

## UAB QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

# LEARNING IN A TEAM ENVIRONMENT



*MANY MINDS.  
A COMMON GOAL.*

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**UAB** THE UNIVERSITY OF  
ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

Knowledge that will change your world

Prepared for the Commission on Colleges of the  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of Alabama at Birmingham's vision is to be an internationally renowned research university — a first choice for education and health care, and our mission is to be a research university and academic health center that discovers, teaches and applies knowledge for the intellectual, cultural, social and economic benefit of Birmingham, the state and beyond.

The importance of teams was a recurring topic throughout stakeholder conversations, and after careful review and reflection on what UAB is and what it can become, ***Learning in a Team Environment*** was selected as the next UAB QEP topic.

The vision of this QEP topic was further focused to two specific aims:

1. Teach students to succeed in all (appropriate) roles of a team
2. Use these skills to improve student learning

All schools and colleges, from undergraduate to professional, will be participating. The skills UAB students develop as a result of this QEP will allow them to enhance their learning while at UAB, to enhance their engagement throughout all academic activities, and to enhance their opportunities for success in the workforce upon graduation.

Student learning is at the center of this QEP. Our desired student learning outcomes are that students will demonstrate competence in teamwork behaviors (including interprofessional teaming) and will demonstrate gains in critical thinking through the expanded utilization of team-focused pedagogies, including, but not limited to, Team-based Learning and simulations. By effectively fostering team dynamics and improving team acumen in students at UAB, the implementation of these pedagogies will allow our students to exhibit improved academic outcomes and increased team skills. Student skills in working on teams will be assessed institutionally using the Teamwork VALUE rubric, and enhanced student learning will be assessed institutionally using the Critical Thinking VALUE rubric. Global effects will be assessed by monitoring (and comparing) course success rates, changes in ETS Proficiency Profile gains, National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data and Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory responses.

The learning environment will also be altered by *Learning in a Team Environment*. The number of courses which enhance student capabilities to work on teams and courses which utilize team-focused pedagogies ("footprint") will be measured institutionally and within schools, colleges and departments to assure breadth of impact on student learning.

Faculty development will be one of the primary tools for implementation. Resources will be dedicated to (1) increasing the staff of the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) by adding a 0.5 FTE position and establishing QEP Faculty Fellows to mentor faculty, (2) funding team learning faculty development projects selected by the CTL advisory board, and (3) funding unit-based projects that will serve as seeds for further growth in footprint or quality.

*Learning in a Team Environment* will be led by a full-time Director who reports through the Office of the Provost. Assessment will be managed by the UAB Center for Education Accountability. Advisory, Implementation and Assessment committees will have defined responsibilities in assuring the success of this QEP.



## DEVELOPING THE QEP

In preparation for the 2015 QEP, UAB engaged Clarus Consulting Group to design and facilitate a series of processes that served to gather insights from faculty, students, administrators and other key stakeholders, while also informing the development of the QEP. As an objective third party, Clarus brought neutrality to the stakeholder engagement process, enabling the firm to elicit unfiltered feedback to enrich QEP development. The stakeholder engagement process and QEP topic selection occurred in three phases as described below.

Results of the activities of each phase were communicated to participants through the UAB faculty and QEP websites, a blog, and UAB media coverage revealing that participant feedback and involvement informed the development of the next QEP.

### Identification of the QEP Topic

#### Phase I – Involvement of Administrators, Faculty and Student Leaders

Phase I of the project, which began in August 2012, involved gathering information on the development process of the 2005 QEP and recommendations for institutionwide stakeholder engagement from key UAB leadership. More than half of this group of Deans, senior leadership, faculty leaders and student leaders experienced and were sensitive to the successes and difficulties of the previous QEP.

Through individual interviews, group interviews and focus groups, this leadership group identified key stakeholders to include in the development of the next QEP as well as appropriate methods for reaching UAB faculty, staff and students. (A list of individuals who participated in QEP topic selection is found in Appendix A.)

Participants were asked for input on the following topics, the feedback for which served as the foundation for planning Phase II and the selection of the new QEP focus:

- Successes and challenges of the last QEP
- Groups and individuals to engage during the process of identifying and developing the QEP
- Effective engagement methods
- Communicating the QEP

#### Phase II – Stakeholder Engagement

In Phase II, an 11-member Stakeholder Engagement Committee was formed to advise on stakeholder engagement strategies for UAB faculty and students. Members were selected by the Provost and Vice Provost for Student and Faculty Success and included administrative, faculty and student representatives from five schools and the college, undergraduate and graduate student government, the UAB Faculty Senate, and co-curricular units. (Membership roster is found in Appendix A.) The Committee was issued the following charge by the Office of the Provost:

The Stakeholder Engagement Committee will advise Clarus Consulting Group on the development and implementation of the QEP Focus Identification process, which will take place from September 2012 through March 2013. The committee will provide feedback on the messaging for various stakeholder groups, will brainstorm new methods for gathering stakeholder input, and will support Clarus by encouraging the UAB community to participate in the identification of the new QEP topic. Through regular



communication methods including in-person meetings, conference calls and emails, the Stakeholder Engagement Committee will provide insights on how best to communicate about the QEP and design methods for successfully engaging the UAB campus community.

At each meeting, the committee focused on identifying opportunities and developing strategies for educating stakeholders on the SACSCOC reaffirmation of accreditation process and to learn from key stakeholders about the most important areas for improving student learning at UAB. The committee was active throughout the faculty and student engagement process.

Additionally, Clarus met individually with each Dean to identify the best methods to engage the faculty in their respective school/college. This approach worked well given the various sizes of the schools/college and the varying levels of involvement in the previous QEP.

Recommendations from the committee, in addition to input from each Dean, resulted in three methods that were utilized to engage UAB faculty and students in this process.

- Presentation at existing or QEP-specific meetings (faculty/faculty leadership and student government [undergraduate and graduate]).
- Focus group
- Community Café roundtable (small group discussion)

### *Identification of Potential QEP Themes*

From October 2012 through January 2013, 17 presentations and discussions (e.g., focus groups, roundtables) were held that engaged more than 525 faculty, staff and students.

During engagements, stakeholders were asked to identify skills, experiences and values that UAB students should possess in order to be successful. Students were asked the following questions:

- As students, what do you think is important about your college education? Looking forward, what experience or skill will set you apart?
- Why was UAB your college of choice? How can these qualities be amplified to improve student learning University-wide?

Similarly, faculty members were asked:

- What are some of UAB's strengths?
- What do you want students to know, to experience and to value when they graduate from UAB?
- What does a successful UAB student look like?

Eleven potential QEP themes were identified through this process.

- Building a UAB Community. Students and faculty expressed the desire to build on the unique strengths found at UAB in order to develop a stronger school spirit and increase participation in activities and organizations.
- Communication. Effective communication, in written, oral and visual forms, is necessary for students at all levels.
- Critical Thinking. Most faculty members felt that critical thinking is the most important skill set for graduates, which enables students to make informed decisions and develop innovative solutions to problems.



- Current QEP. Despite success seen in the areas of writing, quantitative literacy, and ethics/civic responsibility, there are still opportunities for improvement.
- Experiential Learning. Students and faculty cited opportunities for hands-on experience as excellent methods of learning beyond the classroom.
- Global Citizenship. Students must learn about the world around them and develop cultural competencies in order to contribute to the global community.
- Interdisciplinary Collaboration. Exposure to interdisciplinary experiences in school provides the opportunity for students to learn these skills necessary to work on teams in the workforce.
- Lifelong Learning. Students should possess the skill set needed to continue the process of learning in their chosen careers.
- Local Service Learning. Being involved in the local community develops students into more active citizens.
- Responsible Citizenship. Students should become empowered to engage in and make a difference in the world outside of the university campus.
- Writing. Writing is an important skill that students must possess in order to clearly and effectively communicate.

Many of the themes that emerged had shared goals and were interrelated, allowing for a broader grouping of themes as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Grouping of Potential QEP Themes**

Groups	Themes
Enhancing Learning	Communication, Critical Thinking, Experiential Learning, Interdisciplinary Collaboration, Lifelong Learning, Local Service Learning, Writing
Promoting Citizenship	Building a UAB Community, Current QEP Initiatives, Global Citizenship, Local Service Learning, Responsible Citizenship, Writing
Building Core Competencies	Communication, Critical Thinking, Current QEP Initiatives, Interdisciplinary Collaboration, Writing

### **Phase III – QEP Topic Selection and Communications Plan**

UAB stakeholders from Phases I and II were re-engaged in Phase III to build on the momentum and enthusiasm that had generated from earlier discussions. By reconnecting with Deans, faculty and students who were part of the stakeholder engagement process, a strong foundation for the QEP was established and the campus community was invested. Faculty and students received acknowledgment that their input and feedback directly influenced the themes that were developed. This approach aligned with the Office of the Provost’s desire for a “grassroots” process for identifying the next QEP.

#### ***Development of Identified Themes***

The Stakeholder Engagement Committee continued to play an important role in the process of identification of the next QEP topic in Phase III. Its role was expanded to:

- Review and discuss findings from Phase II
- Review the 11 potential themes
- Discuss additional opportunities for consolidating themes
- Expand theme descriptions





### *Development of Communication Strategy*

The goal of this effort was to complete the communication loop with all participants from Phase II. Building on their experience identifying and designing the stakeholder engagement process, the Stakeholder Engagement Committee and the Deans' Council developed and recommended the best approaches for re-engaging faculty and students.

Those who previously participated in the stakeholder engagement process as well as additional faculty and students were given the opportunity to provide feedback on the QEP themes, which were described in full on the QEP website. A blog was also used to capture commentary from UAB stakeholders. This comment period helped generate excitement and created buy-in around the QEP process.

### *Selection of the QEP Topic and Focus Areas*

After re-engagement of Deans, faculty and students on the identified themes and an extensive comment period, the President and the Provost reviewed all data gathered during the QEP selection process. This information combined with the focus on student success and desire to have a broad topic that involved both the traditional academic programs and medical-related programs across the campus informed the final selection of the QEP topic.

On May 1, 2013, President Ray L. Watts addressed the university, saying:

"The importance of teams was a recurring topic throughout all conversations related to the QEP, and after careful review and reflection on what UAB is and what it can become, Provost Lucas and I have selected 'Learning in a Team Environment' as the next UAB QEP topic.

"Our vision is that this university will (1) teach students to succeed in all roles of a team, (2) use these skills to improve student learning, and (3) take team skills out into the community to do service. In so doing we will build on the culture of collaboration that defines us and has been critical to UAB's success.

"'Learning in a Team Environment' is a topic that will apply to every UAB graduate no matter his or her career plans — and all schools and the college will participate."

With implementation of this QEP, students and faculty at UAB will be exposed to team mechanics and team dynamics. The three focus areas will afford UAB students opportunities to develop team skills that they can use to enhance their learning while at UAB, use to enhance their engagement throughout all academic and nonacademic activities, and use to succeed in the workforce upon graduation.

### Focus Areas

The three focus areas contained components of all 11 QEP themes that emerged during the stakeholder engagement process. The resulting QEP has the capability of addressing multiple areas of student learning under a broad umbrella of teamwork.

### *Teach Students to Succeed in all Roles of a Team*

Employers universally expect their workforce to be able to work effectively in teams. Universities often provide experiences for student group work, which tend to operate as individuals' working independently toward a common goal. Teams, however, require collaboration and recognition of the talents or knowledge-base of others in order to achieve the team's goal. With this QEP, we aim to provide institutionwide assistance to improve all students' skills in working on teams.





### *Use Team Skills to Improve Student Learning*

Research has shown that there are various team-focused pedagogies that are effective in engaging students in the learning process, thereby improving their understanding of concepts.<sup>1,2</sup> These methodologies include Team-based Learning, “flipping” the classroom, simulations, interprofessional collaboration and project-based learning. In an institution as large and as diverse as UAB, it would be challenging to implement one approach for all programs. Selection of a particular pedagogy at the unit or course level empowers instructors to determine what is best for their students and environment.

### *Take Team Skills out into the Community to do Service*

Community service is a large component of many academic programs and co-curricular activities at UAB. Since service often involves groups of individuals working toward a common goal, enhancing students’ team skills would maximize the positive impact that our students can have on the community.

## **Refinement of the Topic**

Following identification of the QEP topic, the QEP Steering Committee led the process of refining the topic and focus areas.

Two individuals were selected to serve as co-facilitators of the QEP Steering Committee. Dr. Kristi Menear, Chair of Human Studies in the School of Education, and Dr. Peter Anderson, professor and Director of Pathology Undergraduate Education in the School of Medicine, were chosen by the Office of the Provost based on their strong leadership skills, recommendations from faculty and administrators, and passion for the topic. Menear brought experiences from the traditional undergraduate side of the UAB campus, while Anderson represented the health-focused entities. Since the health-focused schools were not part of the 2005 QEP, it was determined that having a representative from those schools was critical to the development of the next QEP.

The QEP Steering Committee was formed in fall of 2013 to guide development of *Learning in a Team Environment*. Each school and college, representative co-curricular units, and students — undergraduate and graduate — were included on the Committee. (List of Committee Members is found in Appendix B.) The charge to the Committee was to:

- Identify where team learning is currently being conducted on campus
- Find ways in which current team learning can be enhanced
- Identify what is being currently being assessed
- Assemble current accreditations and plans and incorporate them into the QEP
- Bring the information that individual departments and schools currently gather for their own accreditation agencies and apply it toward the new QEP and SACSCOC reaffirmation report.

Committee members served as liaisons with their respective units. They provided information on current team-focused activities and relayed information to and from their units.

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<sup>1</sup> Kamei, R. K., Cook, S., Puthucheary, J., & Starmer, C. F. (2012). 21st Century Learning in Medicine: Traditional Teaching versus Team-based Learning. *The Journal of the International Association of Medical Science Educators*, 22(2), 57-64.

<sup>2</sup> Flipped Learning Network. (2013). *Flipped Learning in Higher Education* [White paper]. Retrieved from <http://www.flippedlearning.org/cms/lib07/VA01923112/Centricity/Domain/41/HigherEdWhitePaper%20FINAL.pdf>



### **Validation of Focus Areas – Institutional Data**

During the spring of 2014, the Center for Educational Accountability (CEA) in consultation with the QEP Steering Committee developed a series of online surveys to document baseline implementation, attitudes and needs of different groups regarding the general theme of *Learning in a Team Environment*. Faculty, administrators and co-curricular supervisors were surveyed by the CEA regarding the importance of teamwork and team skills within classrooms, programs, and co-curricular activities. The results confirmed the significance of skills and dispositions relating to collaboration and teamwork across the campus and were shared with the committee to inform our understanding of the foci and the context of this QEP. Survey instruments and summaries of results are provided in Appendices C-G.

A majority of schools and individual academic programs are accredited by their programmatic agencies. Most of these agencies include some component of teaming in their standards for accreditation as shown in Appendix H.

This QEP topic is supported by institutional data, which includes the survey results described above, the Clarus stakeholder engagement process, and the large number of accredited programs.



### **Refinement of Focus Areas**

During Steering Committee discussions, it became apparent that the first two foci were the areas where most ideas for improvement existed. In addition, the existing academic assessment processes can be leveraged as part of the QEP assessment process. Information gathered at the 2014 SACSCOC Institute on Quality Enhancement and Assessment, attended by the Steering Committee co-facilitators and SACSCOC Liaison, led UAB to re-evaluate the focus areas to eliminate the potential for an unsuccessful QEP due to overambitious objectives. After consulting with the Provost, the Steering Committee made the decision to eliminate the third focus area, team skills in the community. Although the focus was removed, co-curricular activities may be a part of the QEP if they meet criteria for designation as “QEP activities” and they incorporate at least one of the student learning outcomes. (Criteria are detailed in Assessment Overview.)

### **Relationship of QEP to UAB Mission**

The University of Alabama at Birmingham’s vision is to be an internationally renowned research university — a first choice for education and health care, and our mission is to be a research university and academic health center that discovers, teaches and applies knowledge for the intellectual, cultural, social and economic benefit of Birmingham, the state and beyond.

The desire of *Learning in a Team Environment* is it will teach students to succeed in all roles of a team and use these skills to improve student learning. This QEP will better prepare our graduates, which will in turn be of economic benefit to the communities in which they are employed. It will also have a direct impact on our ability to teach and apply knowledge. Thus, *Learning in a Team Environment* will allow us to better achieve the institutional mission.



## LITERATURE REVIEW

*Learning in a Team Environment* will expose students and faculty at UAB to team dynamics and team-focused learning pedagogies. These elements of learning will be beneficial in all stages of the students' academic experiences and throughout their careers. The skills our students develop through this process will allow them to enhance their learning while at UAB, enhance their engagement throughout all academic and nonacademic activities, and leave them better prepared to succeed in the workforce upon graduation.

While extensive community engagement efforts highlighted the importance of establishing an effort to learn in a team in environment, the pertinent literature led us once again to the core principle of this effort — collaborative learning models are considered a “high-impact education practice.”<sup>3</sup>

In addition, literature confirms that focusing on building team skills within the classroom offers opportunities for greater retention of materials by students, increased student participation in classroom activities, improved student performance along standard academic achievement measures, and achievement of our prescribed student learning outcomes.

Based on best-practices from the literature, the following criteria guide our efforts:

- Instructors must be well-versed in Team Learning Environments and have the tools and skills necessary to be effective in this area of skill building
- Teaching in a team setting should allow for greater development of soft skills and interpersonal skills
- Teams are most effective when membership is defined and consistent throughout the course schedule
- Effective teams require individual and team accountability where feedback and constructive criticism are encouraged from instructor and peers

Capacity to measure success of team-focused learning efforts will be best determined through a combination of traditional written assessments, peer evaluations and instructor evaluations

## Faculty Mentoring

Many academic programs, including the Harvard Business School, have invested in the use of skilled peers to serve as coaches or mentors to support other faculty who wish to improve or innovate their teaching. Such supportive practices typically involve modeling, reviews of materials, course and syllabus planning and review, observation (live or videotaped), feedback, and joint problem-solving. While there does not appear to be a significant literature on the effectiveness of such coaches in regard to teaching in higher education, the effectiveness of coaches in K-12 programs has been established. For example, most research on the effectiveness of literacy coaches finds that they are effective at improving instructional practices of teachers; but the impacts on student outcomes are less compelling (e.g., NRTAC 2010, Rand, 2008). Huston and Weaver (2008) provide a review of the literature regarding peer instructional coaching and make some recommendations related to practices for implementing

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<sup>3</sup> Kuh, G. D. (2008). High-Impact Educational Practices. In *High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter* (A Brief Overview). Retrieved from <http://www.aacu.org/leap/hips>.



peer-to-peer coaching programs in higher education.<sup>4</sup> The inclusion of teaching coaches within centers for teaching and learning within a number of universities speaks to the perceived value of such support. The UAB QEP will engage master teachers as support for faculty wishing assistance in implementing innovative teaming pedagogies within their classes across campus.

## Improving Student Learning

As identified in many of the specific Year 1 unit-based projects described in the Actions to be Implemented section, the importance of having a clear understanding of the benefits of *Learning in a Team Environment* and possessing the tools to be effective in that effort at the faculty level are critical.

According to a recent survey of faculty, nearly 40% of courses at UAB require some aspects of *Learning in a Team Environment* — even if that is as simple as group work on projects. Many of these efforts, however, do not incorporate specific guidelines and best practices related to team-focused or collaborative learning.

