



R E A S O N

SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation Town Meeting

Focused Report


Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

On-Site Review Team Visit



FEBRUARY 2008

Agenda

- Greetings and Overview
- SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation: Process and Reports
- **Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)**  REASON
- Discussion

Purpose

- Inform campus community about SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation On-Site Review Team visit (March 25-27, 2008)
- Present the final draft of the NSU **QEP** to campus and ensure a thorough understanding of the Plan by various campus constituencies
- Seek campus feedback on the **QEP** to facilitate effective implementation of the Plan



REASON

**QEP, presentation slides, and
video recording are posted at**

www.nsu.edu/iea



**SACS REAFFIRMATION OF
ACCREDITATION:
PROCESS AND REPORTS**

Reaffirmation Process: Overview

- Comprehensive analysis of all aspects of institutional operation by a team of peer reviewers and SACS staff
- Last NSU reaffirmation of accreditation review in 1998
- Significant changes in SACS reaffirmation of accreditation review process in 2004
- Importance of accreditation
 - Recognition and approval of NSU degrees by higher education community
 - Eligibility for federal funding (e.g., student financial aid, federal research grants)

Reaffirmation Process: Major Stages and Documents

I. Off-Site Review / November 2007

- ❖ *NSU Compliance Certification Report* submitted in September 2007
- ❖ Positive feedback
- ❖ Additional information requested for only **9** (out of 70+) requirements and standards in the areas related to:
 - Faculty qualifications and evaluation (3)
 - Financial audit data (2)
 - Administrators' evaluations (2)
 - Graduates job placement rates and graduate school acceptance rates (1)
 - Student complaint cases (1)

Reaffirmation Process: Major Stages and Documents (Cont'd)

II. On-Site Review / March 25-27, 2008

❖ *Focused Report*

- ❖ NSU responses (additional information) to **9** Compliance Certification follow-up items

❖ **15** *Compliance Certification Report* items required by the federal government for on-site review. E.g.,

- ❖ Program / unit assessment reports
- ❖ Student support services
- ❖ Faculty and program coordinators
- ❖ All Federal Requirements (job placement rates, curriculum content and length, recruitment practices, financial aid documentation, etc.)

❖ *Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)*

- ❖ Other areas chosen for review by the On-Site team

Reaffirmation Process: Major Stages and Documents (Cont'd)

III. SACS Commission on Colleges Review / Summer-Fall 2008

- ❖ NSU Response Report to On-Site Team findings
(if any)

IV. SACS Decision / December 2008



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**QUALITY ENHANCEMENT
PLAN (QEP): 2008-2013**

R.E.A.S.O.N.:

Creating Coherent Pathways

To Develop Critical Thinking Skills In Student

**QEP, presentation slides, and
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So, What is the QEP?

- SACS Reaffirmation of Accreditation Core Requirement 12
- The QEP is
 - A focused course of action
 - Designed to address important institutional issues
 - Directly related to improving specific student learning outcomes
 - New / substantial development

QEP Focus



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What is the Purpose of the NSU QEP?

- **CRITICAL THINKING**
- The NSU QEP is designed to instill in NSU students skills and dispositions to
 - Analyze, criticize, synthesize and advocate ideas
 - Reason holistically in an inductive and deductive manner, and
 - Reach factual or judgmental conclusions based on sound inferences drawn from integrated and diverse frames of reference, in an attempt to respond to a variety of issues.

What are the Intended Outcomes of the NSU QEP?

R.E.A.S.O.N.

- NSU graduating students will be able to:
 - **R**eflect on information presented in diverse media and diverse frames of reference to identify main ideas, themes, and assumptions and make comparative judgments from data.
 - **E**valuate the validity and limitations of assumptions in relation to evidence and identify limitations and contradictions in an event.
 - **A**rgue to effectively advocate ideas and alternative solutions; identify, develop, and evaluate arguments and issues.
 - **S**olve problems in creative, efficient, and effective ways to demonstrate creative problem-solving skills.
 - **O**btain desired goals or outcomes by assessing potential deviations from such outcomes; evaluate and implement a plan to work towards a goal or conclusion.
 - **N**etwork to communicate ideas, alternative solutions, and desired outcomes in a variety of media and in diverse frames of reference; communicate the results, findings, and recommendations in a variety of media.

