
Because Rodney Mauricio was unable to attend, Bob Boehmer chaired the meeting, calling it to order at 1:10 p.m.

Bob began by asking “How will we get to the finish line?” We must have a final QEP to the Leadership Team by the end of this semester. “Where we are now” is represented by our current draft of the plan. An example of “where we must go” is the UT-Austin QEP, a tangible representation of where we must be by this spring.

Bob then explained how the organizational structure of the team is changing in order to facilitate our work. A copy of the new structure is attached.

Rodney and Bob have made three presentations recently, to University Council Executive Committee, to University Council, and to the Leadership Team. Generally, there seems to be excitement about the underlying concept of promoting a closer relationship between faculty and students as well as students’ gaining an understanding of what it means to be enrolled at a research institution.

Some faculty have offered criticism of the QEP. At the Executive Committee and University Council meetings, Rodney heard from representatives from Speech Communication and the Writing Center about what their roles should be. Others have expressed that they would be unhappy with too many requirements as to what must be covered in the seminars.

The Leadership Team suggested that the QEP should be made simpler and more focused. The group has budget concerns with regard to the writing, speech, and library components of the budget draft.

An earnest discussion followed. The primary topics included the writing and speech components and how to provide support to faculty in those areas if they request it.

Bob stated Rodney’s position-- if we could have only one outcome from the seminars it would be that by the end of the semester, students would be able to articulate in writing and orally a specific example of how the experience of a student attending a public, land-grant, sea-grant university is different from that of a student in any other environment. In other words, does the student understand what it means to be at UGA and can he/she articulate that?

Irwin added that we should be able to change students’ attitudes about the importance of writing.
Bob asked that the group focus on the new organizational structure for completing the QEP. We must have a finished plan by the end of the semester. The Leadership Team needs to approve and adopt the plan, and, since the Compliance Team’s deadline for submitting the Compliance Certification is September 10, David Shipley and his group must determine this semester that the QEP meets SACS standards. The actual plan will be filed with SACS at least six weeks ahead of their on-site visit, March 1-4, 2011.

Allan added that part of our plan is to determine what elements of the QEP must be approved by University Council. We will have to allow time in our schedule for that.

Bob stated that the Office of Academic Planning will provide logistic support to the QEP working groups this semester. Allan has drafted task lists, and those will be forwarded to the groups.

There was more discussion about defining aspects of the QEP and how to complete it.

Bob summarized the discussion up to this point in the meeting: UGA has a unique academic culture. If our goal is accomplished, UGA students will have relationships with faculty, will appreciate what it means to attend a public land-grant institution, and who can write, speak, and analyze better than students without this experience.

David Lee requested that we note a statement from Kasee about our primary goal: “Introduce first year students to the research, public service, and international missions of the University, how these missions relate to teaching and learning in the classroom, and how students can become involved.”

Bob asked if we could reach a consensus on our overriding goal, noting that we are an academic culture that values academic rigor, research, service, and international missions.

Jean said that we should emphasize small classes in our goal statement. She also reminded the group that we will have to demonstrate to SACS that we’re doing something new.

David Lee pointed out that Bob’s statement is the context in which the seminars would take place.

Bob asked if we could state our overarching theme, then other goals/outcomes that occur from that experience: relationship with faculty, appreciation of the role of research, and better writing. Bob requested that David Lee’s group meet to flesh out details.

David asked if there could be flexibility in the writing goal. There was discussion on this point.

Bob summarized that we want to require a meaningful writing exercise, but we should not tell the faculty member what that means. We should provide appropriate resources to the faculty for accomplishing this.

David cautioned that we shouldn’t get too flexible: teaching writing is the most meaningful thing we do.

Cheryl Dozier announced that she will ask Jan to send a notice to the team about details of meetings to brainstorm a name for the QEP. Tentatively those dates are March 17, 18.

In closing, Bob said that Allan would schedule meetings for the Program Design group. The chairs of the five other groups will be asked to attend.
David Lee stated that he understood the sentiment of the group. The team will have the opportunity to correct the plan as we go along. His group will include guidelines for writing in its description.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Wheeler