In order to ensure that our students are best-prepared to develop these skills, faculty members will receive additional training on:

1. Team-based Learning: Educational approaches that consist of student teams, peer evaluation and opportunities for students to debate problems arising from course materials with one another.<sup>5,6</sup> This technique was originally developed to foster Active Learning in particularly large higher-education classrooms.<sup>7,8</sup> Team-based Learning is applicable to classrooms across disciplines and is characterized by:
  - Permanent and purposefully heterogeneous work groups
  - Assessments based on individual performance, group performance and peer evaluation
  - Class time primarily devoted to small group activities
2. Other Team-focused Pedagogies: Educational approaches involving joint intellectual efforts by students or students and teachers — that require teams of two or more where students actively apply course subject matter rather than passively consuming teacher-presented material.<sup>8</sup> In a collaborative learning environment, students “cognitively and cooperatively” engage in a common task to reach a mutual goal.<sup>9</sup> At the postsecondary level in particular, this practice has been used to improve students’ communication and creative thinking skills while facilitating instruction and application of content-specific knowledge.<sup>8</sup> In order to prove successful, collaborative learning environments require

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<sup>4</sup> Huston, T., & Weaver, C. L. (2008). Peer Coaching: Professional Development for Experienced Faculty. *Innovative Higher Education*, 33(1), 5-20.

<sup>5</sup> Sibley, J. & Spiridonoff, S. (2013). *What is TBL?* Retrieved from <http://www.teambasedlearning.org/Resources/Documents/TBL%20Handout%20Aug%2016-print%20ready%20no%20branding.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Michaelsen, L. K. & Sweet, M. (2008). The Essential Elements of Team-Based Learning. In L. K. Michaelsen, M. Sweet, & D. X. Parmalee (Eds.), *Team-Based Learning: Small Group Learning's Next Big Step. New Directions in Teaching and Learning* (pp. 7-27). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Periodicals, Inc.

<sup>7</sup> Michaelsen, L. K. (1992). Team Learning: A Comprehensive Approach for Harnessing the Power of Small Groups in Higher Education. *To Improve the Academy*, 11, 107-122.

<sup>8</sup> Smith, B. L., & MacGregor, J. T. (1992). What is Collaborative Learning? In *Collaborative Learning: A Sourcebook for Higher Education* (pp. 10-30). University Park, PA: National Center on Postsecondary Teaching, Learning, and Assessment.

<sup>9</sup> Nihalani, P. K., Wilson, H. E., Thomas, G., & Robinson, D. H. (2010). What Determines High- and Low-Performing Groups? The Superstar Effect. *Journal of Advanced Academics*, 21(3), 520-529.



the instructor's ability to cultivate and require interdependence among groups and cultivate a mentality among students in a collaborative group that they "sink or swim" together.<sup>10</sup>

The primary purpose of incorporating these elements in faculty training is to ensure that in each of these settings our students are in the most effective environment possible to develop the necessary skills they will need to succeed in school and in their careers.

Without doubt, our focus is to establish collaboration, which is the primary principle of *Learning in a Team Environment*. We recognize that this occurs best when active learning is pursued. Active learning results when students move from passively receiving information from their instructors and begin to take more active roles in the classroom through discussion and group problem-solving.<sup>11</sup>

Another indication of improved student learning is the course success rate, one indicator of which is the drop, fail and withdrawal (DFW) rate. Implementation of TBL in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) courses at the University of South Alabama has demonstrated a strong, positive effect of DFW rates.<sup>12</sup>

A well-trained and well-prepared faculty is the key to improving student learning.

### Student Success on Teams

At the same time, faculty members will be trained on developing and monitoring successful team structures in the classroom. In its most basic sense, a team comprises two or more individuals interdependently working together toward a common goal.<sup>13,14,15</sup> This arrangement, however, involves more than individuals working in the same work station or same vicinity, or even on a common project. Groups and teams have to be engaged in the group process. The "group process leads to a spirit of cooperation, coordination, and commonly understood procedures and mores."<sup>13</sup> Many researchers and theorists agree that it is essential to emphasize the importance of a shared creative process within the team, a shared and clear coordination of activity, and a shared focus on results.<sup>11,14</sup>

Within a team setting, it is essential that faculty be aware of the potential for negative roles to develop. Instructors must anticipate and mitigate barriers to productivity and build stronger team skills in their classrooms. In particular, "social loafing" and student dominance represent the most common obstacles to team effectiveness.

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<sup>10</sup> Davis, B. G. (1993). Collaborative Learning: Group Work and Study Teams. In *Tools for Teaching* (pp. 147-158). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

<sup>11</sup> Prince, M. (2004). Does Active Learning Work? A Review of the Research. *Journal of Engineering Education*, 93(3), 223-231.

<sup>12</sup> University of South Alabama. (n.d.). Quality Enhancement Plan. Team USA 2013-14 Summary Report Retrieved from <http://www.southalabama.edu/departments/qep/resources/QEP%20Year%201%20%20Summary.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Berge, Z. L. (1998). Differences in teamwork between post-secondary classrooms and the workplace. *Education and Training*, 40(5), 194 – 201.

<sup>14</sup> Blair, G. M. (1991). Groups that work. *IEE Engineering Management Journal*, 1(5), 219-223.

<sup>15</sup> Larson, C. E. & LaFasto, F. M. J. (1989). *Teamwork: What Must Go Right / What Can Go Wrong*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.





Teaching strategies designed to develop team skills should aim to help students mitigate these common group challenges, starting with providing an understanding of their source. The following six forces have been identified as causes of potential problems in group settings:<sup>16</sup>

- Some individuals naturally resist participation
- Some individuals prefer to dominate discussions
- Members may believe they lack the content knowledge required for making a meaningful contribution
- Members may be concerned about appearing to be disagreeable or overly aggressive
- Members may not be committed to the success of the group
- The task may be inappropriate for groups because it can be completed by one or two members working alone or it does not require members to reach an agreement

At the same time, faculty will be required to identify and cultivate the characteristics of effective teams:<sup>17</sup>

- Clear unity of purpose
- Group is self-conscious of own operations
- Group has established clear and demanding performance goals
- Discussion is prevalent and all group members participate
- Disagreement and debate are a positive
- Most decisions are made following general agreement within the group
- Individuals carry their own weight
- Criticism is frequent, frank and relatively comfortable

Considering this, we have established the importance of clear faculty direction in team development, team composition and team assignments.

Much research has stressed the importance of instructors' actively creating teams for collaborative work rather than allowing students to self-select group members.<sup>18</sup> This practice replicates situations that students will encounter with future employers in the workplace. Our primary criteria for establishing effective teams requires that they remain stable throughout the semester and that they comprise as few individuals as is possible for the effective conduct of the course.<sup>19,20</sup>

At the same time, we have focused much research and planning on the keys to developing appropriate tasks and goals for our student teams. Again, the success of a team skill-building initiative in the classroom hinges upon the instructor's ability to design activities that account for a group's developmental level, as well as the activity's impact on the cohesiveness of a group. The keys to this are:<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Michaelsen, L. K., Fink, L. D., & Knight, A. (1997). Designing Effective Group Activities: Lessons for Classroom Teaching and Faculty Development. *To Improve the Academy*, 16, 373-398.

<sup>17</sup> *Characteristics of Effective Teams*. Retrieved from <http://www.stanford.edu/class/e140/e140a/effective.html>.

<sup>18</sup> Barkely, E. F., Cross, K. P., & Major, C. H. (2005). *Collaborative Learning Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons.

<sup>19</sup> Michaelsen, L. K. Getting Started with Team Learning. 1-21. Retrieved from <https://www.med.illinois.edu/FacultyDev/Classroom/InteractiveMethods/Michaelson.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup> Fiechtner, S. B. & Davis, E. A. (1992). Why Some Groups Fail: A Survey of Students' Experiences with Learning Groups. In *Collaborative Learning: A Sourcebook for Higher Education* (pp. 86-98). University Park, PA: National Center on Postsecondary Teaching, Learning, and Assessment.



- High level of individual accountability
- Promoting significant discussion between group members through group assignments completed collaboratively
- Ensuring direct and immediate feedback from peers and instructor
- Rewarding positive group performances
- In the end, individual student accountability is crucial for ensuring that one student does not monopolize a group's work.<sup>21</sup>

Without it, team members will likely feel less committed to a project's success. In addition, individual accountability mimics performance evaluation systems common in most workplace settings.

The final key in this effort is to ensure student buy-in. In order for *Learning in a Team Environment* to prove successful, we recognize that students can no longer passively receive material in class. For that reason, the possibility exists that students may greet team learning methods with hostility. In fact, if students feel frustrated by the process, they are more likely to rate professors poorly, regardless of demonstrated educational gains.<sup>22</sup>

To combat this, at the beginning of courses, we will partner with our faculty to support them:

- Clarify how team learning differs from traditional coursework
- Clarify how the class will be conducted
- Clarify the rationale behind developing these types of skills
- Establish individual and group evaluations at the beginning of the course to familiarize students and reduce anxiety
- Establish transparency in group-selection processes in order to reduce student suspicions of an instructor's ulterior motives

Once these efforts have been established, it is our contention that students will more actively participate in classes that incorporate and seek to develop team skills. Literature has shown that collaborative learning increases attendance rates as students develop a sense of greater accountability to their peers.<sup>19</sup>

In addition, classrooms that incorporate Team-based Learning show that students participate more regularly in class discussions. Data from a specific experiment show that student participation peaked at 25% in a noncollaborative classroom while averaging approximately 70% in a collaborative learning classroom.<sup>23</sup>

The literature also makes it clear that strong team skills positively impact student performance in the classroom along traditional student learning metrics. Cooperative learning “promotes higher individual achievement” than is reflected in other approaches. Higher achievement is reflected both in terms of areas such as “knowledge acquisition, retention, accuracy, creativity in

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<sup>21</sup> Blumenfeld, P. C., Marx, R. W., Soloway, E., & Krajcik, J. (1996). Learning With Peers: From Small Group Cooperation to Collaborative Communities. *Educational Researcher*, 25(8), 37-40.

<sup>22</sup> Michaelsen, L. K. & Sweet, M. (2008). *Team-Based Learning: Small Group Learning's Next Big Step. New Directions in Teaching and Learning*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Periodicals, Inc.

<sup>23</sup> Drummond, C.K. (2012). Team-Based Learning to Enhance Critical Thinking Skills in Entrepreneurship Education. *Proceedings of the Academy of Entrepreneurship*, 16(2), 18-22.





problem-solving and higher-level reasoning,” and in terms of factors such as the willingness of individuals to “take on difficult tasks” and their “intrinsic motivation.”<sup>24</sup>

And finally, development of team skills in the classroom has been linked to positive outcomes in student retention. In one study, an introductory course was taught to students using a team-learning approach and to another group of students using a traditional approach. There was a notable (15.2%) improvement in student retention among those who studied via the team-learning approach.<sup>25</sup> It should be noted that many of the high-impact instructional techniques, such as simulation, Team-based Learning, project-based learning, peer-led team learning in sciences and supplemental instruction, all include working in groups or teams.

In addition, it is noted that team environments in the classroom increase the percentage of students who take the final examination. In team environments, students are more apt to attend class on days involving group activity out of a sense of loyalty to their teams.

Teamwork skills also play an important role in developing and cementing social structures and support networks that can improve institutionwide retention rates.



<sup>24</sup> Johnson, D. W., Johnson, R. T., & Smith, K. A. (1998). Cooperative Learning Returns To College: What Evidence Is There That It Works? *Change*, 38(2), p. 27-35.

<sup>25</sup> Kreie, J., Headrick, W. R., & Steiner, R. A. (2007). *Team-Oriented Approach to Learning: An Effort to Improve Student Retention and Performance*. Retrieved from <http://tinyurl.com/mm7serw>



## STUDENT LEARNING AND ENVIRONMENT OUTCOMES

UAB has chosen a QEP focus that is responsive to the learning needs of all students and to the skills that are expected in the workplace. Under the umbrella of *Learning in a Team Environment*, the implementation of the QEP will be targeted at the achievement of meaningful reforms to the learning environment of UAB and to meaningful improvements to student learning. Outcomes for each of these areas follow.

### Student Learning Outcomes

A critical reason for focusing on *Learning in a Team Environment* is that the workplace requires the teamwork and critical-thinking skills that will be taught and practiced through academic and co-curricular opportunities. By formalizing student learning outcomes that address student, alumni and employer satisfaction with teamwork preparedness for the workplace, we expect that academic and co-curricular efforts will focus equally on the professional and academic values of teaming.



Changes that are proposed in the learning environment have been targeted because they will promote the desired student learning outcomes of the QEP. There are two primary and several secondary student learning outcomes. The two primary student learning outcomes are:

- Students will demonstrate competence in teamwork behaviors (including interprofessional teaming).
- Students will demonstrate gains in critical thinking through involvement in team-focused pedagogy.

It should be noted that we adopted these student learning outcomes, not because institutional analyses reveal significant weaknesses in these areas, but rather because we recognize the key importance of these outcomes to the academic and professional success of our graduates.

In addition to these primary learning outcomes, we adopted several secondary student learning outcomes that we will measure across the term of the QEP. Secondary student learning outcomes are:

- Drop, fail and withdrawal (DFW) rates in courses with a team focus will be lower than parallel courses that do not have a team focus.
- Students and alumni will report value-added benefits associated with coursework with a team focus.
- Employers of UAB graduates will report satisfaction with team-skills preparation of graduates in selected disciplines.

Analyses of institutional retention data identified several courses where higher-than-expected





DFW rates may be contributing to retention problems with undergraduate students. Plans for achieving these student learning outcomes are discussed in the Actions to be Implemented section. Plans for assessing these outcomes are discussed in the Assessment Overview section.

### Learning Environment Outcomes

The development of the foci of the QEP and subsequent data collection highlights strengths and opportunities on campus regarding *Learning in a Team Environment*. We identified areas where teaming is a well-established as part of the learning environment and found areas in academic and co-curricular units where there is significant room for expansion and improvement. We are committed to continuing to build on our strengths while addressing opportunities for improvement. For the benefit of our students and graduates, we will strive to strengthen areas where teaming is already part of curricula or pedagogy. We will also strive to infuse teaming in courses and activities where it will promote student learning and the preparedness of our graduates. As a result, we are targeting two primary learning environment outcomes:

- There will be a broader footprint regarding the use of team-focused pedagogy and teamwork instruction in undergraduate and graduate courses and co-curricular activities across the university.
- There will be evidence of improvement in the implementation of team-focused pedagogy and teamwork instruction in undergraduate and graduate courses and co-curricular activities across the university.

Plans for achieving these learning environment outcomes are discussed in the Actions to be Implemented section. Plans for monitoring these outcomes are discussed in the Assessment Overview section.





## ACTIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED

*Learning in a Team Environment* will be accomplished through efforts made in four areas: faculty professional development, CTL Teaching Awards, QEP Fellows and unit-based projects.

### Faculty Professional Development

The University's Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) was created in 2011 to organize and coordinate ongoing instructional development activities available to all faculty members. The CTL provides a wide range of training opportunities to help faculty members enhance their pedagogical skills and use of instructional technology.

**New Teaching Faculty Orientation.** The CTL offers a one-and-a-half-day orientation and quick course for new faculty members on fundamentals of teaching and course management prior to the start of fall semester. A focus on *Learning in a Team Environment* will be added to the topics covered during orientation.

**Workshops, seminars and demonstrations.** CTL programming has grown in number and diversity of topics since its inception in 2012. Workshops and sessions on teaching practice topics and instructional technology topics are offered, in addition to individual teaching practice consultations, mentoring sessions and class observations. An annual faculty survey will be conducted by the Center for Educational Accountability to identify faculty development needs related to this QEP. Survey results will inform actions and progress within the QEP, including CTL programming.

In line with this QEP topic, the CTL has offered several faculty development opportunities to date that have been focused on Team-based Learning (TBL). A TBL demonstration in October 2012 led to a two-part workshop in February 2014 that was conducted by the creator of the method, Dr. Larry Michaelson. Dr. Wayne McCormick, University of Florida, President of the Team-based Learning Collaborative, conducted a three-hour workshop in September 2014 to introduce attendees to the TBL method. Dr. Michaelson returned in October 2014 to conduct two half-day advanced TBL workshops addressing the design of high-quality class activities and dealing with classroom challenges and an all-day Introduction to TBL workshop. In addition to outside speakers, UAB faculty members have also led TBL workshops. The UAB CTL and the University of South Alabama are discussing ways to collaborate on additional TBL training and jointly developing TBL modules.

Another method to allow learning in a team environment is simulation for learning. A multidisciplinary demonstration workshop conducted in October of 2013 allowed faculty members from the health professions and the arts and sciences to experience a progressive simulation that transitioned to different learning objectives. A reflective debriefing followed. This simulation workshop led to cross-department collaborative efforts.

Faculty development conducted and coordinated by the CTL will contribute directly to the learning environment outcomes expected from this QEP. Through its programming related to team-focused pedagogies, it is expected that more instructors will implement these practices into a growing number of courses offered across the university and implementation will be improved.

### CTL Teaching Awards

The CTL solicits individual proposals from faculty across the University for funding to improve courses. These funds will be targeted to courses that relate to the QEP topic of learning in a



team environment. Proposals will be evaluated by the CTL Academic Advisory Council on their significance, innovation, approach and potential for sustained use. The CTL Academic Advisory Council consists of one representative from all schools (three from the College of Arts and Sciences), as well as administrative units that support the CTL such as the Office of the Provost, UAB Online and UAB Information Technology. Awardees will be required to utilize the Teamwork and Critical Thinking VALUE rubrics in their courses to evaluate the student learning outcomes and present the results of their projects to the university community via the CTL.

These funding mechanisms will have a direct impact on this QEP's learning environment outcomes by increasing the footprint and quality of instruction in general and, in some cases, teamwork skills of students.

## QEP Fellows

The purpose of the QEP Fellows program is to identify faculty who have expertise and demonstrated success (identified through course evaluations, use of particular tools, related publications, etc.) in positively affecting student learning utilizing team-focused pedagogies or teaming activities in the classroom. The ideal cohort of Fellows would represent STEM disciplines, Medicine, Arts and Humanities, as well as experience with various modes of instruction (traditional, online, blended), interprofessional collaboration and simulation activities. Individuals possessing the expertise in areas of need identified by annual faculty surveys will be selected as Fellows.

The mentoring activities conducted by the QEP Fellows are designed to make impacts on the identified learning environment outcomes by supporting instructors who are experiencing challenges with implementation of team-focused pedagogies or team activities in the classroom.

## Unit-based Projects

Unit-based projects will typically be larger in scope and funding level than the CTL Teaching Awards. Projects will be selected strategically, to provide a critical seed either in areas where the QEP will impact a maximum number of students or in areas where excellence is likely to be achieved with focused effort and resources. These are viewed as germination sites for ideas that can be adopted throughout the university. The unit-based projects will make the largest impacts on the student learning outcomes associated with this QEP. All projects will work with the CEA to design feasible evaluation systems and will be required to use the core assessment tools (e.g., VALUE rubrics) as part of the evaluation. The selection criteria and funding model for the unit-based projects are shown in Appendix I.

Year 1 unit-based proposals were selected from the Department of Clinical and Diagnostic Sciences, Department of Psychology, Department of Theatre, Collat School of Business, and School of Engineering.

### Department of Clinical and Diagnostic Sciences

Faculty in the Department of Clinical and Diagnostic Sciences (CDS) in the School of Health Professions will embed the QEP in four graduate courses for the CDS Professional Development program, a requirement for the approximately 150-175 students in the department. This program focuses on the development of nontechnical skills that are essential to effective functioning in today's health care environment.

The program, delivered across six graduate programs in the department, is designed to provide all enrolled students the opportunity to develop valuable nontechnical skills focused on four



components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management and relationship management.

Currently, there is great interest in building emotional intelligence in health care professionals due to the growing body of evidence that these behaviors contribute to the development of effective patient-centered teams, improved health care provider-patient relationships, increased empathy, improved communication, stress management, organizational commitment and effective leadership.