What is the Goal of the QEP?

- To implement a commonly agreed upon core definition of critical thinking (which is not intended to replace more comprehensive definitions at the discipline level)
- To develop strategies to build, sustain, and assess critical thinking skills using focused, intentional, and somewhat uniformly applied approaches at the general core level.

QEP Background



How was the NSU QEP Developed?

- Timeline
 - QEP Background information dissemination
 - Identification of theme
 - Work on proposal
 - Discussions
- Main Contributors
 - QEP Committee
 - Proposal Writing Team and QEP Pilot Team
 - Critical Thinking Assessment Committee
 - Pre-Proposal Authors and Pre-Proposal Review Team
 - Summer Academy Teams (faculty, students, staff)

Why Focus on Critical Thinking?

- Critical thinking is an important goal of higher education: often preached, *but* rarely explicitly addressed and/or documented (*re: higher education goals*)
- Critical thinking skills are an essential tool of human empowerment (*re: HBCU tradition*)
- Critical thinking skills are absolutely necessary for effective functioning in a global, rapidly changing society (*re: NSU mission*)

Why Focus on Critical Thinking? (Cont'd)

- Critical thinking was identified as a common theme in the NSU QEP pre-proposals
- Students' critical thinking skills is a common concern among NSU faculty members
- Demonstration of critical thinking skills is required by professional licensures and accreditations (e.g., teacher education, nursing, social work)
- Documented gap between NSU student perceptions of their development of critical thinking skills (high) and performance on direct critical thinking assessments (relatively low)

What is the Theoretical Background of the QEP?: Perry's Model

- William Perry's *Theory of Intellectual and Ethical Development*
 - Critical thinking: Multiple perspectives
 - Global complex world
 - Effective communication and collaboration
 - Character development
 - Stage development of critical thinking

Why is Perry's Model?

- Developmental/empowerment perspective:
Critical thinking skills can be developed
 - Re: NSU QEP Guiding Principle 1
- Stages of Perry's model are aligned with NSU
Critical Thinking dimensions
 - QEP, p.vi

Why is Perry's Model (Cont'd)

- Perry's theory provided the foundation for subsequent major models of cognitive development. For example,
 - King & Kitchener's *Reflective Judgment Model*
 - Baxter Magolda's *Epistemological Reflection Model*
- Not only does Perry's theory conceptualize the idea of critical thinking (similar to Facione or Paul), but it also explicitly takes a developmental perspective and provides a solid foundation for systemic design of practical specific targeted pedagogical, co-curricular, and assessment applications to facilitate sequentially progressive logical development of critical thinking skills in students. For example,
 - Lee Knefelkamp's comprehensive work on developing university-wide approaches to facilitating critical thinking skills in students
 - Craig Nelson's illuminatingly simple and effective applications of Perry's model in classroom settings
 - Stonewater's valuable application of Perry's model in developing residence halls programs
 - Baxter Magolda's and Dary Erwin's instruments to measure student progression in developing higher order cognitive skills

How Will the NSU QEP Be Implemented?

