

Active Learning Interventions Narrative

The major purpose of the Active Learning Interventions initiative is to provide faculty, staff, and curriculum development funds (as well as peer tutoring resources) to a select number of "bottleneck" courses. These are large enrollment, high attrition courses that are recognized as significant barriers to student success at UHD. The objective is to increase the number, depth and quality of active learning strategies employed in these courses, with the ultimate goal of improving learning outcomes. Learning outcomes will be measured by observing student mastery of course learning objectives, as well as by observing traditional measures such as retention rates, course passing rates, and grade distributions. Department program committees that supervise these courses will have the major voice in determining how funds allocated to these courses are spent, which may include: faculty development travel; stipends for curriculum development; brainstorming sessions, mini-retreats, or workshops to explore curriculum innovation; classroom technology; or other projects at the committees' discretion. Moreover, the program committees will help shape the procedures used for assessing learning outcomes, in ways appropriate to the discipline and practical for the faculty. "Lead teachers" for each bottleneck course will be designated to guide and coordinate these efforts. Initially, two bottleneck courses have been selected: ENG 1302-Freshman Composition II and MATH 1301-College Algebra. In the second year, HIST 1305-U.S. History I will be added. These courses were chosen, in part, by examining passing rates for various large enrollment courses in several disciplines. It should be noted that these courses are frequently cited as bottleneck courses across the nation, not just at UHD. The combined enrollment in Math 1301, Eng 1302, and Hist 1305 in Fall 2005 was 2003 students, discounting students enrolled in more than one of these courses.

A secondary component of the Active Learning Interventions initiative is a more general Curriculum Development Grant Program which will solicit proposals for release time or stipends to develop or adapt reusable active learning curriculum materials for various courses from faculty campus wide. Thus, this program will function as a complement to the established Organized Research and Faculty Development Grant Programs. Such a program has often been suggested by UHD faculty, and release time for curriculum development was frequently cited as an attractive incentive by faculty who responded to the on-line survey soliciting input into the QEP's implementation. A summary of the results of this survey can be found in Appendix 3.

Linking these two components will be several events designed to increase knowledge and interest in student engagement and contemporary active learning strategies throughout the broader university community, including: invited speakers or specialists in active learning, student engagement, or student affairs; symposia to report the results of QEP-sponsored activities and to foster a Faculty Learning Community devoted to active learning/student engagement; and a workshop for New Faculty Orientation. Results of the on-line faculty survey mentioned above suggest that symposia and workshops in the early years of the plan should perhaps be devoted to invited speakers or specialists explaining the meaning, theory, and practice of active learning, or the use of audience response systems.

Helping to guide these events will be an Active Learning Faculty Specialist. This faculty member will be given release time and travel money to develop expertise in contemporary active learning strategies and disseminate the corresponding information campus wide. In particular, the specialist

will research the opportunities and requirements for publishing scholarship that might arise from QEP-sponsored activities. He or she will, moreover, aid in developing an active learning/student engagement resource library, in cooperation with library staff. Respondents to the on-line faculty survey also express interest in using the specialist as a convenient, accessible contact person for those seeking quick answers to frequently asked questions about active learning or student engagement strategies.

Table IV: Timeline for Active Learning Interventions and Related Administrative Tasks

*Task repeated in each subsequent year

Year	Tasks	Responsible Person or Unit
2006-07 Year 1	Designate a "lead teacher" for each bottleneck course to guide and coordinate efforts and liaison with the QEP Council (Fall)	QEP Director, Department Chairs, QEP Council
	Recruit active learning faculty specialist (Fall)	QEP Director and QEP Council
	Hire part-time secretary for QEP (Fall)	QEP Director
	Conduct brainstorming sessions and/or mini-retreats to develop ideas for curriculum innovation in initial bottleneck courses (these are Eng 1302 and Math 1301) (Fall)	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director
	Evaluate basic learning objectives for initial bottleneck courses and refine grading practices/learning outcome surveys/course evaluations to be used for collecting learning outcomes (Fall)	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director
	Collect additional baseline data as needed for bottleneck courses (Fall and/or Spring)	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director
	Create guidelines and solicit proposals for release time to develop active learning curriculum materials for various "threshold" courses from faculty or units campus-wide (Fall)	QEP Director and QEP Council
	Commence faculty development activities such as: funding certain faculty to travel to pedagogical conferences and workshops that emphasize contemporary methodologies in initial bottleneck courses; or, inviting discipline-specific speakers or specialists to support curriculum development efforts in initial bottleneck courses, at the committees' discretion with QEP Council approval (Fall and/or Spring)*	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director, QEP Council
	Provide electronic update to all UHD faculty regarding QEP activities (Fall and Spring)*	QEP Director
	Plan for "formative" and "summative" symposia discussed below; begin conducting periodic surveys of faculty, staff, and students to guide activities of the QEP (Fall)*	Lead Teachers, QEP Director, Active Learning Specialist, Dean UC, Coordinator of SI
	Hold joint mid-year "formative" symposium for initial bottleneck course program committees to share results of Fall activities and compare Spring curriculum development plans	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director, Active Learning Specialist, QEP Council
	Provide mid-year status report to the Provost and the Academic Affairs Council*	QEP Director
	Begin developing reusable curriculum materials that incorporate generic and discipline-specific active learning strategies to improve learning outcomes in initial bottleneck courses (Spring)	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director, QEP Council
	Begin adapting active learning strategies and courseware for initial bottleneck courses from off-campus to the distinctive circumstances of UHD (Spring)	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director, QEP Council
Award first round of curriculum development grants (Spring)	QEP Director, QEP Council, Department Chairs, Deans	