The Professional Development program is purposefully designed to engage all department faculty and students from numerous degree programs in common activities to create the foundation for success in a team environment. This enables students to develop a greater awareness of the health care team and will enable them to develop professional networks beyond their specific disciplines.

In addition, we anticipate that students will develop skills to:

- Describe the value of teams in health care
- Explain individual personality characteristics
- Develop a plan to use these characteristics to improve professional relationships
- Utilize team skills in challenging environments

To assess success in this effort, the department will:

- Enhance existing assessment tools — the Clinical Practice Summary Evaluations and Employer Surveys — to include QEP-specific questions.
- Develop a pre- and post-test to assess attainment of team skills related to knowledge gained over the course of the professional development experience.
- Utilize the Teamwork VALUE rubric to assess the use of teamwork skills during the challenging environments group activity in the last semester of the program.

### **Department of Psychology**

The Department of Psychology in the College of Arts and Sciences will first assess faculty strengths in team building and team learning environments and develop a series of workshops for faculty to learn about:

- Development of team-based learning approaches
- Creating effective teams
- Grading and assessment practices
- Resolving team conflicts

Once the faculty have developed the required foundational principles of team learning, the Department will implement this effort over a two-year period in two separate courses, PY 212 - Developmental Psychology and PY 316 - Research Methods in Psychology. PY 212 satisfies one of the Core Curriculum Area IV History, Social and Behavioral Sciences requirements and is also a required course for majors in Psychology, Nursing, Sociology and Physician Assistant Studies. Approximately 1,000 students enroll in PY 212 each year. This course examines change throughout the life span and also explores the interaction of the developing person with the environment, along with individual and cross-cultural differences in patterns of development. PY 212 also allows students to integrate their knowledge of psychology with observations of human behavior in the field. PY 316 is a required research course within the department —



reaching approximately 180 students and includes a strong emphasis on quantitative analysis and questions of ethics and civic responsibility. The course also provides practical knowledge of the scientific methodology, such as problem definition, hypothesis formation, measurement, causal inference, validity and reliability.

Throughout this process, the faculty will also develop a comprehensive assessment of the transition to a team learning environment and provide the document as a training tool to implement team learning in other Psychology courses and for other departments that seek to implement team learning.

The Department's efforts will require students to develop core competencies in the following:

- Develop a comprehensive set of practical skills and tools to work effectively in teams
- Develop skills related to time management, meeting management, agenda setting, group dynamics and team building
- Develop ability to recognize and appreciate contributions of individuals from diverse backgrounds
- Develop ability to contribute to the effective functioning of teams
- Develop ability to communicate effectively (using written and spoken word, nonverbal language, and listening skills)
- Develop ability to cultivate relationships, manage conflicts and work across differences

To assess the success in this effort, the department will employ qualitative survey documents for students and faculty facilitators, as well as evaluation of the students' team contribution, knowledge of team skills and perception of teamwork. The Teamwork VALUE rubric will be used to assess team member contributions. A questionnaire will also be developed to guide team member expectations of teamwork. Surveys and assignments will track the development of students' team skills and will be used in feedback loops for student learners and facilitators. IDEA surveys will be utilized to evaluate students' perceptions of teamwork.

### **Department of Theatre**

By their nature, theater productions are collaborative. From the writers and producers to the directors, set designers and actors, dramas require a cast and crew. UAB Theatre students have always learned and been trained in a team setting; but moving forward, the focus will be on teaching all students the various team roles in a production.

To accomplish this, the department will change course instruction in four courses: THR 154 - Beginning Acting, THR 254 - Intermediate Acting, THR 277 - Filmmaking I, THR 375 - Filmmaking II.

In the Acting classes, students will be assigned scenes in groups of two, three and four. Each team will be led through a series of ensemble building exercises which facilitate the development of commitment in the moment, pro-activity, respect in collaboration, and the growth of beneficial self- and group assessment. These exercises then allow a freer exploration of personal skill sets and contributions to the team through successful repetitions.

In the Filmmaking courses, students will be divided into teams for the purpose of becoming a film crew (writer, producer, director, cinematographer, audio, actor, editor) to accomplish the production of a short movie to learn desired team behaviors according to specific scenarios.

The department's efforts will require the following:





- Development of collateral materials that illustrate desired team behaviors
- Development of collateral materials that illustrate methods to be a successful team
- Utilize shared projects to establish foundational responsibility to team members
- Establish standards for improved communication skills in making shared decisions and verbalizing various points of view
- Establish course structure to allow students to learn personal strengths through working in a variety of roles in a film crew environment
- Develop a structure for group feedback and assessments of individual performances within the team

The expectation is that, through these efforts, Theatre students will develop an awareness of the importance of personal contributions to a team; an awareness of team benefits and chemistry in working toward excellence; an awareness of a positive, repeatable protocol in using team dynamics; and the confidence to contribute ideas without fear of criticism.

Approximately 75 undergraduate students will be affected by these efforts each semester. To assess the success in this effort, the department will use a variety of instruments, including peer team assessment, personal instructor interview and written self-assessments.

### **Collat School of Business**

The Collat School of Business (CSOB) has built an approach to their project that is divided into two phases or goals.

**Goal 1** – Understanding that it is the job of the faculty to teach and instruct students, the School's immediate approach is focused on preparing the faculty to develop and enhance the current team structure within the school.

All faculty members will engage in this dialogue through a series of 'lunch and learn' sessions and through online and computer-based training modules. Through that process, curriculum and teaching methods will be established that are geared toward improving learning in teams and to promote success in team roles.

These efforts will require the following:

- Development of training modules — that are both face-to-face and computer-based — on functionality within the Learning Management System (LMS) that is necessary for team-based learning.
- Conduct lunch and learns to share best practices and offer "local expertise" from Collat School of Business faculty who are currently using team learning exercises and modules in the classroom.
- Conduct seminars on team learning strategies and invite leaders from the local, state and national levels to speak to faculty about the importance of team approaches and the strengths of team learning.
- Develop a toolkit that will allow for faculty to objectively evaluate team and team member performance consistently across courses.

To assess the success in this effort, the CSOB is establishing baseline data during the fall semester of 2014. From this data, they will establish the specific collateral materials, training modules and technology that will be required to best equip faculty to work as a team and to instruct their students on team learning and on team functionality. In future years, the baseline data will be used to assess the degree to which faculty are using team learning strategies and the level of comfort they have developed in the classroom with those strategies.



**Goal 2** - Building on the development of the faculty, CSOB's second goal will require that all students in the school receive guidance on working in a team environment and demonstrate effective team skills in a variety of environments, including in the classroom and in the workplace. In Year 1 of the QEP, the CSOB plans to reach 600 (or 25%) of the students in the school.

The school's efforts will require the following:

- Development of an online toolkit (for undergraduate and graduate courses), embedded in the LMS shell, that:
  - Provides just-in-time training for students taking classes with team-based learning experiences,
  - Provides guidance on how to resolve team conflicts,
  - Provides guidance on the various roles of team members,
  - Provides guidance on the stages of team development (forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning), and
  - Provides guidance on offering feedback to team members.
- Increased focus on working in teams — to include working in virtual and face-to-face teams — in required courses such as MG 302 - Introduction to Management.
- Reinforcement of team-based learning approaches in subsequent classes in each program area, with refresher in the respective capstone courses.
- Development of a mentor program where mentors can help students to resolve team conflicts.

To assess success in this effort, the school will use a multifaceted approach to include — but not be limited to — student course evaluations, grades, student surveys and employer feedback through student intern evaluations.

### **School of Engineering**

The School of Engineering has many courses with group activities; however, formal team training is primarily taught in the capstone design classes. Team training materials will be developed by capstone course instructors who have expertise in training students to work on teams for instructors and distributed to other course instructors for implementation in all course levels. Our goal is for students to experience an increased number of team activities throughout their academic careers to improve their understanding and ability to work in teams. In acknowledgment of the fact that all of the instructors engaged in team training will be improving in their understanding of team training, the school will be creating a system of training that can grow and improve as our instructors grow. Therefore, rather than creating a static suite of online and video training materials, the method will be to utilize students to create videos suitable for team training.

In each year of the QEP, the school will a) improve the quality of team training to which its students are exposed and b) expand the number of courses that include formal team training. The expectation is that this effort will affect all students in the School of Engineering. During Year 1, formal team training will be implemented in the First Year Experience engineering course which has enrollment above 200 students.

The school's efforts will require the following:

- Engage School of Engineering faculty with team training expertise
- Involve students in creating the team training material

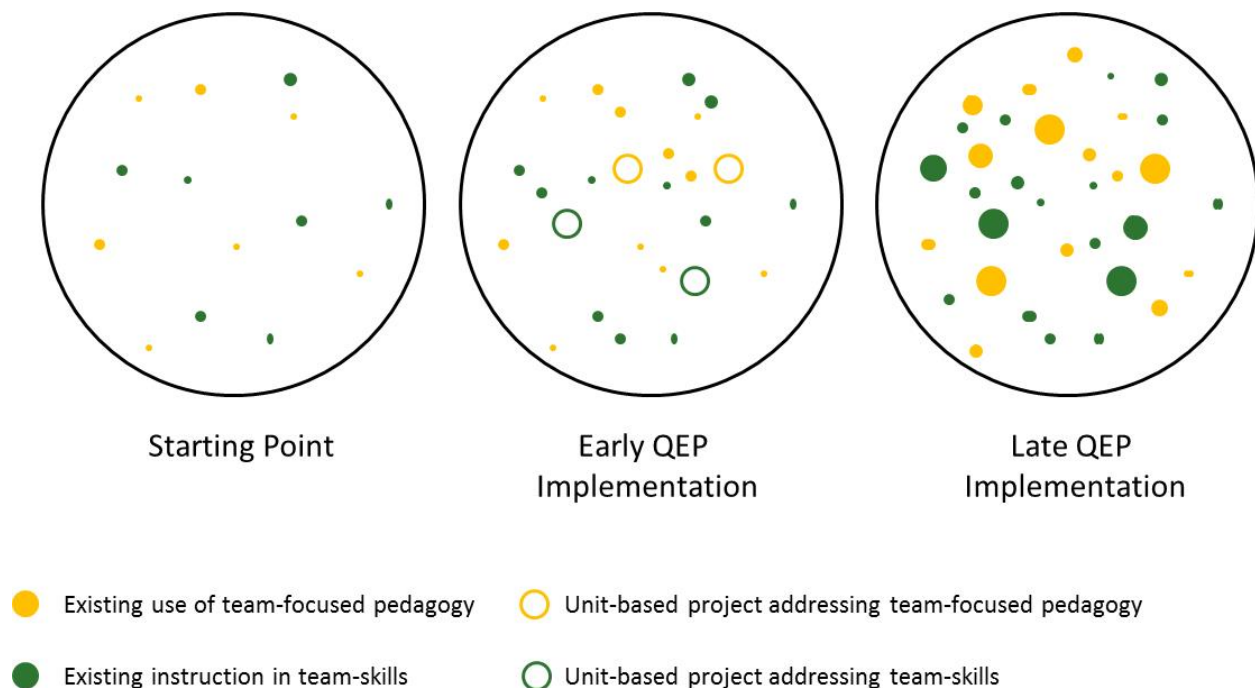


- Train faculty on how to teach teaming
- Establish formal team training during the first semester for all incoming students
- Develop effective methods for team training throughout coursework from introductory courses to the capstone level

Over time, the school's goal is to increase the number of engineering courses in which students are formally taught team skills, making certain that these activities are taught during the first semester. To assess success in this effort, the school will use a variety of assessment instruments, including developed rubrics, IDEA course evaluations and ABET surveys.

### Combination of Actions

These four actions will result in (1) increases in the number of courses that utilize team-focused pedagogies, (2) increases in the number of courses that teach team-skills and (3) the quality of that instruction. The synergies of the actions are shown schematically in Figure 1. The number of courses either using team-focused pedagogies or teaching team skills is related to the number of circles, and the quality of experience is analogous to the size of the circle. The first three actions (Faculty Professional Development, CTL Teaching Awards and QEP Fellows) will increase both the frequency and quality of *Learning in a Team Environment* across the entire university. The Unit-based Projects will provide very targeted improvement in either the footprint or quality.



**Figure 1. Schematic of roles of Unit-based Projects and other actions on the impact of *Learning in a Team Environment* on UAB.**



## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

UAB's QEP organizational structure is shown in Figure 2. The initiative will be administratively housed in the Office of the Provost. The Vice Provost for Student and Faculty Success, Associate Vice Provost for Assessment and Accreditation, QEP Director, Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) Director, and Center for Educational Accountability (CEA) Director will coordinate faculty development, assessment and other QEP activities to ensure that short- and long-term goals are met. Senior administration (President and Provost) will be updated on progress and will provide guidance on alignment with the university mission and evolving strategic planning process to assure that the QEP has the maximum institutional impact.

The program will be led by a QEP Director, a new full-time (1.0 FTE) faculty position. The program will be implemented with existing units (the CTL and the CEA) and with support from committees and cohorts of CTL Fellows. University-wide representation and involvement in development and implementation of the QEP will ensure success and sustainability of this initiative to transform student learning in a team environment.

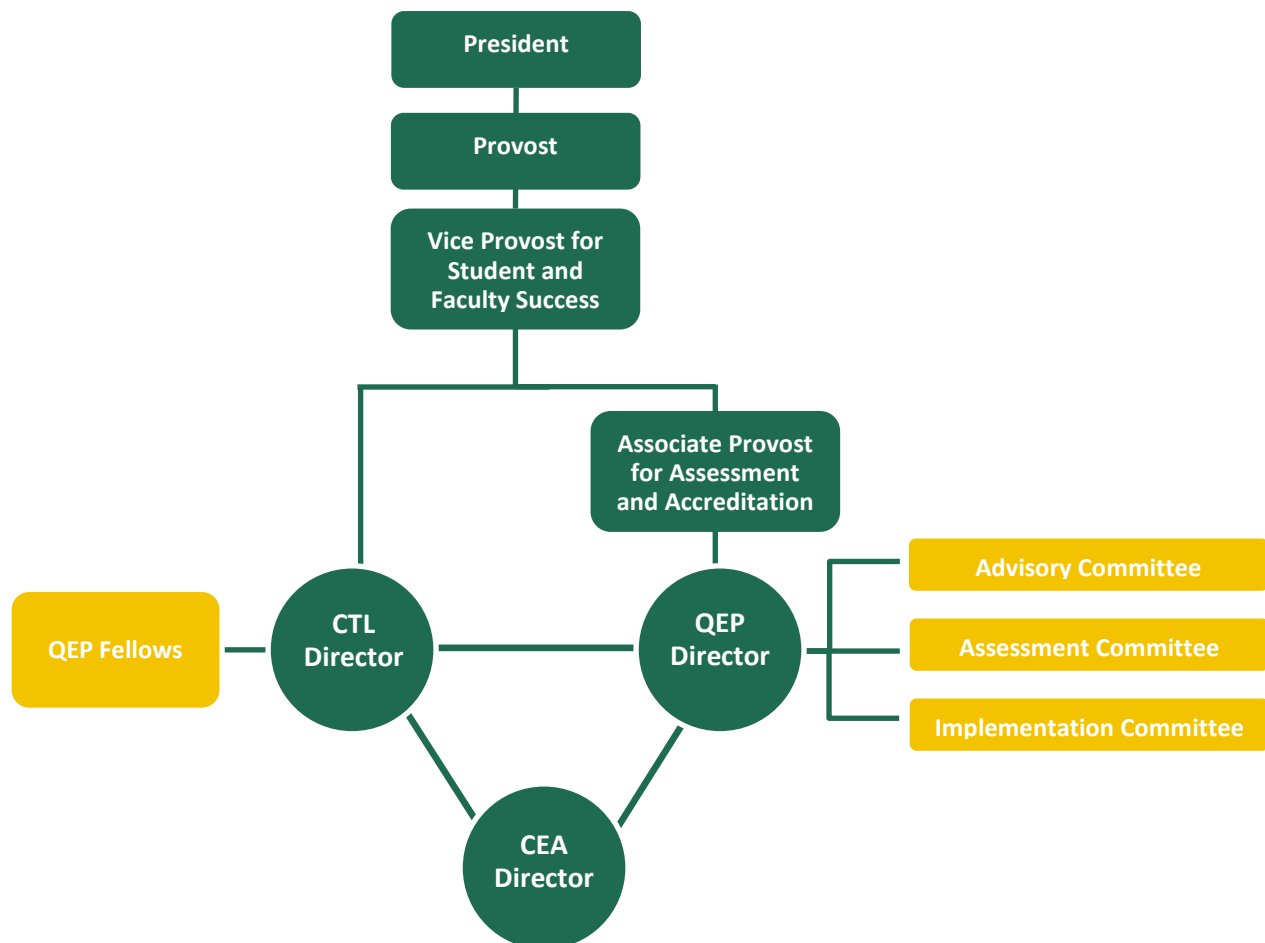


Figure 2. QEP Organizational Chart



## **QEP Director**

It is expected that the QEP Director will have faculty credentials comparable to an associate or full professor with evidence of teaching excellence in higher education and appropriate administrative experience to oversee the fiscal and programmatic needs of the effort. The QEP Director job description is provided in Appendix J. A faculty search is planned for spring 2015.

The Director will have overall responsibility for managing all aspects of the program, including project selection and implementation, assessment, faculty development, budget management, and promotion and communications.

The Director will collaborate with the QEP committees to monitor project implementation and — in consultation with the Executive Committee and university Provost — modify the plan as needed. S/he will report to the Associate Provost for Assessment and Accreditation, who is also the university's SACSCOC Liaison. An administrative associate will provide support to the Director.

The QEP Office will be in the CTL, a central campus location which is convenient to classroom buildings and faculty offices.

## **QEP Fellows**

As mentioned above, QEP Fellows are cohorts of faculty who are experienced in team-focused pedagogies or who have utilized team-oriented activities and will serve as mentors to others on campus. The purpose of this fellowship program is to promote faculty engagement in the QEP and to ensure that best practices are disseminated across campus. Recruitment efforts will target faculty from diverse academic programs who demonstrate excellence in the classroom and possess interpersonal skills necessary for one-on-one interactions.

## **Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)**

The UAB CTL is a joint effort of the Office of the Provost and the Office of the Vice President of Information Technology. The CTL is focused on supporting excellence in teaching that promotes learning through a commitment to pedagogical best practices, appropriate and effective use of technology, and innovative collaboration. The services provided by the CTL are available to all regular faculty members and, when space is available, to adjuncts and graduate teaching assistants.

Guided by data provided by the QEP Implementation and Assessment Committees and input from the CTL Advisory Committee, the CTL will develop, design and implement institutionwide faculty training seminars and workshops in support of the QEP. The work of the CTL will be supported by the CTL Fellows.

## **Center for Educational Accountability (CEA)**

The CEA, housed in the UAB School of Education, promotes the improvement of educational outcomes of students, schools and agencies through responsive and valid data-based decisions focused on reform.

With input from the QEP Executive Committee, the CEA has designed the overall assessment plan. The CEA will collect, analyze and report on university-level data related to the QEP. The CEA has conducted baseline surveys of faculty and students to understand current attitudes regarding team-focused pedagogies and activities and understanding of the value of teams.



Annual surveys will be administered by the CEA to evaluate the impact the QEP has on the campus.

The Center will provide support to units in the design of unit-specific data collection related to their QEP proposals. The CEA will also oversee the design and implementation of graduate student training to collect student learning outcome data using the VALUE rubrics based on random sampling of courses.

## Supporting Committees

The supporting committee structure was strategically designed to provide a robust system for continuous feedback.

Regular progress reports from each committee will inform next steps to ensure that each component of the QEP works together.