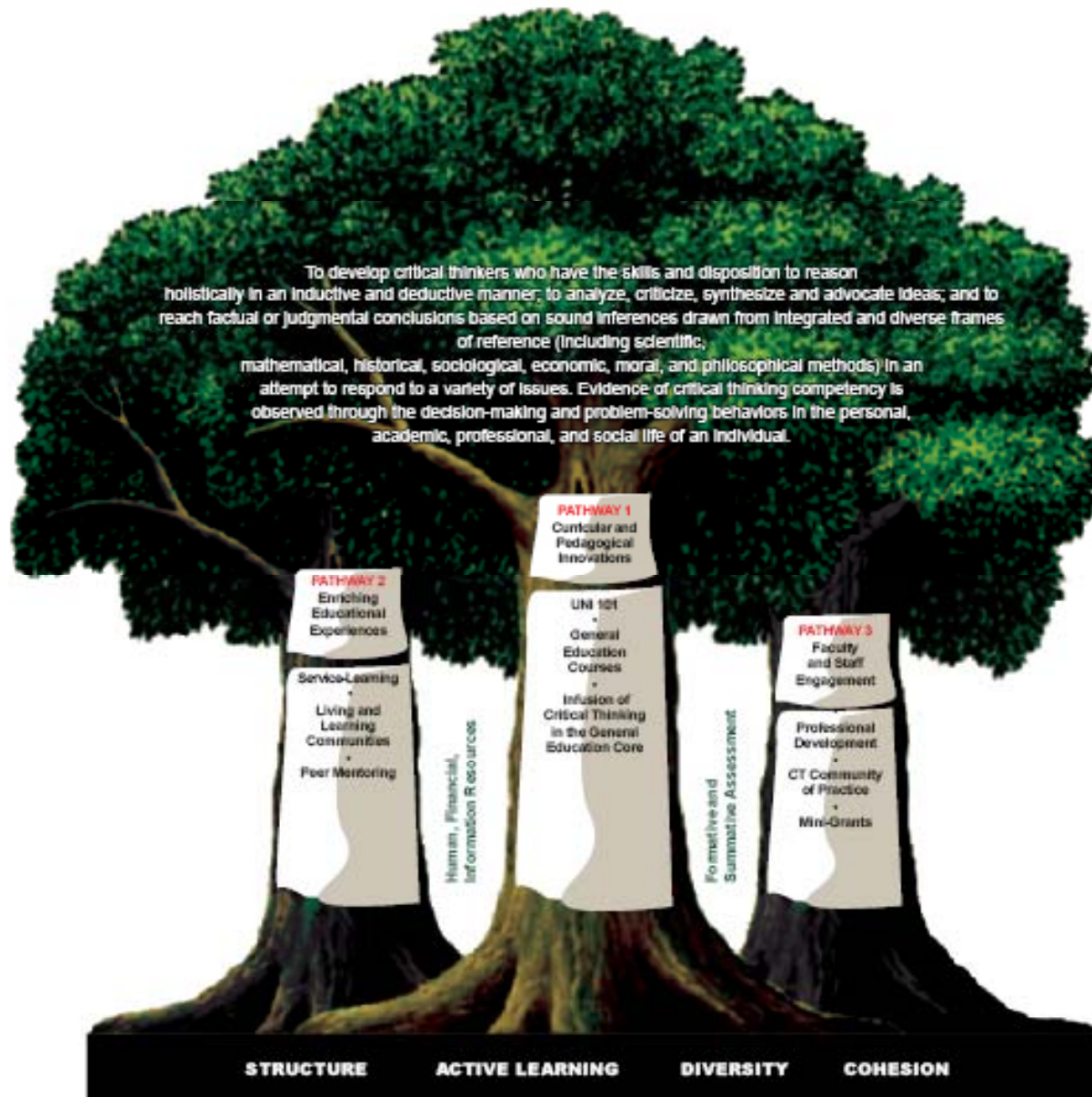
The QEP is not a blueprint but, rather, a general formulation that serves to guide institutional learning and action in developing critical thinking skills in students through intentional experimentation and systematic evaluation of possible answers and solutions

QEP Implementation Pathways



R.E.A.S.O.N.

Creating Coherent Pathways to Develop Critical Thinking Skills in Students



How Will the NSU QEP Be Implemented?

- Implementation Pathway 1
 - **Curricular and pedagogical innovations**
- Implementation Pathway 2
 - **Enriching Educational Experiences (*E3*)**
- Implementation Pathway 3
 - **Faculty and Staff Engagement**

How Will the NSU QEP Be Implemented?