	Active learning faculty specialist begins developing expertise in contemporary active learning strategies (Spring)	Active Learning Specialist and QEP Director
	Hold first "summative" year-end symposium to report to the university community the results of QEP activities in transition programs, active learning, and supplemental instruction. First-year symposium includes invited keynote speakers or specialists in active learning, student engagement, or student affairs that may appeal to the broader university community. (Spring)	QEP Director, QEP Council, Active Learning Specialist, Lead Teachers, Dean UC, Coordinator of SI
	Collect from student records system and summarize course outcomes data (indirect data) for bottleneck courses for previous Fall (Spring)*	QEP Director and VP Student Affairs/Enrollment Mgt.
	Implement grading practices/learning outcome surveys/course evaluations used for collecting learning outcomes for initial bottleneck courses (Spring)	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director
	Use selected parts of the "summative" symposium to create an initial, limited faculty development workshop for New Faculty Orientation in order to emphasize the student success mission of UHD (Summer)	QEP Director, QEP Council, Active Learning Specialist, Lead Teachers, Dean UC, Coordinator of SI
	Review, reflect on, and assess yearly QEP activities from all areas (Summer)*	QEP Director and QEP Council
	Submit annual written status report to Provost and Academic Affairs Council (Summer)*	QEP Director
2007-08 Year 2	Begin executing the QEP model for faculty and curriculum development in Hist 1305 (Fall)	Department Program Committee, Lead Teacher, Department Chair, QEP Director
	Conduct brainstorming sessions and/or mini-retreats to assess and disseminate prior year's activities, as well as to continue developing ideas for curriculum innovation in bottleneck courses (including curricular redesign to better accommodate active learning strategies, if necessary) (Fall)	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director
	Solicit proposals for release time to develop active learning curriculum materials for various "threshold" courses from faculty or units campus-wide (Fall)*	QEP Director and QEP Council
	Design and begin implementing assessment procedures for curriculum development grants (Fall)	QEP Director
	Research further technology needed for assessment purposes; evaluate and update assessment procedures for bottleneck courses	QEP Director and Assoc. VP of Information Technology
	Active learning faculty specialist begins developing an active learning/student engagement resource library in cooperation with library staff (Fall)	Active Learning Specialist, Library Director, QEP Director
	Active learning faculty specialist begins liaisoning with and advising bottleneck course lead teachers on active learning strategies (Fall)	Active Learning Specialist and QEP Director
	Active learning faculty specialist continues developing expertise in contemporary active learning strategies*	Active Learning Specialist and QEP Director