The QEP Advisory Committee is chaired by the Associate Provost of Assessment and Accreditation and has campuswide representation, including the co-facilitators who assisted with the development of the QEP. This committee will build on the work that the QEP Steering Committee has done since identification of the QEP topic. It is expected that there will be some turnover in membership. Overall, the Advisory Committee build contribute to increasing the footprint across the university. The committee will assist with the solicitation of proposals at the school/college level and review and recommend approval of proposals for funding. In addition, committee members will serve as ambassadors to their respective units by communicating the committee's plans and gathering feedback, as well as promoting QEP initiatives and events to ensure campuswide participation.

The QEP Implementation Committee will be chaired by the QEP Director and will be composed of the CTL Director, CEA Director, and representatives from each of the current and subsequent year projects — as these projects are identified. The committee will coordinate activities and share best practices, approaches and lessons learned. Input from this committee will inform CTL faculty development programming.

The QEP Assessment Committee is chaired by the CEA Director and is composed of representatives from each academic school and college. The Assessment Committee will provide recommendations to the Executive Committee regarding data collection, analysis and reporting for the QEP. Members of the Assessment Committee also serve as liaisons to various units on campus regarding QEP assessment issues. Since its formation in 2014, this committee has identified and recommended definitions for designating courses and co-curricular activities as "QEP Courses" or "QEP Activities" and distributed proposed VALUE rubrics for consideration by faculty as a component of data collection.







## RESOURCES

The University of Alabama at Birmingham is committed to allocating personnel, physical and financial resources to support implementation and sustainability of the QEP *Learning in a Team Environment*. All budget-related expenses will be administered, tracked and evaluated through the Office of the Provost.

### Personnel

UAB's QEP will be managed by a full-time (1.0 FTE) faculty Director who will be supported by a part-time administrative associate (0.75 FTE). Director salary will be commensurate with rank and tenure status. The faculty development and assessment components to the QEP will be carried out by the CTL and CEA, respectively. These centers have a history of supporting campus activities and will dedicate a portion of their operations to supporting the QEP. QEP funds will be used to support a full-time faculty member (1.0 FTE) in the CTL to develop and coordinate professional development related to teaming. QEP Fellows will receive support for their roles as faculty mentors.

### Physical Resources

The new QEP Office will be strategically located near the CTL and CEA in the Education Building. The office space will be renovated to create office space for the Director and administrative associate. Existing meeting and common spaces will be shared with the CTL. The CTL conducts faculty development programming in existing UAB facilities, either in its own meeting space or in campus locations convenient to the faculty participants. Facility expenses are not included in the QEP budget.

### Financial Resources

In order to achieve the project's goals, UAB has allocated approximately \$700,000 annually to support implementation of this QEP and its ongoing administration. Funding will be derived from the UAB Educational Foundation and the Office of the Provost, both of which funded the previous QEP which has continued at a lower level for the institutionalized activities. Unit-based projects that include faculty release time will be funded on a matching basis with the department/school/college and QEP funds (see Appendix I). The estimated five-year budget for implementation of *Learning in a Team Environment* is shown in Table 2.





**Table 2. QEP Budget (2015-2020)**

	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Total
<b>Director Salary (1.0 FTE)</b>	160,020	164,821	169,765	174,858	180,104	<b>849,568</b>
<b>Staff Salary (0.75 FTE)</b>	40,020	41,221	42,457	43,731	45,043	<b>212,472</b>
<b>Assessment by CEA</b>	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	125,000	<b>625,000</b>
<b>Travel for QEP Director</b>	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	<b>50,000</b>
<b>Unit-based Projects</b>	60,000	60,000	70,000	70,000	70,000	<b>330,000</b>
<b>CTL Teaching Awards</b>	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	<b>250,000</b>
<b>PR and Marketing</b>	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	<b>250,000</b>
<b>CTL Enhancement (1.0 FTE Faculty Salary)</b>	150,000	154,500	159,135	163,909	168,826	<b>796,370</b>
<b>QEP Fellows</b>	20,000	30,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	<b>170,000</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>665,040</b>	<b>685,541</b>	<b>716,357</b>	<b>727,498</b>	<b>738,973</b>	<b>3,533,410</b>





## ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

The focus of the QEP chosen by UAB is responsive to the learning needs of all students and to the skills that are expected in the workplace. For the benefit of our students and graduates, we will strive to strengthen areas where teaming is already part of curricula or pedagogy. We will also strive to infuse teaming in courses and activities where it will promote student learning and the preparedness of our graduates.

The UAB QEP Assessment System involves the collection and analysis of data for the purposes of (a) documenting the learning environment and student learning outcomes of the QEP and (b) facilitating improvement of implementation of the QEP.

### Student Learning Outcomes

As discussed previously, there are two primary student learning outcomes and several secondary student learning outcomes. The two primary student learning outcomes are:

- Students will demonstrate competence in teamwork behaviors (including interprofessional teaming).
- Students will demonstrate gains in critical thinking through involvement in team-focused pedagogy.

Secondary student learning outcomes are:

- Drop, fail and withdrawal (DFW) rates in courses with a team focus will be lower than parallel courses that do not have a team focus.
- Students and alumni will report value-added benefits associated with coursework with a team focus.
- Employers of UAB graduates will report satisfaction with team-skills preparation of graduates in selected disciplines.

Plans for monitoring each of these student learning outcomes are provided in Tables 5 and 6.

### VALUE Rubric Background

UAB has adopted the use of VALUE (Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education) rubrics as the primary measure of student learning outcomes in teamwork and critical thinking. VALUE rubrics were developed by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) to assess student products and behaviors across 16 areas. The analytical rubrics describe progression toward criterion (e.g., graduation-level expectations of faculty and employers). The rubrics present observable indicators of expected performance at beginning, intermediate and advanced levels of accomplishment. VALUE rubrics were initially developed across more than 100 institutions and have undergone both national and institution-specific validity and reliability determinations. They have adequate face validity, content validity and inter-rater reliability for use in data collection efforts such as Quality Enhancement Plans where they are not used for making high-stakes decisions about individual students. A simple Internet search reveals that AAC&U VALUE rubrics are used frequently as part of Quality Enhancement Plans. According to Rhodes & Finley (2013), campus-based studies have provided evidence for



the reliability of the VALUE rubrics demonstrating consistently high levels of inter-rater reliability.<sup>26</sup>

### Application of VALUE Rubrics

The AAC&U VALUE rubrics will be the primary tools used to judge Student Learning Outcomes. The VALUE rubrics for Teamwork and Critical Thinking, shown in Appendices K and L, will be used to evaluate progress toward the following Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound (SMART) Objectives related to the Student Learning Outcomes.

#### *SMART Objectives for Primary Student Learning Outcomes:*

- The percentage of students in randomly sampled courses scoring at criterion-levels on the VALUE rubrics (level 2 for underclassmen, level 3 for upperclassmen, and level 4 for undergraduate capstone experiences and graduate students) will be 70% in Year 2, 75% in Year 4, and 80% in Year 6.
- Using the appropriate rubric, the majority of freshmen and sophomores in randomly sampled QEP courses will be rated at level 2 on mid-semester observations and at the end of the semester by peers, self and instructor.
- Using the appropriate rubric, the majority of juniors and seniors in randomly sampled QEP courses will be rated at level 3 on mid-semester observations and at the end of the semester by peers, self and instructor.
- Using the appropriate rubric, the majority of graduate students in randomly sampled QEP courses will be rated at level 3 on mid-semester observations and at level 4 at the end of the semester by peers, self and instructor.
- Using the Teamwork VALUE rubric, the majority of participants in QEP-designated activities will be rated 3 or higher on episode-specific and summative judgments by peers, self and program staff.

According to AAC&U guidelines, VALUE rubrics can be modified, to some degree, in order to suit unit-specific vocabulary and individual campus needs. Such modifications typically take the form of revised vocabulary, modified formatting, or addition/removal of the criteria for a given rubric to better reflect campus foci or context. Initial review of the Teamwork and Critical Thinking rubrics by the QEP Assessment Committee suggests that the Teamwork rubric is satisfactory, but would benefit from a qualitative explanation column for students to justify their judgments of others when evaluating their role on a specific team activity. A representative group of faculty members who apply Team-based Learning at UAB were queried as to which of the VALUE rubrics was most closely associated with the benefit of TBL on learning outcomes. Most faculty members selected the Critical Thinking VALUE rubric. However, Problem Solving also received endorsements. The Teamwork and Critical Thinking VALUE rubrics will be piloted and evaluated for inter-rater reliability during the spring 2015 and will be modified based on feedback. Final piloting will occur during the summer of 2015.

The Teamwork and Critical Thinking rubrics are intended to be applied to observations of team performance as part of a course that focuses on team skills or that focuses on using team-based pedagogy to facilitate higher-level thinking. For the purpose of the UAB QEP, such assessments will be both exercise-specific (i.e., applied to an observation of a specific team

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<sup>26</sup> Rhodes, T & Finley, A. (2013) Using the VALUE Rubrics for Improvement of Learning and Authentic Assessment. AAC&U.





event) and summative (i.e., judging final status of individual competencies at the end of the QEP-designated course).

The QEP Assessment Committee proposes conducting random samples of 15% (or stratified random samples if a disproportionate number of courses are selected in Engineering or Business) of QEP courses and all QEP co-curricular activities each semester (assessment of QEP co-curricular activities will begin in Year 2).

The exercise-specific application of the rubric will be to provide information regarding mid-semester performance of students as judged by students, peers, and instructor and external evaluators for a subset of students. In addition to providing data regarding performance, the data collection will provide information related to inter-rater judgments between different raters within the classroom (e.g., instructor observations of a student compared to peer assessments and student self-assessment) and also sensitize students to the use of the rubric in the course in preparation of the summative use of the scale. Exercise-specific assessments will focus on only one team of students per course.

The summative use of the rubrics will occur at the end of each semester in randomly sampled QEP designated courses. Students will self-evaluate, and peers will evaluate others in their course/team. In addition, in courses with enrollments of fewer than 50 students, faculty will complete the rubrics on all students.

Students and faculty in courses designated as QEP courses due to teamwork will complete the VALUE Teamwork rubric. Students and faculty in courses designated as QEP courses due to team-focused pedagogy will complete the Critical Thinking rubric. Courses with both designations will complete both forms. When Interprofessional Teaming rubrics are developed, they will be used in the same way.

### **Reporting**

Rubric performance on the randomly sampled QEP designated courses will be reported within and across units at the beginning of summer each year. Data will be reported in various formats so that faculty and administrators can identify strengths and weaknesses across different criteria of each rubric. The report will separate QEP designated courses that are “teamwork courses,” “team-based pedagogy courses,” “interprofessional teaming courses” or “combination courses. Ratings from different sources will be reported in order to discern the level of agreement about performance ratings. Furthermore, ratings will be reported relative to achievement of criterion performance levels.

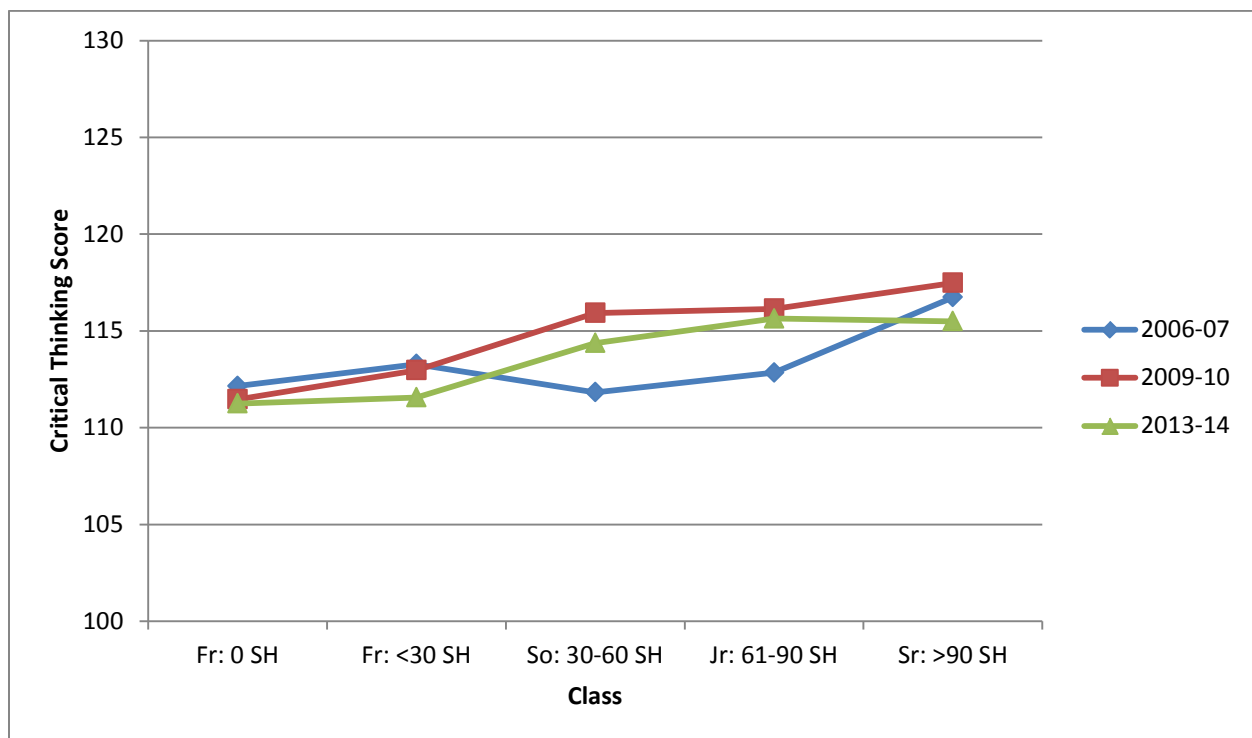
### **Measuring Secondary Student Learning Outcomes**

A series of measures will be used to gather information regarding the secondary student learning outcomes. Increasing student engagement with teams through courses and co-curricular activities is expected to promote academic success (as evidenced by gains in Proficiency Profile scores and decreases in DFW rates) and improved satisfaction with “preparedness for the workforce” from students, graduates and employers (as evidenced by Noel-Levitz, National Survey of Student Engagement [NSSE], exit, alumni and employer surveys; and focus groups involving students, alumni and employers). Several of these measures are part of the ongoing institutional research efforts of UAB. Others will be implemented specifically for the QEP.

Baseline data are available, or will be gathered during the 2015 calendar year, regarding these secondary outcomes. For example, Figure 3 below shows the nature of gains in critical thinking



made by prior cohorts of students using the Proficiency Profile. Similar tracking will be done with students who are freshmen at UAB during each of the next four years in order to compare the nature of gains after the implementation of the QEP to prior cohorts.



**Figure 3. Proficiency Profile critical thinking subscore means by year and class.**

The use of TBL has been shown to reduce DFW rates in other institutions.<sup>12</sup> It is expected that some courses with higher-than-desired DFW rates will implement some form of teaming. Cohort comparisons from semesters — ones without teaming to one with teaming — can provide some information regarding the impact of teaming on DFW rates. It is also desirable to make comparisons between sections that implement teaming and those that do not during a given semester.

For secondary measures that are quantitative and have sufficient sample sizes, the efficacy of the QEP will be judged by both statistical and practical significance. In most cases, comparisons will be made in terms of annual changes (year-to-year improvements) and in terms of changes relative to the baseline (e.g., academic year 2014-2015). Data will be disaggregated by unit and subgroups in order to facilitate the use of such data by the institution and by units.

In addition to quantitative data, assessment of student learning outcomes for the QEP will involve the conduct and analysis of focus groups of students, alumni and employers. Researchers in the Center for Educational Accountability have considerable experience in conducting focus groups with diverse participants.

### **Unit-specific Student Learning Outcomes**

Institutionally, UAB will focus on the primary and secondary outcomes discussed above. Additionally, units may elect to focus on other outcomes that are most critical to their curricula. For example, the School of Education may focus on the degree to which prospective general education teachers report having the skills necessary to collaborate with special education



teachers, reading specialists and administrators to promote the learning of all children. The School of Engineering may focus on the impact of improved teamwork preparation on the performance of students on capstone projects. These outcomes are supplemental to the institutional outcomes discussed above. Units will receive support from the Center for Educational Accountability in designing procedures to monitor targeted outcomes. These unit-specific outcomes will be reported and summarized each year.

### **Interprofessional Teaming**

Interprofessional teaming is a particular priority within the general QEP focus area of teamwork. Several of the professional schools (Medicine, Nursing and Health Professions) and other schools (e.g., Engineering) include interprofessional teamwork competencies as part of their programs.

The VALUE rubric relating to Teamwork does not provide sufficient insight about the unique skills that are required for working across disciplines or for addressing the functional requirements of medical teams (i.e., relating to the leadership role of the M.D. on such teams). The QEP Assessment Committee has explored, in consultation with faculty across the professional schools, rubrics that would be appropriate for measuring interprofessional teamwork. While some measures were well-received, it was determined that there was no existing measure of interprofessional teaming that could serve the needs of health professionals and the needs of nonmedical interprofessional teams in an efficient manner. The Interdisciplinary Team Performance Scale<sup>27</sup> was deemed to have potential; but with 50 rubric-based items, it was considered to be unwieldy for broad application and not directly related to the TeamSTEPPS model that has emerged as a focus of interprofessional efforts within health-related units on campus. Therefore, it was determined that between the spring of 2015 and summer of 2016 the assessment committee would work with the School of Medicine and other schools on campus with significant interprofessional outcomes (e.g., School of Engineering) to identify or develop and pilot one or more measures of interprofessional competence. The Center for Educational Accountability will assist the committee to assure that the instruments are reliable and valid.

As a result, assessment of student learning outcomes related to interprofessional teamwork as an institutional focus will not be initiated until 2016. Individual units may engage in initiatives related to interprofessional teamwork at any time.

### **Learning Environment Outcomes**

While learning environment outcomes are expected to be related to student learning outcomes, they will be assessed independently in order to facilitate program improvements. As indicated in prior sections, there are two primary learning environment outcomes:

- There will be a broader footprint regarding the use of team-focused pedagogy and teamwork instruction in undergraduate and graduate courses and co-curricular activities across the university.
- There will be evidence of improvement in the implementation of team-focused pedagogy and teamwork instruction in undergraduate and graduate courses and co-curricular activities across the university.

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<sup>27</sup> Temkin-Greener, H., Gross, D., Kunitz, S. J., and Mukamel, D. (2004). Measuring interdisciplinary team performance in a long-term care setting. *Medical Care*, 42(5), 472-481.



Plans for monitoring each of these learning environment outcomes are provided in the Assessment Table and described in the following narrative.

There are two primary questions that must be addressed when evaluating the targeted learning environment outcomes:

- How will the university track changes in the “footprint” across campus, and how will it determine success?
- How will the university monitor the changes in “quality” of team instruction across campus, and how will it determine success?

### Tracking Changes in the “Footprint”

Sections of all courses that meet criteria established by the QEP Assessment Committee will be designated as “QEP Courses.” Similarly, all co-curricular activities that meet criteria established by the QEP Assessment Committee will be designated as “QEP Activities.” The criteria established by the Assessment Committee are described below.

### Criteria for QEP Course Designation

A course is a QEP course if at least one of the following is true:							
1. More than one-third of in-class time (total instructional time or typical class structure) is spent in team activities (e.g., Team-based Learning, teaching students to work as effective team members to address problems).							
2. More than one-third of student grading is based on performance in team activities.							
3. An evaluated component of the course involves interprofessional teamwork (individuals from different disciplines working and communicating together as a team).							
Is this course a QEP course based on the definition above?		IF YOU ANSWERED “YES” TO THE ITEM IN COLUMN I, please answer each of these items:					
		Is the course teamwork-focused?		Is subject-matter learning based on team instruction (such as TBL)?		Does the course involve interprofessional teaming?	
Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No

### Criteria for QEP Activity Designation

A co-curricular activity will be considered a “QEP Activity” if:

- Students work in a team across multiple meetings in order to accomplish a stipulated goal, and
- Students receive training on working in teams as part of the co-curricular activity.