Pathway 1: Curriculum and Pedagogies

- Proposed General Education core revision
 - Tier 1
 - Tier 2
- Active pedagogies
- Information literacy

How Will the NSU QEP Be Implemented?

Pathway 1: Curriculum and Pedagogies (Cont'd)

- Proposed General Education core revision
 - Tier 1
 - 27 credit hours
 - Develop an awareness in students that knowledge is not absolute and different points of view exist among experts
 - Students will be able to reflect on the information presented in diverse media and diverse frames of reference to
 - Identify main ideas, themes, and assumptions
 - Make comparative judgments from data

How Will the NSU QEP Be Implemented?

Pathway 1: Curriculum and Pedagogies (Cont'd)

- Proposed General Education core revision (Cont'd)
 - Tier 2
 - 13 credit hours
 - Emphasize and reinforce the fundamental principles and processes of inquiry underlying effective reasoning
 - Students will be able to
 - Evaluate the validity and credibility of suppositions
 - Use an inferential ladder to articulate and analyze assumptions underlying decisions
 - Propose solutions to problems or issues

How Will the NSU QEP Be Implemented?

Pathway 2: Enriching Educational Experiences

- Enhancement of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement program
- Enhancement of Living and Learning Communities
- Enhancement of Peer Tutoring and Peer Mentoring programs

How Will the NSU QEP Be Implemented?

Pathway 3: Faculty and Staff Engagement

- Critical Thinking Communities of Practice
- Critical Thinking Resource Materials
- Comprehensive Faculty Development Program
 - Stipends / mini-grants
 - Workshops and seminars
 - Conferences and Summer Institutes

What Resources Are Allocated to QEP Implementation?

- Budget
 - Almost \$2M over five years // ~\$400K annually
- Comprehensive Faculty Development Program
 - Critical Thinking Communities of Practice
 - Stipends
 - Workshops / Conferences / Summer Institutes
- Coordination Structure
 - Office of Quality Enhancement and Critical Thinking Studies
 - Director
 - Administrative Assistant

What Is New in the QEP?

Don't We Already Develop Critical Thinking Skills in Our Students?

- What is New in the QEP?
 - Intentionality
 - Planning *and* resources
 - Formative feedback mechanisms
 - Documentation
 - Summative evaluation of the QEP impact
 - Systemic approach
 - The QEP is “everyone’s business”

Don't We Already Develop Critical Thinking Skills in Our Students?

- What is New in the QEP? QEP:
 - Is based on the consensus on the importance of the QEP focus
 - “Colleagues lament about the dearth of critical thinking in students”
 - Focuses on affirming and developing NSU faculty as critical thinking experts
 - Relies on the subject expertise of instructors to infuse critical thinking in courses
 - Offers faculty and staff proof of their hard work in educating NSU students

QEP: Roles, Responsibilities, and Benefits

What Will Be My Role in QEP Implementation?

- Faculty Members Teaching General Education Courses
 - Attending faculty development workshops
 - Joining a Critical Thinking Community of Practice
 - Participating in curriculum review of general education core
 - Developing and infusing critical thinking pedagogies in classroom activities
 - Developing assessment tools to document and facilitate student learning
 - *Other roles?*

What Will Be My Role in QEP Implementation? (Cont'd)

- Faculty Members Who Do Not Teach General Education Courses
 - Providing constructive formative feedback to General Education Council on how well general education core prepares students for work in their majors
 - Preparing students for professional / licensure exams that require demonstration of advanced critical thinking skills
 - Working with Student Affairs, SGA, and GSA to facilitate peer mentoring and peer tutoring in departmental clubs and organizations
 - *Other roles?*

What Will Be My Role in QEP Implementation? (Cont'd)

- Students
 - Understand what critical thinking is and why it is important for an educated person and successful professional
 - Participate in classroom and co-curricular critical thinking activities
 - Be responsible and pro-active peer tutors and mentors
 - Challenge instructors and staff to design activities facilitating development of critical thinking skills
 - Participate in various critical thinking assessment efforts
 - Strive to demonstrate critical thinking in daily activities
 - *Other roles?*

What Will Be My Role in QEP Implementation? (Cont'd)

- Staff
 - Challenge and support students and faculty
- Administrators
 - Coordination
 - General education core courses
 - General Education – Majors
 - Academic Curriculum – Co-Curriculum Activities
 - Support
 - Training
 - Resources
 - *Other roles?*

How Can I Get Involved in QEP Implementation?

