QEP Topic Proposal Writing

Selecting the Topic for VCU’s next QEP:
A workshop hosted by the QEP Planning & Development Committee

August 17, 2022
What is a QEP?

A Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is an integral and required part of the SACSCOC 10-year reaffirmation process. It is a future-oriented, time-bound project that allows the university to demonstrate its commitment to the continuous improvement of student learning and success.

Six SACSCOC requirements of an acceptable QEP

- Identifies key, emerging issues for action based on institutional data and assessment
- Aligns with and supports the institution’s strategic plan
- Focuses on student learning outcomes and the environment supporting student learning
- Reflects broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in its development and implementation
- Demonstrates an institution’s capability to implement and complete the QEP within the 5-year timeframe
- Includes clear and measurable goals and a detailed plan to assess their achievement
What is a QEP (in practice)?

There is no cookie-cutter template for what a QEP is. In practice, QEPs look different based off the needs and circumstances of the institution developing them.

**A QEP must:**
- Connect to the institution's strategic plan and priorities
- Be data informed and inquiry driven
- Be realistic and assessable

**A QEP can:**
- Target specific student populations
- Focus on experiences outside of the classroom
- Leverage existing and ongoing initiatives
- Connect to a prior QEP

**A QEP should:**
- Enhance student learning
- Focus on a bounded question
- Reflect broad-based input through a phased development

Above all, QEPs must have **students at the center**.
QEPs that are faculty-driven recognize

Faculty and staff roles in:

- Governing and overseeing the curriculum
- Providing content expertise
- Inheriting the QEP topic and implementation decisions
- Identifying the ‘right’ actions and resources to take a QEP from a vision to an actionable plan
QEP broad theme

Theme: Level Up!: Connecting all students to transformative, mentored experiences

- Alignment with key pillars of the Quest 2028 strategic plan
- Provides direction and context while allowing broad flexibility to potential proposal topics
- Leverages the momentum gained through the REAL initiative
- An opportunity to continue our REAL work in a focused, intentional way
Significance of the Planning & Development Committee

Their ongoing work:

- Guides the topic selection and development process
  - Establishes criteria and procedures for proposal submission
  - Develops evaluation rubric for assessing proposals
  - Identifies the evaluation process for full QEP proposals

- Drives engagement for VCU community
  - Request for Topic Proposals – the current “RFP”
  - Engagement activities (e.g., writing workshops) for faculty, staff, and students
Proposal content

What information should a proposal contain?

- Provide a concise opening statement/abstract
- Align with VCU Mission, Quest 2028 and REAL initiatives, including DEI principles
- Address student success in terms of need, population affected, and benefits
- Identify goals: broad, overarching targets
- Include objectives: tangible steps to achieve goals
A strong proposal will also:

- Identify potential **partners** and **collaborators**
- Be **data informed**: how do we know this is an area we should work on?
- Include how we will know if the plan is working: how might success be **measured**?
- Identify a **timeline** for the project. Will it be implemented by semesters or years?
- Provide an approximate **budget** for your project; Staff time, office space, stipends and travel funds
- Provide **bibliography/references** if applicable.
Evaluation rubric

To guide you as you develop your proposals, a draft version of the QEP Proposal Evaluation Rubric is available on the VCU QEP webpage.

The criteria, developed by the QEP Planning and Development Committee, reflect VCU’s priorities and values, and the SACSCOC requirements for an acceptable QEP.

VCU QEP webpage: provost.vcu.edu/qep
QEP Topic Proposal Rubric: uploads.provost.vcu.edu/qep/qeprubric.pdf
Finding collaborators/partners

Great ideas emerge when we work together. Remember: The QEP needs to be specific enough to measure its impact, yet broad enough to be relevant across disciplines.

So collaborating with peers and colleagues across VCU as you develop your topic proposal is not only an option, it’s highly encouraged!

QEP collaboration sheet
Use this form to seek thought-partners, co-conspirators, and colleagues with mutual areas of interest!

• QEP collaboration spreadsheet (link will be shared in Zoom chat as well)
Questions and answers/breakout session
Next steps

- Submit a topic proposal (and encourage others in your unit to participate as well!)
  - Application, RFP, and rubric can be found on QEP webpage (provost.vcu.edu/qep)

- Attend and promote writing workshops/other engagement opportunities coming in September

Thank you for your time and partnership!

Questions?
Contact qep@vcu.edu