Such designations will allow the university to track changes in the “footprint” within and across units and facilitate the strategic assignment of resources to promote learning environment outcomes. While some baseline data regarding this learning outcome was initially collected in the spring of 2014, such data did not give a comprehensive picture of which courses or co-





curricular activities implemented teaming. The results of those surveys are available in Appendices C-G. More complete and comprehensive data will be collected during the early spring of 2015 for courses taught during the fall of 2014 and spring of 2015.

Currently, there is not a centralized mechanism for monitoring which co-curricular activities focus on teaming. That mechanism will be established during the spring of 2015. In the future, designations in the Banner system will identify QEP courses and their focus (teamwork, team-focused pedagogy or both). This will allow the university to monitor, not only the changes in the “footprint,” but also the campus distribution and nature of changes in the footprint.

Other tools will be used to monitor changes in the footprint. For example, the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction System, used by most units with the exception of Medicine, Dentistry and Optometry, requires faculty to identify the relevance of working in teams and other learning objectives in each course that is taught each semester. Data from the 2013 calendar year is summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3. Instructor Rating of Importance of Team Skills in 2013**

Learning Objectives: Instructor ratings are indicated as: Essential, Important, Minor or No Importance, Blank (not rated), or Default-Imp (instructor failed to rate any objectives as Essential or Important. By default all objectives rated as Important).						
Objective 5 - Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team						
	N	Minor/No Importance	Important	Essential	Blank	Default-Imp
Overall	5035	49.37%	21.13%	10.94%	7.25%	11.30%
A&S	2220	60.36%	13.33%	6.98%	5.81%	13.51%
Business	524	57.82%	20.61%	8.21%	6.49%	6.87%
Education	655	39.54%	29.92%	14.96%	1.83%	13.74%
Engineering	231	55.41%	24.68%	11.69%	1.30%	6.93%
Health Professions	455	41.98%	27.25%	10.11%	4.40%	16.26%
Nursing	729	18.93%	34.16%	21.67%	21.95%	3.29%
Public Health	190	61.05%	16.84%	10.00%	3.16%	8.95%
Honors	31	35.48%	6.45%	16.13%	3.23%	38.71%

These data reveal that “acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team” was considered, by the instructor, an essential component of approximately 11% of courses, with almost 22% of courses in Nursing placing teaming as an essential component. While these data reveal some evidence that learning to be a member of a team is already a component of courses in all units, the data also reveal that there is significant room for growth in all units.

Students in each course then rate the extent to which teaming was effective. Student ratings of courses are weighted based on the fidelity of student satisfaction to the importance of key components. Therefore, if a faculty member indicates that teaming is essential and students report little benefit related to teaming, the course evaluation score for the faculty member is decreased. As such, faculty member attribution of the importance of teaming in a course can be considered a valid metric of the intent of the faculty member for the course.

A less direct measure of the increase in footprint will be provided by supplemental items added to the Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Inventory and items on the UAB survey of graduating students. The increase in the footprint will be made evident through increases in the number of



undergraduate students who indicate that teaming has been a significant part of their curriculum. Baseline data on these metrics will be collected in the spring of 2015.

### Criteria Related to “Increasing the Footprint”

There is an expectation that teaming will increase in courses and co-curricular activities by 10% across the university every three years of implementation of the QEP. There is also an expectation that by the end of the QEP all units will apply teaming within classrooms at undergraduate and graduate levels. These criteria acknowledge that, while the QEP applies across the entire campus, there is already a moderate level of team pedagogy occurring within certain units (e.g., Engineering, Business, Nursing). In such units, it may not be reasonable to expect a significant increase in the number of additional courses implementing team strategies. Rather, the focus in such units will be on improving the quality of offerings.

On the other hand, it is expected that there are a number of units where there is significant opportunity for expansion of teaming within course offerings. A 20% increase in the number of courses using teaming in those units across a three-year window would be a significant pedagogical shift. Units with substantial growth will balance those with less opportunity for growth.

It is expected that, across the entire campus, an increase of 10% in courses that qualify for “QEP” designation would reflect an educationally meaningful shift for the university. This 10% gain criterion will also be applied to the number of courses for which teaming is essential (IDEA) and the percentage of students who report that teaming was a significant part of their curriculum (Noel-Levitz and exit surveys).

### Measuring Improvement in Quality of Implementation

Several different assessment methods will be required to evaluate improvements in the quality of implementation of teaming within courses and co-curricular activities. The primary measure will be the student-completed IDEA course evaluations. These instruments include one item on the short form and two items on the long form that relate to the quality and benefit of teaming in the course. Baseline data for these items from academic year 2013-2014 are provided in Table 4.

**Table 4. Adjusted Means of Student Satisfaction with Learning Team Skills**

Objective 5 - Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team					
Adjusted Mean					
	N	Mean	Std Dev	Mdn	Mode
Overall	4651	22.52	0.79	3.60	3.66
A&S	1962	22.47	0.85	3.38	3.66
Business	495	21.74	0.77	3.38	3.13
Education	614	22.30	0.80	3.68	3.66
Engineering	217	22.27	0.71	3.48	2.98
Health Professions	447	22.38	0.69	3.75	3.86
Nursing	725	23.45	0.51	3.91	4.21
Public Health	166	22.85	0.78	3.21	4.11
Honors	25	23.46	0.54	3.93	NA



Students in Nursing, Health Professions and Education were most satisfied with the degree to which the courses assisted them in acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team. Students in the College of Arts and Sciences and the Schools of Business and Public Health were less satisfied. Similar data will be generated for academic year 2014-2015.

Other measures of quality improvement will depend on the improvement focus adopted by specific units. As indicated previously, units seeking to increase their footprint may apply for QEP funding to support their expansion efforts. Similarly, units already having a high density of teaming courses may apply for funding to improve the quality of their teaming efforts. Therefore, if a unit seeks QEP funding to improve the quality of Team-based Learning courses (i.e., fidelity of implementation with the prescribed model), there would be an expectation tied to such funding that the unit determine a mechanism for monitoring the fidelity of implementation of those processes and — with the assistance of the Center for Educational Accountability — conduct a study documenting the targeted improvements.

Other possible changes in learning environments include, but are not limited to, modifying curriculum to include more teaming, increasing teaming for online offerings, or the development and application of instructional materials related to teaming that have a direct effect on students. Documentation of unit-specific changes in the learning environment tied to the QEP will largely be the responsibility of each unit. The Center for Educational Accountability will provide technical assistance to support such documentation.

### **Criteria for Improvement in Quality**

Changes in median and mean ranks for these items across time will be used to judge changes in students' perceptions of quality of teaming. The criterion for success will be that effect size improvements (d-type) within unit will be greater than 0.25 across progressive three-year windows. That is, median values for academic year 2017-2018 on the targeted item will improve by 0.25 standard deviations over the academic year 2014-2015 data, and the academic year 2018-2019 values will be 0.25 standard deviations above the academic year 2015-2016 data, and so on. An effect size of 0.25 is considered to be the low end of practical significance.

### **Using Assessment Data for QEP Improvement**

UAB is committed to the use of data to promote and guide improvements to the implementation of the QEP within units and across the university. Units will receive annual reports of results that are specific to their units. In light of that data and any other internal data the unit has collected related to relevant outcomes, Deans and co-curricular administrators will submit annual improvement plans. The Center for Educational Accountability will work with all units to provide data at a level of specificity that will support the identification of target areas for improvements and unit strengths that can be leveraged to facilitate growth.



Collaboration between the Directors of the Center for Educational Accountability and the Center for Teaching and Learning is critical to the success of the QEP. Their involvement helps to assure quality control relating to assessment practices for the QEP and the seamless identification and delivery of university-level professional development opportunities related to data-based needs.


**Table 5. Assessment Activities for Student Learning Outcomes**

Student Learning Outcomes	Assessment Procedure	Comparison Group
<b>BENCHMARK PERFORMANCE:</b> 80% of students enrolled in a random sample of courses with a teamwork focus will demonstrate expected level of competence in teamwork, critical thinking or interprofessional behaviors during specific teaming activities and overall within the course.	The AAC&U Teamwork and Critical Thinking VALUE rubrics will serve as templates. An interprofessional rubric is being developed to serve as the template for that SLO. Both the Critical Thinking and Teamwork (or interdisciplinary) rubrics will be used by multiple evaluators to assess SLOs. These assessments will be done to evaluate overall and activity-specific student performance. These assessments will occur in courses that have been randomly selected each term or that receive unit-based or CTL-project funding and (beginning in Year 2) in co-curricular activities that meet the QEP criteria. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student self-assessments</li> <li>• Peer assessments</li> <li>• Faculty assessments</li> <li>• External evaluations of teamwork activity behavior using Team-work VALUE rubric</li> </ul>	<p>Criterion levels. Use baseline collection during spring and summer 2015 to establish pre-QEP baseline levels of mastery.</p> <p>Multiple sources of information (students, teachers, observers) will be used.</p> <p>Teamwork and Critical Thinking VALUE rubrics will be completed on all courses that address either or both of those SLOs. Therefore, there will be a built-in comparison of SLOs directly targeted by courses (as specified by the Banner designation) and not directly targeted by the course.</p>
<b>MEASURE OF ACADEMIC SKILLS:</b> Freshmen admitted in fall 2015 and in subsequent years will demonstrate greater gains in critical-thinking skills than evidenced by prior cohorts of students.	The Proficiency Profile (administered to freshmen and to sampled juniors and seniors) contains subscales in a variety of academic areas. It is expected that the QEP focus on teaming will have a particularly strong focus on critical thinking performance.	Baseline performance levels across units (gains of prior cohorts of students within unit, comparison of gains across clusters of high- and low-implementing units).
<b>DECREASING DFW RATES:</b> DFW rates in courses with a team focus will be lower than parallel courses that do not have a team focus.	DFW data by course by unit	DFW rates in QEP courses versus non-QEP courses. The most precise comparison will involve sections of courses that use teams versus those that do not.



Student Learning Outcomes	Assessment Procedure	Comparison Group
<b>GRADUATES REPORT IMPROVED PREPARATION FOR TEAMING IN THEIR PROFESSION:</b> UAB graduates who have been exposed to two or more years of the QEP will report value-added benefits associated with coursework with a team focus.	<p>Item on graduation survey regarding value-added benefits of teamwork, interprofessional skills or learning in teams.</p> <p>Noel-Levitz items specific to teaming.</p> <p>NSSE results related to engagement on teams.</p>	<p>Comparison of responses to such questions from spring 2015 and 2016 graduating cohort to those cohorts that follow.</p>
<p>After three years of implementation of the QEP, employers of UAB graduates will report greater satisfaction with team-skills preparation of graduates in selected disciplines than reported prior to that time.</p>	<p>Focus groups.</p>	
<b>DIFFERENTIAL SATISFACTION:</b> Students will report greater satisfaction in courses with a team focus than in parallel courses without a team focus.	<p>IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction.</p>	<p>The most direct comparisons are possible only between sections of the same course that use different approaches.</p> <p>Other comparisons involve clustering courses within unit into team focus levels and comparing median ratings.</p>
<b>FACULTY SATISFACTION:</b> 80% of faculty who implement QEP courses will report satisfaction with the benefit of team-focused courses to facilitate student learning.	<p>End-of-year faculty survey.</p>	<p>80% criterion.</p>




**Table 6. Assessment Activities for Learning Environment Outcomes**

Learning Environment Outcome	Assessment Procedure	Comparison Group
<b>INCREASE THE FOOTPRINT:</b> There will be a 10% increase in the extent of implementation of team-based coursework across units and co-curricular activities every three years (team-focused pedagogy including TBL, course focused on teamwork, co-curricular activities with a significant component of teamwork and team training, courses focused on interprofessional teaming).	All courses and co-curricular activities as QEP or non-QEP and designating QEP courses or activities by their type for each semester in Banner. Faculty self-identification of course sections in Banner via departments when setting schedules.	Baseline (2014-2015) and annual progress.
	Co-curricular activities will be identified through an initial survey of co-curricular administrators during the spring of 2016, and then again in the spring of 2018 and 2021.	Baseline data (spring 2016).
	IDEA Faculty Information Forms (FIF) will identify the frequency and topography of courses across campus that include teaming as an essential component of the course. Student IDEA form responses relating to teaming will be used to substantiate that teaming was a focus of the course from the perspective of the students.	Baseline 2014-2015 and annually.
	Banner designations will be compared to FIF designations for a random sample of courses to determine the association between ratings of importance of teaming (IDEA) and QEP course designations.	
<b>INCREASE THE QUALITY:</b> Student, faculty and co-curricular staff ratings of the quality of team learning, team-based pedagogy and interprofessional teaming will increase during the term of the QEP.	End-of-year faculty and co-curricular staff surveys (TBD).	Median ratings on survey and IDEA items within units relating to quality of learning in a team environment.
	IDEA course evaluations.	
	Unit-specific student focus groups.	Themes generated from focus groups (three schools will be sampled each year).
	Unit-specific faculty focus groups.	



Learning Environment Outcome	Assessment Procedure	Comparison Group
<b>IMPROVE “LEARNING IN TEAMS” WITHIN EACH UNIT:</b> Unit-specific plans will be developed and implemented as planned.	Unit-based documentation of changes in student learning outcomes, curriculum, faculty development and/or resources.	TBD by each unit each year.
<b>IMPROVE THE SCHOLARSHIP OF TEAMS:</b> There will be a 10% increase in student and/or faculty publications and presentations with a focus on teams by Year 3.	End-of-year faculty survey (self-reported presentations and publications related to teaming). An item regarding this topic will be added every three years to a brief end-of-year faculty survey.	Baseline (gathered in spring of 2015).
<b>MEET FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS RELATED TO TEAMING:</b> At least five professional development efforts will be provided to faculty per year regarding the foci of the QEP. Systematic professional development will be provided to facilitate implementation. QEP mentors and QEP professional development projects will also be delivered to serve professional development needs related to the QEP across campus.	Listing of offerings within and across units based on the identification of professional development needs identified through brief annual surveys of faculty and co-curricular personnel and through recommendations by QEP committees.	Criterion performance.





## TIMELINE

**Table 7. QEP-related Activities Planned for 2014-2015**

Planning Year 0		
Spring 2014	Summer 2014	Fall 2014
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Initial call for proposals for <i>Learning in a Team Environment</i></li> <li>– Survey of faculty regarding courses</li> <li>– Survey of co-curricular administrators</li> <li>– Survey of department chairs</li> <li>– Analysis of 2013 IDEA data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Submission of Year 1 unit-based proposals</li> <li>– Submission of reports from Spring 2014 data collection (summaries in Appendices C-G)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Selection of Year 1 unit-based projects</li> <li>– Initiation of QEP Assessment Committee</li> <li>– Development of student survey instrument</li> <li>– Development of graduating student items and additional Noel-Levitz items</li> <li>– Analysis of Proficiency Profile cross-sectional and longitudinal data (summary in Appendix G)</li> <li>– Approval of VALUE rubrics by Assessment Committee</li> <li>– Approval of designation rules for QEP Courses and Co-curricular Activities</li> <li>– Draft QEP document circulated for feedback to Steering Committee</li> </ul>
Spring 2015		Summer 2015
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– SACSCOC On-site Reaffirmation Committee Visit</li> <li>– Finalize implementation plan based on committee's comments</li> <li>– Select initial CTL Teaching Awardees</li> <li>– Initiate QEP Fellows program</li> <li>– QEP Implementation Committee established</li> <li>– Transition from Steering Committee to Advisory Committee</li> <li>– Select QEP Director</li> <li>– CTL faculty development programming</li> <li>– Establish a system for identifying co-curricular activities focused on teaming</li> <li>– Initiate Student Survey</li> <li>– Collect baseline data and test system pilot for QEP Course designation</li> <li>– Train VALUE rubric external data collectors (inter-rater reliability training)</li> <li>– Pilot and revise VALUE rubrics</li> <li>– Assessment committee discussions regarding the use of VALUE rubrics in special circumstances (online courses, large course sections, etc.)</li> <li>– Year 1 unit-based project assessment planning</li> <li>– Develop and implement annual faculty survey (to judge perspectives and identify university-level professional development needs)</li> <li>– Analysis of 2014 calendar year IDEA survey data</li> <li>– Collect fall 2015 QEP course data</li> <li>– Administer Noel-Levitz</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Summarize and report baseline data from 2014/15 academic year</li> <li>– Pilot any revisions made to the VALUE rubric assessments</li> </ul>


**Table 8. QEP-related Activities Planned for 2015-2016**

Implementation Year 1		
Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Summer 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Implementation of Year 1 unit-based project</li> <li>– Initiate first random sampling of QEP Course</li> <li>– Conduct initial data collection of SLOs using VALUE rubrics</li> <li>– Initiate data collection for unit-based projects</li> <li>– QEP Orientation for New Faculty/Annual QEP Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Call for/approval of Year 2 unit-based proposals</li> <li>– Select CTL Teaching Awardees</li> <li>– Conduct random sampling of QEP courses and data collection</li> <li>– Report on fall 2015 data</li> <li>– Analysis of 2015 calendar year IDEA survey data</li> <li>– Continue assessment processes with Year 1 unit-based projects</li> <li>– Plan assessment for Year 2 unit-based projects</li> <li>– Faculty survey</li> <li>– Campuswide QEP Planning Retreat</li> <li>– Administer NSSE</li> <li>– Select QEP Fellows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Report on spring 2016 data collection</li> <li>– Summarize 2015-2016 data</li> <li>– Solicit improvement plans from all units</li> <li>– Select QEP Fellows based on spring 2016 faculty survey of university-level needs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Faculty development programming conducted by the CTL</li> <li>– Administer IDEA survey or similar course evaluation assessment tool</li> </ul>		

**Table 9. QEP-related Activities Planned for 2016-2017**

Implementation Year 2		
Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Summer 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Implementation of Year 2 unit-based project</li> <li>– Conduct random sampling of QEP courses and data collection</li> <li>– Conduct data collection for unit-specific projects</li> <li>– QEP Orientation for New Faculty/ Annual QEP Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Call for/approval of Year 3 unit-based proposals</li> <li>– Select CTL Teaching Awardees</li> <li>– Conduct random sampling of QEP courses and data collection</li> <li>– Report on fall 2016 data</li> <li>– Analysis of 2016 calendar year IDEA survey data</li> <li>– Continue assessment processes with Year 2 unit-based projects</li> <li>– Plan assessment for Year 3 unit-based projects</li> <li>– Faculty survey</li> <li>– Campuswide QEP Planning Retreat</li> <li>– Administer Noel-Levitz</li> <li>– Select QEP Fellows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Report on spring 2017 data collection</li> <li>– Summarize 2016-2017 data</li> <li>– Solicit improvement plans from all units</li> <li>– Select QEP Fellows based on spring 2017 faculty survey of university-level needs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Faculty development programming conducted by the CTL</li> <li>– Administer IDEA survey or similar course evaluation assessment tool</li> </ul>		



**Table 10. QEP-related Activities Planned for 2017-2018**

Implementation Year 3		
Fall 2017	Spring 2018	Summer 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Implementation of Year 3 unit-based project</li> <li>– Conduct random sampling of QEP courses and data collection</li> <li>– Conduct data collection for unit-specific projects</li> <li>– QEP Orientation for New Faculty/ Annual QEP Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Call for/approval of Year 4 unit-based proposals</li> <li>– Select CTL Teaching Awardees</li> <li>– Conduct random sampling of QEP courses/data collection</li> <li>– Report on fall 2017 data</li> <li>– Analysis of 2017 calendar year IDEA survey data</li> <li>– Continue assessment processes with Year 3 unit-based projects</li> <li>– Plan assessment for Year 4 unit-based projects</li> <li>– Faculty survey</li> <li>– Campuswide QEP Planning Retreat</li> <li>– Administer NSSE</li> <li>– Select QEP Fellows</li> <li>– Comparison of footprint status from 2014-2015 baseline data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Report on spring 2018 data collection</li> <li>– Summarize 2017-2018 data</li> <li>– Solicit improvement plans from all units</li> <li>– Select QEP Fellows based on spring 2018 faculty survey of university-level needs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Faculty development programming conducted by the CTL</li> <li>– Administer IDEA survey or similar course evaluation assessment tool</li> </ul>		