- Read QEP Executive Summary and share your thoughts with QEP Committee
- Share QEP Executive Summary with your colleagues
- Talk about QEP with students in the classrooms and offices
- Suggest critical thinking resources (books, articles, pedagogical techniques, assessment tools)
- Attend QEP Information Sessions in Spring - Fall 2008
- Join a Critical Thinking Community of Practice in Fall 2008
- Apply for a mini-grant in Fall 2008
- *Other ways to get involved?*

What Are the Benefits of QEP Implementation for the NSU Community?

- Student Benefits
 - Major
 - Graduate Studies
 - Competitive edge at the workplace
 - *Other?*
- Faculty Benefits
 - “Create a less frustrating atmosphere for instruction”
 - “...discoursal process would become as fulfilling and rewarding as in the days of yore”
 - *Other?*

What Are the Benefits of QEP Implementation for the NSU Community? (cont'd)

- NSU Benefits
 - Engaging in critical thinking “as a fuel for efficient and satisfactory operations university wide”
 - Improved retention and graduation rates
 - Improved institutional image
 - *Other?*
- Employers Benefits
 - Productive employees
 - *Other?*

What's Next?

- March 25-27, 2008 On-Site Review Team Visit
- Spring-Summer 2008, SACS-COC review
- December 2008, SACS reaffirmation decision
- Fall 2008-Spring 2013, QEP Implementation
- **2013, *QEP Impact Report* is due to SACS**

How Will the QEP Be Evaluated?

- SACS On-Site Review Committee, February-March 2008
- SACS Commission on Colleges, Spring-Summer 2008
- Evaluation Criteria:
 - Clear, specific focus of the QEP on student learning
 - Sufficient institutional resources allocated to support QEP implementation
 - Comprehensive assessment plan to provide formative and summative information on QEP Implementation
 - Broad-based campus involvement in QEP development and implementation



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QEP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Help us enhance the NSU QEP by sharing key questions related to the QEP and encouraging answers from the faculty, students, staff, administrators, alumni, employers, and community partners.

Question 1

How can we get faculty, students, and administrators to buy into the merit and longevity of this intentional critical thinking effort?

Question 2

What effective curriculum approaches and classroom pedagogies can you suggest to facilitate the development of critical thinking skills in NSU students?

Question 3

What effective co- and extra-curriculum activities can you suggest to facilitate the development of critical thinking skills in NSU students?

Question 4

How would we know that students had developed better critical thinking skills while at NSU?

What effective and manageable assessment strategies and instruments can you suggest to measure the development of critical thinking skills in NSU students?

Question 5

How can NSU administration facilitate and ensure effective QEP implementation?

Do we need a stick as well as carrots to encourage meaningful participation in QEP implementation? For example, should participation be rewarded directly through portfolio / merit pay process?

Question 6

How can SGA, GSA, non-academic units (e.g., Student Affairs, Enrollment Management), alumni, community partners engage in QEP implementation in meaningful ways?

Question 7

How do we assess effectiveness and impact of QEP-related workshops, conferences, and information sessions like this one?

How do we disseminate information/knowledge received/gained at the workshops, conferences, information sessions?

Other Questions?

????????????????



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THANK YOU!

Please share these questions with your colleagues and e-mail your responses, comments, questions, and/or concerns re: QEP to

Dr. Charles Ford, Co-Chair, QEP Committee

chford@nsu.edu

or

Dr. Alexei Matveev, QEP Committee Support Staff

agmatveev@nsu.edu

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