	Summarize learning outcomes/course evaluation data (direct data) for bottleneck courses for previous Spring (Fall)*	QEP Director
	Conduct on-line survey available to all UHD faculty to collect feedback on faculty interests and attitudes towards QEP activities (Fall)*	QEP Director and QEP Council
	Begin acquiring audience response systems and other technology needed to support new curricular materials and curriculum redesigns	QEP Director and Assoc. VP of Information Technology
	Continue developing reusable curriculum materials to improve learning outcomes in bottleneck courses; faculty begin implementing requisite curricular redesigns in bottleneck courses	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director, QEP Council
	Continue adapting active learning strategies and courseware for bottleneck courses from off-campus*	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director, QEP Council
	Award next round of curriculum development grants and assess projects from the prior year that have been completed (Spring)*	QEP Director, QEP Council, Department Chairs, Deans
	Hold second "summative" year-end symposium to report to the university community the results of QEP activities. Second-year symposium focuses on presentations by faculty, staff, and students participating in QEP activities.	QEP Director, QEP Council, Active Learning Specialist, Lead Teachers, Dean UC, Coordinator of SI
	Invite speakers or specialists in active learning, student engagement, or student affairs that may appeal to the broader university community, as funds permit*	QEP Director, QEP Council, Active Learning Specialist
	Use selected parts of the "summative" symposium to expand the faculty development workshop for New Faculty Orientation (Summer)	QEP Director, QEP Council, Active Learning Specialist, Lead Teachers, Dean UC, Coordinator of SI
	Continue faculty surveys used for collecting learning outcomes for bottleneck courses (Spring)*	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director
2008-09 Year 3	Conduct brainstorming sessions and/or mini-retreats to assess and disseminate prior year's activities, as well as to select a "core" set of curriculum innovations or active learning strategies to adopt across all sections of bottleneck courses (Fall)	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director
	Continue implementing/practicing assessment procedures for curriculum development grants*	QEP Director
	Acquire further technology needed for assessment purposes; adjust assessment procedures for bottleneck courses based on prior year's evaluation	QEP Director and Assoc. VP of Information Technology
	Active learning faculty specialist continues developing an active learning/student engagement resource library in cooperation with library staff*	Active Learning Specialist, Library Director, QEP Director
	Active learning faculty specialist continues liaisoning with and advising bottleneck course lead teachers*	Active Learning Specialist and QEP Director
	Continue acquiring audience response systems or other technology needed to support new curricular materials and curriculum redesigns*	QEP Director and Assoc. VP of Information Technology

	Continue developing reusable curriculum materials to improve learning outcomes in bottleneck courses; faculty continue implementing requisite curricular redesigns in bottleneck courses*	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director, QEP Council
	Hold third "summative" year-end symposium to report to the university community the results of QEP activities. Third-year symposium focuses on fostering a Faculty Learning Community centered on active learning/student engagement.	QEP Director, QEP Council, Active Learning Specialist, Lead Teachers, Dean UC, Coordinator of SI
	Continue using selected parts of the "summative" symposium to conduct a faculty development workshop for New Faculty Orientation (Summer)*	QEP Director, QEP Council, Active Learning Specialist, Lead Teachers, Dean UC, Coordinator of SI
2009-10 Year 4	Continue conducting brainstorming sessions and/or mini-retreats to assess and disseminate prior year's activities in the bottleneck courses (Fall)*	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director
	Plan intradepartmental faculty development workshops to introduce "core" set of curriculum innovations or active learning strategies, or to tutor faculty in the use of new courseware and redesigned curricula for bottleneck courses (Fall)	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director
	Acquire further technology needed for assessment purposes*	QEP Director and Assoc. VP of Information Technology
	Active learning faculty specialist begins researching the opportunities and requirements for publishing scholarship arising from QEP-sponsored activities	Active Learning Specialist and QEP Director
	Hold fourth "summative" year-end symposium to report to the university community the results of QEP activities. Fourth-year symposium continues fostering a Faculty Learning Community centered on active learning/student engagement.	QEP Director, QEP Council, Active Learning Specialist, Lead Teachers, Dean UC, Coordinator of SI
	Conduct intradepartmental faculty development workshops for bottleneck courses (Spring)	Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director
	2010-11 Year 5	Continue conducting intradepartmental faculty development workshops for bottleneck courses (Fall)
Implement core set of curriculum innovations or active learning strategies across all sections of bottleneck courses (Fall)		Department Program Committees, Lead Teachers, Department Chairs, QEP Director
Active learning faculty specialist continues researching the opportunities and requirements for publishing scholarship arising from QEP-sponsored activities		Active Learning Specialist and QEP Director
Hold final "summative" year-end symposium to report to the university community the results of QEP activities. Final symposium focuses on exploring practical ways for Faculty Learning Community to publish scholarship arising from QEP-sponsored activities.		QEP Director, QEP Council, Active Learning Specialist, Lead Teachers, Dean UC, Coordinator of SI
Summarize learning outcomes data for bottleneck courses for previous Spring (Summer)		QEP Director
Review, reflect on, and assess QEP activities from all areas over the life of the plan (Summer)		QEP Director and QEP Council
Submit five-year written report to Provost and Academic Affairs Council, analyzing the overall results of the QEP and recommending future directions (Summer)		QEP Director