**Table 11. QEP-related Activities Planned for 2018-2019**

Implementation Year 4		
Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Summer 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Implementation of Year 4 unit-based project</li> <li>– Conduct random sampling of QEP courses and conduct data collection</li> <li>– Conduct data collection for unit-specific projects</li> <li>– QEP Orientation for New Faculty/ Annual QEP Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Call for/approval of Year 5 unit-based proposals</li> <li>– Select CTL Teaching Awardees</li> <li>– Conduct random sampling of QEP courses/data collection</li> <li>– Report on fall 2018 data</li> <li>– Analysis of 2018 calendar year IDEA survey data</li> <li>– Continue assessment processes with Year 4 unit-based projects</li> <li>– Plan assessment for Year 5 unit-based projects</li> <li>– Faculty survey</li> <li>– Campuswide QEP Planning Retreat</li> <li>– Administer Noel-Levitz</li> <li>– Select QEP Fellows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Report on spring 2019 data collection</li> <li>– Summarize 2018-2019 data</li> <li>– Solicit improvement plans from all units</li> <li>– Select QEP Fellows based on spring 2019 faculty survey of university-level needs</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Faculty development programming conducted by the CTL</li> <li>– Administer IDEA survey or similar course evaluation assessment tool</li> </ul>		





**Table 12. QEP-related Activities Planned for 2019-2020**

Implementation Year 5 (Academic Year 2019-2020)		
Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Summer 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Implementation of Year 5 unit-based project</li> <li>– Conduct random sampling of QEP courses and conduct data collection</li> <li>– Conduct data collection for unit-specific projects</li> <li>– QEP Orientation for New Faculty/ Annual QEP Report</li> <li>– Develop QEP Impact Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Select CTL Teaching Awardees</li> <li>– Conduct random sampling of QEP courses and data collection</li> <li>– Report on fall 2019 data collection</li> <li>– Analysis of 2019 calendar year IDEA survey data</li> <li>– Continue assessment processes with Year 5 unit-based projects</li> <li>– Faculty survey</li> <li>– Administer NSSE</li> <li>– Develop QEP Impact Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Report on spring 2020 data collection</li> <li>– Summarize 2019-2020 data</li> <li>– Solicit improvement plans from all units</li> <li>– Submission of QEP Impact Report</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Faculty development programming conducted by the CTL</li> <li>– Administer IDEA survey or similar course evaluation assessment tool</li> </ul>		





## Appendix A. QEP Topic Selection Participant Lists

### Phase I Leadership Engagement

Dr. John Chatham  
Faculty Senate Past Chair

Dr. Tom DiLorenzo, College of Arts & Sciences  
Dean

Carolyn Farley  
Director of Academic and Student Services

Brent Gage  
Associate Provost of Enrollment

Dr. Doreen Harper, School of Nursing  
Dean

Adrian Jones  
Undergraduate Student Government Association  
(USGA) President

Dr. Harold Jones, School of Health Professions  
Dean

Dr. Karen Kennedy, Collat School of Business  
Associate Dean

Dr. Mindy Lalor, School of Engineering  
Interim Dean

Andy Marsch  
Assistant Vice President of Student Life

Dr. Max Michael, School of Public Health  
Dean

Toni Mueller  
Graduate Student Association (GSA) President

Dr. Bryan Noe, Graduate School  
Dean

Dr. Rod Nowakowski, School of Optometry  
Dean

Dr. Michael Reddy, School of Dentistry  
Dean

Dr. Julio Rivera  
Faculty Senate Chair

Harlan Sands  
Vice Provost for Administration and Quality  
Improvement

Dr. Debbie Voltz, School of Education  
Dean

Dr. Ray L. Watts, School of Medicine  
Dean

### Stakeholder Engagement Committee Members

Dr. Suzanne Austin, Office of the Provost  
Vice Provost for Student and Faculty Success

Dr. Renato Camata, College of Arts & Sciences  
Associate Professor of Physics

Dr. John Chatham, School of Medicine  
Professor of Molecular and Cellular Pathology  
Past Chair of Faculty Senate

Dr. Janelle Chiasera, School of Health  
Professions  
Professor of Clinical and Diagnostic Sciences

Dr. Gregg Janowski, Office of the Provost  
Interim Faculty Director of Academic  
Assessment  
Professor of Materials Science &  
Engineering

Adrian Jones  
USGA President

Andy Marsch, Student Life  
Assistant Vice President for Student Life

Toni Mueller  
GSA President

Dr. Pamela Murray, College of Arts & Sciences  
Professor of History

Dr. Julio Rivera, School of Business  
Associate Professor of Business  
Chair of Faculty Senate

Dr. Tracee Synco, Office of the Provost  
Director for Retention Initiatives and Academic  
Engagement



## Appendix B. QEP Steering Committee Members

### **College of Arts and Sciences**

Catherine F. Danielou, Ph.D.  
Senior Associate Dean and Associate Professor

Maria I. Hopkins, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor, Department of Psychology

Jeffrey W. Reynolds, D.M.A.  
Associate Professor, Department of Music

### **Collat School of Business**

Karen Kennedy, Ph.D.  
Associate Dean and Professor

### **School of Dentistry**

Ken R. Tilashalski, D.M.D.  
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and  
Associate Professor

### **School of Education**

Retta R. Evans, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor, Department of Human  
Studies

Kristi S. Menear, Ph.D.  
Chair and Associate Professor, Department of  
Human Studies  
QEP Co-facilitator

### **School of Engineering**

Douglas H. Ross, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor, Department of Mechanical  
Engineering

### **School of Health Professions**

Chad Epps, M.D.  
Associate Professor, Department of Clinical and  
Diagnostic Sciences  
UAB Faculty Senate Chair-elect

### **School of Medicine**

Peter G. Anderson, DVM, Ph.D.  
Professor, Department of Pathology, Division of  
Molecular and Cellular Pathology  
QEP Co-facilitator

Marjorie L. White, M.D.  
Associate Professor, Department of Pediatrics,  
Division of Pediatric Emergency Medicine

### **School of Nursing**

Ashley L. Hodges, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor, Department of Family,  
Community and Health Systems

### **School of Optometry**

Roderick J. Fullard, O.D.  
Associate Professor, Department of Vision  
Sciences

### **School of Public Health**

Nir Menachemi, Ph.D.  
Professor, Department of Health Care  
Organization and Policy

### **Career & Professional Development**

Suzanne Scott Trammell  
Executive Director

### **Center for Teaching and Learning**

Ronan O'Beirne, Ed.D.  
Director, Instructional Technology

Jonathan B. Waugh, Ph.D.  
Faculty Director and Professor

### **Retention Initiatives and Academic Engagement**

Tracy Lyons  
Director, Academic Services

### **Student Affairs**

Andy Marsch  
Assistant Vice President for Student Life

### **Students**

Nathaniel H. Boyd  
Graduate Student Association

Candra Long  
Undergraduate Student Government Association

### **Ex-officio**

Suzanne Austin, Ph.D.  
Vice Provost for Student and Faculty Success

Gregg M. Janowski, Ph.D.  
Associate Provost for Assessment and  
Accreditation



## Appendix C. 2013 IDEA Course Evaluation Analysis (abbreviated)

IDEA course evaluations are completed each semester by students in most schools and colleges at UAB. Course-level summary results were analyzed for selected items to provide QEP baseline data. These analyses are reported here.

Table C-1 shows, overall and by school/college for calendar year 2013, the number of courses included in the IDEA evaluations. These courses had a total enrollment of 124,408 students.

**Table C - 1. Number of Courses Utilizing IDEA Course Evaluations in 2013**

School	N	% of Total
Arts and Sciences	222	44.09
Business	52	10.41
Education	65	13.01
Engineering	23	4.59
Health Professions	45	9.04
Nursing	72	14.48
Public Health	19	3.77
Honors	3	0.62
Total	503	100.00

For each course included in IDEA evaluations, instructors indicate the importance of each of 12 Learning Objectives. That rating is the basis for computing a weighted average of students' evaluations of progress on the objective. Instructor ratings include Essential, Important, Minor or No Importance, blank (not rated), or Default-Imp (instructor failed to rate any objectives as Essential or Important. By default all objectives rated as Important). Objective 5 – Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team was selected as part of the QEP baseline data for its relevance to the QEP theme of *Learning in a Team Environment*. Table C-2 reveals for Objective 5, the number and percentage of courses assigned each rating.

**Table C - 2. Faculty Ratings of the Importance of Objective 5 in Courses**

Response Option	N	% of Total
Minor/No Importance	2486	49.37
Important	1064	21.13
Essential	551	10.94
Blank	365	7.25
Default-Imp	569	11.30
Total	5035	100.00

Instructors respond to three sets of contextual questions related to the courses they include in IDEA evaluations. Among these were course requirements. One item selected for its relevance to QEP was the course requirement related to group work. Instructors rate the course requirement for group work as “None (or little) required,” “Some required,” or “Much required.” Table C-3 contains instructor responses for the extent to which group work is required for each course included in IDEA evaluations for 2013.

**Table C - 3. Instructor Identification Group Work Requirements**

Response Option	N	% of Total
None (or little) required	1679	33.35
Some required	1351	26.83
Much required	635	12.61
Blank	1370	27.21
Total	5035	100.00

Several sets averages are calculated as part of IDEA evaluations. Among them are the summary evaluation and means for each learning objective. For QEP baseline data, the summary evaluation and Learning Objective 5 were selected. Summary evaluation is a weighted average of Progress on Relevant Objectives (weighted "2") and Excellent Teacher (weighted "1") and Excellent Course (weighted "1"). Table C-4 contains averages computed on the mean for each course.

**Table C - 4. Summary Evaluation and Learning Objective 5 Means**

	Summary Evaluation		Objective 5 - Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team	
	Weighted Adjusted Mean	Converted Adjusted Score as compared to other courses in the Institution	Adjusted Mean	Converted Adjusted Score as compared to other courses in the Institution
N	4651	4651	4651	4651
Mean	3.91	49.95	3.47	44.74
Std Dev	0.57	9.94	0.79	12.82
Mdn	4.00	52.00	3.60	46.77
Mode	4.20	54.00	3.66	47.74
Corrections were made to this table December 10, 2014				





## Appendix D. Faculty Survey Summary

The baseline faculty QEP survey was designed to gather information about the degree to which faculty employ instructional strategies related to the QEP theme of *Learning in a Team Environment*. The survey items targeted the degree to which faculty are currently teaching students to succeed in all appropriate roles of a team, using teams to improve student learning and applying team skills out into the community to do service. Much of the survey focused on implementation of instructional strategies involving learning in teams — specifically, small group interaction, team assignments and team assessments. The survey also contained items regarding faculty attitudes toward team-based pedagogy and their perceptions of incentives and obstacles to its implementation.

### Sample

The survey was sent in March 2014 to teaching faculty in 10 schools on the UAB campus. The response rate varied by school; but overall, 51% of faculty members responded to the survey. Of those who responded, about one-third were assistant professors (36%), another one-third were associate professors (31%), 21% were full professors, and 11% were instructors.

### Practices Related to Team-based Instruction

When asked how often their students work in groups in the spring 2014, the majority of faculty reported they incorporated some form of team or group work for in-class or out-of-class assignments. However, the nature and extent of the group work varied significantly by school, department, course and instructor. Overall, approximately two-thirds (65%) of respondents' courses involved some level of team or group work. About 25% of courses involved groups or teams less than 20% of the time. Slightly more than one-quarter of courses involved students working in teams more than 40% of the time.

When faculty had students working in teams, groups of three or four students were most common. In those groups, students were typically not required to assign roles or the teams were responsible for delineating those roles among themselves. Similarly, either a leader was selected within the teams or the teams were not required to designate a leader at all. In about half of the courses that used some teaming as part of instruction (49.7%), there were no pre-established group rules at all. In another 40% of courses, group rules were determined by the instructor.

Do you teach team performance skills?	
Yes 35.2%	No 64.8%
Do you grade team performance skills?	
Yes 32.8%	No 67.2%

Although there were notable exceptions, most faculty members who used teams or groups as part of their instruction neither explicitly taught team skills (such as communication, collaboration, conflict resolution and leadership) nor formally assessed students based on their ability to work as members of a team. However, in many courses, instructors assessed team-based products or activities, such as group projects and presentations. Faculty most commonly cited improved *content understanding*, improved *critical thinking*, improved *communication* skills and improved *collaboration* as expected outcomes of team-based activities.

### Attitudes About Team-based Pedagogy

In an analysis of both the qualitative and quantitative survey data, there appeared to be an appreciation among faculty respondents for the value and effectiveness of team-based approaches to teaching and learning. A majority of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed



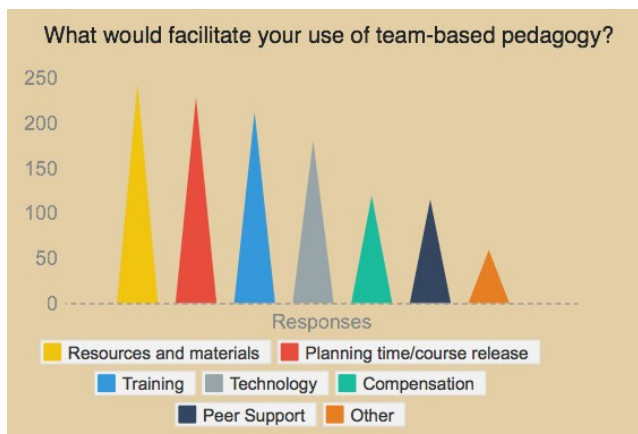
that having students work in teams enhances *student engagement* during class, enhances *student interest* in and *comprehension* of course content, enhances *teaming skills*, and enhances students' ability to *apply course content* in their careers. Over 85% of faculty agreed or strongly agreed that team skills are critical, not only to students' success in their future careers, but to their own success in their current faculty positions. However, faculty also noted several obstacles to implementation.

When asked to select the statement that most closely described them, close to 40% of faculty selected either "I am trying to learn enough about team-based pedagogy to feel comfortable" or "I have insufficient knowledge or understanding to use team-based pedagogy." Another 26% struggled less with understanding how to implement team-based approaches and more with the time and effort required to execute it, selecting the descriptor, "I understand team-based pedagogy, but considerable time is required to plan."

The most commonly mentioned obstacles were *time* and *classroom configuration*, followed by *understanding of team-based pedagogy*. Many faculty stated that, while some of their courses could lend themselves to a team-based approach, others were not appropriate for such an approach due to their size, course content, student characteristics, etc. Some faculty specifically mentioned online courses as a significant challenge for employing team-based instruction.

Over half of respondents (53%) pointed to the time and effort required to adequately implement team-based approaches as an obstacle. Approximately 40% of faculty selected *understanding of team-based pedagogy* as an obstacle to implementation. Although they were cited by fewer than 30% of respondents, *student resistance*, lack of *technological support* and lack of *administrative support* were also mentioned as obstacles.

In qualitative comments and in responding to the quantitative survey items, faculty expressed an interest in learning more about team-based approaches and commented that it is critical to put a formal support structure in place to ensure the fidelity of implementation. Most commonly cited as necessary to facilitate implementation were *resources and materials* (60%), *planning time/course release* (57%), *training* (53%), and *technology* (45%). While peer support and compensation were also selected, less than 30% of faculty chose them as a priority for facilitating implementation.



## **Conclusion**

It is clear from the survey that faculty across campus define and implement team learning in multiple ways and to varying degrees. One of the deficits uncovered across many of the schools was in the specific teaching of team skills and assessment of team performance. Although many assess students' perceptions of team member contributions for out-of-class group assignments, few rigorously and regularly assess students' performance on teams in terms of communication, collaboration, leadership, etc. Also emerging from the data was a strong interest on the part of most faculty members to incorporate more team learning principles and strategies into their curriculum. However, faculty also noted several challenges to taking a more team-focused approach and pointed to the need for systematic training, guidance, support and resources to make those desired changes.



## Appendix E. Department Chair and Program Administrator Survey Executive Summary

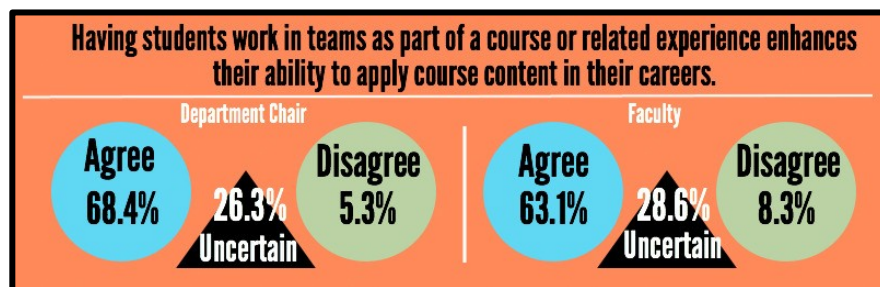
The QEP baseline administrator and department chair survey was designed to gather information about the degree to which departments and programs on campus were using strategies related to the QEP theme of *Learning in a Team Environment*. The survey also contained items regarding administrators' knowledge of team-based practices and attitudes toward team-based pedagogy, as well as their perceptions of incentives and obstacles to its implementation in their departments or programs. This report summarizes some key components of the survey results. Data summaries for all variables are provided in the appendix.

### Sample

The survey was sent in May 2014 to department chairs and program administrators in 10 schools on the UAB campus: Medicine, Dentistry, Nursing, Optometry, Arts and Sciences, Business, Engineering, Education, Public Health, and Health Professions. The response rate varied by school; but overall, 60% of department chairs targeted responded to the survey. Responses from program administrators came primarily from Health Professions (14 of the 18 surveys received); therefore, it is not yet possible to paint a campuswide picture of program administrators' perspectives related to the QEP theme.

### Perceptions of the Importance of Team Learning

Most of the department chairs (87%) agreed or strongly agreed that having students work in teams as part of a course would enhance student engagement, which was slightly higher than the percentage of the faculty who agreed or strongly agreed with the same statement (73%). Almost all department chairs (95%) and faculty (92%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that team skills are critical to students' success in their future careers. However, both the faculty and department chairs reported they were uncertain what impact having students work in teams would have on students' comprehension and retention of course content. In fact, almost half of department chairs (45%) and 39% of faculty selected "uncertain" regarding enhanced retention of course material, more than the percentage who agreed or strongly agreed.



### Perceptions of the Implementation of Team Learning

Because of the range in size of departments on campus, there was significant variance in the number of undergraduate programs, graduate programs, and faculty per department. Overall, the median number of teaching faculty per department was 19, and the median number of faculty per department who were said to be implementing some form of team-based pedagogy

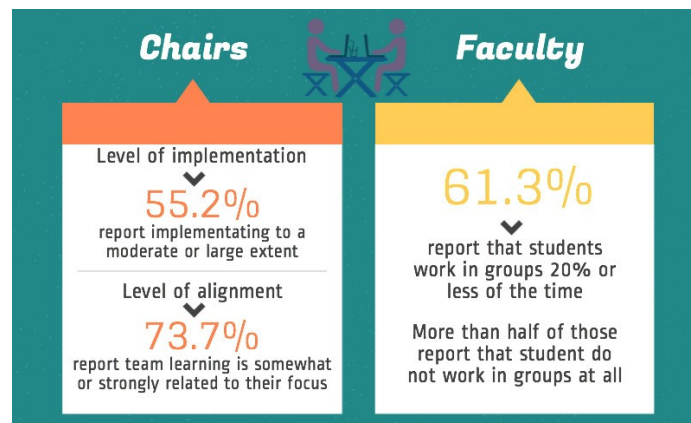


in their courses was seven. Most undergraduate and graduate programs were reported to have at least one course that incorporated a team-learning component or taught team skills in 2013-14.

About 55% of responding chairs reported their departments were implementing team learning to a moderate or a large extent. However, from qualitative comments, there seemed to be dramatic variance in the way departments defined team learning and team-based pedagogy, from engagement in simulations to in-class group activities:

- “Several courses use team-based learning as the primary pedagogy. Student activities also include simulation exercises with other programs and participation in the Interdisciplinary Geriatric Education program.”
- “In the broad sense of groups functioning as teams, all of our programs use assignments and/or class activities within their courses. Most of our programs have student organizations that also function in essence as teams.”

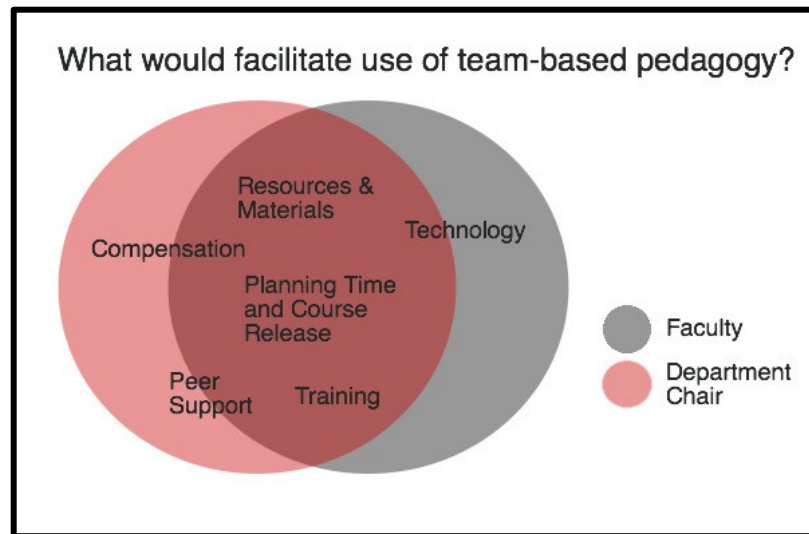
It is important to note that, while the majority of responding chairs reported their departments were implementing team learning to a moderate or large extent, 61% of the faculty reported having students working in groups less than 20% of the time. And 65% of the faculty said they did not explicitly teach team skills.



### **Necessary Resources and Potential Obstacles**

A little less than half of department chairs (45%) claimed “none of the above” when asked to select forms of support they had provided for faculty to implement team-based pedagogy in their own classrooms. It was, by far, the most commonly selected response (n=17). Ten department chairs (26%) reported they had provided training and curricular materials as well as other resources and provided or sponsored workshops for faculty related to team learning. Nine provided travel funds for conferences related to team learning. And eight department chairs (21%) said they had provided faculty salary support for implementation.

When asked what would support their departments’ implementation of team learning, chairs cited resources and materials, planning time and course releases for faculty, and training most often. This was very similar to the response pattern for faculty on the faculty survey, with the exception of reference to technology. Faculty selected technology as a critical resource to facilitate their use of team-based pedagogy much more often than department chairs.



Both the faculty and the department chairs selected time as the greatest obstacle to implementation of team-based pedagogy. There was also agreement between faculty and department chairs about obstacles related to classroom configuration and knowledge/understanding of team-based pedagogy.

### **Conclusion**

One theme that emerged from quantitative survey items and qualitative comments on both the survey of department chairs and survey of faculty was that team learning was defined significantly differently in different departments across campus. As well, team-based pedagogy is implemented in varying degrees across departments and schools. In addition, faculty and chairs may not be in perfect alignment with regard to the degree to which they believe team learning is currently being implemented. Generally, department chairs reported implementation of team learning at a slightly higher rate than faculty.

However, for the most part, faculty and department chairs agreed with respect to the importance and impact of team learning as well as what is necessary to implement it with fidelity. There was substantial overlap between the responses of department chairs and faculty on items related to the importance of team skills in students' future success as well as their own career success, the impact of having students work in teams on student engagement and interest, and what is necessary to facilitate faculty implementation of team-based pedagogy as well as obstacles to implementation.





## Appendix F. Co-curricular Baseline Survey Executive Summary

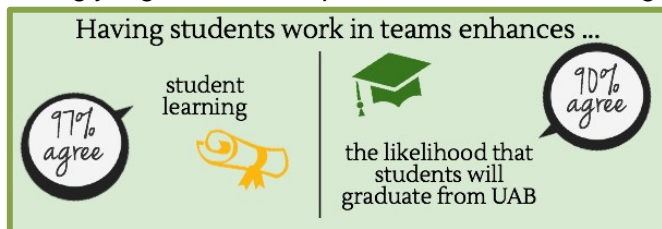
The QEP baseline co-curricular survey was designed to gather baseline information about the degree to which co-curricular units on campus were using strategies related to the QEP theme of *Learning in a Team Environment*. The survey asked about the units' involvement in team-focused activities, in particular, teaching students to succeed in all roles of a team, using team skills to enhance student learning, and taking team skills into the community to engage in service activities. The survey also contained items for co-curricular program directors regarding attitudes toward team-based pedagogy, perceptions of incentives and obstacles to implementation of team learning in their programs, and program-specific areas for potential growth and focus in the area of team learning. This report summarizes some key components of the survey results. Data summaries for all variables are provided in the appendix.

### Sample

The survey was sent in June 2014 to co-curricular program directors and administrators across the UAB campus. The CEA received completed surveys from 30 respondents. Of the 21 units on campus that were identified to receive the survey, 17 distinct units (81%) were represented. The representation rate varied by unit. For example, as many as four respondents from Student Activities completed the survey and another four from Student Involvement participated, whereas four units were not represented at all (Army ROTC, Athletics, Enrollment Management and Mervin Sterne Library). Among the 30 respondents, 25 reported that they direct, coordinate or supervise anywhere from one to seven programs within their unit (median=1) and serve an average of 2,308 students (median=200).

### Perceptions of the Importance of Team Learning

Most of the co-curricular units represented agreed or strongly agreed that it was beneficial to have students working in teams for a variety of reasons. For example, 73% of the respondents strongly agreed that working in teams enhances student engagement, 73% strongly agreed that team learning would prepare students for skills they would need in their careers, and 63% strongly agreed that exposure to team learning would enhance the likelihood that students



would return the following academic year. All of those who responded (100%) agreed or strongly agreed that team skills are critical to students' success in their future careers, and 97% agreed or strongly agreed that team skills are critical to their own success in their current positions.

### Perceptions of the Implementation of Team Learning

Co-curricular units on campus were asked about their current level of implementation of team learning. Half of respondents reported they are already implementing the QEP to a moderate or large extent. And almost all respondents (83%) believed the theme of the QEP is somewhat or strongly related to the work they already do. However, only 30% of respondents indicated they have had at least "some" engagement in QEP planning efforts.

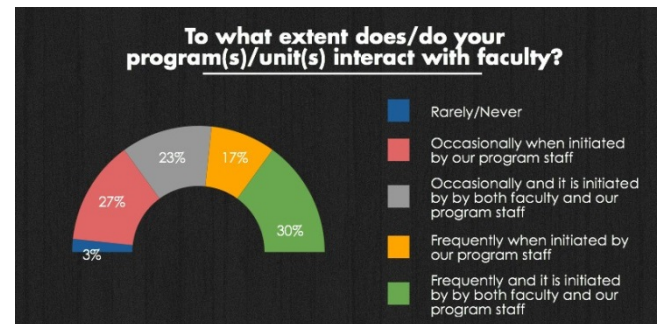
When asked how often they engage with students in specific ways related to team learning, about 70% of the co-curricular respondents said they work "frequently" or "to a moderate extent" with students to teach them to succeed in all roles of a team. Almost 80% said they work "frequently" or "to a moderate extent" with students in teams to improve their learning and



success here at UAB. But only 37% reported that the work of their unit involves taking team skills out into the community to do service “frequently” or “to a moderate extent.”

### **Perceptions of Interactions with Faculty**

Most respondents (83%) believed that faculty members were somewhat familiar with what their unit does, selecting the response that faculty “could describe some of what we do.” Respondents’ perceptions about the frequency of interactions with faculty on campus were significantly more varied. Answers were fairly equally distributed across choices: occasionally when initiated by staff, occasionally when initiated by both faculty and staff, frequently when initiated by staff, frequently when initiated by both faculty and staff.



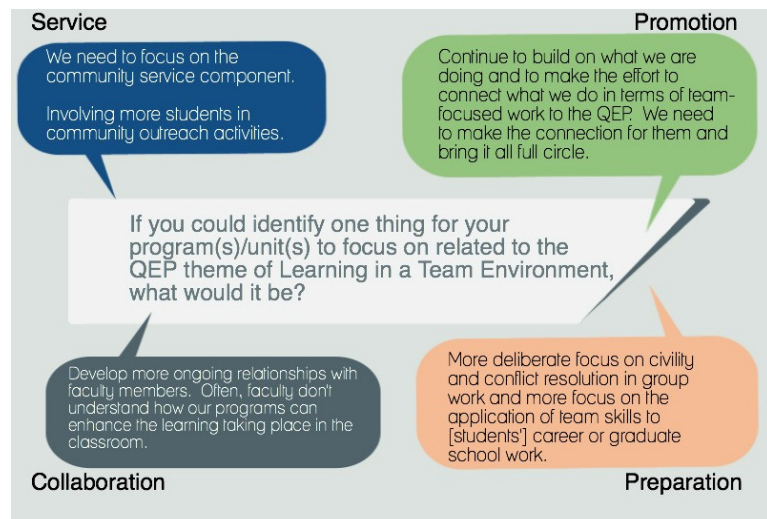
### **Necessary Resources and Potential Obstacles**

To date, co-curricular units reported having received limited support to implement team learning in their work with students. While many respondents (37%) indicated no support had been provided, others stated that workshops had been offered, resources and materials had been provided, and registration and travel had been paid for members of some units to attend conferences related to team learning. When asked what would facilitate their use of team-based pedagogy and strategies in the future, co-curricular units suggested resources and materials most frequently, followed by training, planning time, peer support and technology.

Co-curricular representatives cited time (57%), lack of administrative support (39%), and a lack of alignment between the units'/programs' focus and team learning goals and objectives (25%) as obstacles to implementation of team-based pedagogy. One person mentioned the necessity of “having an outside expert that can guide us and help us evaluate our efforts.” Another spoke to the issues of time, expertise and lack of administrative support when mentioning the need for “someone on our team who can give the necessary time to developing meaningful experiences.”

### **Conclusion**

Survey responses indicated that co-curricular units on campus value team learning and believe there are benefits of teaching students to work in teams, particularly for student learning and engagement. It was also notable that many co-curricular units on campus reported team learning is already an integral part of what they do. Respondents also recognized areas for potential growth — in promoting and communicating about current initiatives and activities, in collaborating with other units and faculty on campus, in engaging in more service learning and community-based opportunities, and in preparing students to work in teams. However, co-curricular representatives expressed several concerns about having resources to appropriately enhance their current work, and many of the resources cited were connected to funding.





## Appendix G. Proficiency Profile Analysis

Since 2006-07, the Proficiency Profile has been administered to a group of UAB students each academic year. The Proficiency Profiles and its predecessors were integral to the assessment activities of the 2005 QEP and also utilized in Comprehensive Standard 3.5.1 of the Compliance Certification. The profile contains seven sections: Critical Thinking, Reading, Writing, Mathematics, Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Sciences. The CEA analyzed data from the Proficiency Profile for Critical Thinking, Reading, Mathematics and Writing both cross-sectionally and longitudinally to determine whether there was meaningful growth from the freshman to senior administration. Particular attention was paid to the Critical Thinking dimension of the assessment.

### Sample

The number of examinees has varied by academic year, as can be seen in G-1.

**Table G - 1. Number of Student Examinees by Year**

Year	Number of Examinees
2006-07	990
2007-08	268
2008-09	280
2009-10	550
2010-11	80
2011-12	316
2012-13	955
2013-14	1,687
Total	5,126

In preparation for analysis, the CEA grouped students based on the number of completed semester hours as follows:

- Entering Freshmen: 0 Semester Hours
- Freshmen: <30 Semester Hours
- Sophomores: 30-60 Semester Hours
- Juniors: 61-90 Semester Hours
- Seniors: >90 Semester Hours

### Cross-sectional Analysis

There were three academic years (2006-07, 2009-10 and 2013-14) for which scores were available for students at each class level in sufficient numbers to warrant analysis ( $n > 10$ ). For those years, results were examined for the total score as well as each subscale. The total score had scale values from 400-500. The mean score breakdown by year and class appears in Table G-2.


**Table G - 2. Cross-sectional Analysis of Proficiency Profile Total Score by Year**

Class	2006-07				2009-10				2013-14			
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>f</i>	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>f</i>	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Total	990	99.60%	447.46	19.40	550	99.82%	453.29	21.62	1687	99.76%	450.30	19.29
Fr: 0 SH	382	38.59%	444.61	16.80	191	34.73%	442.28	15.76	808	47.90%	446.67	17.50
Fr: <30 SH	118	11.92%	449.12	20.82	36	6.55%	446.78	18.00	452	26.79%	448.77	19.35
So: 30-60 SH	195	19.70%	442.82	16.31	82	14.91%	458.52	20.28	113	6.70%	455.06	18.96
Jr: 61-90 SH	128	12.93%	444.90	19.72	93	16.91%	458.66	21.49	185	10.97%	459.00	19.33
Sr: >90 SH	163	16.46%	460.88	21.11	147	26.73%	463.05	22.89	125	7.41%	462.50	20.70

As can be seen from Table G-2, the mean total score for seniors was at least 10 points higher on the scale than for freshmen each of the three academic years. As well, there appear to be fairly steady improvements in mean total scores based on semester hours for the 2009-10 and 2013-14 academic years.

Results for each subscale of the assessment followed a similar trend. Of particular interest to the QEP Steering Committee were the scores for the Critical Thinking subscale. Values for that subscale ranged from 100-130. Results by year and group can be seen in Table G-3.

**Table G - 3. Cross-sectional Analysis of Proficiency Profile Critical Thinking Subscore by Year**

Class	2006-07				2009-10				2013-14			
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>f</i>	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>f</i>	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Total	990	99.60%	113.07	6.42	550	99.82%	114.62	6.94	1687	99.76%	112.33	6.47
Fr: 0 SH	382	38.59%	112.15	6.00	191	34.73%	111.46	5.41	808	47.90%	111.25	6.00
Fr: <30 SH	118	11.92%	113.28	6.66	36	6.55%	112.97	5.98	452	26.79%	111.56	6.21
So: 30-60 SH	195	19.70%	111.83	5.86	82	14.91%	115.93	6.71	113	6.70%	114.37	6.66
Jr: 61-90 SH	128	12.93%	112.84	6.40	93	16.91%	116.14	7.07	185	10.97%	115.64	6.48
Sr: >90 SH	163	16.46%	116.74	6.51	147	26.73%	117.48	7.19	125	7.41%	115.50	7.10

Seniors typically outperformed freshmen on the Critical Thinking dimension of the Proficiency Profile by about 3 points. The difference between scores for seniors and freshmen was similar for Critical Thinking to two of the other subscales for which the CEA had data — Reading and Mathematics (about 3 points). For writing, the difference was slightly lower (2 points). No data were available for Humanities, Social Sciences or Natural Sciences.

### **Comparison Analysis**

ETS requires that at least 10 institutions be identified for comparison purposes. Not all institutions administered the Proficiency Profile at all class levels. Table G-4 provides information on the institutions included in the comparison group and the number of students included in the analysis. Note that UAB is included — a limitation of the ETS selection criteria.


**Table G - 4. Number of Students in Analysis of Institutional Comparison Groups**

School	State	Fr0 N	Fr<30 N	So3060 N	Jr6190 N	Sr>90 N
Clark Atlanta University	GA	2902	216	186	678	59
Clemson University	SC			410	561	
Florida A&M University	FL	2174	331	126	353	1673
Florida International University	FL	2037	399	117	143	1004
Mississippi State University	MS	2135	194	104	333	3840
Troy University	AL			1731	4580	
University of Alabama at Birmingham	AL	2039	681	222	304	239
University of Cincinnati	OH	129	40			152
University of Mississippi	MS	1814	574		73	84
University of South Alabama	AL	40	33	90	202	336
University of Southern Mississippi	MS	385	71	135	473	1197
University of Tennessee - Knoxville	TN	812	108			67
Univ of Tennessee - Chattanooga	TN			40		
<b>Comparison Group Total N</b>		14467	2647	3161	7700	8651
<b>Number of Schools</b>		10	10	10	10	10
<b>All Institutions Total N</b>		110128	36850	48921	66408	128556
<b>Number of Schools</b>		141	122	125	156	188

Scores for UAB students who took the test between July 2009 and June 2014 were compared to scores for the set of 10 comparable institutions and to scores for all institutions nationwide that were either (a) Doctoral/Research Universities I and II or (b) Master's (Comprehensive) Colleges and Universities I and II. A summary of those results for the total score is shown in Table G-5.

**Table G - 5. Comparison of Total Score by Level**

	UAB	Comparison Institutions	All Institutions
Fr: 0 SH	444.63	437.2	437.4
Fr: <30 SH	448.27	441.6	437.9
So: 30-60 SH	455.38	441.6	440.9
Jr: 61-90 SH	458.73	440.4	443.2
Sr: >90 SH	462.79	445.8	446.9

As can be seen from Table G-5, UAB students outperformed comparison institutions on the assessment. Although the UAB freshman students began about 7 points higher than the comparison students, UAB seniors outscored comparison seniors by 15 points. Differences for seniors were most pronounced for the Mathematics and Critical Thinking subscales.



**Longitudinal Analysis**

To examine results longitudinally, the CEA matched students based on their ID, name and other demographic data. A total of 406 cases were matched. Of those, 156 were eliminated due to inconsistencies in credit hour reporting or missing data.

Growth in mean scores was examined for the total score and the Critical Thinking subscale. Summary results are provided in Table G-6.

**Table G - 6. Growth in Mean Score for Total Score and Critical Thinking Subscore**

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Total - BASELINE	450.56	250	18.145	1.148
	Total - POST	461.18	250	19.425	1.229
Pair 2	Critical Thinking - BASELINE	113.35	250	6.029	.381
	Critical Thinking - POST	116.02	250	6.899	.436

A paired samples t-test showed statistically significant growth from the baseline freshman administration to the follow-up senior administration ( $p < .05$ ). These results, shown in Table G-7, were consistent for total score and across all subscales, including Critical Thinking, corroborating the findings of the cross-sectional analysis.

**Table G - 7. Paired Samples Test**

		Paired Differences							
				Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
	Mean	Std. Deviation				t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	
Pair 1	Total	-10.616	13.220	.836	-12.263	-8.969	-12.697	249	.000
Pair 2	Critical Thinking	-2.676	5.808	.367	-3.400	-1.952	-7.284	249	.000



## Appendix H. Accredited Program Standards

Programs	Agency	Standard Details
<b>COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES</b>		
Art (BFA)	National Association of Schools of Art and Design	They are able to work collaboratively as appropriate to the area(s) of specialization.
Chemistry	American Chemical Society	Team Skills. Solving scientific problems often involves multidisciplinary teams. The ability to work in such teams is essential for a well-educated scientist. Students should be able to work effectively in a group to solve scientific problems, be effective leaders as well as effective team members, and interact productively with a diverse group of peers. Programs should incorporate team experiences in classroom and laboratory components of the chemistry curriculum.
Computer and Information Sciences (B.S.)	Computing Accreditation Commission of ABET	Criterion 3d: The program must enable students to attain, by the time of graduation: an ability to function effectively on teams to accomplish a common goal.
Music Music Education	National Association of Schools of Music	Students must have appropriate ensemble (choir, orchestra, band, chamber groups) experiences.
Public Administration (MPA)	National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration	Standard 5.1: the ability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– to lead and manage in public governance</li> <li>– to participate in and contribute to the policy process</li> </ul>
Social Work	Council on Social Work Education	Educational Policy 2.1.10(a)–(d) — Engage, assess, intervene and evaluate with individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities.
Theatre	National Association of Schools of Theatre	IN ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR LIBERAL ARTS DEGREE (BA); VII.D.3.b. (1) The work in this area includes acting, design/technology, other aspects of participation in theatre productions, and studies in scholarly or pedagogical aspects of theatre. PROFESSIONAL DEGREE (BFA): VIII.B.1.e Knowledge and skills sufficient to work in both collaborative and individual roles in matters of theatre interpretation. SPECIFICALLY, MUSICAL THEATRE: IX.D.3.e Opportunities for performance in workshops and full productions of musical theatre in a variety of formal and informal settings. Performance of a significant role in at least one full production during advanced study is regarded as an essential experience.
<b>COLLAT SCHOOL OF BUSINESS</b>		
	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business-International	Business: Standard 9 - "Interpersonal relations and teamwork (able to work effectively with others and in team environments)"
	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business-International	Accounting: "Participation in a bachelor's degree program in accounting presupposes the foundations necessary for a bachelor's degree program in business, as described in Business Standard 9 ..."



Programs	Agency	Standard Details
<b>SCHOOL OF DENTISTRY</b>		
	American Dental Association, Commission on Dental Accreditation	Students should understand the roles of members of the health care team and have educational experiences, particularly clinical experiences, that involve working with other health care professional students and practitioners
General Practice Residency  Advanced Education in General Dentistry	American Dental Association, Commission on Dental Accreditation	2-1.a.3: The program must provide didactic and clinical training to ensure upon completion of training, the student/resident is able to: Act as a primary oral health care provider to include: functioning effectively within interdisciplinary health care teams, including consultation and referral
<b>SCHOOL OF EDUCATION</b>		
Teacher Certification Programs	National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education	1c. [Teacher candidates] take on leadership roles in the professional community and collaborate with colleagues to contribute to school improvement and renewal; 1d. [Teacher candidates] collaborate with other professionals to identify and design strategies and interventions that support student learning; 3b. Candidates are members of instructional teams in the school and are active participants in professional decisions.
Counseling (Community and School)	Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)	<u>General standard</u> - "Professional Orientation and Ethical Practice": studies that provide an understanding of all of the following aspects of professional functioning: b. professional roles, functions, and relationships with other human service providers, including strategies for interagency/interorganization collaboration and communications; c. counselors' roles and responsibilities as members of an interdisciplinary emergency management response team during a local, regional or national crisis, disaster, or other trauma-causing event; <u>School Counseling</u> - M2: 2. Knows strategies to promote, develop and enhance effective teamwork within the school and the larger community. M3. Knows how to build effective working teams of school staff, parents and community members to promote the academic, career, and personal/social development of students.
<b>SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING</b>		
Baccalaureate Level	Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET	Student outcome d) an ability to function on multidisciplinary teams
<b>SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS</b>		
Genetic Counseling	Accreditation Council for Genetic Counseling (previously American Board of Genetic Counseling)	Practice-based Competency Domain IV: Professional Development and Practice 18c: Recognize the various roles a genetic counselor can play on a research team and identify opportunities to participate in and/or lead research studies, 22: Establish and maintain professional interdisciplinary relationships in both team and one-on-one settings, and recognize one's role in the larger health care system.



Programs	Agency	Standard Details
Medical Technology/Clinical Laboratory Science	National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences	At entry level, the medical laboratory technician will have the following basic knowledge and skills in: Communications sufficient to serve the needs of patients, the public and members of the health care team.
Nuclear Medicine Technology	Joint Review Committee on Educational Programs in NMT, Department of Education	C2.3 The program shall include learning opportunities for students to develop personal and professional attributes and values relevant to clinical practice. These attributes include: b) a commitment to make a significant contribution to the healthcare team.
Physician Assistant Studies	Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant	B1.08 The curriculum must include instruction to prepare students to work collaboratively in interprofessional patient-centered teams.
Health Administration	Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education	III.B.2 The Program will provide, throughout the curriculum, opportunities for students to participate in team-based and interprofessional activities.
Health Information Management	Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education	V. Organization and Management V.A. Subdomain: Human Resources Management, 7. Develop, motivate and support work teams. V.B. Subdomain: Strategic Planning and Organizational Development, 5. Facilitate project management by integrating work efforts, as well as planning and executing project tasks and activities.
Nutrition Sciences Dietetic Internship	Accrediting Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND)	Guideline 11.1.c: Learning activities for interns must develop collaboration, teamwork, problem-solving, critical-thinking and self-assessment skills; and personal and professional attitudes and values, cultural competence, leadership, and decision-making skills; Coursework or laboratory experiences must provide opportunities for students to work together in organized activities with a common goal. Supervised practice must provide opportunities for interns/students to work with individuals from other disciplines, preferably with clearly defined roles as part of a team.
Occupational Therapy	Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education	Standard B.5.21 Effectively communicate and work interprofessionally with those who provide services to individuals, organizations and/or populations in order to clarify each member's responsibility in executing an intervention plan.
Physical Therapy	Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education	CC-4. The physical therapist professional curriculum includes clinical education experiences for each student that encompass: d) Opportunities for involvement in interdisciplinary care.



Programs	Agency	Standard Details
<b>SCHOOL OF MEDICINE</b>		
	Liaison Committee on Medical Education	7.9 Interprofessional Collaborative Skills The faculty of a medical school ensure that the core curriculum of the medical education program prepares medical students to function collaboratively on health care teams that include health professionals from other disciplines as they provide coordinated services to patients. These curricular experiences include practitioners and/or students from the other health professions.
<b>SCHOOL OF NURSING</b>		
School-wide	Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education	<u>UGR</u> : Essential VI Interprofessional Communication and Collaboration for Improving Patient Health Outcomes; <u>MSN</u> : Essential VII: Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes: Recognizes that the master's-prepared nurse, as a member and leader of interprofessional teams, communicates, collaborates and consults with other health professionals to manage and coordinate care; <u>Doctoral</u> : Essential VI: Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes
Nurse Anesthesia	Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs	C21. The program demonstrates that graduates have acquired knowledge, skills and competencies in d. Communication skills are demonstrated by the graduate's ability to: 1. Effectively communicate with individuals influencing patient care.
<b>SCHOOL OF OPTOMETRY</b>		
Professional Program (O.D.)	Accreditation Council on Optometric Education	2.9.5 The graduate must be able to recognize when it is necessary to obtain a consultation and to coordinate care provided by health care providers and/or other professionals.
<b>SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH</b>		
MPH, MSPH, Dr.P.H., Ph.D.	Council on Education for Public Health	Identified by each institution (not defined by accrediting body): for Maternal and Child Health: MCH 28 Appropriate use of networking, team building, small group processes, advocacy, negotiation and conflict resolution skills, and the knowledge of community organization and coalition-building techniques to address MCH issues and problems.





## Appendix I. Principles of Project Selection and Funding

Selection and funding criteria were developed based upon experience from the previous QEP, alignment between projects and assessment, and demonstrated commitment. These principles were approved by the Deans' Council, QEP Steering Committee and the Office of the Provost.

1. Projects must include one or both of the focus areas of the QEP, “teach students to succeed in all (appropriate) roles of a team” and “use these skills to improve student learning.”
2. Projects should serve to advance the department/school/college in strategic ways in terms of implementation of the QEP and support for student learning outcomes, which is indicated by approval of the proposal by the chair and Dean.
3. Projects should be directed at (a) scaling up the delivery of the QEP theme of learning in a team environment, (b) increasing the efficiency of delivery of learning in a team environment in order to make implementation more sustainable or (c) producing other value-added gains.
4. Projects should advance the university through the development of generalizable professional development training and resources related to the QEP, demonstration and testing of evidence-based practices that can be expanded within and/or outside the unit, and/or impacts on student learning outcomes that are in addition to (not substituting for) the university-adopted outcomes.
5. Projects with multiyear support must indicate plans for increasing the breadth of impact (scaling, diffusion) over the term of the project.
6. Projects should generate data that informs and promotes the expansion of the QEP within or outside the unit.
7. In general, project funding should not be used to duplicate supports or resources that are available elsewhere on campus. However, exceptions will be considered for discipline-specific speakers and activities in cases where a national expert or meeting is identified.
8. Proposals may include release time for faculty to develop course materials and/or other resources to implement the QEP. Release time will be funded on a matching basis with the department/school/college and QEP funds at the rate of a replacement adjunct instructor. Additional one-time student assistant support will be similarly handled. Faculty members who are supported to develop or revise a course are required to teach it three times in a four-year period. Project funding will not be approved for faculty to serve as consultants in their own school or college.
9. Professional travel will be supported to either present on QEP-related activities or for professional development. A “train-the-trainer” model where new approaches are brought back to UAB and disseminated is encouraged.
10. Video production costs and other such expenditures may be supported. However, proposals will be reviewed to determine if the resources could be utilized to develop materials for a wider audience. Subject experts on team skills and teaching with team-driven models are expected to guide the content development.

### Other Funding Issues

1. Faculty will not be compensated to serve on committees.
2. QEP funds will be used to establish “CTL Fellows” or something similar for faculty who take on large mentoring roles — \$5,000-\$10,000/year for three to five people — with the expectations for service to be defined.
3. The QEP budget will fund the institutionwide assessment activities and will assist in other assessment activities on a limited, time-available basis.



## Appendix J. QEP Director Job Description

The University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) seeks a faculty administrator to serve as Director of the university's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) titled *Learning in a Team Environment*. The five-year QEP is designed to enhance the ability of all UAB students to work successfully on teams and learn more effectively using team-oriented pedagogies.

The QEP Director will provide leadership to this initiative beginning with the later phases of program development through institutionalization. The Director will report to the Associate Provost for Assessment and Accreditation.

### Primary Responsibilities

The QEP Director will be a champion for the QEP, promoting and encouraging the adoption of team-focused pedagogy and team-focused activities University-wide. Primary responsibilities include:

- Supervise the day-to-day activities of the QEP initiative, including budget and staff (administrative assistant).
- Manage marketing and public relations programs, including overseeing development, production and distribution of public relations products in collaboration with the Office of Public Relations and Marketing.
- Coordinate, administer and oversee the development and management of unit-based project submission, selection and implementation processes with appropriate university offices.
- Chair the institutional QEP Implementation Committee and serve as a resource to all school/college-level QEP committees.
- Partner with the CTL to conduct needs assessments and facilitate institutionwide faculty development efforts related to the QEP.
- Collaborate with the Center for Educational Accountability (CEA) to oversee assessment efforts related to the QEP and to analyze the impact of the QEP on the campus.
- Prepare results and findings for annual institutional progress reports and a five-year QEP evaluation report to SACSCOC.

### Required Qualifications

- Education: An earned doctorate in a discipline represented in the university and credentials consistent with appointment at the rank of associate or full professor are required.
- Experience: A distinguished record of teaching experience at the college or university level is required. Experience in assessment of learning outcomes at the classroom and program level is required.
- Skills: Strong leadership and interpersonal communication and motivational skills are required. A knowledge base of outcomes-based curricular design and program development and assessment of learning outcomes is required.
- Other: Demonstrated ability to provide collaborative leadership and management skills to the QEP team and to work collaboratively with different constituent groups is required. Publications related to pedagogy and learning are preferred. Familiarity with SACSCOC Quality Enhancement Plan requirements is preferred.



## Appendix K. Teamwork VALUE Rubric

### TEAMWORK VALUE RUBRIC

*for more information, please contact [value@uab.edu](mailto:value@uab.edu)*



The VALUE rubrics were developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The core expectations articulated in all 15 of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

#### Definition

Teamwork is behaviors under the control of individual team members (effort they put into team tasks, their manner of interacting with others on team, and the quantity and quality of contributions they make to team discussions.)

#### Framing Language

Students participate on many different teams, in many different settings. For example, a given student may work on separate teams to complete a lab assignment, give an oral presentation, or complete a community service project. Furthermore, the people the student works with are likely to be different in each of these different teams. As a result, it is assumed that a work sample or collection of work that demonstrates a student's teamwork skills could include a diverse range of inputs. This rubric is designed to function across all of these different settings.

Two characteristics define the ways in which this rubric is to be used. First, the rubric is meant to assess the teamwork of an individual student, not the team as a whole. Therefore, it is possible for a student to receive high ratings, even if the team as a whole is rather flawed. Similarly, a student could receive low ratings, even if the team as a whole works fairly well. Second, this rubric is designed to measure the quality of a **process**, rather than the quality of an **end product**. As a result, work samples or collections of work will need to include some evidence of the individual's interactions within the team. The final product of the team's work (e.g., a written lab report) is insufficient, as it does not provide insight into the functioning of the team.

It is recommended that work samples or collections of work for this outcome come from one (or more) of the following three sources: (1) students' own reflections about their contribution to a team's functioning; (2) evaluation or feedback from fellow team members about students' contribution to the team's functioning; or (3) the evaluation of an outside observer regarding students' contributions to a team's functioning. These three sources differ considerably in the resource demands they place on an institution. It is recommended that institutions using this rubric consider carefully the resources they are able to allocate to the assessment of teamwork and choose a means of compiling work samples or collections of work that best suits their priorities, needs, and abilities.



## TEAMWORK VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact [valubw@uab.edu](mailto:valubw@uab.edu)



### Definition

Teamwork is behaviors under the control of individual team members (effort they put into team tasks, their manner of interacting with others on team, and the quantity and quality of contributions they make to team discussions.)

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a *zero* to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

	Capstone 4	3	Milestones 2	Benchmark 1
Contributes to Team Meetings	Helps the team move forward by articulating the merits of alternative ideas or proposals.	Offers alternative solutions or courses of action that build on the ideas of others.	Offers new suggestions to advance the work of the group.	Shares ideas but does not advance the work of the group.
Facilitates the Contributions of Team Members	Engages team members in ways that facilitate their contributions to meetings by both constructively building upon or synthesizing the contributions of others as well as noticing when someone is not participating and inviting them to engage.	Engages team members in ways that facilitate their contributions to meetings by constructively building upon or synthesizing the contributions of others.	Engages team members in ways that facilitate their contributions to meetings by restating the views of other team members and/or asking questions for clarification.	Engages team members by taking turns and listening to others without interrupting.
Individual Contributions Outside of Team Meetings	Completes all assigned tasks by deadline; work accomplished is thorough, comprehensive, and advances the project. Proactively helps other team members complete their assigned tasks to a similar level of excellence.	Completes all assigned tasks by deadline; work accomplished is thorough, comprehensive, and advances the project.	Completes all assigned tasks by deadline; work accomplished advances the project.	Completes all assigned tasks by deadline.
Fosters Constructive Team Climate	Supports a constructive team climate by doing all of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Treats team members respectfully by being polite and constructive in communication.</li><li>Uses positive vocal or written tone, facial expressions, and/or body language to convey a positive attitude about the team and its work.</li><li>Motivates teammates by expressing confidence about the importance of the task and the team's ability to accomplish it.</li><li>Provides assistance and/or encouragement to team members.</li></ul>	Supports a constructive team climate by doing any three of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Treats team members respectfully by being polite and constructive in communication.</li><li>Uses positive vocal or written tone, facial expressions, and/or body language to convey a positive attitude about the team and its work.</li><li>Motivates teammates by expressing confidence about the importance of the task and the team's ability to accomplish it.</li><li>Provides assistance and/or encouragement to team members.</li></ul>	Supports a constructive team climate by doing any two of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Treats team members respectfully by being polite and constructive in communication.</li><li>Uses positive vocal or written tone, facial expressions, and/or body language to convey a positive attitude about the team and its work.</li><li>Motivates teammates by expressing confidence about the importance of the task and the team's ability to accomplish it.</li><li>Provides assistance and/or encouragement to team members.</li></ul>	Supports a constructive team climate by doing any one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Treats team members respectfully by being polite and constructive in communication.</li><li>Uses positive vocal or written tone, facial expressions, and/or body language to convey a positive attitude about the team and its work.</li><li>Motivates teammates by expressing confidence about the importance of the task and the team's ability to accomplish it.</li><li>Provides assistance and/or encouragement to team members.</li></ul>
Responds to Conflict	Addresses destructive conflict directly and constructively, helping to manage/resolve it in a way that strengthens overall team cohesiveness and future effectiveness.	Identifies and acknowledges conflict and stays engaged with it.	Redirecting focus toward common ground, toward task at hand (away from conflict).	Passively accepts alternate viewpoints/ideas/opinions.



## Appendix L. Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric



### CRITICAL THINKING VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact [rubric@aacu.org](mailto:rubric@aacu.org)

The VALUE rubrics were developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The core expectations articulated in all 15 of the VALUE rubrics can and should be translated into the language of individual campuses, disciplines, and even courses. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

#### Definition

Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.

#### Framing Language

This rubric is designed to be transdisciplinary, reflecting the recognition that success in all disciplines requires habits of inquiry and analysis that share common attributes. Further, research suggests that successful critical thinkers from all disciplines increasingly need to be able to apply those habits in various and changing situations encountered in all walks of life.

This rubric is designed for use with many different types of assignments and the suggestions here are not an exhaustive list of possibilities. Critical thinking can be demonstrated in assignments that require students to complete analyses of text, data, or issues. Assignments that cut across presentation mode might be especially useful in some fields. If insight into the process components of critical thinking (e.g., how information sources were evaluated regardless of whether they were included in the product) is important, assignments focused on student reflection might be especially illuminating.

#### Glossary

*The definitions that follow were developed to clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.*

- Ambiguity: Information that may be interpreted in more than one way.
- Assumptions: Ideas, conditions, or beliefs (often implicit or unstated) that are "taken for granted or accepted as true without proof." (quoted from [www.dictionariesreference.com/browse/assumptions](http://www.dictionariesreference.com/browse/assumptions))
- Context: The historical, ethical, political, cultural, environmental, or circumstantial settings or conditions that influence and complicate the consideration of any issues, ideas, artifacts, and events.
- Literal meaning: Interpretation of information exactly as stated. For example, "she was green with envy" would be interpreted to mean that her skin was green.
- Metaphor: Information that is (intended to be) interpreted in a non-literal way. For example, "she was green with envy" is intended to convey an intensity of emotion, not a skin color.





## CRITICAL THINKING VALUE RUBRIC

for more information, please contact [valuc@uaaam.org](mailto:valuc@uaaam.org)

### Definition

Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.

*Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (all one) level performance.*

	Capstone 4	3	Milestones 2	Benchmark 1
<b>Explanation of issues</b>	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding.	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated, described, and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions.	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or background unknown.	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated without clarification or description.
<b>Evidence</b> <i>Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion</i>	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly.	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are subject to questioning.	Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are taken as mostly fact, with little questioning.	Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question.
<b>Influence of context and assumptions</b>	Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.	Identifies own and others' assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position.	Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa).	Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position.
<b>Student's position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)</b>	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is imaginative, taking into account the complexities of an issue. Limits of position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) are acknowledged. Others' points of view are synthesized within position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis).	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) takes into account the complexities of an issue. Others' points of view are acknowledged within position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis).	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) acknowledges different sides of an issue.	Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is stated, but is simplistic and obvious.
<b>Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences)</b>	Conclusions and related outcomes (consequences and implications) are logical and reflect student's informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order.	Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.	Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified.