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Revised
Quality Enhancement Plan



Engagement Drives GPC Education

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Quality Enhancement Plan

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Executive Summary

Resulting from a broad-based process involving faculty, staff and students, Georgia Perimeter College (GPC) has developed a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) based on using engaged learning practices in targeted courses to improve selected outcomes. The QEP is titled “EDGE: Engagement Drives GPC Education.” As part of the QEP, 11 courses have been chosen to receive EDGE interventions. Courses targeted for EDGE interventions were selected based on being taken by (or required for) large numbers of students, having undesirably high non-success (grades of D or F or course withdrawal) rates, and representing multiple disciplines and curricular areas.

Faculty teaching targeted courses will be trained in specific EDGE strategies starting the spring semester before implementation in their courses. Four EDGE strategies were selected for implementation based on review of the literature and best practices: 1) two forms of active learning: a) collaborative learning and b) problem-based learning, and 2) two forms of community-based learning: a) service learning and b) community-based research. The degree to which EDGE strategies are actually implemented in the targeted courses will be assessed using multiple measures.

This QEP aims to change behaviors, attitudes, and learning outcomes. **Behaviors:** Students will be more likely to persist in their courses and to be retained at the college; faculty will increase their focus and skills in making their courses engaging. **Attitudes:** Students will perceive their courses as more relevant and will report greater engagement both in targeted courses and as part of their overall college experience. **Learning outcomes:** Students will improve in their ability to make connections between course content and real-world issues, and will perform better on assessments of course content.

Targeted outcomes will be assessed before and after implementation of EDGE strategies, with EDGE strategies being implemented in two to three courses per year over the five-year span of the QEP.

Process Used to Develop the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)

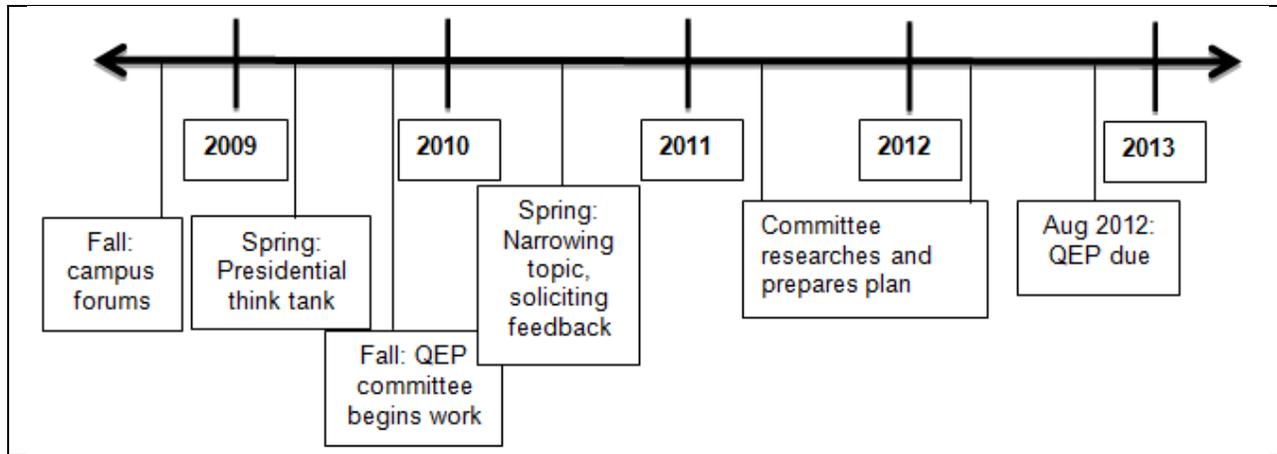
Georgia Perimeter College (GPC) began work to develop the QEP in Fall 2008. Former GPC President Anthony Tricoli initiated a QEP planning process involving faculty, staff, students, and the community. A series of open forums [1] was held between October 28, 2008 and November 4, 2008 on the four largest GPC campuses with the president emphasizing that the QEP should be built around GPC's strategic plan and mission statement. Comments and suggestions from the forums were collected and posted on GPC's website [2, 3, 4, 5]. More than 80% of the comments expressed during these forums indicated an interest in increasing student engagement inside and outside the classroom.

One topic that emerged from these open forums was an interest in expanding use of service learning to enhance and encourage student learning. To nurture this interest, GPC sponsored a two-day "Think Tank" [6] in January of 2009, led by Mr. Luciano Ramos from Florida Campus Compact. The Think Tank was attended by 27 faculty and staff members and administrators ([Appendix 1](#)). An additional 15 faculty members attended a workshop on service learning on GPC's Faculty Development Day in March 2009, providing further evidence of faculty interest in service learning.

Follow-up surveys were sent to GPC faculty members to determine what types of student engagement techniques were already being employed in the classroom. Survey results revealed considerable faculty interest in using service learning as an instructional pedagogy. Although only 6 of the 29 respondents indicated that they were already using service learning in their courses, 26 of the 29 respondents (90%) indicated an interest in learning more about particular student engagement strategies [7]. GPC opened the Atlanta Center for Civic Engagement and Service Learning (ACCESL) in February 2010, with a mission to support faculty in providing students with meaningful service learning opportunities.

In Fall 2009, GPC created a QEP Steering Committee made up of faculty, staff, students, and community representatives. The committee included faculty members from all five campuses as well representation from various functional areas of the college ([Appendix 2](#)). Rotating members were appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA); faculty and department chairs were appointed to serve three-year terms with the option of being reappointed for second terms, and Student Government Association representatives were appointed for one-year terms. The president charged this committee with the development of GPC's Quality Enhancement Plan.

The Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, Dr. Pamela Moolenaar-Wirsiy, was asked to chair the QEP Steering Committee. The committee began meeting on a monthly basis to establish a process and timeline for selection of a QEP topic and ultimate submission of the QEP. One of the committee's first tasks was to solicit suggestions for, to focus, and to develop the QEP topic. The committee created the timeline below to guide their activities.



In December 2009, the committee created six possible topics based on the suggestions that had been put forth:

1. **Connect and Succeed**
This topic suggests making connections with students during the first-year experience and helping them succeed with the second-year experience (advising, mentoring) with hopes of helping students to stay in college and succeed (transfer, graduate).
2. **Assessment by Students for Students**
Students would be guided on ways in which to assess themselves and one another in various classes.
3. **Interdisciplinary Threads**
This topic addresses the problem of students not being able to see the interconnectivity of a college education. The topic could utilize “teaching communities” so that faculty could work together on interdisciplinary classes, projects, etc.
4. **Active Student Learning**
Faculty would be able to customize the kind of active learning activities that they wanted to incorporate into their courses (problem-based learning, project-based learning, civic engagement/service learning, etc.).
5. **Making Learning Relevant**
This topic suggests integrating a broad-based topic or concept into courses typically taken during a student’s first year (ENGL, MATH, etc.). Faculty would be encouraged to use service learning, active learning, problem-based learning, or other engaged pedagogies.
6. **Enhancing [First Year] Student Success Through Engaged Learning**
Faculty would be encouraged to use a variety of engaged pedagogies and practices (problem-based learning, project-based learning, Web 2.0 technologies, interdisciplinary threads, and co-curricular activities) in the classroom in an effort to enhance student success.

The topics above were presented to the entire college community during the 2010 Fall Convocation program. During this convocation, Dr. Moolenaar-Wirsiy announced that QEP committee members would be hosting open forums on each campus, inviting faculty, staff, and students, so that input and suggestions could be offered to help narrow the focus of potential QEP topics.

QEP Steering Committee members facilitated focus group meetings during spring semester 2011. Focus group meetings were scheduled for each campus (including online), as well as for special groups such as the Faculty Senate and the Staff Senate. There were also special focus group sessions for the college's executive team, department chairs, and the Student Government Association. Online synchronous and asynchronous meetings were offered in order to get input from GPC's online students and faculty. Attendance records for these focus groups are provided in [Appendix 3](#).

To facilitate discussion during the focus group sessions, the steering committee prepared questions to be used as prompts for the sessions. The questions were adjusted as needed to suit faculty, staff, and students.

The prompts for faculty and staff focus groups were as follows:

- What type of student engagement activities do you employ in your teaching (active learning, civic engagement, service learning, problem-based learning, case studies, etc.)?
- Do you currently assess the usefulness of these engagement activities? If so, how?
- Which of the engagement tools listed would you like to use in your class(es) (or can you suggest others)?
- If you offer civic engagement or service learning (CE or SL) in your class(es), is it a required component, or optional?
- In your estimation, in which course(s) in your division would implementation of this topic be most suitable? Why?

The prompts for student focus groups were as follows:

- What type of student engagement activities does your instructor utilize in your courses? (active learning, civic engagement, service learning, problem-based learning, case studies)
- How do you feel about the usefulness of these engagement activities?
- Which of the engagement tools listed would you like your instructor to use in your class (or can you suggest others)?
- Have you been/are you enrolled in a course that offered a civic engagement or service learning (CE or SL) opportunity in your class(es)? Was/is it a required component, or optional?
- In your estimation, in which course(s) would implementation of this topic be most suitable? Why?

Focus group responses were analyzed by the QEP Steering Committee, and suggestions were compiled. The committee developed a Topic Checklist (below) to aid in evaluating the appropriateness of each of the topic proposals.

QEP Topic Proposal Checklist

October 28, 2009

	Does proposed topic extend, modify, redirect, or strengthen initiatives already underway?
	Does proposed topic “complement the institution’s ongoing, integrated, planning and evaluation process?”
	Is proposed topic aligned with GPC Strategic Plan?
	Does proposed topic contribute to institutional quality, with special attention to student learning?
	Does proposed topic include broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in the development and implementation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (List the constituencies and possible ways they’ll be involved)
	Can topic result in measurable changes in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Knowledge ▪ Skills ▪ Behaviors ▪ Or Values
	Will your faculty colleagues “buy” this proposed topic?
	Will student services “buy” this proposed topic?
	Will staff “buy” this proposed topic?
	Will community partners “buy” this proposed topic?
	Will there be long-term support for this proposed topic (financial, academic, student support)?
	Do we have baseline data to support this being a focus of the QEP?
	Draft three possible, measurable student learning outcomes for this topic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can students do (as a result of the proposed topic)? • What do students know (as a result of the proposed topic)? • What do students believe (as a result of the proposed topic)?

After extensive discussion during monthly committee meetings, the QEP topic suggestions were consolidated into one overarching theme: enhancing student success through engaged learning. The committee further subdivided the theme into the following topics related to learning inside and outside the classroom, and strategies were suggested for each:

1. Engaged learning inside the classroom
 - Problem-based learning
 - Project-based learning
 - Active learning
 - Technology Tools (Web 2.0 Tools, etc.)
 - Interdisciplinary threads
2. Engaged learning outside the classroom
 - Engaged learning in the community (service learning and civic engagement)
 - Engaged learning in co-curricular activities

Since part of GPC's stated mission [8] is to ". . . provide relevant, responsive, learner-centered higher education . . ." the selected topic is clearly linked to GPC's mission.

At the July 2011 QEP committee meeting, Adam Stone, Associate Professor of Political Science, created an acronym that became the QEP's title: "EDGE: Engagement Drives GPC Education." The acronym was accepted unanimously as an embodiment of the proposed, narrowed topic that would ultimately become the QEP.

The EDGE as GPC's QEP topic was presented to the entire college community during the 2011 Fall Convocation program (Aug. 15, 2011). The introduction of EDGE to the college community was continued throughout the fall semester with activities aimed at making EDGE visible on all GPC campuses. "What is the EDGE?" slides were displayed on all campus flat-panel, closed-circuit televisions. QEP committee members attended student Welcome Week activities, which featured t-shirts and balloons with the words "What is the EDGE?" printed on them. Students were urged to answer the question "What is the EDGE?" (Many had heard of the EDGE but needed some help with what the acronym stood for) and were rewarded with cups of goodies.

The Office of Student Life also kept the EDGE momentum going by using EDGE as the theme of their Annual Student Leadership Conference, appropriately titled "Be the EDGE: Engage Yourself in Leadership" [9]. EDGE excitement also caught on with the newly formed Staff Senate; the theme of their inaugural staff development day was "Sharpen Your EDGE" [10]. To keep the EDGE on the forefront of faculty members' minds, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) instituted a workshop series (see [Appendix 4](#)) entitled "Bringing Learning to Life" for Spring 2012. In this workshop series, various engaged instructional strategies were explored to enhance the process of teaching and learning: contextual learning, collaborative learning, multiple intelligences, integrative learning, service/experiential learning, and use of games in instruction.

The ACCESL also piloted a service learning faculty development program named the Service Learning Faculty Fellows, which was a three-tiered program that provided in-depth training for Georgia Perimeter College faculty members interested in implementing service learning as a teaching methodology in their courses. Each tier of the program offered faculty members an opportunity to deepen their knowledge of service learning. The Service Learning Faculty Fellows program was open to all full-time GPC faculty members. Part-time instructors and other GPC staff were encouraged to participate in the ACCESL's other regularly scheduled service learning faculty development opportunities.

In Spring 2012, Dr. Sean Brumfield was appointed Executive Director of the QEP. Dr. Brumfield had been the Executive Director of the Atlanta Center for Civic Engagement and Service Learning at GPC and was reassigned to serve as the Executive Director of the Quality

Enhancement Plan. He was identified to lead the QEP effort because of his extensive experience working with faculty, staff and students involved in student engagement pedagogies inside and outside the classroom. Dr. Brumfield has overseen the Service Learning Faculty Fellows program at GPC since 2010.

References and Documentation

	Internal Link	External Link or Source
[1]	GPC web page with links to QEP open forums	http://depts.gpc.edu/governance/ofnotesqep.html
[2]	Notes from Newton QEP open forum	http://depts.gpc.edu/governance/qepopenforum_newton.pdf
[3]	Notes from Clarkston QEP open forum	http://depts.gpc.edu/governance/qepopenforum_clarkston.pdf
[4]	Notes from Decatur QEP open forum	http://depts.gpc.edu/governance/qepopenforum_decatur.pdf
[5]	Notes from Dunwoody QEP open forum	http://depts.gpc.edu/governance/qepopenforum_dunwoody.pdf
[6]	Presidential QEP Think Tank participants	http://depts.gpc.edu/governance/thinktankqep.html
[7]	Results of pre-faculty workshop engagement survey	http://depts.gpc.edu/qep/GPCFacultyEngagementSurveyPre-FacultyDayWorkshop.pdf
[8]	GPC Mission Statement	http://www.gpc.edu/catalog/strategic-plan
[9]	Annual Student Leadership Conference Flyer	No external link
[10]	Staff Development Day Flyer	No external link

Identification of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Topic

While the [previous section](#) outlines the [process](#) that went into the selection of the topic of engaged learning, this section focuses on the context in which the topic was chosen and the key decisions that were made in terms of refining the topic and developing plans for implementation.

Quick Overview of the **EDGE** QEP

Topic: **EDGE: Engagement Drives GPC Education.** The plan focuses on using engaged learning practices to enhance student outcomes.

Outcomes: **Instructors**

- Will increase their focus on and skills in making their courses engaging and relevant.

Students

- Will be more likely to persist in and complete their courses.
- Will be more likely to be retained at the college.
- Will perceive their courses as more relevant to their lives and careers.
- Will report greater engagement in courses using engaged learning strategies.
- Will report greater engagement as part of their overall college experience.
- Will improve in their ability to make connections between course content and issues of real-world significance.
- Will perform better on course-specific common end-of-course assessments.

Intervention: Instructors will be trained to incorporate four engaged learning strategies into their teaching of targeted courses. These four engaged learning strategies were selected based on reviews of the literature and best practices.

- Two forms of active learning:
 - Collaborative learning
 - Problem-based learning
- Two forms of community-based learning:
 - Service learning
 - Community-based research

The 11 courses targeted for EDGE intervention were chosen based on having historically high non-success (grades of D or F or course withdrawal) rates, being taken by large numbers of students, and representation of diverse areas of the curriculum.

Assessment: Multiple forms of assessment have been selected to measure:

- The degree to which engaged (EDGE) practices have been implemented in targeted courses,
- Student withdrawal/persistence rates within courses,
- Student retention rates at the college,
- Student perceptions of the relevance of EDGE-targeted courses,
- Student engagement in courses using engaged learning strategies,
- Overall student engagement with the college experience,

- Students' demonstrated ability to relate course content to real-world issues, and
- Course-specific learning outcomes.

Assessments will be conducted in targeted courses before and after the implementation of EDGE strategies and the results will be compared to evaluate the impact of engaged learning practices on student outcomes.

Institutional Context, Mission, and Strategic Plan

Georgia Perimeter College (GPC) is a large, urban/suburban, public access institution enrolling more than 25,000 students with five metropolitan Atlanta campuses located in DeKalb, Fulton, and Newton counties. Creating an engaging learning environment for students at an access institution such as GPC represents a significant issue germane to the overall improvement of student learning. GPC is unlike most two-year institutions outside of the state of Georgia in that its focus is almost entirely on preparing students for transfer to four-year institutions. While GPC does have a small number of career programs, institutions that are part of the Technical College System of Georgia provide most of the post-secondary career and technical education in the state.

The core of Georgia Perimeter College's (GPC's) mission is its role as a key point of entry for students into higher education in Georgia [1]. In support of the strategic plan of the University System of Georgia, GPC is committed to maintaining its role as the major provider of associate degrees and student transfer opportunities in the state [1]. Currently GPC admits more undergraduate students each Fall semester, accepts more transfer students and sends more students on to other institutions than any other USG institution, accounting for more than one-third of all transfer students in the system. Last year 24,024 students were enrolled in the GPC transfer program, and in FY 2010 (the most recent year for which University System of Georgia (USG) transfer data are available), nearly 4000 students successfully transferred to other institutions within the USG.

Selected Comparisons on GPC Transfers with USG, FY05 - FY10

Note: The USG did not produce an aggregated transfer feedback report for FY08.

Receiving Inst	Number Sent					% of All Transfers from GPC					% of Receiving Institution's Transfers from within USG				
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2008-09	2009-10	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2008-09	2009-10	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2008-09	2009-10
Georgia State	785	937	1,083	1,152	1,143	28.0	31.7	32.9	30.3	29.2	42.9	47.7	48.2	47.4	45.6
U of Georgia	577	558	520	500	467	20.5	18.9	15.8	13.2	11.9	26.2	24.2	24.4	20.2	19.0
Kennesaw State	374	373	398	497	528	13.3	12.6	12.1	13.1	13.5	25.6	24.5	24.7	27.6	26.5
Ga Gwinnett College			72	259	288			2.2	6.8	7.4			58.5	61.7	43.4
Georgia Tech	210	166	201	247	213	7.5	5.6	6.1	6.5	5.4	25.1	24.3	29.8	32.2	26.4
Clayton State	204	189	242	194	271	7.3	6.4	7.4	5.1	6.9	26.4	24.8	32.6	32.3	33.9
Receiving Inst	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2008-09	2009-10	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2008-09	2009-10	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2008-09	2009-10
Research Univs	1,588	1,683	1,837	1,919	1,837	56.6	56.9	55.8	50.5	46.9	30.9	32.2	34.7	32.6	30.9
Regional Univs	100	100	118	109	124	3.6	3.4	3.6	2.9	3.2	6.0	5.7	6.9	6.0	6.1
State Univs	943	975	1,016	1,100	1,260	33.6	33.0	30.9	28.9	32.2	16.7	16.8	17.7	17.6	18.1
State Colleges	101	153	257	551	535	3.6	5.2	7.8	14.5	13.7	10.5	9.6	13.8	22.5	19.0
2-Year Colleges	76	47	61	123	159	2.7	1.6	1.9	3.2	4.1	2.8	2.0	2.6	4.2	4.7
USG	2,808	2,958	3,289	3,802	3,915						17.4	17.7	19.4	19.6	18.5

As a two-year transfer institution, GPC's primary focus is and always has been on teaching. Indeed, the first goal of GPC's strategic plan is to ". . . strengthen student success" by providing "relevant and responsive learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom" [1]. This QEP provides GPC with the opportunity to explore the key question evolving from our mission

and strategic plan “*What teaching strategies will provide relevant and responsive learning opportunities that will lead to student success?*”

Fall 2011 Statistics – Student Profile

Total Enrollment

Headcount: 26,996
FTE: 20,466

Enrollment by Campus (*duplicated)

Alpharetta: 1,733
Clarkston: 7,073
Decatur: 3,851
Dunwoody: 9,066
Rockdale/Newton: 2,724
Distance Learning: 9,425

Student Classification

Freshman: 15,700
Sophomore: 9,614
Dual Enrollment: 868
Transient: 290
Other: 524

Other

Senior Citizen: 79
Non-US Citizens (Int'l. Students): 3,721
Average Age: 26.0
Median Age: 22
% Full-Time: 43.5%
% Part-Time: 56.5%

Enrollment by Type of Residency and Tuition Status

Georgia Residents: 24,626
Out of State: 1,131
Out of Country: 1,239

First Generation Students

Headcount: 3,090**
% New Student Enrollment: 36.1%

* Duplicated Headcount: A GPC student may have attended more than one campus location. In such a case, the student is counted once in each location category where they attended. As a result, if all the campus location category headcounts were added together, their sum would be larger than overall GPC headcount due to this duplication.

Student Gender

Female: 62.1%
Male: 37.9%

Ethnic Diversity

Asian: 8.9%
African American: 45.6%
Hispanic: 7.3%
Multiracial: 3.1%
Native American: 0.3%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific: 0.1%
White: 30.5%
Unknown/Undeclared: 4.1%

New Student Enrollment by Classification

Beginning Freshman: 4,632
Transfer Freshman: 1,970
Transfer Sophomore: 641
Dual Enrollment: 812
Transient: 171
Other: 233
Total: 8,459

Students Enrolled in Learning Support

Reading: 1,453
English: 1,743
Math: 5,180
Total (Unduplicated): 6,033

Enrollment in Transfer and Career Programs: Number Enrolled

Transfer: 24,024
***Career: 651
Undecided: 2,321

**First Generation Students: Student data based on New Student enrollment and is self reported on applications. Fall 2011 first year of reliable data.

*** Career Programs Include: Nursing, Dental Hygiene, Fire Management, Library & Information Science Tech, Medical Assisting, Sign Language Interpreting, and Surgical Technology

In addition to seeking a topic in line with GPC’s teaching mission and strategic plan, the QEP had to be appropriate for the student population served by the college. With almost 27,000 students on five campuses, GPC is the third-largest college in the state of Georgia. The average age of GPC students is 26, with approximately 44% of its students enrolled full-time and 56% part-time. GPC students come from diverse backgrounds: Asian (8.9%), African American (45.6%), Hispanic (7.3%), multiracial (3.1%), and White (30.5%). International students account for 15% of the total population and represent 157 countries.

The QEP Steering Committee also reviewed existing data on retention, progress, and graduation of students, course success and withdrawal rates, overall engagement, and critical thinking in developing the Quality Enhancement Plan. These data were already being collected as part of GPC's institutional effectiveness processes.

Data on GPC Student Success, Retention, Progression and Graduation

Retention and graduation rates have been issues for GPC since at least 2005, when this was raised as an issue within the University System of Georgia (USG). While GPC's retention rates (the percentage of students enrolling in fall of one year who are still enrolled the next fall) compare favorably with those of other two-year institutions in the USG, its graduation rates (counting only students who enter and graduate within three years) are low, even when compared with other two-year institutions.

FT/FT Student Retention & Graduation Data	
Retention	
Fiscal Year	Rate
FY 2009-10	57.6%
FY 2010-11	60.3%
Graduation	
FY 2006	8.74%
FY2007	9.54%
FY2008	7.68%

Source: Office of Institutional Research and Planning

GPC has made concerted efforts to increase completion and graduation rates over the past seven years. In February 2012, all USG institutions were asked to participate in Complete College Georgia, a statewide initiative to increase college graduation rates that is linked to the nationwide effort, Complete College America. As part of its commitment to the Complete College Georgia initiative, GPC has identified three key gateway courses with high non-success (withdrawal and grades of D or F) rates and is developing programs of support services to increase the pass rates in ENGL 1101, 1102, and MATH 1111 by 5%. While these courses overlap with those targeted for the EDGE initiative, the strategies to be implemented, the time frames, the coverage of courses, and the targeted outcomes are different.

While increasing graduation rates is an important goal, it is one that is not likely to produce measurable results over the five-year time frame of this QEP. Related to the issue of program completion and graduation is the shorter-term issue of persistence within courses. Students who withdraw from courses lose valuable time and money and become less likely to graduate within reasonable time frames. In deciding on a plan for the QEP, the QEP steering committee reviewed success rates in GPC courses, obtaining lists of courses with the highest non-success (grades of D and F or course withdrawal [DFW]) rates as potential targets for the EDGE intervention ([Appendix 5](#)). The college-wide list of courses included several learning support

(developmental) courses, which were not targeted for this initiative because they have already been targeted by other initiatives and are in the process of major revision at this time. The college-wide list of courses also listed courses with very high DFW rates that are not taken by very many students. Examples of the latter include MATH 2431 (Calculus I) and MATH 2432 (Calculus II). Therefore, the committee requested lists of courses with the highest DFW rates within each major academic division ([Appendix 6](#)). This yielded an expanded list of courses with high DFW rates. However, as before, some of the courses on the lists were learning support courses, and others were courses that are taken by relatively few students. To maximize the impact of the EDGE intervention, the QEP steering committee sought courses with high DFW rates that are taken by large number of students. Eleven courses (see table below) that met these criteria were targeted for intervention as part of the EDGE initiative.

Implementation	Course	Course (s)
Fall 2013	English 1101	History 1111
Fall 2014	English 1102	Mathematics 1001 and 1111
Fall 2015	Political Science 1101	Chemistry 1211
Fall 2016	English 2131	Accounting 2101
Fall 2017	Philosophy 2020	Psychology 1101

The FY 2011 enrollments in the targeted courses are shown in the table below.

Course	Semester	Semester Enrollment	Academic Year Enrollment
ACCT 2101	Fall 2011	899	1863
	Spring 2012	964	
CHEM 1211	Fall 2011	741	1435
	Spring 2012	694	
ENGL 1101	Fall 2011	5892	10931
	Spring 2012	5039	
ENGL 1102	Fall 2011	3226	7667
	Spring 2012	4441	
ENGL 2131	Fall 2011	461	931
	Spring 2012	470	

HIST 1111	Fall 2011	1815	3466
	Spring 2012	1651	
MATH 1001	Fall 2011	1037	1855
	Spring 2012	818	
MATH 1111	Fall 2011	3448	6346
	Spring 2012	2898	
PHIL 2020	Fall 2011	378	724
	Spring 2012	346	
POLS 1101	Fall 2011	3482	6808
	Spring 2012	3326	
PSYC 1101	Fall 2011	2584	4892
	Spring 2012	2308	

Selection of some courses was also influenced by a desire to include courses from each of the major academic divisions and by a desire to include “gateway” courses with high DFW rates that limit access or success in key programs of study.

Academic Divisions of EDGE-Targeted Courses

Business, Physical Education, and Sign Language Interpreting

ACCT 2101

English

ENGL 1101

ENGL 1102

ENGL 2131

Humanities and Fine Arts

PHIL 2020

Mathematics, Computer Sciences and Engineering

MATH 1001

MATH 1111

Science

CHEM 1211

Social Sciences

HIST 1111

POLS 1101

PSYC 1101

ENGL 1101 and 1102 were targeted because they are required for all students in all transfer programs of study. Since there is a required three-semester sequence of English courses, ENGL 1101 is taken relatively early in most students' college careers. Interventions in this course, therefore, have the potential to pay dividends by establishing engaged learning habits that may carry over to future coursework, both in EDGE-targeted courses and other courses.

ENGL 2131 is one of six alternatives for the third required English course. It was targeted due to being taken by a relatively large number of students and having rather high non-success rates.

MATH 1001 and MATH 1111 were targeted because all students in transfer programs (except those who place into higher levels of mathematics) must take one or the other of these courses. (MATH 1001 was a new course in Fall 2011, replacing MATH 1101, a course with relatively high DFW rates.) Since both of these mathematics courses have been targeted, virtually all students will experience EDGE-enhancements when they take their first collegiate mathematics courses.

POLS 1101 is required for all transfer students.

HIST 1111 is one of two alternative courses in world history. All students in transfer programs must take either HIST 1111 or 1112, and more students take HIST 1111 than HIST 1112.

PSYC 1101 is a very popular social sciences elective, taken by nearly 5,000 students a year. With relatively high DFW rates, this course seemed to be a good target for the EDGE initiative.

The fact that PHIL 2020 is one of the more popular humanities electives, paired with its relatively high DFW rates, made this course an appropriate target for EDGE interventions. (The number for this course was changed from PHIL 2641 to PHIL 2020 as of Spring 2011.)

CHEM 1211 was selected because it is a gateway course for students pursuing careers in the health sciences (one of the more popular majors) and it has DFW rates approaching 50%.

<p style="text-align: center;">GPC Core Curriculum</p> <p>Area A1: Communication Skills (6 hours) ENGL 1101 English Composition I (3) ENGL 1102 English Composition II (3)</p> <p>Area A2 – Quantitative Skills (3 hours) Choose one course from the following: [Students must earn at least a "C" in this course.] MATH 1001 Quantitative Skills and Reasoning (3) MATH 1111 College Algebra (3) MATH 1113 Pre-Calculus (3) MATH 2431 Calculus I (4)</p> <p>Area B: Institutional Foundations (4-6 hours) Required: COMM 1201 Public Speaking (3) Choose 1-3 hours from the following: PRSP 1010 Perspectives on Critical Issues (3) RSCH 1203 Research Strategies and Technology(1)</p>
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Foreign Language 1002 or higher (3)

Area C: Humanities, Fine Arts and Foreign Languages (6 hours)

Choose one class from Literature:

ENGL 2111 World Literature 1 (3)

ENGL 2112 World Literature II (3)

ENGL 2121 British Literature I (3)

ENGL 2122 British Literature II (3)

ENGL 2131 American Literature I (3)

ENGL 2132 American Literature II (3)

Choose one class from Humanities, Fine Arts or Foreign Languages

Humanities

FILM 1010 Introduction to Film (3)

HUMN 1301 Humanities through the Arts (3)

HUMN 1303 Aesthetic Expressions of Western Culture 1(3)

HUMN 1305 Aesthetic expressions of Western Culture II (3)

PHIL 2010 Survey of Philosophical Thought (3)

PHIL 2020 Logic and Critical Thinking (3)

PHIL 2030 Introduction to Ethics (3)

PHIL 2040 Philosophy of Art (3)

RELI 1301 World Religions (3)

THEA 1301 Theater Appreciation (3)

Fine Arts

ARTS 1301 Art Appreciation (3)

ARTS 1690 Art History: Prehistory-Renaissance (3)

ARTS 1692 Art History: Baroque to 20th Century (3)

ARTS 1694 Art History: Arts of Africa, Oceania and the Americas (3)

MUSC 1301 Music Appreciation (3)

MUSC 1303 Understanding Jazz (3)

Foreign Languages

Foreign Language 1002 or higher (3)

Area D Science, Mathematics and Technology (9-11 hours)

Science

Choose any two three hour courses with the corresponding one hour lab for each:

ASTR 1010 and ASTR 1010L Astronomy of the Solar System (4)

ASTR 1020 and ASTR 1020L Stellar and Galactic Astronomy (4)

BIOL 1402 and BIOL 1402L Cell Biology and Genetics (4)

BIOL 1403 and BIOL 1403L Diversity in the Living World (4)

BIOL 1407 and BIOL 1407L Plants, People and the Environment (4)

CHEM 1151 and CHEM 1151L Survey of Chemistry I (4)

CHEM 1152 and CHEM 1152L Survey of Chemistry II (4)

CHEM 1211 and CHEM 1211L Principles of Chemistry I (4)

CHEM 1212 and CHEM 1212L Principles of Chemistry II (4)

ENVS 1401 and ENVS 1401L Environmental Science (4)

GEOL 1121 and GEOL 1121L Physical Geology (4)

GEOL 1122 and GEOL1122L Historical Geology (4)

PHYS 1111 and PHYS 1111L Introductory Physics (4)

PHYS 1112 and PHYS 1112L Introductory Physics (4)

PHYS 2211 and PHYS 2211L Principles of Physics I (4)

PHYS 2212 and PHYS 2212L Principles of Physics II (4)

Mathematics and Computer Science

Choose one course from the following:

CSCI 1100 Introduction to Computing (3)

MATH 1113 Pre-Calculus (3)

MATH 1431 Introduction to Statistics (3)

MATH 1433 Applied Calculus (3)

MATH 2431 Calculus I (4)

MATH 2432 Calculus II (4)

Any science course with lab from the list above (4)

Area E: Social Sciences (12 hours)

United States Politics and History (6 hours)

Required:

POLS 1101 American Government (3)

Select one:

HIST 2111 United States History I (3)

HIST 2112 United States History II (3)

World History

Select one:

HIST 1111 A Survey of World History to Early Modern Times (3)

HIST 1112 A Survey of World History from Early Modern Times (3)

Social Science Foundations

Select one:

ANTH 1102 Introduction to Anthropology (3)

CRJU 1100 Introduction to Criminal Justice (3)

ECON 2105 Principles of Macroeconomics (3)

ECON 2106 Principles of Microeconomics (3)

ECON 2100 Global Economics (3)

GEOG 1101 Introduction to Human Geography (3)

POLS 2401 Global Issues (3)

PSYC 1101 Introduction to General Psychology (3)

SOCI 1101 Introductory Sociology (3)

ACCT 2101 is required only for students pursuing the business administration program of study, but this is the largest degree program at GPC. With DFW rates hovering around 35%, the high non-success rates in this course impact a large number of students.

Area F (Pre-major) Requirements

Business Administration Program of Study

F Courses appropriate to the Program of Study (18 hours)

Required courses:

ACCT 2101 Principles of Accounting I (3)

ACCT 2102 Principles of Accounting II (3)

BISM 2601 Business Information Systems (3)

BUSA 2106 The Environment of Business (3)

ECON 2105 Principles of Macroeconomics (3)

ECON 2106 Principles of Microeconomics (3)

Implementing EDGE interventions in the above core courses will allow GPC to impact up to 47,000 students in the first five years of EDGE implementation.

While non-success (DFW) rates were part of the initial criteria for selecting courses for EDGE interventions, a subsequent decision was made to target withdrawal rates and student learning in these courses, rather than DFW's per se. Since grades of "D" and "F" are subject to factors such as instructor bias and grade inflation, these were not considered good measures of learning outcomes. Withdrawal rates, which are the inverse of persistence rates, remain an important behavioral outcome targeted by the EDGE intervention. These outcomes are discussed in more detail in the sections on [Outcomes](#) and [Assessment](#).

Data on Student Engagement

As do many two-year institutions, GPC uses periodic administration of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) [2] to assess students' self-reported levels of engagement in a variety of activities and behaviors at the college. This survey was administered at GPC in 2005, 2008, and 2011, and is planned again for 2014 and 2017. The QEP Steering Committee initially reviewed the findings from the 2008 administration and later, when they became available, reviewed the findings from the 2011 CCSSE. The engaged behaviors reported on the CCSSE are thought to be highly correlated with student learning and retention.

Comparing the results of the 2008 and 2011 administrations of the CCSSE, GPC students showed significant increases in self-reported participation in student activities and service learning, indicating that students were becoming more involved in college activities and student learning projects. The percentage of students engaged in college sponsored activities increased from 20.0% in 2008 to 27.4% in 2011. The percentage of students reporting spending more than six hours per week in these activities nearly doubled in the three year period examined, from 4.3% to 7.9%. The percentage of students who said they participated in a community-based project increased from 22% in 2008 to 31.2% in 2011. Although change occurred in the desired direction, there remains ample room for improvement.

GPC is seeking even more emphasis on student engagement through the EDGE initiative in order to maximize student success. While student engagement with college activities is on the rise, in 2011 only 67.7% of survey respondents indicated that they sought assistance from faculty members or college staff persons when they experienced academic difficulties. The fact that nearly one out of every three GPC students failed to seek assistance when faced with academic difficulties suggests that the connection between faculty members and students needs strengthening. The [data from the 2005, 2008, and 2011 CCSSE](#) administrations are presented in more detail in the section on [Assessment](#).

Data on Student Achievement in Targeted Courses

As part of its ongoing efforts to assess institutional effectiveness, GPC periodically assesses each course offered at the college using a Common Course Assessment. These Common Course Assessments are based on the common learning outcomes established for each course and are administered to **all** sections of a given course offered in a semester in which assessment is conducted. Depending on the course content and intended learning outcomes, the common course assessments may consist of a series of multiple choice questions, a series of short-answer questions, essays that are scored according to rubrics, some combination of

these, or a nationally-normed standardized test. Typical targets for scores on these assessments would be for at least 70% of students to score 70% or higher on the Common Course Assessment. These targets are set by the curriculum committees, made up of faculty who teach the respective courses in the discipline. No matter what the format or the course, typical findings at GPC are that student achievement hovers somewhere around the target level, sometimes below, more rarely above.

The QEP Steering Committee saw clear opportunities for improving course-specific student learning outcomes through EDGE interventions. Although the EDGE interventions would not target course-specific learning outcomes directly, increasing student engagement might increase student motivation, in turn increasing achievement of desired student learning outcomes.

A GPC Initiative That Influenced the QEP Topic Selection

The Million-Dollar Difference Pilot Program

Findings from a recent GPC engagement pilot program also impacted the QEP Steering Committee's decision-making process. At a recent point in time mathematics had the lowest overall course persistence rates of any core curriculum department in the College. The Mathematics Department approached GPC's Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) to develop a plan to improve persistence and success in mathematics courses. A review of retention, literature, and best practices resulted in a simple program, focused around Astin's (1985) Theory of Involvement and the Tinto (1993) model that advanced the notion that student retention grows as academic and social integration grows within the formal and informal academic and social systems of a college. The Department of Mathematics, Computer Science, and Engineering titled this program "The Million-Dollar Difference," a reference to a Department of Labor study that found that staying in college and earning a degree enabled college graduates to earn more than \$1 million more in their lifetimes than their non-graduate counterparts.

The pilot program revolved around five simple academic interventions during the first three weeks of class that would take no more than 30 minutes total during the semester.

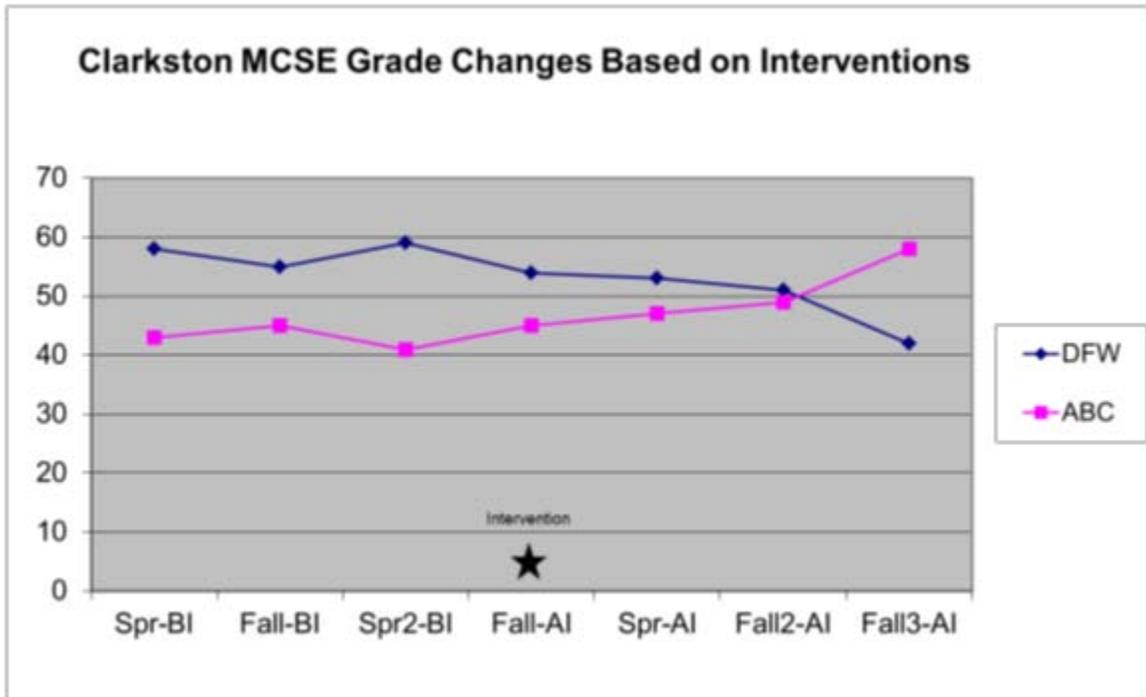
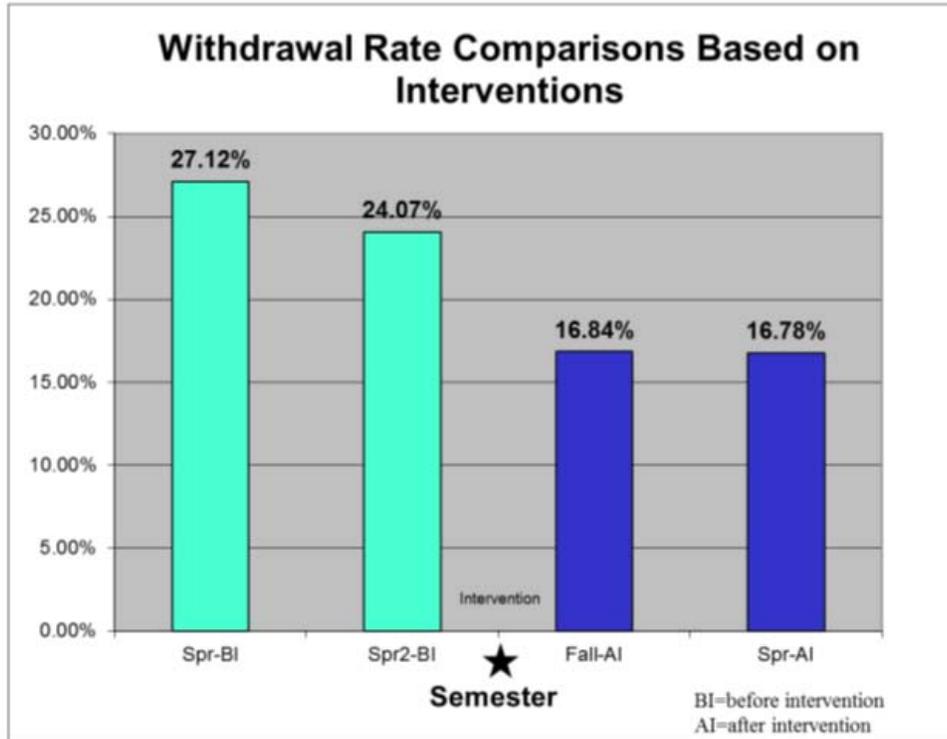
Retention literature had suggested that connections between faculty and students are key during the first three weeks of class. On the first day, faculty members wore nametags and introduced themselves, explaining why they chose mathematics as a career. This action was intended to humanize the faculty member to the students. In addition, the faculty members explained why math would be important to students in their futures and how what they learned in math classes was relevant to their success. In order to reduce the anonymity that has been associated with student withdrawals, students wrote their names on card stock paper tents placed on their desks, enabling both faculty members and fellow students to see their names. (Faculty members were requested to call students by their names throughout the semester from day one). Finally, the teacher explained that each student was to get the names and phone numbers of two other students in their class, nicknamed "Study Buddies," and write their information down on the wallet-sized cards provided for them, to be placed immediately in their wallets. The wallet cards also included their teacher's name, phone, office number, office hours, and the phone number and location of the mathematics tutoring center on campus. This first day was termed Connection Day, with a goal for students to connect with both the teacher and other students

On the second day of class, the teacher devoted five minutes to explaining that she/he wanted students to learn how to study better and to understand that the ways that students' optimal study habits could differ based on differing learning styles. Students were asked to take Solomon and Felder's [3] online learning styles inventory and return to class the next day with their learning style analysis. On the third day, returning with their learning style analyses, students were provided with optimal study strategies based on their learning styles. At the fourth class meeting, students were asked to use a classroom assessment technique known as the "Muddiest Point" (Angelo & Cross, 1993); students were given an index card at the end of class and asked to anonymously write what area of the material studied that day was the least clear and needed more explanation. Faculty then used these suggestions on the fifth day to clarify weak areas indicated.

On the final day of the intervention, students were asked to create brief tutorials explaining to other students how to understand/apply one of the mathematical concepts studied in the class to date. Students then shared their tutorials with the entire class, permitting them to have the experience of teaching a concept.

These interventions took no more than five minutes per day for the first six class sessions of the semester. At the end of the pilot, withdrawal rates had changed markedly. Despite the short and simple changes made, withdrawal rates in pilot classes dropped from 27.1% in the spring before the intervention to 16.8% in the fall after the intervention. Moreover, the drop in withdrawal rates was sustained at 16.8% in the spring after the intervention. (See graphs below.)

Mathematics instructors were surprised that minor interventions could significantly impact course persistence, and even more surprised that learning outcomes were also affected. During the pilot period, not only did DFW grades decline by 10% percent but ABC's increased by 12% percent. The two graphs below reflect withdrawal rate comparisons and grade distributions before, during, and after the intervention period. These striking results prompted the QEP Steering Committee to consider whether relatively simple engagement interventions could create a rich environment to support accomplishment of desired learning outcomes.



Existing Elements of GPC Culture Supporting Student Engagement

While the QEP Steering Committee identified areas in need of improvement at GPC, it also identified several ways that GPC has been successful in engaging students. The first of those is GPC's service learning program. The communities surrounding GPC's campuses are among

the most underserved in the greater Atlanta area, each with a multitude of community and environmental needs. High school dropouts, illiteracy, teen pregnancy, poverty, homelessness, hunger and food security, health illiteracy, environmental justice and sustainability, and immigrant/refugee issues are just a sampling of the many problems facing the communities in which GPC campuses are located.

Since its founding in 1964, GPC has demonstrated a commitment to meeting identified needs through service to its surrounding communities. GPC's service learning program, begun formally in 2010, but active on an informal basis long before that, provides students with meaningful service learning and civic engagement opportunities as an integral part of their GPC education. GPC maintains a resource center and central repository of information for students, faculty, staff, and other community members interested in addressing community-identified needs through service learning and other forms of experiential education. GPC's service learning program supports and develops student leaders, sponsors student academic scholarships, engages faculty in the scholarship of service learning (including the Service Learning Faculty Fellows program), nurtures community partnerships and relationships, and provides services to constituency groups engaged in making a positive difference in their communities. In 2011, GPC's Atlanta Center for Civic Engagement and Service Learning (ACCESL) had over 7,008 students participating in 75 different community placements with 40 community partners and logging over 183,000 service hours.

Beginning in 2010, Dr. Sean Brumfield operated a faculty development workshop series through the ACCESL for faculty members interested in incorporating service learning into their courses. In the spirit of continuous improvement, the program was modified in 2011 so that experienced practitioners mentored new faculty members, and success was celebrated through the use of a service learning faculty showcase. One result of this two-year experience is the creation of a faculty development model that works for GPC faculty members. This faculty development model will be further modified to incorporate the three other interventions of this QEP.

Commitment to the Focus on Engaged Learning: GPC's EDGE

For well over a year, a five-campus discussion was conducted as described earlier in the [Process](#) section. The discussion focused on several questions. How could GPC education be enriched to make it more relevant and connected to future real-world experiences? How could both in-classroom and out-of-classroom experiences be changed to maximize engagement between faculty and students and between students? How could classroom experiences use group activities, problem-solving, and communication to better prepare students for future careers? Various constituencies met online, face-to-face in town hall meetings and focus groups, and via surveys to reach every contingent of the GPC community. Over that year a clearer Steering Committee focus emerged, suggesting that the objectives implicit in the questions above could be accomplished through an aggressive engagement process, both inside and outside the classroom that made learning more relevant and engaging. With the acronym of EDGE (Engagement Drives GPC Education), the QEP Steering Committee began focusing on best practices and review of the literature, as explained further in the [Literature Review and Best Practices](#) section of this document. As the committee delved into what worked for others and more importantly, what would fit into the academic context and culture at GPC, the concept of engaged learning practices that could strengthen learning outcomes at GPC emerged and was refined into a coherent plan for change.

To answer the question of "What would this educational experience look like for our students?" the committee began to focus on how active learning strategies in the classroom would provide

the learning platform for a carefully designed QEP that fit our resources, culture, and student needs. Jones, Valdez, Nowakowski & Rasmussen’s (1994) “vision” of engaged learning strongly influenced the Steering Committee’s thinking about engaged learning. Jones et al. noted that

- Engaged learners can transfer knowledge to solve problems creatively,
- Engaged learning involves being collaborative (valuing and having the skills to work with others),
- Engaged learning must involve tasks that are challenging and focus on problems of relevance and interest to the learner,
- The authentic tasks that promote engaged learning incorporate knowledge of the discipline and the ways knowledge is used by practitioners,
- Tasks for engaged learning often require integrated instruction that incorporates problem-based learning and other active strategies,
- The most powerful models of instruction are interactive and generative, actively engaging learners and requiring them to construct and produce knowledge in meaningful ways,
- For engaged learning to happen, classrooms must be conceived of as knowledge-building learning communities, and
- Engaged learning takes place in classrooms that encourage students to ask hard questions, define problems, and lead conversations.
(paraphrased from pp.11, 12, 61, 62)

“Engaged learning,” as GPC came to define it, would address the three questions posed above and would employ academic interventions and strategies, inside and outside the classroom, to provide a more relevant education. Engaged learning would provide a deeper understanding of connections across the disciplines and tie classroom learning to real-world applications. Engaged learning would help students to develop skills, including analytical skills, problem solving and creative thinking, and require faculty to move from requiring mere passive involvement of students to an engaged platform.

As GPC’s mission statement and strategic plan state, in order to prepare students to compete in the global workplace, GPC will offer “relevant and responsive learning opportunities both inside and outside the classroom” [1]. GPC’s QEP focus thus became to bring our “EDGE” to education through engaged learning.

References and Documentation

	Internal Link	External Link or Source
[1]	GPC Mission Statement and Strategic Plan	http://www.gpc.edu/catalog/strategic-plan
[2]	Community College Survey of Student Engagement Website	http://www.ccse.org/aboutccse/aboutccse.cfm
[3]	Solomon and Felder’s Learning Styles Inventory	http://www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html

Desired Outcomes, Including Student Learning Outcomes

Outcomes of the EDGE Initiative

Behavior Changes:

Students will be more likely to persist in and complete their courses.
Students will be more likely to be retained at the college.
Instructors will increase their focus on and skills in making their courses engaging and relevant.

Attitude Changes:

Students will perceive their courses as more relevant to their lives and careers.
Students will report greater engagement in courses using engaged learning strategies.
Students will report greater engagement as part of their overall college experience.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will improve in their ability to make connections between course content and issues of real-world significance.
Students will perform better on course-specific common end-of-course assessments.

After developing the QEP focus on engaged learning through the EDGE Initiative and researching the literature and best practices, GPC developed the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis: Engaged learning, inside and outside the classroom, will lead to improved student learning and persistence.

Goals

The QEP EDGE Initiative will train and encourage GPC faculty to incorporate engaged learning pedagogies into their classes in order to reach the following college-wide goals:

1. Enhancement of the skills of faculty and staff by fostering efforts to develop and integrate applied learning experiences into curricular and co-curricular GPC experiences.
2. Improvement in student learning outcomes in courses using engaged learning pedagogies.
3. Increase in students' perceptions that their courses are relevant to life outside the classroom.
4. Increase in student persistence to the end of the semester in courses using engaged learning practices.
5. Increase in student retention across the college.

As discussed in the [Literature Review and Best Practices](#) section, engaged learning pedagogies include, but are not limited to, collaborative learning, problem-based learning, service learning, and community-based research. As will be discussed further in the section on [Actions to be Implemented](#), faculty will be trained and encouraged to use one or more of these engaged learning strategies in their courses. Courses will then be rated on the level of incorporation of engaged learning practices within targeted courses using the EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric ([Appendices 7, 8, and 9](#)).

Anticipated Outcomes of the EDGE QEP

Behavior Changes

Outcome 1. Students will be more likely to persist in and complete their courses.

While an increased rate of program completion and graduation is an important college-wide goal, this is not easily measured or changed within a short time frame, or even one as long as five years. Course withdrawal rates were selected as a short-term proxy for the more important long-term outcome of student persistence through graduation. One of the factors that impacts program completion and graduation is students withdrawing from courses without completing them. Student persistence rates of less than 100% within courses represent students who have spent time and money on courses that have not brought them closer to degree completion.

Measurement: GPC measures withdrawal rates in every course every semester, so data from the EDGE-targeted courses will be collected and tracked in service of the EDGE initiative. The overall goal will be at least a 5% increase in course completion (persistence) rates within EDGE-targeted courses after implementation of EDGE strategies and at least an 85% persistence rate in all EDGE-targeted courses.

Outcome 2. Students will be more likely to be retained at the college.

While course withdrawal rates (above) were selected as a short-term proxy for the more important long-term outcome of student persistence through graduation, college-wide retention rates can be used as intermediate measures of student persistence.

Measurement: GPC calculates retention rates every fall semester, defining retention as the percentage of students enrolled in a specified fall semester who are still enrolled the next fall semester. If the QEP has the desired impact, GPC should see increasing retention rates starting with the Fall 2013 cohort and gradually increasing through the Fall 2016 cohort as more and more students are impacted by the EDGE Initiative.

Outcome 3: Instructors will increase their focus on and skills in making their courses engaging and relevant.

Instructors in EDGE-targeted courses will be trained to incorporate engaged learning strategies into the teaching of their courses. It is hoped that EDGE-targeted courses will use significantly more engaged learning strategies than courses not targeted for intervention. It is anticipated that even within the targeted courses, instructors will vary greatly in the extent to which they incorporate EDGE strategies into their teaching. Therefore, a rubric has been devised to measure the degree to which engaged learning practices are employed in the course.

Measurement: The degree to which engaged learning practices have been incorporated into courses will be measured using three versions (faculty self-ratings, EDGE Advisory Team Assessment and Evaluation Team Ratings, and student ratings) of the EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric ([Appendices 7, 8, and 9](#)). The targets for this measurement will be to have at least 90% of EDGE-targeted courses rated as “EDGE Emerging” or higher and 75% of EDGE-targeted courses rated as “EDGE Intensive “ after EDGE strategies have been implemented in the courses, and for post-implementation ratings of EDGE engagement levels to be significantly higher than pre-implementation ratings in those same courses.

Attitude Changes

Outcome 4: Students will perceive their courses as more relevant to their lives and careers.

One of the anticipated outcomes of the EDGE initiative is that students will see courses as more valuable and relevant when engaged learning strategies are integrated into their courses.

Measurement: Students will be asked to rate their degree of agreement with [four statements](#) about the value and relevance of the EDGE-enhanced courses (described in more detail in the [Assessment](#) section). It is expected that there will be statistically significant differences between average scores in courses pre- and post-EDGE-implementation. The target on this measure will be for at least 80% of students in targeted courses to agree somewhat or strongly agree with the four statements.

Outcome 5: Students will report greater engagement in courses using engaged learning strategies.

While the strategies employed in this QEP emphasize the use of engaged teaching and learning strategies in targeted classes, the use of such strategies does not guarantee that students will actually feel more engaged. It is hoped that students will report significantly higher levels of engagement in EDGE-enhanced courses than in courses that do not use EDGE strategies.

Measurement: Students ratings on [selected engagement items](#) (listed in the section on [Assessment](#)) pulled from the CCSSE Course Evaluation Form will be used to measure this outcome. The goal is for the ratings on the targeted items to be significantly higher (statistically) after implementation of EDGE strategies than prior to implementation of EDGE strategies in those same courses.

Outcome 6: Students will report greater engagement as part of their overall college experience.

While only 11 courses have been targeted for incorporation of EDGE strategies as part of the EDGE initiative, it is hoped that students will form engaged learning habits that will influence their overall engagement in college life.

Measurement: Students ratings on [selected engagement items](#) (listed in the section on [Assessment](#)) on the planned 2014 and 2017 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) administrations. The target is for the ratings on the targeted items on the 2014 and 2017 CCSSE administrations to be significantly higher (statistically) than ratings on the same items on the 2005, 2008, and 2011 administrations.

Learning Outcomes

Outcome 7: Students will improve in their ability to make connections between course content and issues of real-world significance.

An important goal of this QEP is to help students make connections between what they learn in their courses and issues they will deal with in the real world. While it is not possible to follow students outside of the classroom to see how they use their course-based knowledge, this ability can be sampled by asking students to write essays reflecting their thoughts about these connections.

Measurement: Students in EDGE-targeted courses will be asked to write [essays](#) that require them to make connections between course content and issues of real-world significance. Student essays will be scored using the [EDGE Student Learning Outcome \(EDGE SLO\) Rubric](#), which is described more fully in the section on [Assessment](#). The target is for average scores on this essay after implementation of EDGE strategies in targeted courses to be significantly higher than average scores prior to implementation of EDGE strategies and for at least 80% of students completing EDGE-enhanced courses to receive ratings of 4 or higher using the [EDGE SLO Rubric](#).

Outcome 8: Students will perform better on course-specific common end-of-course assessments.

Measurement: GPC currently utilizes a process that evaluates student learning outcomes through a common course assessment developed by the discipline committees for each course. Such assessments are course-specific, but are administered to students in every section of a particular course. GPC's goal is for average student scores on common course assessments after implementation of EDGE strategies to be significantly higher than average student scores prior to implementation of EDGE strategies in that course.

Measurement of the outcomes briefly noted above will be discussed in greater detail in the section on [Assessment](#). The use of standardized, normed national instruments and GPC-created rubrics, assessment instruments, and surveys will provide a variety of measures of intended outcomes. These measures will yield formative feedback which can be used to establish of benchmarks, as well as to guide changes to the EDGE training to be provided to faculty teaching EDGE-targeted courses.

Literature Review and Best Practices

Introduction

Georgia Perimeter College's (GPC) EDGE initiative proposes to improve achievement of student learning outcomes by training instructors in targeted courses to follow established best practices as they incorporate engaged learning strategies into their teaching. Engaged learning strategies to be used in the EDGE initiative are:

- Active learning, including
 - collaborative learning and
 - problem-based learning and
- Community-based learning, including
 - service learning and
 - community-based research.

This section focuses on the review of the literature on these strategies and their best practices as well as the rationale for selection of these strategies for the EDGE intervention. In developing the EDGE initiative, GPC will utilize some of the nation's best practices as identified in the literature. Identified best practices will be incorporated into faculty development workshops and will be posted on the EDGE website and online repository.

A sizable body of literature exists concerning engaged learning in post-secondary education. A review of the literature indicates that students who are engaged both inside and outside of the classroom are more likely to persist and achieve course learning outcomes than their colleagues who are not. In their 1995 article "From Teaching to Learning: A New Paradigm for Undergraduate Education," Robert Barr and John Tagg describe a shift from an "instruction paradigm" to a "learning paradigm". They wrote that

... in the learning paradigm, ... a college's purpose is not to transfer knowledge but to create environments and experiences that bring students to discover and construct knowledge for themselves, to make students members of communities of learners that make discoveries and solve problems. The college aims, in fact, to create a series of ever more powerful learning environments. (p. 15)

In his 2001 Education White Paper, Russ Edgerton wrote that "Learning 'about' things does not enable students to acquire the abilities and understanding they will need for the 21st century. We need new pedagogies of engagement that will turn out the kinds of resourceful, engaged workers and citizens that America now requires" (p. 33).

GPC is not alone in attempting to reform the traditional college classroom. National commissions on the status of American higher education have repeatedly criticized colleges for failing to actively involve students in the learning process (Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), 2007 & Hart, 2008). A successful college education should provide an environment that encourages the development of critical thinking skills, the ability to work collaboratively, and the ability to analyze and solve complex problems. Research, however, indicates that the vast majority of college faculty members do not use pedagogies that would help develop these skills, still focusing on lecturing as their primary method of instruction (Thielens, 1987). Unfortunately, this relegates students to the role of passive spectators as they receive their college education. Other scholars (McKeachie, Pintrich, Lin, & Smith, 1986;

McKeachie, 2001; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991) have emphasized that even if students are able to maintain attention and concentration during typical class lectures, the research shows that outcomes such as development of critical thinking skills are less likely to be achieved when students listen to lectures as opposed to when they engage in more active forms of learning.

Engaged Learning in Post-Secondary Education

McKeachie's exhaustive research into college teaching methods suggests that if colleges want students to become more steeped in meaningful learning and thinking, they need to spend more time in active, meaningful learning and thinking not just sitting passively receiving information (McKeachie, et al., 1986). Astin's 1993 study of 27,000 students at 309 institutions indicates that active student involvement in the learning process is a factor strongly associated with retention in college classes (i.e. persistence to course and degree completion). Furthermore, Astin noted that the two most significant factors predicting students' academic development were interaction among students and interaction between faculty and students. It is hoped that a direct intervention into GPC's classrooms and co-curricular activities through the EDGE initiative will impact this need for more interaction.

The use of engaged learning to move students from passive receptors in the traditional lecture-based model to in-depth learners has long been rooted in educational theory (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 2006). Indeed, even Confucius reportedly said, "I hear and I forget; I see and I remember; I do and I understand." Engaged, active learning draws from the early theory of constructivism, where students construct their own knowledge rather than glean information from an instructor's knowledge (Piaget, 1976). The seminal set of "Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education" (Chickering and Gamson, 1987) that began promoting engagement reform in colleges in the 1980s supports practices that:

- Encourage contact between student and faculty,
- Develop reciprocity and cooperation among students, and
- Encourage active learning.

Engaging students in the classroom provides a platform for student learning that moves away from the traditional use of lectures (Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 2006). Definitions of what constitutes active or engaged learning vary from scholar to scholar. However, "engaged learning" is generally defined as any instructional method that engages students in the learning process. Students engage in activities such as writing, case studies, discussion, or problem-solving that promote analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of class content. Collaborative learning, problem-based learning, and the use of case methods and simulations are just some of the approaches that promote active learning (Bonwell & Eison, 1991).

In 2001 while working with the Pew Charitable Trusts, Russ Edgerton began his leading research on what became known as the "Pedagogies of Engagement" and provided a clearer focus on strategies that have proven effective in changing students' success in the college classroom (Edgerton, 2001; Smith, Shepard, Johnson & Johnson, 2005). Indeed the AAC&U (2002) suggests that "Pedagogies of Engagement" represent "one of the most important developments in higher education -- the shift toward teaching and learning practices that engage students with complex and unsolved problems confronting their society" (p. 18).

Edgerton's "White Paper on Education" (2001) laid out four strategies that constituted the pedagogies of engagement: problem-based learning, collaborative learning, service learning, and undergraduate research. GPC noted that the QEP topic selected by its students, staff,

faculty, administrators, and community clearly paralleled these pedagogies of engagement (substituting community-based research for undergraduate research). Research on collaborative learning, problem-based learning, service learning, and community-based research indicates that use of these pedagogies increases content mastery, encourages critical thinking, and fosters personal development (Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005). Indeed, Edgerton (2001) noted that these four engagement strategies work because they require students to be actively learning as they “do” the tasks of the discipline. He wrote, “to really understand an idea ... a student must be able to carry out a variety of performances involving the idea ... students know chemistry by reading and listening to lectures, but to really understand chemistry, students need to engage in the tasks that chemists perform” (p. 74). This opinion was echoed by Bonwell and Eison (1991) whose research indicated that engaged learning was superior to lectures for developing critical thinking and writing skills.

Using multiple strategies of engagement for the QEP (i.e., collaborative learning, problem-based learning, service learning, and community-based research) was important in order to craft a QEP topic specifically for GPC. Following the nomenclature established in the literature, GPC classifies collaborative learning and problem-based learning as “active learning,” and service learning and community-based research as “community-based learning.” GPC has an extremely diverse population in terms of race, ethnicity, age, gender, and prior experience, and offering multiple strategies of engagement is essential to meet the needs of that diverse student body. The selected strategies of engagement will allow GPC’s students to participate in meaningful learning activities and will cause them to think differently about what they are experiencing and learning.

Active Learning

Active learning is an umbrella term coined by Bonwell and Eison (1991) that refers to a spectrum of pedagogical approaches that “engage students in activities such as reading, writing, discussion, or problem solving that promote analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of class content” (Svinicki and McKeachie, 2011, p. 197). GPC selected two active learning pedagogies for its QEP: collaborative learning and problem-based learning.

Collaborative Learning

“Collaborative learning” is defined as any instructional method in which students work toward common educational goals in pairs or small groups (Barkley, Cross, & Major, 2005). Collaborative activities in the classroom are experiential processes that take students out of the passive role of listeners and put them into an inquiry mode as participants in collaborative learning experiences. Faculty members abandon their role as lecturers to become facilitators to groups of students working together.

Collaborative learning has been shown to enhance critical thinking skills. Evidence indicates that shared learning gives students opportunities to engage in discussion and take responsibility for their learning, which moves students toward becoming more critical thinkers. (Totten, Sills, Digby & Russ, 1991). In addition, there is persuasive evidence that collaborative teams achieve higher levels of thought and retain information longer than students learning individually (Johnson and Johnson, 1986). Researchers have noted, however, that when constructing collaborative learning activities in the classroom, there must be both group goals and individual accountability. This balancing of elements will be woven into all EDGE collaborative efforts. EDGE faculty development will include collaborative learning strategies such as (but not limited

to) case studies, dyadic essays, group reports, guided reciprocal peer questioning, online collaboration, and position papers.

Meta-analyses have consistently shown a strong positive relationship between collaborative learning and learning outcomes. In a review of more than 90 years of research, Johnson, Johnson, and Smith (1998) found that working together collaboratively increased learning outcomes compared to individual work on all measures studied. Prince's (2004) meta-analysis of collaborative learning also showed significant effects of collaborative learning on learning outcomes. The literature is consistent in showing significant increases in academic achievement, student attitudes, and student retention in classrooms employing pedagogies of engagement.

Collaborative Learning: Best Practices for Group Work (from Angelo & Cross, 1993; Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Johnson, Johnson, & Smith, 1998).

General Strategies

1. Plan for each stage of group work.
2. Carefully explain to your class how the groups will operate and how students will be graded.
3. Give students the skills they need to succeed in groups.
4. Consider written contracts.

Designing Group Work

1. Create group tasks that require interdependence.
2. Make the group work relevant.
3. Create assignments that fit students' skills and abilities.
4. Assign group tasks that allow for a fair division of labor.
5. Set up "competitions" among groups.
6. Consider offering group test taking.

Organizing Learning Groups

1. Decide how the groups will be formed.
2. Be conscious of group size.
3. Keep groups together.
4. Help groups plan how to proceed.
5. Regularly check in with the groups.
6. Provide mechanisms for groups to deal with uncooperative members.

Evaluating Group Work

1. Ensure that individual student performance is assessed and that the groups know how their members are doing.
2. Give students an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of their group.
3. Decide how to grade members of the group.

Sample Resources for Collaborative Learning		
Texas Collaborative for Teaching Excellence, Collaborative Learning	http://www.texascollaborative.org/Collaborative_Learning_Module.htm	The Texas Collaborative for Teaching has an extensive repository of online learning modules including an excellent collaborative learning workshop, which provides an overview of both the research and specific strategies proven to work in increasing student learning through collaborative learning.
Wisconsin Center for Education and Research	http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/archive/cl1/CL/doingcl/DC_L1.asp	This site focuses on the "practical" side of implementing collaborative learning including course structure and objectives, creating goals, and incorporating student goals for student buy in, evaluation issues, creating groups, roles within groups, the new roles students and instructors face, and ideas on group dynamics.
National Institute for Science Education	http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/nise/cl1/cl/doingcl/start.htm	The National Institute for Science Education's website includes a clear, step-by-step guide to preparing and facilitating collaborative learning activities. The site incorporates research and recommendations from experts in the field.
The Berkeley Collaborative	http://teaching.berkeley.edu/bgd/collaborative.html	The University of California at Berkeley offers an extensive teaching guide with over 1000 tips on active and collaborative learning.
Center for Research on Teaching and Learning, University of Michigan	http://www.crit.umich.edu/publinks/clgt_bestpractices.php	Containing multiple best practices for teachers who want to employ collaborative learning strategies, the Center for Research on Teaching and Learning at the University of Michigan provides effective and practical advice for new collaborative learning practitioners.

Problem-Based Learning

Just as collaborative learning provides a natural environment to promote interpersonal skills, Problem-Based Learning (PBL) provides a natural environment for developing problem-solving and life-long learning skills (Prince, 2004). Every teacher asks, "What can I do to get my students to think critically and become problem solvers?" A variety of teaching methods have been developed over the years, including PBL, to address this question. Problem-based learning is defined as

... a curriculum development and instructional system that simultaneously develops both problem solving strategies and disciplinary knowledge bases and skills by placing students in the active role of problem solvers confronted with what mirrors real-world problems. (Finkle & Torp, 1995, p.1)

Support for PBL is tied to the acknowledgement that students retain minimal information obtained from traditional lecture-based teaching (Bok, 1986) and have difficulty transferring knowledge to new experiences (Schmidt, 1993). According to Schmidt (1993), PBL provides an

environment in which students can draw upon “prior knowledge, learn within the real-world context, and reinforce the knowledge through independent and small group work” (p. 427).

PBL is commonly defined as an instructional method that challenges students to "learn to learn," working collaboratively in groups to seek solutions to real world problems. PBL prepares students to think critically and analytically and to find and use appropriate learning resources (Duch, 1995). The PBL movement was pioneered in the science and medicine fields in the late 60s and was later adapted to undergraduate instruction (Boud & Feletti, 1991; Duch, Groh, & Allen, 2001; Amador et al., 2006). Faculty members were drawn to PBL after witnessing the failures of traditional lecture methods (Wingspread, 1994; Boyer, 1998). PBL has become a favorite of faculty members who want to engage students in constructing knowledge in a group environment that helps them analyze problems that they will encounter in their future work world. Research indicates that PBL engages students, develops higher-order thinking skills, improves knowledge retention, and enhances motivation (Dochy, Segers, Van den Bossche & Gijbels, 2003; Savery, 2006).

Problem-based learning can be adapted to any discipline and can be combined with lecture to form hybrid models of teaching. Harvard University expanded upon these experiences by integrating PBL problems with lecture, discussion, and experiential sessions (Tosteson, Adelstein & Carver, 1994). Students can improve their problem-solving skills, research skills, and social skills through PBL instruction. Research indicates that with PBL, students gain improvement in skills such as self-direction, critical thinking and reasoning, data gathering, and self-evaluation (Derry, Hmelo-Silver, Nagarajan, Chernobilsky, & Beitzel, 2006; Dochy, Segers, Van den Bossche, & Gijbels, 2003). A meta-analytic review of 43 empirical studies on PBL also found a substantial positive influence of PBL on the student skills (knowledge application) and a weaker, though still positive, effect on knowledge acquisition (Dochy, Segers, Van den Bossche, & Gijbels, 2003). This same review suggested a set of best practices for PBL, which is included in the following table.

A Best Practice Model for Problem-based Learning (from Dochy, Segers, Van den Bossche, & Gijbels, 2003)

1. Identify course objectives and write a problem(s) for each of the objectives. PBL is based on “ill structured” problems – those that may have multiple “correct” answers. Determine the weight of the assignment within the context of the course grade.
2. Determine what resources students will need and what resources are available to the student to solve these problems. Consider planning a library orientation for students in collaboration with librarians.
3. Determine how students will present their answers and provide a rubric that explains how the project will be graded.
4. Prepare students for a different class culture. Inform students about PBL, how the class will be conducted, what they are expected to do, and how they will be graded.
5. Model problem-solving techniques for students and help students find the resources they need rather than giving them the answers.
6. Give students class time to work as a group.
7. Provide feedback about the quality and completeness of problem’s solution, keeping in mind that the thinking and rationale that went into the solution are as important as the solution itself.

The EDGE initiative attempts to connect what is learned in the classroom to the real world and assumes that this connection occurs naturally when PBL is used in the classroom. PBL allows students to participate in relevant learning experiences, working with the following learning materials (Prince, 2004):

1. The problem situation,
2. A list of objectives that the student is expected to master while working on the problem,
3. A reference list of materials that pertain to the basic objectives, and
4. Questions that focus on important concepts and applications of the knowledge base.

In classes using PBL, students work on problems in project teams and are evaluated in multiple ways by instructors, peers, and themselves using questionnaires, interviews, observations, and other assessment methods.

Ultimately, based on the literature (Dochy, Segers, Van den Bossche, & Gilbels, 2003; Savery, 2006; Prince 2004; Tosteson, Adelstein & Carver, 1994), PBL benefits students in the following ways:

- Increases motivation to learn
- Develops critical thinking, writing, and communication skills
- Enhances retention of information
- Provides a model for lifelong learning
- Demonstrates the power of working cooperatively

Sample Resources for Problem-Based Learning		
Institute for Transforming Undergraduate Education, Problem-Based Learning Clearinghouse at the University of Delaware	http://www.udel.edu/inst/	The PBL Clearinghouse, a massive collection of problems and articles to assist educators in using problem-based learning, is peer-reviewed and arranged by discipline and content. Teaching notes and supplemental materials accompany each problem, providing insights and strategies that are innovative and classroom-tested. Access to the Clearinghouse collection is limited to educators who register via an online application, but it is free and carries no obligation.
The Center for Problem-Based Learning (now Center for Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship) at Samford University	http://www.samford.edu/ctls/archives.aspx?id=2147484112	The Center for Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and corresponding website were established in 1998 in conjunction with two grants from the Pew Charitable Trusts. Since that time, Samford has taken on the challenge not only to incorporate PBL into various undergraduate programs, but also to document best models of PBL practice in course portfolios. The goal of the associated web pages is to provide administrators, faculty, students, and parents with detailed information on the components, implementation, assessment and documentation of PBL. Web pages are specifically separated into PBL background, process, evaluation, and resources. These pages also contain guides to relevant workshops and conferences, materials, and links to other institutions that are using PBL.

Community-Based Learning

For the purposes of the EDGE initiative, the term “community-based learning” includes two highly-complex experiential pedagogies: service learning and community-based research. Svinicki and McKeachie (2011) described experiential learning as the process of making meaning from direct experience, and they identified several experientially-based pedagogies: the case method; problem-based learning; games, simulations, role playing, and field experiences (i.e., research studies, internships, service learning, community based research). Svinicki and McKeachie argued, however, that some of the strategies “involve a degree of artificiality since they don’t take place in the real world” (p. 210). They further argued that students who experienced real-world problem solving within the context of the community got the greatest benefit from experiential learning and that service learning and community-based research provided first-hand, real-world experience combined with problem solving without the artificiality of some of the other strategies.

Holland and Robinson (2008) remarked that since the inception of the community college in 1901, community colleges have integrated experiential activities into course work. Regarding the evolution of community-based learning in the community college, they stated, “the remarkable growth in establishing new community colleges in the 1960s and 1970s paralleled an increase in community-based learning. But the majority of service learning programs, more than 80% among community colleges, for example, began in 1990 or later” (p. 20).

In his article “Creating the New American College,” Boyer (1994) argued that colleges and universities have moved away from providing service to their communities. To remedy this, he suggested that the “New American College would organize cross-disciplinary institutes around pressing social issues. Undergraduates at the college would participate in field projects, relating ideas to real life” (p. A48). Boyer stated that ultimately “the New American College, as a connected institution, would be committed to improving, in a very intentional way, the human condition” (p. A48). While Boyer did not specifically mention forms of community-based learning, certainly community-based learning helps to fulfill Boyer’s vision of the new American College.

The Theoretical Framework for Community-Based Learning

Fundamental to the theoretical development of community-based learning are the writings and research of John Dewey and David Kolb. Dewey’s philosophy provides a theoretical foundation for experiential education, and Kolb provides a viable, replicable model to ensure academic rigor and effectiveness.

John Dewey’s Educational Philosophy

John Dewey’s writings and philosophy of education are often cited in service learning research; his philosophy of education and the importance of experience in education form the foundation of service learning. According to Cummings (2000), Dewey believed that “education must center on society’s most pressing problems, particularly the reconstruction of democratic community, that it engage students in community service and prepare them for lifelong commitment to civic involvement and social reconstruction” (p. 97). Dewey’s beliefs ultimately informed the core practices and philosophy of service learning. Furthermore, Eyer (2000) stated, “they [Dewey’s beliefs] create social arrangements that lead to motivation and a sense of agency and serve as a strength of service learning” (p. 12).

According to Saltmarsh (1996), "Dewey's writings reveal five specific areas of contribution to service learning:

1. Linking education to experience,
2. Democratic community,
3. Social service,
4. Reflective inquiry, and
5. Education for social transformation" (p. 13).

Later in his review of the works of Dewey, Saltmarsh stated, "service, in other words, is defined as one's place of privilege in society and a relationship to those less privileged defined by a sense of justice" (p. 17). Commenting on the importance of reflection in service learning, Saltmarsh included this quotation of Dewey's: "When we reflect upon an experience instead of just having it, we inevitably distinguish between our own attitude and the objects toward which we sustain the attitude" (p. 18).

In their 1994 seminal article "The Theoretical Roots of Service-Learning in John Dewey: Toward a Theory of Service-Learning," Giles and Eyler argued for the development of service learning theory to act as a guide for the practice. Then, in an effort to respond to their own call for theory, Giles and Eyler presented two themes based on Dewey's work: Dewey's relevance to learning in service learning and Dewey's relevance to service in service learning. Giles and Eyler (1994) cited Dewey's four criteria necessary for experiential learning to be educative. Learning "projects," according to Dewey (1933),

1. Must generate interest,
2. Must be worthwhile intrinsically,
3. Must present problems that awaken new curiosity, and
4. Must cover a considerable time span and be capable of fostering development over time (p. 217).

Regarding experience, Giles and Eyler (1994) cited Dewey's 1938 book *Experience and Education*:

The belief that all genuine education comes about through experience does not mean that all experiences are genuinely or equally educative. Experience and education cannot be directly equated to each other. For some experiences are mis-educative. Any experience is mis-educative that has the effect of arresting or distorting the growth of further experience. An experience may be such as to engender callousness; it may produce lack of sensitivity and responsiveness. Then the possibilities of having richer experience in the future are restricted. (p. 25)

A chronological review of Dewey's writings reveals a wide range of support for experiential learning and for many of the aspects of service learning. To link education to experience, Dewey (1897) stated, "I believe, finally, that education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience; that the process and the goal of education are one and the same" (p. 13). Commenting on the necessity of reflection and value of experience, Dewey (1916) said, "When an activity is continued into the undergoing of consequences, when the change made by action is reflection back into change made in us, the mere flux is loaded with significance. We learn something" (p. 139); he continued: "Two conclusions important for education follow: (1) Experience is an active-passive affair; it is not primarily cognitive. But (2) the measure of value

of an experience lies in the perception of relationships or continuities to which it leads up” (p. 140). In 1938, Dewey reconfirmed the connection between experience and learning, cementing the relationship: “I take it that the fundamental unity of the newer philosophy is found in the idea that there is an intimate and necessary relationship between the processes of actual experience and education” (p. 7).

David Kolb’s Cycle of Experiential Learning

David Kolb (1984) defined learning as “the process whereby knowledge is created through transformation of experience” (p. 38). Describing the theoretical foundation of David Kolb’s work, Atkinson and Murrell (1988) stated:

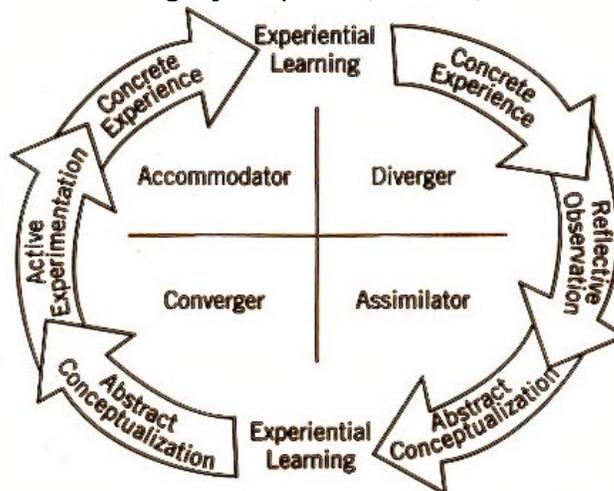
Kolb primarily built on the work of Dewey (1938), who recognized the importance of experience in the process of learning; Lewin (1951), who emphasized active participatory learning; and Piaget (1970), who conceived of intelligence as largely a result of the interaction of the individual with the environment. (p. 274 – 275)

Kolb envisioned a four-step cycle (see the figure below) comprised of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984). Atkinson and Murrell (1988) offered this description of the cycle:

A learner moves through the cycle by first having an immediate experience (CE), which becomes the basis for observations and reflections (RO). These observations and reflections are assimilated and distilled into a concept or theory (AC), even if highly informal, from which new implications for action can be generated. The newly developed ideas can then be tested actively (AE) and can serve as guides for creating new experiences. The cycle begins anew, but at a higher level of complexity. (p. 275)

According to Kolb (1984), in order for learning to occur, each of the elements of his learning cycle must be present since experience alone is not enough to cause learning and since reflection cannot cause learning without some experience to reflect upon.

Kolb’s Learning Cycle (Cress, Collier, & Reitenauer, 2005)



Kolb's model relates directly to community-based learning. Community-based learning experiences include a community service experience (concrete experience), reflection (reflective observation), connecting new ideas with existing ideas (abstract conceptualization), and applying the knowledge gained (active experimentation). Petkus (2000) stated that there are three general implications of Kolb's model for community-based learning:

Most important, the learning experience should involve all stages of the cycle. Second, Kolb's model highlights the general importance of reflection in the learning process. Third, the cyclical nature of Kolb's model facilitates the integration of the direct learning experience and the abstract generalization, with reflection as the linking function. (p. 65)

Service Learning

At its core, service learning is a teaching methodology/pedagogy that allows students and faculty members to draw connections between service hours provided to non-profit, community-based organizations and course objectives. The term "service learning" dates to ca.1967 and evolved out of the writing of Robert Sigmon and William Ramsey. For twenty-five years after the term was created, most writing was devoted to agreeing upon a common definition of the term and to collecting a list of best practices (Giles & Eyler, 1994). Suggesting service-learning as a revolutionary paradigm shift in the field of pedagogy, Zlotkowski (1998) commented, "Although I do not believe there exists any single strategy capable of bringing about academic renewal, I do believe the educational paradigm latent in what has come to be called 'service-learning'... may represent a key to our moving forward" (p. 3).

Many definitions for the term "service learning" exist (Jacoby, 1996); however, all definitions share the following key components: classroom instruction, community service, reflection, and civic engagement. Jacoby (1996) defined service learning as "a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and development. Reflection and reciprocity are key concepts of service learning" (p. 5).

Prentice and Garcia (2000) offered this description of the pedagogy: "Service learning is based on a reciprocal relationship in which the service reinforces and strengthens the learning and the learning reinforces and strengthens the service" (p. 20). According to Furco (1996), on a continuum with volunteerism on one side and learning on the other, service learning falls directly in the center. Clarified by Robinson (2000), "The student serves while learning, and learns while serving" (p. 8). The American Association of Community Colleges (Robinson, 2001) defined service learning as a pedagogy that "combines community service with classroom instruction, focusing on critical, reflective thinking as well as personal and civic responsibility" (p. 1).

Benefits of Service Learning

In community colleges, the 1990s marked a steady increase in the popularity of service learning among students, faculty members, college administrators, and community leaders (Holland and Robinson, 2008). As a result, studies designed to evaluate the effectiveness of service learning began to appear in the literature in the mid to late 1990s. This literature indicated that when best practices are followed (see table below) service learning results in significant benefits to students, to faculty members, and to the institution.

Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, and Yee (2000) concluded that "service participation shows significant positive effects" on a variety of student learning outcomes measures including GPA,

leadership, self-efficacy, critical thinking, and writing. Research indicates that service learning has a positive effect on students' academic learning (Astin & Sax, 1998; Cohen & Kinsey, 1994; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996; Eyler & Giles, 1999), application of knowledge to the real world (Cohen & Kinsey, 1994; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Kendrick, 1996; Markus, Howard, & King, 1993), personal development (Astin & Sax, 1998), interpersonal development (Astin & Sax, 1998; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996; Eyler & Giles, 1999), sense of civic engagement and civic responsibility (Astin & Sax, 1998; Batchelder & Root, 1994; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996), and commitment to service (Astin & Sax, 1998; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996).

Ten Principles of Good Practice in Service Learning (Howard, 1993 & 2001)

1. ***Academic credit is for learning, not for service.*** Students earn course credit by demonstrating they have learned course content and skills. Reflection is the graded component.
2. ***Do not compromise academic rigor.*** The service learning assignment should replace an existing requirement (or be a new requirement) and should not lower academic expectations. Service learning often enhances course rigor.
3. ***Set learning goals for students.*** It is especially necessary and advantageous to establish clear learning objectives in service learning courses. The addition of the community as a learning context multiplies the learning possibilities. Deliberate planning of course academic and civic learning objectives is necessary for students to prioritize their learning and to leverage the bounty of learning opportunities offered by service learning experiences.
4. ***Establish criteria for the selection of community service placements.*** Placements must relate to the content of the course. The duration of service must be sufficient to enable the fulfillment of learning goals. Activities must have the potential to stimulate course-relevant learning. Community projects must meet real, community-identified needs.
5. ***Provide educationally sound mechanisms to harvest the community learning.*** Learning strategies must be employed that support learning from service experiences and enable its use toward meeting course learning objectives. Interventions that promote critical reflection, analysis, and application of service experiences enable learning.
6. ***Prepare students for learning from the community.*** Most students lack experience extracting and creating meaning from experience, let alone merging it with other academic and civic course learning strategies. Instructors can support students' learning through service by providing opportunities to acquire skills for gleaning the learning from the service context (e.g., participant-observer skills), and/or examples of how to successfully complete assignments (e.g., making available exemplary papers and reflection journals from previous courses to current students).
7. ***Minimize the distinction between the students' community learning role and classroom learning role.*** Classrooms and communities require students to assume different learner roles. If students are passive learners in the classroom and active learners in the community, the contrast may challenge and even impede student learning. The solution is to reshape the traditional classroom to value students as active learners.
8. ***Rethink the faculty instructional role.*** Commensurate with the preceding principle's recommendation for active student learning; this principle advocates that service learning instructors also rethink their roles. An instructor role that would be most compatible with an active student role shifts away from a singular reliance on transmission of knowledge and toward mixed pedagogical methods that include learning facilitation and guidance.

9. **Be prepared for variation in, and some loss of control with, student learning outcomes.** In traditional courses, the learning strategies are constant for all enrolled students and are under the watchful eye of the faculty member. In service learning courses, given variability in service experiences and their influential role in student learning, one can anticipate greater heterogeneity in learning outcomes and compromises to faculty control. Even when students are exposed to the same presentations and the same readings, instructors can expect that classroom discussions will be less predictable and the content of student papers/projects less homogeneous than in courses without a service component.
10. **Maximize the community responsibility orientation of the course.** Designing classroom norms and learning strategies that not only enhance academic learning but also encourage civic learning are essential to purposeful civic learning. While most traditional courses are organized for private learning that advances the individual student, service learning instructors should consider employing learning strategies that will complement and reinforce the civic lessons from the community experience.

Research suggests (Batchelder & Root, 1994; Kendrick, 1996; Miller, 1994; Parker-Gwin & Mabry, 1998) that student participation in service learning has an impact on cognitive development, problem analysis, critical thinking, and demonstrated complexity of understanding. In their longitudinal study, Bernacki and Bernt (2007) found that students who participated in service learning courses were more likely to participate in other campus activities such as alternative spring breaks, advocacy work, and leadership retreats.

Faculty members who used service learning indicated satisfaction with the quality of student learning (Cohen & Kinsey, 1994) and a commitment to research (Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996). They also reported feelings of invigoration and a renewed commitment to teaching and developing relationships with students (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Both faculty members and students indicated that participation in a course that used service learning resulted in a positive impact on a student's academic performance (Astin & Sax, 1998; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996; Eyler & Giles, 1999).

For colleges, service learning has been linked to increased student retention (Astin & Sax, 1998) and enhanced community relationships (Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996). Community-based organizations, satisfied with student participation (Cohen & Kinsey, 1994; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996), indicate that service learning students help fulfill real community needs (Cohen & Kinsey, 1994; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996) and report enhanced college relations (Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996).

Community-Based Research

In an effort to combine the best attributes of both service learning and undergraduate research, community-based research emerged out of other participatory research models such as action research, participatory action research, collaborative action research, and community-based inquiry (Ansley & Gaventa, 1997; Creswell, 2002). Paul (2006) defined community-based research as a pedagogy designed to engage "students in a collaborative partnership to work on real research that will make a difference for local communities." She further stated, "Students are socialized as *public scholars*, learning actively about the research process and about how empirical inquiry can be applied to real social issues." Savan, Flicker, Kolenda, & Mildnerberger (2009) used a definition based upon that developed by the Loka Institute, which states that community-based research is "conducted by, for or with the participation of community

members...community based research aims not merely to advance understanding, but also to ensure that knowledge contributes to making a concrete and constructive difference in the world” (p. 784).

Strand, Murullo, Curforth, Stoecker, & Donohue (2003) defined community-based research (CBR) as, “collaborative, change-oriented research that engages faculty members, students, and community members in projects that address a community-identified need” (p. 5). Further, they indicate three central features of the pedagogy:

1. CBR is a collaborative enterprise between academic researchers (professors and students) and community members;
2. CBR seeks to democratize knowledge by validating multiple sources of knowledge and promoting the use of multiple methods of discovery and dissemination; and
3. CBR has as its goal social action for the purpose of achieving social change and social justice. (Strand, Murullo, Curforth, Stoecker, & Donohue, 2003, p. 6)

Porpora (1999) argued that community-based research might be considered “a higher stage of service-learning in that it combines service, teaching, and research” (p. 121), and Willis, Peresie, Waldref, & Stockmann (2003) described community based-research as “an intensive form of service learning” (p. 36). Stoecker (2001) wrote, “In the most concrete sense, CBR involves students and faculty working with a community organization on a research project serving the organization’s goals” (p. 35).

Benefits of Community-Based Research

Similar to service learning, community-based research also benefits the college, students, faculty, and community when best practices are followed (see table below). Several studies (Greenwood & Levin, 1998; Reardon, 1995; Cordes, 1998; Benson, Harkavy, & Puckett, 1996; Strand, 2000) suggest that community-based research benefits the college. First, community-based research creates the possibility for cross-department/cross-discipline collaboration (Greenwood & Levin, 1998; Reardon, 1995). Students will benefit from a more cohesive institution, and they also have the opportunity to engage in hands-on learning experiences (Stoecker, 2001; Strand, 2000) that can be very meaningful (Cordes, 1998). Furthermore, students who participate in community-based research projects gain valuable experience using research skills (Benson, Harkavy, & Puckett, 1996; Reardon, 1995; Strand, 2000).

Faculty members who have integrated community-based research into their courses believe that the pedagogy greatly enriches students’ research skills and academic achievement (Strand, 2000). Four areas in which community-based research positively impacts students include “enrichment of traditional coursework, increased sense of empowerment, greater understanding of social problems, and integration of academics and service” (Willis, Peresie, Waldref, and Stockmann, 2003, p. 40). Strand (2000) also identified relational skills that students develop such as tact, perseverance, and tolerance for ambiguity. These skills that students develop are desirable to employers who prefer to hire “graduates with ‘real-world’ experience behind their degrees” (Chopyak & Levesque, 2002, p. 204). The fact that students are working and providing research for real people encourages them to produce top quality work, making the learning experience more meaningful (Strand, 2000).

Finally, the community itself benefits through this kind of research, primarily because the community is provided with research results that are both applicable and useful (Sclove, Scammell, & Holland, 1998). According to Ansley and Gaventa (1997), both the institution and

the community gain social capital. Through CBR work, each develops a network of resources and knowledge that provides advantages for both. It is also important that those who are dealing with the problem are allowed to help seek solutions to these problems. As stated by a community member who participated in a community-based research project, "We have to involve the people whose lives are involved" (Cordes, 1998, p. A39).

Best Practices in Community-Based Research (Strand, Marullo, Cutforth, Stoecker, and Donohue, 2003).

Community Partnerships

1. Successful community partnerships are those where partners (1) share a world view, (2) agree about goals and strategies, and (3) have mutual trust and mutual respect.
2. Community partners (1) share power, (2) communicate clearly and listen carefully, (3) understand and empathize with each other's circumstances, and (4) remain flexible.
3. Successful partnerships are those in which (1) partners' primary interests or needs are met, (2) partners' organizational capacities are enhanced, and (3) partners adopt shared, long-range social change perspectives.

Teaching and Learning

4. Focus on collective/collaborative learning that de-emphasizes hierarchy, including authority differences between teacher and student.
5. Demystify conventional knowledge, including the notion that objectivity is impossible, that knowledge is not neutral, and that people's lived experiences are valid sources of information.
6. Focus on teaching for social change.

Research Design

7. Develop a research design in which everyone participates in discussion and decisions at every stage of research.

Summary of the Review of the Literature

Four key interventions were identified through the review of the literature as strategies for improving achievement of student learning outcomes and for improving overall student engagement: collaborative learning, problem-based learning, service learning, and community-based research.

Best practices for each of four interventions were identified from the review of the literature. These best practices will be incorporated into the design of faculty development workshops that will be offered as part of the EDGE initiative. Evident from the review of the literature is the increasing level of complexity exhibited by these four interventions. If viewed on a complexity continuum, collaborative learning is at one extreme (complex) and community-based research because it combines attributes of the other three interventions is at the other end (most complex).

Also evident from the review of the literature is that as the complexity of the pedagogy increases, faculty resistance to its implementation also increases (McKeachie, 2001). The literature suggests that appropriate faculty support services be provided to mitigate such resistance (Abes, Jackson, & Jones, 2002). At GPC, barriers to implementation will be reduced by providing faculty members with appropriate support for their use of these complex pedagogies in the form of training and technical assistance and project coordination. Training and technical assistance will be provided by the Center for Teaching and Learning, EDGE Initiative staff members, and faculty member experts. Project coordination will be provided by the community-engaged learning coordinator and faculty member experts.

Researchers (Kuh, 2008; Brownell & Swaner, 2010) have endorsed the interventions selected for the EDGE initiative, naming them and others as High-Impact Educational Practices. Kuh (2008) offers six reasons why these practices are particularly effective with students:

1. These practices typically demand that students devote considerable time and effort to purposeful tasks; most require daily decisions that deepen students' investment in the activity as well as their commitment to their academic program and the college. (p. 13)
2. The nature of these high-impact activities puts students in circumstances that essentially demand they interact with faculty and peers about substantive matters, typically over extended periods of time. (p. 13)
3. Participating in one or more of these activities increases the likelihood that students will experience diversity through contact with people who are different from themselves. (p. 14)
4. Even though the structures and settings of high-impact activities differ, students typically get frequent feedback about their performance in every one. (p. 17)
5. Participation in these activities provides opportunities for students to see how what they are learning works in different settings, on and off campus. (p. 17)
6. Doing one or more of these activities in the context of a coherent, academically challenging curriculum that appropriately infuses opportunities for active, collaborative learning increases the odds that students will be prepared to "just connect." (p. 17)

Brownell & Swaner (2010) suggest that weaving two or more high-impact practices together or combining high impact practices with interdisciplinary threads will amplify the positive effect of the learning experience. Brownell & Swaner (2010) write, "imagine what the student experience would be like if all first-year students at your institution took a small (twenty-five students or fewer) writing- or inquiry-intensive seminar with common readings and a service learning component" (p. x). As part of the EDGE initiative, faculty members will be encouraged to intensify the complexity of their engaged pedagogies by combining interventions, moving along the complexity continuum, and / or incorporating interdisciplinary threads or common intellectual experiences into their courses. GPC faculty members have at their disposal at least two existing interdisciplinary threads and two common intellectual experiences:

Interdisciplinary Threads:

1. The Democracy Commitment (TDC): TDC is a national movement designed to provide a platform for the development and expansion of civic learning and democratic process. GPC's TDC project aims to incorporate themes of civic engagement and democratic participation across the curriculum.

2. Sustainability: Issues germane to environmental sustainability, environmental justice, food security, and food quality are examined through multi-disciplinary lenses. Existing gardens located on the Newton and Decatur Campuses are included.

Common Intellectual Experiences:

3. GPC Reads: Each semester, a college-wide, common read is selected and programming is created to provide contextual support.
4. Service Events: Each year, four large-scale service events occur in conjunction with 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance, Make a Difference Day, MLK Day of Service, and Global Youth Service Day.

It should also be noted that faculty members reluctant to participate in the EDGE initiative can integrate one of the above threads/experiences with minimal effort as an easy first step toward integrating more complex activities.

Finally, a considerable body of research supports the efficacy of the four interventions selected for implementation as part of GPC's EDGE initiative. Analysis of the literature indicates several key benefits to students and faculty that are common among the interventions:

Benefits to students:

- Relating course knowledge to real-world situations,
- Developing greater critical thinking skills,
- Developing skills in working cooperatively,
- Developing stronger relationships with both faculty members and peers, and
- Developing leadership and communication skills.

Benefits to faculty:

- Renewed commitment to teaching,
- Stronger relationships with students in the classroom,
- Satisfaction that student learning outcomes are increased,
- Opportunities to participate in ongoing faculty development and development of stronger teaching skills, and
- Opportunities to network with fellow faculty and share successful experiences and practices.

Actions to be Implemented

The EDGE QEP aims to enhance student learning outcomes at Georgia Perimeter College by training instructors of targeted courses to incorporate engaged learning practices into their teaching of these courses.

The EDGE initiative aims to train instructors in targeted courses to incorporate robust engaged learning strategies into their teaching and then to assess the impact on selected behaviors, attitudes, and learning outcomes. In order to accomplish this deceptively simple goal, actions must be implemented in a particular order. Some of these actions have already been accomplished; others are still in the planning stages.

1. Developing a Process for Selecting the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Topic

This has already been accomplished by the QEP Steering Committee, as described in the section on the [Process Used to Develop the QEP](#).

2. Identifying the QEP Topic

This has already been accomplished by the QEP Steering Committee, as described in the section on [Identification of the QEP Topic](#).

3. Developing and Refining the Plan for the QEP

This has already been accomplished by the QEP Steering Committee, as evidenced by this QEP document.

4. Making Decisions as to [Desired Learning Outcomes](#), [Interventions](#), [Targeted Courses](#), [Assessments](#), and [Resources Needed](#)

This has already been accomplished by the QEP Steering Committee, as evidenced and explained in this QEP document.

5. Obtaining Institutional Commitments for the [Resources Needed to Support the QEP](#)

Commitments have already been made by the Vice President for Financial and Administrative Affairs and the President of the College, and a representative of the Georgia Perimeter College (GPC) Foundation, as evidenced by the letters of commitment supplied with this document ([Appendices 10 and 11](#)).

6. Creating the [Infrastructure](#) to Support the QEP

Infrastructure has been developed to support growth, maintain oversight activities, and assess the progress of the EDGE QEP. In June 2012, Dr. Sean Brumfield was selected to be the Executive Director of Georgia Perimeter College's EDGE initiative. Among his responsibilities will be mentoring EDGE faculty, maintaining the EDGE website, implementing EDGE faculty development workshops in coordination with the Center for Teaching and Learning, and establishing the EDGE Advisory Team. In addition, he will direct the collection and utilization of assessment data to make program improvements. Dr. Brumfield supervises two additional

positions associated with the QEP office: Community Engaged Learning Coordinator and Administrative Assistant.

Ms. Mary Elizabeth Tyler Boucebci will serve as the coordinator of the community-engaged learning activities for the QEP. Because service learning and community-based research require considerable faculty support, the community-engaged learning coordinator will assist faculty with the implementation of these pedagogies in their courses. Specifically, Ms. Tyler Boucebci will be responsible for building community partnerships, assisting students with the identification of placement sites, and working with faculty members to create meaningful community-based learning opportunities.

Ms. Kia Osborne will provide administrative support for the QEP. Ms. Osborne will also work in conjunction with student affairs to plan and implement four co-curricular days of service: 9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance, Make a Difference Day, MLK Day of Service, and Global Youth Service Day. Ms. Osborne is also responsible for maintaining the QEP office's extensive collection of faculty development resources in the area of engaged teaching and learning.

Dr. Pamela Moolenaar-Wirsiy is the Executive Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning and served as chair of the QEP Steering Committee, which was responsible for the selection of the QEP theme and development of the QEP document. As Executive Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, Dr. Moolenaar-Wirsiy will continue to work closely with the QEP, and in particular, she will help to plan and carry out training sessions for faculty and staff in "EDGE strategies."

7. Writing, Submitting, and Publishing the QEP Document

This was accomplished by selected members of the QEP Steering Committee in Spring and Summer 2012. This completed document provides evidence of completion of this action.

8. Marketing the EDGE Initiative

In Fall 2012, to ensure that the EDGE initiative will become part of both the institutional culture and physical infrastructure, several marketing strategies will be used. In each campus student center, where students most commonly congregate, there will be a 14' x 6' vinyl banner with the EDGE logo to remind students about the QEP theme. Flag pole banners will be affixed to several perimeter and quad poles on the Newton and Decatur campuses; ground-based flag banners will be used on the other three campuses. EDGE slides will continue to be displayed on all campus flat-panel closed-circuit televisions. There will also be mouse pads with the EDGE logo placed in every student computer lab (including the libraries, which many community persons utilize) and most staff offices on all five campuses. This marketing campaign is aimed at creating and sustaining EDGE awareness and excitement at the college and in the community.

9. Forming the EDGE Advisory Team

In August 2012, the Executive Director of the QEP and the College Executive Team will appoint members of the EDGE Advisory Team. The team will work closely with the Executive Director to launch the EDGE initiative and make ongoing modifications based on programmatic developments. The EDGE Advisory Team will be composed of approximately twelve faculty, staff, student, and community representatives to provide input and guidance for the program, to evaluate courses, review assessments, assist with the facilitation of faculty development

seminars, and to assist with the implementation of community-learning activities. Three working sub-committees will be formed in Fall 2012: (1) Assessment and Evaluation, (2) Faculty Development, and (3) Community-Learning Activities (curricular and co-curricular).

Four community partners (Stone Mountain Memorial Association, Hands on Newton, Clarkston Development Foundation, and the Georgia Commission on Service and Volunteerism) have recently agreed to serve on a fourth subcommittee of the QEP Advisory Team. The new subcommittee (Community Partner Advisory Committee) will advise QEP staff and the QEP Advisory Team about the process and progress of the QEP in general and how students can help meet community identified needs in particular.

10. Meeting with College Academic Leadership

The Executive Director of the QEP and Executive Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning will conduct a half-day workshop in Fall 2012 for all academic deans, department chairs, Vice Presidents, and selected academic and student service personnel who will be involved in the implementation of the project as it goes forward. Special sessions will be conducted with the Deans of English and Social Sciences, whose divisions will host the first EDGE classes in Fall 2013.

11. Developing Training Modules for Engaged Learning

One of the most significant elements in the success of the EDGE initiative will be the development of Engaged Learning Workshops that will motivate faculty to implement these pedagogies. Building upon the service learning faculty fellows faculty development program, a new faculty development workshop series will be developed during Fall 2012. The series will include training workshops built around the four interventions selected for the EDGE initiative. These workshops will include, but are not limited to, the following sessions:

1. Engaged Learning 101 & Using the EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric and Constructing EDGE Portfolios (Leading EDGE Retreat)
2. Building Collaborative Learning in the Classroom
3. Developing Problem-based Learning Exercises
4. Community-based Learning 101 (service learning & community-based research)
5. Syllabus Development
6. The Role of Reflection in the Engaged Classroom
7. Next Steps: Re-visioning Engaged Learning
8. Special Topics (sustainability, democracy, GPC Reads, service events)

Each of the training sessions will be developed for face-to-face sessions and later recorded for archiving on the EDGE website where a separate repository will be built for instructional videos, learning objects, and sample materials. Shared materials will be posted online to create a repository from which EDGE faculty may draw ideas and inspiration. The Center for Teaching and Learning, which has experience in the development of learning object repositories, will be involved directly in the development of the EDGE materials, assisted by the Executive Director of the QEP, the Coordinator of Community Engaged Learning and staff from the Office of Information Technology.

12. Refining the [EDGE Course Evaluation](#) and [Student Learning Outcome Rubrics](#)

The EDGE Rubrics ([Appendices 7, 8, 9](#) and the section on [Assessment](#)) are instruments intended to evaluate the depth of engaged learning strategies being used within a particular class or students' abilities to relate course-based learning to real-world issues. While the basic forms of the EDGE rubrics have already been determined and presented as part of this document, clear guidelines for using the rubrics for quantitative ratings will be developed. It is expected that this can be accomplished by the EDGE Advisory Team Assessment and Evaluation Committee with assistance from the Executive Director of the QEP and the Center for Teaching and Learning between September and November of 2012.

13. Engaging Faculty

GPC's full-time faculty members will be engaged with the QEP through existing infrastructure and new strategies.

Faculty members from the year's selected courses (both full-time and part-time) will be invited to participate in a faculty development workshop series (described above). Faculty unable or unwilling to participate in in-person sessions will be encouraged to participate in online sessions or to read online resources. Additionally, a faculty consulting corps will be created from existing experienced practitioners. The consulting corps will supplement the faculty development workshop series with members mentoring other full-time and part-time faculty members.

Each fall, GPC holds a Faculty Development Day. Classes are canceled on that day so that all faculty members may attend a full day of teaching and learning with 50 or more workshops on a variety of topics. The Fall 2012 Faculty Development Day (in October 2012) will consist of over 40 individual workshops on the topics of service learning, community-based research, collaborative learning, problem-based learning, and other topics of interest to GPC faculty members. Faculty Development Day will be organized by the Center for Teaching and Learning and the EDGE Advisory Team and attended by all full-time faculty members (part-time faculty members will be invited but are not required to attend).

Each spring, GPC holds another college-wide development opportunity: Discipline Development Day. Also organized by the Center for Teaching and Learning, Discipline Development Day consists of a college-wide faculty meeting and afternoon breakout sessions organized by discipline. Faculty development related to the EDGE initiative will occur on this day and will be facilitated by experienced practitioners and invited experts.

Traditionally at GPC because of the nature of part-time faculty members' workloads and contracts, participation in faculty development by part-time faculty members' is sporadic at best. Recognizing that part-time faculty members teach a significant number of sections of EDGE targeted courses, encouraging part-time faculty members' participation in faculty development efforts is important. To that end, a number of strategies designed to train part-time faculty members will be used, including mentorship by fulltime faculty members and online training modules. At orientation, through regular interdepartmental communication, and via pre-implementation training sessions, part-time faculty members will be informed about the QEP and its importance. The Executive Director of the QEP and the Executive Director of the CTL will reach out to part-time instructors to offer just-in-time training prior to the beginning of each semester. Further, full-time experienced practitioners will mentor part-time faculty members and will encourage them to get training. Finally, self-paced, online training modules will be made available part-time and full-time faculty members. (Based on a suggestion from the On-Site

Reaffirmation Committee, GPC will delay implementation of the EDGE Initiative with part-time instructors, although the strategies described in this paragraph will still be used when the EDGE Initiative is implemented among part-time instructors.)

It is important to note that while the QEP specifically focuses on a handful of targeted courses, faculty members who teach other courses are welcome to participate in training sessions and workshops and will be afforded the same level of support as faculty members who will be teaching the targeted courses. It is also important to note that no faculty member will be forced to use any of the selected interventions in his or her course. Faculty reluctant to participate will be encouraged to integrate other existing common intellectual experiences (i.e., GPC Reads and Days of Service) or interdisciplinary threads (i.e., sustainability or democracy across the curriculum) into their courses as an easy point of entry to the selected engaged pedagogies.

14. Beginning Pre-implementation Assessment in EDGE-Targeted Classes

Near the end of Fall Semester 2012, the EDGE Advisory Team Assessment and Evaluation Committee, working with the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, will begin assessment of outcomes in courses targeted for implementation of EDGE strategies in Fall 2013 [\[1\]](#).

15. Developing the EDGE Website and Blackboard/Desire2Learn Site

The EDGE website will provide resources for faculty and staff to use in active learning, collaborative learning, problem-based learning, service learning, community-based research, and other innovative classroom strategies developed to increase student learning. It will include an archive of EDGE faculty development workshops, a list of searchable databases of engaged learning strategies, service learning opportunities, community-based research opportunities, ongoing projects within EDGE classes, and upcoming development opportunities. In addition, using the course learning management platform, Blackboard VISTA (to be changed to Desire2Learn in 2013), an EDGE course site will be developed with sample learning materials, literature reviews, learning objects, and a running discussion board that will allow for interaction between EDGE faculty and those interested in entering the process.

Sample best practices from around the United States will be added to the website and Blackboard site. Prior to the initiation of EDGE training in Spring 2013, a repository of engaged-learning strategies, grouped under collaborative learning, classroom assessment techniques, problem-based learning, service learning, community-based research, and other engaged pedagogies will be provided for all GPC faculty.

These online resources will be the responsibility of the Executive Director of the QEP and the Executive Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, with technical support from the Office of Information Technology.

16. Delivering EDGE Workshops to Instructors of Fall 2013 Targeted Classes

The first workshops designed to train instructors of EDGE-targeted courses to incorporate EDGE strategies in their teaching will be offered in Spring 2013 to instructors who teach courses targeted for EDGE implementation in Fall 2013. (The plans and content for these workshops will have been developed in Fall 2012. See [Action 11](#) above.) This will allow adequate time for training and allow instructors to use the summer to build resources and to create discipline-specific EDGE strategies for coursework.

Workshops will be conducted by staff from the Center for Teaching and Learning or the Executive Director of the QEP and offered in multiple formats. A full-day workshop (Leading EDGE Retreat) covering the full range of EDGE strategies and the EDGE rubrics will be available for all instructors teaching courses in the targeted Fall 2013 groups. Following this overview workshop, shorter workshops focusing on single EDGE strategies and others focusing on advanced topics will be available during the spring semester. Faculty will be encouraged to take as many of the shorter workshops as they wish. While these workshops are intended primarily for instructors of EDGE-targeted classes, other interested faculty may also attend. These shorter workshops will focus on specific engaged learning best practices and will be presented in two parts: (1) a review of the literature and sample strategies and (2) development of course syllabus and reflection strategies.

Delivery of EDGE course enhancement workshops will continue each spring 2014 through 2017 and will be targeted primarily to instructors teaching the courses targeted for EDGE implementation the next fall.

17. Offering the First EDGE-Enhanced Classes

GPC faculty members will begin offering the first two EDGE-Enhanced courses (English 1101 and History 1111) utilizing engaged learning strategies in Fall 2013. At the end of each course, a variety of assessment methods (led by the Executive Director of the QEP and the Office of Institutional Research and Planning) will be implemented as described further in the section on [Assessment](#).

18. Analyzing EDGE Course [Assessments](#)

At the end of each semester, from Fall 2013 through Spring 2018, a thorough analysis of EDGE course assessments will be conducted and shared with faculty teaching EDGE-targeted courses. Analyses of behavioral, attitudinal, and student learning outcomes will be reviewed by the Office of Institutional Research and Planning, the Executive Director of the QEP, and the Dean of Institutional Effectiveness to determine the impact of the added Engaged Learning pedagogies.

19. Modifying [EDGE Training Workshops](#) in Response to Feedback from [Assessment Data](#)

Feedback from assessment of EDGE-enhanced courses and reports from EDGE faculty will be used by the Executive Directors of the QEP and the Center for Teaching and Learning to modify the Spring EDGE training workshops, starting in January 2014 and continuing through January 2017.

Since the training in engaged learning strategies provided to instructors of EDGE-targeted courses is the sole intervention of this QEP, this is the place to make changes if assessment evidence indicates that the desired outcomes are not being achieved. Each round of assessment will provide feedback on achievement of intended learning outcomes. If assessment results indicate that the desired learning outcomes are not being achieved, the Assessment and Evaluation Committee of the EDGE Advisory Team will work with the Executive Directors of the QEP and the Center for Teaching and Learning to determine

what changes in the training provided to faculty are most likely to lead to improvements in performance on the desired outcomes and will ensure that these changes are implemented in the training provided to faculty.

20. Developing “Leading EDGE” Recognition Awards

The Executive Director of the QEP and the EDGE Advisory Team’s Faculty Development Committee will work to develop a recognition process for faculty participating in the Engaged Learning initiative in Spring 2014. Categories of recognition will be developed based on the [EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric](#) as well as successes as documented by increased [learning outcomes](#). (Per suggestion, this will be expanded to include students, staff, administrators, and community partners.)

Celebration and recognition are systematically included in GPC’s community-based learning activities. QEP Office staff provide service certificates to students upon request of the instructor. Additionally, GPC’s QEP Office is an approved administrator of the President’s Volunteer Service Award. Eligible students are recognized at an awards ceremony held each spring in conjunction with GPC’s Year of Service activities. Faculty members are encouraged to include activities related to implementation of the QEP in their tenure and promotion materials, and faculty members are recognized on their annual reviews. Community partners are routinely invited to campus to celebrate with faculty and students at reflection events and awards ceremonies.

21. Maintaining the Progress of the Quality Improvements

It will be the responsibility of the Executive Director of the QEP to ensure that training is provided to faculty on the schedule described [above](#), that the assessments are administered according to [plan](#), and that the results of the assessments are [analyzed](#) and used to modify the training in engaged learning strategies provided to faculty.

22. Replicating and Institutionalizing the EDGE QEP in Year Four and Beyond

As the EDGE initiative enters its fourth year, the Executive Director of the QEP and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness will have evaluated outcomes of EDGE-enhanced classes at the end of every semester. While changes and alterations to EDGE efforts will have been made along the way, Year Four should present an opportunity for formal documentation and review of the project, evaluating the quality of implementation of the plan and the effectiveness of the plan with respect to student learning outcomes.

As with any educational reform, the three stages of implementation include critical mass building, quality building, and sustained institutionalization. In Year Four, an evaluation tool based on the assessment rubric developed by Andrew Furco (2002), will be used to evaluate the level to which a sustained institutionalization of the initiative has taken place at GPC.

The evaluation will include, but is not limited to whether:

1. GPC has accepted definitions for high quality engaged learning strategies that are used to operationalize engaged learning in EDGE classes.
2. GPC’s administrative leaders understand and support the EDGE initiative and actively cooperate to make the EDGE initiative a visible and important part of the college’s work.

3. GPC houses and funds an appropriate number of staff members who understand engaged learning and can influence the advancement and institutionalization of its work on campus.
4. GPC has a substantial number of influential faculty members participating as both instructors and/or advocates for the EDGE initiative and support its infusion into the institution's overall mission.
5. EDGE faculty members receive recognition for their EDGE efforts within the college's promotion and tenure review processes.
6. GPC has college-wide coordinating mechanisms that make students aware of EDGE courses, resources and opportunities.

After the evaluation of the EDGE initiative, the Executive Director of the QEP, the Academic Affairs leadership team, the Dean of the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, the Executive Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, the EDGE Advisory Team, and other appropriate parties will create an action plan designed to move the EDGE initiative forward over the subsequent five years (i.e., 2018 – 2022).

References and Documentation

	Internal Link	External Link or Source
[1]	QEP Focus Group and Survey Pilot	No external link.

Timeline: A Logical Calendaring of All Actions to be Implemented

Already Implemented

- Spring 2005, 2008, 2011 – Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) was administered and targeted engagement items were identified.
- Fall 2011 – Spring 2012
 - The Service Learning Faculty Fellows program was implemented to provide training in incorporating service learning into teaching [1].
 - Best Practices for Service Learning [2], links to Service Learning Faculty Toolkits [3], and guides to reflection were published on the “Engage” website [4].
 - Community partners for service learning were identified and the list was published on the “Engage” website [5].
 - The service learning faculty showcase was developed and published on GPC website [6].
 - Library resources (physically located in the QEP Office Area) to support engaged learning were developed and the list was published on “Engage” website [7].
- Spring 2012 – “Bringing Learning to Life” (engaged learning) workshops were presented by the Center for Teaching and Learning ([Appendix 4](#)).
- Spring 2012 - Dr. Sean Brumfield was named as Executive Director of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).

Planned for FY 13 (Year 1 of the QEP)

Summer 2012: Publication and submission of the QEP.

Fall 2012: Extensive publicity effort around the QEP. Formation of the EDGE Advisory Team and its subcommittees. Meet with Academic Leadership. Incorporate feedback from the Onsite Visiting Committee after the visit. Develop training for implementation of EDGE strategies. Refine the [EDGE Course Evaluation](#) and [Student Learning Outcome](#) rubrics. Engage faculty with the EDGE initiative.

Fall 2012 – Spring 2013: Gather baseline assessments before implementation of EDGE strategies (discussed in [Assessment](#) section). QEP faculty focus group and pilot of survey/assessment instruments in Fall 2012 [8].

Spring 2013: Develop website and Blackboard/Desire2Learn site for EDGE. Begin training in [EDGE strategies](#) and the [EDGE rubric](#) for full-time faculty members teaching HIST 1111 and ENGL 1101.

FY 14 – FY 18 (Years 2 through 6 of the QEP)

Beginning in FY 14, the actions of the QEP take place in [recurring cycles](#). EDGE strategies will be implemented in two or three courses each year in the fall semester. The planned order of implementation (see [figure below](#)) is as follows:

- FY 14** – ENGL 1101, HIST 1111
- FY 15** – ENGL 1102, MATH 1001/1111
- FY 16** – POLS 1101, CHEM 1211
- FY 17** – ENGL 2131, ACCT 2101

FY 18 – PHIL 2020, PSYC 1101

Pre-assessment, using the strategies described in the assessment section, will begin in the targeted courses during the Spring semester prior to implementation of EDGE strategies in those courses. Post-assessment will be conducted in targeted courses at the end of each semester. Assessments will be scored, reviewed, and evaluated almost immediately so that feedback from the assessments can be used to make changes in the training to be provided each spring.

This plan produces a phased implementation of EDGE strategies in targeted courses. Once EDGE strategies are implemented in a course, the intention is that they become permanent components of that course, so that every semester, an increasing number of students will be exposed to courses using EDGE strategies. The phased implementation of EDGE strategies has the logistical advantage of limiting the number of faculty and staff to be trained each semester and allowing faculty and staff to become accustomed to the cycle of training, assessment, and evaluation. The implementation timeline for targeted courses is represented graphically in the figure below.

Spring 2014: Develop “[Leading EDGE](#)” faculty awards. (Per suggestion, will be expanded to include students, staff, administrators, and community partners.)

FY 17 on: Evaluation and [institutionalization](#) of the EDGE initiative.

References and Documentation

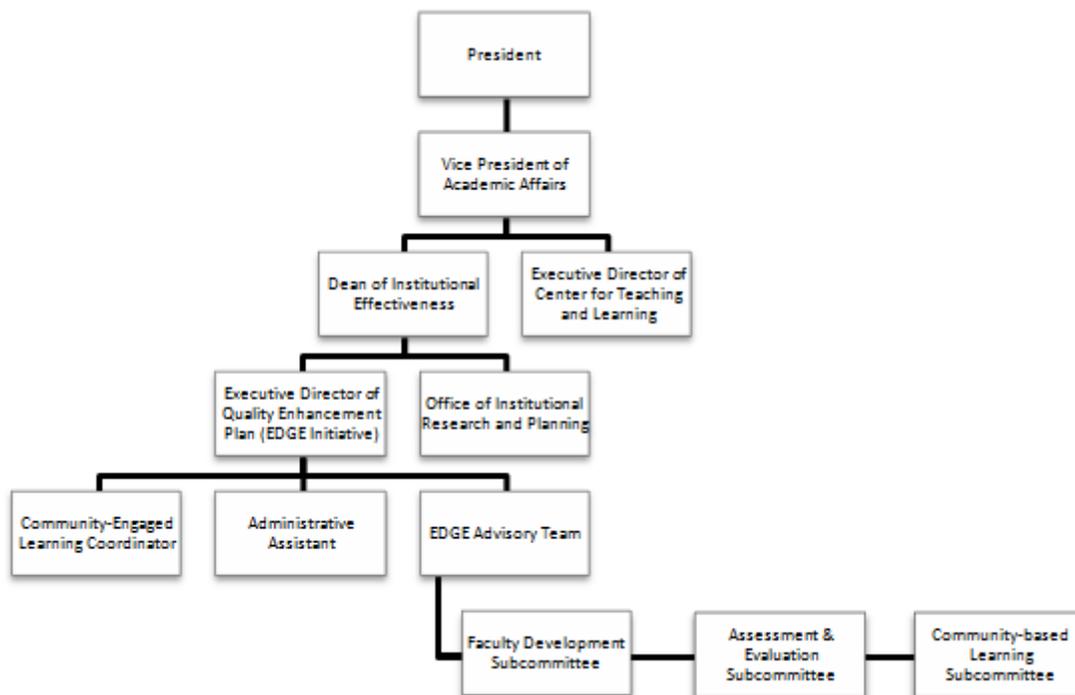
	Internal Link	External Link or Source
[1]	Service Learning Faculty Fellows Program 2011 - 2012	http://depts.gpc.edu/engage/SLFF.html and http://depts.gpc.edu/engage/SLFF2011.html
[2]	Best Practices for Service Learning	http://depts.gpc.edu/engage/faculty.html
[3]	Links to Service Learning Faculty Toolkits	http://depts.gpc.edu/engage/toolkits.html
[4]	Reflection Guides	http://depts.gpc.edu/engage/reflectionarticles.html
[5]	List of Community Partners for Service Learning	http://depts.gpc.edu/engage/communitypartners.html
[6]	Service Learning Faculty Showcase	http://facstaff.gpc.edu/~nyoung/slscep/
[7]	Library Resources for Engaged Learning	http://depts.gpc.edu/engage/resources.html
[8]	QEP Focus Group and Survey Pilot	No external link.

QEP Timeline

	Year 1			Year 2			Year 3			Year 4			Year 5			Year 6		
	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Summer 2013	Fall 2013	Spring 2014	Summer 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Summer 2015	Fall 2015	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Fall 2016	Spring 2017	Summer 2017	Fall 2017	Spring 2018	Summer 2018
Train	HIST 1111, ENGL 1101 faculty																	
Pre-Assess	HIST 1111, ENGL 1101 courses																	
Implement EDGE Strategies	HIST 1111, ENGL 1101 courses 																	
Assess	HIST 1111, ENGL 1101 courses 																	
Review Assessments, Make Changes	HIST 1111, ENGL 1101 courses 																	
Train	MATH 1001/ 1111, ENGL 1102 faculty																	
Pre-Assess	MATH 1001/ 1111, ENGL 1102 courses																	
Implement EDGE Strategies	MATH 1001/ 1111, ENGL 1102 courses 																	
Assess	MATH 1001/ 1111, ENGL 1102 courses 																	
Review Assessments, Make Changes	MATH 1001/ 1111, ENGL 1102 courses 																	
Train	POLS 1101, CHEM 1211 faculty																	
Pre-Assess	POLS 1101, CHEM 1211 courses																	
Implement EDGE Strategies	POLS 1101, CHEM 1211 courses 																	
Assess	POLS 1101, CHEM 1211 courses 																	
Review Assessments, Make Changes	POLS 1101, CHEM 1211 courses 																	
Train	ENGL 2131, ACCT 2101 faculty																	
Pre-Assess	ENGL 2131, ACCT 2101 courses																	
Implement EDGE Strategies	ENGL 2131, ACCT 2101 courses 																	
Assess	ENGL 2131, ACCT 2101 courses 																	
Review Assessments, Make Changes	ENGL 2131, ACCT 2101 courses 																	
Train	PHIL 2020, PSYC 1101 faculty																	
Pre-Assess	PHIL 2020, PSYC 1101 courses																	
Implement EDGE Strategies	PHIL 2020, PSYC 1101 courses																	
Assess	PHIL 2020, PSYC 1101 courses																	
Review Assessments, Make Changes	PHIL 2020, PSYC 1101 courses																	

Organizational Structure

Georgia Perimeter College (GPC) has created an organizational structure to support and sustain the implementation of the EDGE initiative. Positions, committees, and departments that will provide direct support to the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) are described below and illustrated in the figure below.



QEP Administration

GPC's EDGE initiative will be housed administratively within the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Staffing for the program consists of an executive director, a coordinator, and an administrative assistant. The Executive Director of the Quality Enhancement Plan reports to the Dean of Institutional Effectiveness and is a member of the college's Academic Team. The Dean of Institutional Effectiveness reports to the Vice President for Academic Affairs who reports to the President.

Executive Director of the Quality Enhancement Plan. In June 2012, Dr. Sean Brumfield, assistant professor of English and former Executive Director of the Atlanta Center for Civic Engagement & Service Learning, was appointed Executive Director of the QEP. Dr. Brumfield was selected to lead the EDGE program because of his extensive experience using engaged pedagogies in the college classroom, designing and leading faculty development programs, and providing training and technical assistance to other colleges interested in establishing service learning/civic engagement programs. Dr. Brumfield will provide broad program direction, have budget oversight, collaborate with the Center for Teaching and Learning to provide faculty training in engaged learning strategies, maintain the EDGE initiative's website, develop and maintain community partnerships with community-based organizations willing to serve as

placement sites for community-based learning pedagogies, and direct the collection and utilization of assessment data to make program improvements.

Community-Engaged Learning Coordinator. Ms. Mary Elizabeth Tyler Boucebci will serve as the EDGE initiative's Community-Engaged Learning Coordinator. Ms. Tyler Boucebci was selected to serve in this capacity because of her extensive experience leading curricular and co-curricular service learning, civic engagement, and community-based research activities. Mrs. Tyler Boucebci will assist in the facilitation of faculty development programming, provide direct support for faculty members using the more advanced forms of engaged pedagogy, develop and maintain community partnerships, assist with the implementation of co-curricular community-based learning activities, and represent the executive director at meetings and functions as appropriate.

Administrative Assistant. Ms. Kia Osborne was selected to provide general administrative support to Dr. Brumfield and Ms. Tyler Boucebci. Ms. Osborne will also assist with the implementation of co-curricular community-based learning activities.

EDGE Advisory Team and Associated Working Sub-Committees

The EDGE Advisory Team will be composed of approximately twelve faculty, staff, student, and community representatives. The purpose of the EDGE Advisory Team will be to provide input and guidance for the program. Members of the EDGE Advisory Team will evaluate courses, review assessments, assist with the facilitation of faculty development seminars, and assist with the implementation of community-based learning activities. Four working sub-committees will be formed: (1) Assessment and Evaluation, (2) Faculty Development, (3) Community Learning Activities, and (4) Community Partner Advisory Committee. These sub-committees will become an integral part of the implementation of the EDGE initiative.

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL)

The CTL offers opportunities for the faculty of Georgia Perimeter College to develop their teaching, service, and professional activities and provides resources for reflection, rejuvenation, and innovation. The CTL strives to improve the environment for learning by serving the faculty and responding to their professional needs so they can better meet the needs of their students. Working in collaboration with EDGE initiative staff members and the EDGE Advisory Team, the CTL will host the [Leading EDGE Retreats](#), assist with the [Leading EDGE Awards](#) process, and assist faculty in the redesign of their course(s) to move them along the EDGE continuum.

Office of Institutional Research and Planning (OIRP)

The OIRP serves the information needs of the college community and external constituents. In addition to conducting college-wide surveys, this department is specifically responsible for research design, data collection, analysis and reporting of findings to support the research needs of the college. Within the context of the EDGE initiative, the OIRP will assist EDGE staff and the EDGE Advisory Team with the [assessment](#) and evaluation of the QEP's goals and student learning outcomes and with interpretation of statistical data.

Resources

Georgia Perimeter College (GPC) has prioritized support of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) through allocation of space, personnel, and budgetary resources.

Personnel costs will be the greatest budgetary item. The college originally envisioned creating a new QEP Director position, which would have been an additional budgetary item. However, in light of the college's current financial circumstances, a decision was made to staff the QEP Director position by reallocating an existing position from the Atlanta Center for Civic Engagement and Service Learning (ACCESL). Dr. Sean Brumfield, formerly the Executive Director of the ACCESL was named Executive Director of the QEP. Dr. Brumfield is an expert on civic engagement and service learning. The college was already counting on him and the ACCESL to assist with engaged learning for the QEP. With the closure of the ACCESL, Dr. Brumfield will bring that expertise directly to the QEP.

Dr. Pamela Moolenaar-Wirsiy is the Executive Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) and served as chair of the QEP Steering Committee. As Executive Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, Dr. Moolenaar-Wirsiy will continue to work closely with the QEP and to plan and to carry out training sessions for faculty and staff in engaged learning strategies.

Dr. Brumfield brings with him two positions reallocated from the ACCESL: Ms. Mary Elizabeth Tyler Boucebci will serve as the Community-Engaged Learning Coordinator for the QEP and Ms. Kia Osborne will provide administrative support for the QEP.

While the overall personnel costs for the QEP seem high, because these are reallocations of existing positions, there is no incremental cost to the college.

The college has provided space for the QEP staff in offices in the "A" building on the Clarkston Campus in space previously occupied by the Center for Teaching and Learning (relocated to the space previously occupied by the ACCESL) and the Center for International Education (on hiatus for at least a year, but also relocated to the space previously occupied by the ACCESL). The teaching and training activities supported by the QEP will take place in various existing spaces (including classrooms and training rooms) located throughout the college and on all campuses.

The non-personnel costs to support the QEP are relatively modest and are focused on four areas: promotion of the QEP, faculty development costs (limited travel and on-campus professional development/training for faculty and staff on EDGE strategies that may be incorporated into courses and student activities), assessment, and costs for supplies (including printing of the QEP).

Promotional costs for the QEP will be incurred primarily in the first year, FY 2013. These include costs for purchase of light pole banners with the EDGE logo, mouse pads promoting the EDGE initiative to be placed in college offices and computer labs, and promotional prizes for contests designed to increase EDGE awareness.

Travel costs are allocated to allow two people to attend (two different) national meetings related to the QEP each year at \$1,500 per meeting. It is envisioned that only one person will attend a particular meeting, that these funds will support travel of particular relevance to the QEP, and that travelers will bring acquired knowledge back to GPC and present it to the QEP staff, QEP Implementation Committee members, and/or faculty and staff.

An additional \$1,500 is budgeted to support local travel for Dr. Brumfield or other QEP or CTL staff so that training may be conducted on all GPC campuses. The local travel budget will also pay for travel in support of assessment and other QEP-related activities by QEP and Office of Institutional Research and Planning staff.

Money allocated for professional development will support inviting experts to GPC campuses for workshops on QEP topics or attendance at “webinars” on QEP topics. While this budget is modest and focused more on the first year and the early years of the project, it is expected that these workshops and webinars will impact many GPC faculty and staff. In addition to the amounts specifically budgeted for external speakers and webinars, it is expected that most professional development will be provided by QEP and CTL staff, some of whom will benefit from the funds budgeted for travel to national meetings. Some funds have been requested from the GPC Foundation in support of these workshops, primarily to supply appropriate food when all-day workshops (Leading EDGE Retreats) are offered.

Most of the assessment needs for the QEP will be met using internally-developed instruments, as detailed in the assessment section. In addition, our existing Office of Institutional Research and Planning will provide logistical support and data analysis for the assessment activities planned for the QEP. Therefore, these resources do not appear as separate budgetary items. In addition, the University System of Georgia mandates and supports GPC’s participation in administration of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) every three years. GPC has participated in CCSSE administration in 2005, 2008, and 2011. Subsequent administrations are planned in 2014 (which will be QEP Year 2) and 2017 (which will be QEP Year 5). Since there will be no cost to the college (the cost is paid by the USG), administration of this important assessment is not included as a budgetary item, but is described in the [Assessment](#) section.

The supply budget of \$2500 per year reflects anticipated costs for office supplies, routine copying and printing, books, printed materials, and media to promote faculty and staff development in the area of the QEP. An additional \$500 is allocated in the development year to cover the cost of printing the QEP document.

Letters of commitment showing institutional support for the resources needed for this QEP are provided in [Appendices 10](#) and [11](#).



Engagement Drives GPC Education

Georgia Perimeter College Proposed QEP Budget

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
Personnel*						
Executive Director of the QEP (Dr. Sean Brumfield)	\$112,500	\$112,500	\$114,750	\$117,045	\$119,386	\$121,774
QEP Development Committee Chair (Dr. Pamela Moolenaar-Wirsiy) - 25% effort	\$28,504	\$28,504	\$29,074	\$29,655	\$30,248	\$30,853
Community-Engaged Learning Coordinator (Mary Elizabeth Tyler Boucebci)	\$57,813	\$57,813	\$58,969	\$60,148	\$61,351	\$62,578
Administrative Assistant (Kia Osborn)	\$37,501	\$37,501	\$38,251	\$39,016	\$39,797	\$40,593
Personnel Total	\$236,318	\$236,318	\$241,044	\$245,865	\$250,782	\$255,798
Travel						
Travel (to conferences and local travel between campuses)	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$4,500
Operating Costs						
Promotional materials (Year 0 only):						
Light pole banners with EDGE logo	\$5,000					
Mouse pads with EDGE logo for offices/computer labs	\$3,200					
Professional development (speakers for workshops, webinars)	\$6,000	\$5,000	\$4,000	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Supplies (office supplies, copying and printing costs, books, printed materials, media)	\$3,000	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
Operating Cost Total	\$17,200	\$7,500	\$6,500	\$5,500	\$4,500	\$4,500
Non-Personnel Total (Travel plus Operating)	\$21,700	\$12,000	\$11,000	\$10,000	\$9,000	\$9,000
Foundation Funds						
Leading EDGE retreats	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	
QEP promotional prizes (Year 0 only)	\$600					
TOTAL	\$1,100	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$0
Budget Total, All Sources	\$259,118	\$248,818	\$252,544	\$256,365	\$260,282	\$264,798

* Includes fringe benefits, estimated at 25% of base salary

Assessment

Remembering that this Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) aims to change behaviors, attitudes, and course-specific learning outcomes, the QEP will be supported by appropriate assessment methods. Assessment of the EDGE QEP will take place within the context of ongoing assessment at Georgia Perimeter College (GPC) and will harness some of this ongoing assessment in service of the QEP in addition to developing appropriate QEP-specific assessments.

<p style="text-align: center;">Outcomes of the EDGE Initiative</p> <p>Behavior Changes:</p> <p>Students will be more likely to persist in and complete their courses. Students will be more likely to be retained at the college. Instructors will increase their focus on and skills in making their courses engaging and relevant.</p> <p>Attitude Changes:</p> <p>Students will perceive their courses as more relevant to their lives and careers. Students will report greater engagement in courses using engaged learning strategies. Students will report greater engagement as part of their overall college experience.</p> <p>Learning Outcomes:</p> <p>Students will improve in their ability to make connections between course content and issues of real-world significance. Students will perform better on course-specific common end-of-course assessments.</p>

The planned phased implementation of EDGE strategies in courses, with implementation in only two or three courses per year, provides an excellent opportunity to gather baseline data in targeted courses prior to implementation in those courses, and to collect data each semester post-implementation. If the EDGE strategies are effective in improving outcomes in the targeted courses, then there should be statistically significant differences between baseline and post-implementation outcomes. Moreover, if there are improvements in outcomes, the changes should be evident in a timeframe that coincides with the timeframe of implementation in specific courses.

Behavior Changes

Students will be more likely to persist in and complete their courses.

As mentioned above, courses targeted for the EDGE intervention were selected based on 1) being taken by large numbers of students and 2) having undesirably high DFW (grade of D or F or course withdrawal) rates. Withdrawal rates are a measure of (lack of) student persistence

within courses and one of the goals of the EDGE QEP is to increase student persistence within courses. GPC routinely tracks withdrawal rates. Withdrawal rates are readily available for each of the targeted courses for the past several years and will be easily obtainable each semester after the implementation of the QEP. It is expected that there will be a statistically significant increase in persistence (lack of withdrawal) within targeted courses after implementation of EDGE strategies. The overall goal will be at least a 5% increase in course completion rates within EDGE-targeted courses after implementation of EDGE strategies and that all EDGE-targeted courses will have persistence rates of at least 85%.

Numbers in the table below are the percentage of students completing the course in the specified semester.

Course	FA 10	SP 11	FA 11	SP 12	FA 12	SP 13	FA 13	SP 14	FA 14	SP 15	FA 15	SP 16	FA 16	SP 17	FA 17	SP 18
ENGL 1101	92.5	89.8	91.2	86.9	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
HIST 1111	93.3	90.4	90.4	88.9	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
ENGL 1102	89.3	88.4	86.0	89.7	NA	NA	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
MATH 1001*	86.5	83.1	89.7	91.2	NA	NA	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
MATH 1111	85.9	81.2	81.6	81.3	NA	NA	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
POLS 1101	92.6	91.0	91.4	90.7	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?
CHEM 1211	78.4	74.3	76.8	77.9	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?
ENGL 2131	79.5	80.9	81.5	83.3	NA	?	?	?	?							
ACCT 2101	89.1	86.5	84.5	86.6	NA	?	?	?	?							
PHIL 2020**	88.1	81.2	83.6	79.5	NA	?	?									
PSYC 1101	90.6	90.0	90.3	90.3	NA	?	?									

* MATH 1101 was replaced by MATH 1001 in Fall 2011

**PHIL 2641 became PHIL 2020 in Spring 2011

Students will be more likely to be retained at the college.

While an increased rate of program completion and graduation is an important college-wide goal, this is not easily measured or changed within a short time-frame, or even one as long as five years, at institutions where most students attend on a part-time basis. Course completion rates (above) were selected as short-term proxies for the more important long-term outcome of student persistence through graduation. However, an intermediate measure of progress toward program completion and graduation is also possible in the form of “retention” rates. GPC defines retention as the percentage of students who begin in one fall semester who are still enrolled the next fall semester. GPC routinely tracks this statistic and publishes it in annual institutional Fact Books [1, 2]. If the QEP works as predicted, GPC expects that retention (and graduation) rates will gradually increase as more and more students are impacted by courses using engaged learning strategies.

GPC Retention Rates. The numbers in the table below are the percentage of students who started in a given year and were retained at GPC for one or two years post-entry or who graduated within three years of matriculation.

Cohort>	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	Fall 2017
1 st -year retention rate	59.0%	57.3%	53.0%	55.4%	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?
2 nd -year retention rate	38.2%	35.7%	35.6%	NA	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?
3 rd -year associate degree graduation rate	7.1%	6.0%	NA	NA	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?

Instructors will increase their focus on and skills in making their courses engaging and relevant.

GPC will provide [training in EDGE strategies](#) to instructors in [targeted courses](#) the [spring](#) prior to implementation in those courses. The fall and spring prior to EDGE implementation, GPC will collect baseline data on use of EDGE practices in those courses. Three types of data on instructor EDGE practices will be collected to measure the extent to which EDGE practices are used in courses before and after implementation of EDGE strategies in courses:

1. Instructors will be asked to rate themselves on use of EDGE strategies.
2. The EDGE Advisory Team will be asked to rate courses on their use of EDGE strategies.
3. Students will be asked to rate courses on use of EDGE strategies in their courses.

It is expected that there will be a statistically significant increase in ratings on use of EDGE strategies on all three measures after implementation of EDGE strategies in targeted courses. The overall goal will to have at least 90% of EDGE-targeted courses rated as “EDGE Emerging” or higher and 75% of EDGE-targeted courses rated as “EDGE Intensive” after implementation of EDGE strategies. This [rating scale](#) is explained below.

Instructor Self-Ratings on use of EDGE Strategies

GPC has developed a rubric, referred to here as the “EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric” that can be used by faculty, outside observers, and students to rate the degree to which EDGE strategies have been employed in particular courses, and the types of EDGE strategies that have been used and emphasized. Training on the use of the EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric will be provided to instructors as part of the [EDGE training](#) the spring before implementation begins in their courses. Instructors will use a non-quantitative version of this rubric ([Appendix 7](#)) and will be asked to circle the one statement on each row that best represents the use of EDGE strategies in a course. Instructors will fill out one rubric form for each course they teach.

After instructors have rated themselves on the non-quantitative version of the rubric, they will submit their self-ratings and portfolios with supporting materials to their department chairs at the end of the semester. At a minimum, instructors must supply copies of their syllabi for each EDGE-targeted course. Instructors will also be encouraged to supply course materials that

demonstrate incorporation of EDGE strategies into their courses. The instructor self-rating forms and EDGE-portfolios will be forwarded to the EDGE Advisory Team Assessment and Evaluation Committee.

Newly added to the EDGE Course Evaluation Forms (**Appendices 7, 8, and 9**) is an opportunity for students, instructors, and the EDGE Advisory Team Assessment and Evaluation Committee to indicate the degree to which each targeted engagement strategy was used in a particular course section. These data will allow for later [statistical analysis](#) to determine whether one engagement strategy was more effective than others in increasing the desired outcomes.

Administrative personnel will convert non-quantitative instructor self-ratings to quantitative ratings using a quantitative version of the EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric (**Appendix 8**) that assigns point values to statements circled by instructors in their self-ratings. Quantified instructor self-ratings will be averaged within courses for the fall and spring before implementation and every semester after implementation. Post-implementation average self-ratings for each course will be compared to pre-implementation self-ratings for the same course to look for statistically significant differences indicating that training in EDGE strategies results in increases in instructor implementation of EDGE strategies in targeted courses.

[Note: The plan to compare pre-implementation and post-implementation scores is used for analysis of a number of assessment measures described in this section. This paradigm for comparison of pre- and post-implementation findings is referred to as the “**EDGE Data Analysis Paradigm**.” Rather than present the entire paradigm (spreadsheet showing the results that will be compared) repeatedly, the paradigm has been placed with the Appendices (**Appendix 12**) and will be referred to in each section with a description of the measures to be compared.]

Analysis:

Comparison of average instructor self-ratings using the EDGE Data Analysis Paradigm (**Appendix 12**) on quantified scores on the EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric before and after training and implementation of EDGE strategies in targeted courses.

To assess whether the post-implementation targets of at least 90% of EDGE-targeted courses rated as “EDGE Emerging” or higher and 75% of EDGE-targeted courses rated as “EDGE Intensive” have been met, quantitative totals on the EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric will be converted to EDGE Inactive, EDGE Emerging, and EDGE Intensive using the EDGE Rating Scale shown in [Appendix 13](#).

See EDGE Rating Scale in [Appendix 13](#).

The percentage of sections in each course falling into each ratings category will then be entered on the EDGE Rating Spreadsheet ([Appendix 14](#)).

See EDGE Rating Spreadsheet in [Appendix 14](#).

EDGE Advisory Team Assessment and Evaluation Committee Ratings on Use of EDGE Strategies

The instructor EDGE portfolios described above will be forwarded to the EDGE Advisory Team Assessment and Evaluation Committee for external evaluation of the degree to which EDGE strategies have been implemented in the targeted courses. Based on review of syllabi and EDGE portfolios, the committee will determine ratings on the quantitative version of the EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric ([Appendix 8](#)) for each course. Committee-determined ratings will be averaged within courses for the fall and spring before implementation and every semester after implementation. Post-implementation average committee ratings for each course will be compared to pre-implementation committee ratings for the same course to look for statistically significant differences indicating that training in EDGE strategies results in increases in instructor implementation of EDGE strategies in targeted courses.

Analysis:

Comparison of EDGE Advisory Team Assessment and Evaluation Committee ratings using the EDGE Data Analysis Paradigm ([Appendix 12](#)) on quantified scores on the EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric before and after training and implementation of EDGE strategies in targeted courses.

To assess whether the post-implementation targets of at least 90% of EDGE-targeted courses rated as “EDGE Emerging” or higher and 75% of EDGE-targeted courses rated as “EDGE Intensive” have been met, quantitative totals on the EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric will be converted to EDGE Inactive, EDGE Emerging, and EDGE Intensive using the EDGE Rating Scale shown in [Appendix 13](#).

See EDGE Rating Scale in [Appendix 13](#).

The percentage of sections in each course falling into each ratings category will then be entered on the EDGE Rating Spreadsheet ([Appendix 14](#)).

See EDGE Rating Spreadsheet in [Appendix 14](#).

Student Ratings of Use of EDGE Strategies in Targeted Courses

Students will be given a qualitative version of the EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric, similar to that given to instructors for self-rating, but with wording changed slightly to make it more appropriate for students ([Appendix 9](#)). Although presented in [Appendix 9](#) as it would appear in a paper format, student ratings on these four EDGE dimensions will probably be converted to an online format and administered to students as part of a larger assessment (see other assessment pieces below). Scoring will be done by converting student qualitative ratings to quantitative ratings as described for instructor self-ratings (above and [Appendix 8](#)) or by entering point values of each response into an online scoring system. Overall average student ratings will be calculated for each course-section and the average numbers will be treated as course ratings (similar to what will be done for instructor self-ratings). That is, each section of each targeted course will receive a single averaged rating that will be treated as comparable to an instructor rating his or her own section or the committee rating an instructor’s section. All

section ratings within a course will be averaged together to determine course ratings for each targeted course each semester. Student ratings will be averaged within courses for the fall and spring before implementation and every semester after implementation. Post-implementation average student ratings for each course will be compared to pre-implementation student ratings for the same course to look for statistically significant differences indicating that implementation of EDGE strategies results in increases in student awareness of EDGE strategies in targeted courses.

Analysis:

Comparison of student ratings using the EDGE Data Analysis Paradigm ([Appendix 12](#)) on quantified scores on the EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric before and after implementation of EDGE strategies in targeted courses.

To assess whether the post-implementation targets of at least 90% of EDGE-targeted courses rated as “EDGE Emerging” or higher and 75% of EDGE-targeted courses rated as “EDGE Intensive “ have been met, quantitative totals on the EDGE-rubric will be converted to EDGE Inactive, EDGE Emerging, and EDGE Intensive using the EDGE Rating Scale shown in [Appendix 13](#).

See EDGE Rating Scale in [Appendix 13](#).

The percentage of sections in each course falling into each ratings category will then be entered on the EDGE Rating Spreadsheet ([Appendix 14](#)).

See EDGE Rating Spreadsheet in [Appendix 14](#).

Attitude Changes

Students will perceive their courses as more relevant.

This outcome will be assessed by asking students to respond to four items using a four-point Likert scale. Although presented by themselves in this document, these questions will be combined with other student assessments and administered to students online.

1. I now have a clear and thorough understanding of how this course is relevant to and useful in my life and at this stage of my college education.
2. I now have skills to apply what I learned in this course to real-world problem solving.
3. What I learned in this course is highly valuable, important and meaningful to me.
4. This course brought learning to life for me in a very engaging, exciting and motivational manner.

Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

Student qualitative responses on these items will be converted to quantitative responses to permit averaging and comparisons.

Response	Quantitative Score
Strongly Disagree	0
Somewhat Disagree	1
Somewhat Agree	2
Strongly Agree	3

Each student's responses to the four items will be totaled to produce a single score. Student ratings will be averaged to produce overall ratings for each section of targeted courses. Section ratings will be averaged for each targeted course. Student ratings of course relevance will be averaged within courses for the fall and spring before implementation and every semester after implementation. Post-implementation average student ratings for each course will be compared to pre-implementation committee ratings for the same course to look for statistically significant differences indicating that implementation of EDGE strategies results in statistically significant increases in student perceptions of the relevance of the targeted courses.

Analysis:

Comparison of student ratings of course relevance using the EDGE Data Analysis Paradigm ([Appendix 12](#)) before and after implementation of EDGE strategies in targeted courses.

The target on this measure will be for at least 80% of students in targeted courses to somewhat agree or strongly agree with the four statements above. Success in meeting this target can be evaluated by entering the percentage of students in each course with quantified ratings of eight or higher onto the spreadsheet provided by the EDGE Data Analysis Paradigm ([Appendix 12](#)).

Analysis:

Percentage of students with total scores of 8 or higher on the four statements about course value and relevance before and after implementation of EDGE strategies in targeted courses, displayed using the EDGE Data Analysis Paradigm ([Appendix 12](#)).

Students will report greater engagement in courses using engaged learning strategies.

When the QEP document was created, GPC was not aware that a Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) Course Evaluation Form [3] existed and was available to members at no additional cost. Having been made aware of this instrument by a member of the On-Site Reaffirmation Committee, GPC now plans to use selected items from this instrument for both formative and summative evaluation of the QEP. Selected items from the CCSSE Course Evaluation Form will be administered to all students in targeted courses beginning one year before implementation of EDGE strategies in the course, and every semester after that through the lifespan of the QEP. The makers of CCSSE permit institutions to pull selected items from

the Course Evaluation Form, so GPC has selected items that closely parallel the targeted items on the every-third-year college-wide administrations of CCSSE (see below). It is expected that responses of students in targeted courses after implementation of EDGE strategies will be significantly different than responses of students in those same courses in the year prior to implementation of EDGE strategies and that post-implementation responses will reflect greater engagement of students in the targeted courses than prior to implementation of the EDGE QEP.

Targeted CCSSE Course Evaluation Form items include the following:

<p>1. In your experiences in <u>this course</u> during the current academic term, how often have you done the following?</p> <p>Very often Often Sometimes Never</p> <p>a. Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussion b. Made a class presentation d. Worked on papers that required integrating ideas or information from various sources f. Worked with other students on projects or assignments during class g. Worked with classmates outside of class to complete a project or an assignment h. Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary) i. Participated in a community-based project as part of your coursework q. Worked with your instructor on activities other than coursework</p>
<p>7. During this academic term, how much has <u>this course</u> emphasized the following mental activities?</p> <p>Very much Quite a bit Some Very little</p> <p>c. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways d. Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations f. Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill</p>
<p>8. During this academic term, to what extent has <u>this course</u> helped you develop in the following areas?</p> <p>Very much Quite a bit Some Very little Not applicable</p> <p>c. Thinking critically and analytically g. Learning effectively on your own k. Contributing to the welfare of the community l. Developing clearer career goals</p>

13. During this academic term, how frequently has your instructor for this course used the following techniques?

Very often

Often

Sometimes

Never

- a. Instructor-led lecture
- b. Instructor-led discussion
- c. Teacher-student shared responsibility (seminar, discussion, etc.)
- d. Computer-based assignments/coursework
- e. Small-group activities (work/discussion)
- f. Student presentations
- g. Individual student work (writing, working problems, practicing skills)
- h. Performances in applied and fine arts (e.g., dance, drama, music)
- i. Field-based experience (internship, clinical placement, etc.)
- j. Lab sessions (sciences, writing, math, etc.)
- k. Large group discussion
- l. Quizzes, tests, or examinations

Students will report greater engagement as part of their overall college experience.

The **Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)** is frequently used as a measure of student engagement at two-year colleges. GPC, with the support of the University System of Georgia, administers the CCSSE every three years in the spring semester. To date, the CCSSE has been administered in 2005, 2008, and 2011. Future administrations within the lifespan of the QEP are planned for 2014 and 2017.

The distributors of CCSSE select the course sections to be sampled in each administration. Therefore, the CCSSE cannot be selectively administered in targeted courses, and is not aimed at revealing information about experiences in particular courses. Rather, it is aimed at gathering information about students' overall college experiences. Since all of the EDGE-targeted courses are taken by large numbers of students and four of these are required courses that must be taken by all students, it is expected that virtually every student will be impacted by one or more courses targeted for EDGE interventions. It is hoped that the engaged attitudes intended to be fostered by the EDGE-targeted courses will generalize to other courses and to students' overall experiences at GPC. After review of the CCSSE, a number of items were selected that might be affected by this QEP's focus on engaged learning. It is expected that responses of the CCSSE sample population will be affected by participation in the EDGE QEP, resulting in responses on the CCSSE that reflect greater involvement in the college than prior to implementation of the EDGE QEP.

Targeted CCSSE items include the following:

4. In your experiences at this college during the current school year, how often have you done each of the following?
 - Very often
 - Often
 - Sometimes
 - Never
 - a. Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
 - b. Made a class presentation
 - d. Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources
 - f. Worked with other students on projects during class
 - g. Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments
 - h. Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)
 - i. Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course
 - q. Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework

5. During the current school year, how much has your coursework at this college emphasized the following mental activities?
 - Very much
 - Quite a bit
 - Some
 - Very little
 - c. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways
 - d. Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods
 - e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations
 - f. Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill

12. How much has your experience at this college contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?
 - Very much
 - Quite a bit
 - Some
 - Very little
 - b. Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills
 - e. Thinking critically or analytically
 - i. Learning effectively on your own
 - m. Contributing to the welfare of your community

The goal will be to produce increases in self-reported student engagement in the college and the community, as reflected in student responses on the CCSSE and the Survey of Online Student Engagement (SOSE) over the lifespan of the EDGE QEP. The goal will be a statistically significant increase in the percentage of students responding “Often” or “Very often” on the targeted components of CCSSE question 4, and students responding “Quite a bit” or “Very much” on the targeted components of CCSSE questions 5 and 12 in the 2014 and 2017 administrations, compared to the 2005, 2008, and 2011 administrations.

Percentage of students responding “Often” or “Very Often” to items that are part of question 4 and “Quite a bit” or “Very much” to items that are part of questions 5 and 12.

CCSSE Item	2005	2008	2011	2014	2017
4a	67.1%	62.4%	68.8%	?	?
4b	36.7%	34.3%	42.6%	?	?
4d	68.3%	65.2%	74.0%	?	?
4f	38.1%	38.2%	43.4%	?	?
4g	23.6%	26.5%	35.1%	?	?
4h	9.7%	9.3%	11.4%	?	?
4i	6.1%	6.9%	10.7%	?	?
4q	7.6%	10.7%	12.8%	?	?
5c	60.3%	60.2%	79.0%	?	?
5d	54.5%	55.3%	62.4%	?	?
5e	53.2%	54.6%	63.0%	?	?
5f	56.6%	57.7%	64.7%	?	?
12b	36.5%	36.6%	43.8%	?	?
12e	66.9%	65.4%	73.5%	?	?
12i	66.0%	65.9%	71.9%	?	?
12m	23.6%	25.4%	34.4%	?	?

The CCSSE is not yet available for online administration. However, the makers of the CCSSE are in the process of developing a comparable instrument for students in online courses, the Survey of Online Student Engagement (SOSE). In Spring 2011, GPC participated in the first nationwide pilot of the SOSE. The SOSE includes items with counterparts to CCSSE, as well as items that pertain strictly to the online learning environment. While CCSSE is distributed in randomly selected class sections, the SOSE was made available to all online students via an e-mail invitation. In Spring 2011, approximately 500 GPC students completed the SOSE. Preliminary results from the Spring 2011 pilot administration of SOSE and comparisons with responses to comparable items on CCSSE are presented below. These initial comparisons indicate significant differences for most items between CCSSE responses and SOSE responses. It appears, therefore, that it will not be reasonable to treat CCSSE and SOSE results as comparable, but these pilot SOSE findings will provide a basis for comparison with subsequent SOSE results.

Responses to selected CCSSE Items for which a comparable question was asked on the Survey of Online Student Engagement (SOSE), Spring 2011 Administrations

Note: For items with statistically significant differences, using Chi Square analysis, significance level is noted in parentheses, following the item description.

SOSE and CCSSE Items		SOSE	CCSSE
In your experiences in classes at this college during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?			
Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions (.000)	% Often + Very Often	77.6	68.8
Made a class presentation (.000)	% Often + Very Often	27.9	42.6
Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources(.000)	% Often + Very Often	70.8	74.0
Worked with other students on projects during class (.000)	% Often + Very Often	22.1	43.4
Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	Not Asked on SOSE		
Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary) (.000)	% Often + Very Often	7.5	11.4
Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework (.000)	% Often + Very Often	10.2	12.7
During the current school year, how much has your coursework at this college emphasized the following mental activities?			
Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways	% Quite a bit + Very much	69.3	
Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods (.018)	% Quite a bit + Very much	63.5	62.4
Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	% Quite a bit + Very much	67.5	
Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill.	% Quite a bit + Very much	66.6	
How much has YOUR EXPERIENCE IN CLASSES AT THIS COLLEGE contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?			
Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	% Quite a bit + Very much	47.2	
Thinking critically and analytically	% Quite a bit + Very much	74.9	
Learning effectively on your own (.000)	% Quite a bit + Very much	84.9	71.9
Contributing to the welfare of your community (.034)	% Quite a bit + Very much	40.7	34.4

Learning Outcomes

Students will improve in their ability to make connections between course content and issues of real-world significance.

As part of the end-of-course EDGE evaluation, students in EDGE-targeted courses will be asked to write essays that require them to make connections between course content and issues of real-world significance. These assessments will be administered online and students will be asked to write essays on this topic that will be scored both by their course instructors (to ensure that students are motivated to do their best) and by a committee specially trained to rate these essays using the EDGE Student Learning Outcome (EDGE SLO) Rubric (below).

Students in all EDGE targeted courses will be asked to write an essay on the following topic:

EDGE Essay

Identify the most important topic taught in this course and write a well-developed essay that explains what you learned about this topic and how this relates to real-world issues outside the classroom. Explain how you might apply what you learned to your life outside of college.

The **EDGE SLO Rubric** that will be used to rate the resulting student essays is as follows:

EDGE SLO Rubric	
Points Awarded	Descriptor
0	Student fails to identify a topic from the course.
1	Student identifies most important topic from the course, but does none of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identifies what was learned about the topic• relates the course topic to real-world issues• applies course learning about the topic to life outside of college
2	Student identifies most important topic from the course and does one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• identifies what was learned about the topic• relates the course topic to real-world issues• applies course learning about the topic to life outside of college

3	<p>Student identifies most important topic from the course and does two of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifies what was learned about the topic • relates the course topic to real-world issues • applies course learning about the topic to life outside of college
4	<p>Student identifies most important topic from the course and does all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifies what was learned about the topic • relates the course topic to real-world issues • applies course learning about the topic to life outside of college
5	<p>Student identifies most important topic from the course, identifies what was learned about the topic, relates it to real-world issues, and offers an example of how this might apply to life outside of college in a coherent, well-organized, and compelling essay.</p>

Students will be required to write these essays in all EDGE-targeted courses starting the fall and spring semesters prior to EDGE implementation in that course and every semester after implementation. It is expected that average scores on this essay after implementation of EDGE strategies in targeted courses will be significantly higher than average scores prior to implementation of EDGE strategies. These data will be analyzed using the EDGE Data Analysis Paradigm ([Appendix 12](#)).

Analysis:

Average ratings on student essays using the [EDGE SLO Rubric](#) (above) ([Appendix 12](#)) before and after implementation of EDGE strategies in targeted courses.

A specific target for this learning outcome is that at least 80% of students completing EDGE-enhanced courses will achieve ratings of 4 or higher (on a scale of 0 to 5) on their essays using the EDGE SLO rubric, reflecting significant abilities to make connections between course content and real-world significance. Success in meeting this target can be evaluated by entering the percentage of students in each course whose essays are rated 4 or 5 onto the spreadsheet provided by the EDGE Data Analysis Paradigm ([Appendix 12](#)).

Analysis:

Percentage of students achieving scores of 4 or 5 on essays scored using the EDGE SLO Rubric before and after implementation of EDGE strategies in targeted courses, displayed using the EDGE Data Analysis Paradigm ([Appendix 12](#)).

Students will perform better on course-specific common end-of-course assessments.

Courses at GPC have common end-of-course assessments that are administered periodically to enable the college to assess the achievement of the specified learning outcomes for each course. This assessment is described as a “common” assessment because it is administered to **all** sections of a given course offered in any semester in which assessment is conducted. These common assessments are typically developed by the faculty teaching the course, and assessment items are based on the learning outcomes specified in the Common Course Outlines that have been developed for the courses. The Common Course Outlines are faculty-developed documents that are intended to guide the teaching of that course by specifying the content that must be covered and the expected learning outcomes to be achieved by students in every section of the course. These Common Course Outlines are posted on the website [4], and copies are made available to all instructors. A sample Common Course Outline (for MATH 1001) is included as [Appendix 15](#).

Depending on the course content and intended learning outcomes, the common course assessments may consist of a series of multiple choice questions, a series of short-answer questions, essays that are scored according to rubrics, some combination of these, or a nationally-normed standardized test. If engaged learning practices increase content or skill-specific learning within courses, then average student scores on common course assessments after implementation of EDGE strategies should be higher than average student scores prior to implementation of EDGE strategies in that course.

Analysis:

Comparison of average scores on common course assessments pre- and post-EDGE implementation using the EDGE Data Analysis Paradigm ([Appendix 12](#)).

Multivariate Analyses

The descriptions above have largely emphasized comparison of results of a variety of assessments before and after implementation of the EDGE QEP. Results from that type of analysis will inform the college as to whether there are differences in instructor behaviors and student outcomes post-implementation, but will not allow any conclusions to be drawn as to cause and effect. Since this is not a true experimental design with random assignment of subjects to control and experimental groups, it will not be possible to establish clear cause and effect relationships. However, by using various multivariate analyses, it should be possible to determine which factors account for the greatest amount of the variance in other outcomes. Factors that account for a great deal of the variance in outcomes may be considered good candidates for cause and effect relationships.

At this stage, it is premature to plan the multivariate analyses in detail, as the comparisons that will ultimately be performed will depend to a great extent on the initial findings from the proposed project. However, there are some obvious relationships that will need to be explored.

Ratings of EDGE Implementation in Courses

Three measures have been proposed to look at the degree to which EDGE strategies have been implemented in courses: quantified instructor self-ratings, quantitative ratings by the EDGE Advisory Team, and quantified student ratings of EDGE implementation in courses. One

interesting question concerns the degree to which these measures are correlated. If highly correlated, perhaps only one measure is needed. Alternatively, with less-than-perfect correlations between these ratings, is one type of rating superior to another in predicting the various behavioral, attitudinal, and student learning outcomes?

Relationships Between Measured Outcomes

- Does the degree to which EDGE strategies have been implemented in courses, as measured by either instructor self-ratings, QEP Implementation Committee ratings or student ratings predict any of the following: student persistence, perceived relevance, students' demonstrated abilities to make connections between course content and issues of real-world significance, or students' performance on course-specific common end-of-course assessments?
- Of the four major engaged learning strategies to be used in this QEP, are they equally associated with increases in the desired outcomes or is one (or more) more strongly associated with increases in desired outcomes?
- Do student perceptions of the relevance of their courses predict any of the following: student persistence, students' demonstrated abilities to make connections between course content and issues of real-world significance, or students' performance on course-specific common end-of-course assessments?
- Does students' ability to make connections between course content and issues of real-world significance predict their performance on end-of-course assessments?

References and Documentation

	Internal Link	External Link or Source
[1]	Retention Rates from 2010 – 2011 Fact Book, pages 58 - 59	http://depts.gpc.edu/~gpcoirp/fact_book/Master_FactBook_2010-2011Final(9-4-12).pdf
[2]	Retention Rates from Draft of 2011 – 2012 Fact Book, pp. 61 – 62	No external link.
[3]	CCSSE Course Evaluation Form	http://www.ccsse.org/tools/suppassessment.cfm - Members only area
[4]	GPC Website with links to Common Course Outlines	http://www.gpc.edu/programs/Common-Course-Outlines

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Appendix 1. Presidential QEP Think Tank participants, January 22 – 23, 2009

Name	Title	Campus
Dr. Anthony Tricoli	President	Decatur
Julius Whitaker	Executive Assistant to the President	Decatur
Barbara Brown	Academic Dean/Discipline Dean	Decatur
Janan Fallon	Associate Professor	Dunwoody
Randy Finley	Professor	Dunwoody
Andrea Hendricks	Associate Professor	Clarkston
Eileen Kramer	Librarian Assistant Professor	Clarkston
Lee Richardson McKinley	Assistant Professor	Newton
Virginia Michelich	Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs	Decatur
Pamela Moolenaar-Wirsiy	Director of Center for Teaching and Learning	Clarkston
Debra Moon	Associate Professor	Clarkston
Linda Mullins	Assistant Professor	Clarkston
Stuart Noel	Department Head - Associate Professor	Clarkston
Rose Nicolette	Associate Professor	Decatur
Janet Shanteau	Assistant Professor	Dunwoody
Adam Stone	Associate Professor	Dunwoody
Jeff Tarnowski	Vice President for Institutional Advancement	Decatur
Mark Griffin	Associate Professor	Dunwoody
Debra Denzer	Director, Center for International Education	Clarkston
Napolita Hooper-Simanqa	Associate Professor	Decatur
Debra Davis	Department Head - Assistant Professor	Dunwoody
Diane White	Academic Division Dean	Clarkston
Patricia Gregg	Associate Director, Planning and Assessment	Lakeside
Pamela Joseph	Assistant Director Webmaster	Lakeside
Godfrey Noe	Chief Institutional Research Officer	Decatur
Barbara Obrentz	Chief Public Information Officer, Director of Marketing	Decatur
Anna Schachner	Associate Professor	Dunwoody

Appendix 2. QEP Steering Committee membership as of 6/14/12

Name	Title	Campus	Service Begins
Non-rotating members			
Collins Foster	Director of Alumni Relations	Decatur	Non-rotating
Sean Brumfield	QEP Director	Clarkston	Non-rotating
Barry Gray	GPC Foundation Board and Community Representative	Community	Non-rotating
Coletta Hassell-Carter	Assistant VP for Student Development and Special Programs	Clarkston	Non-rotating
Pamela Moolenaar-Wirsiy	Executive Director for the Center for Teaching & Learning and Early Colleges; QEP Chair	Clarkston	Non-rotating
Patricia L. Gregg	Associate Director, Planning & Assessment and Acting Director, Institutional Effectiveness	Lakeside	Non-rotating
Ex-officio members			
Barbara Brown	SACS Liaison; Interim Dean of Institutional Effectiveness	Lakeside	Non-rotating
Ethel Brown	Director of Grants and Sponsored Programs	Lakeside	Non-rotating
Vicki Carew-Johnson	Director of Institutional Advancement	Decatur	Non-rotating
Pamela Joseph	Assistant Director for Web Technologies	Lakeside	Non-rotating
Vincent June	VP for Student Affairs and Enrollment Services	Decatur	Non-rotating
Philip Smith	Interim VP for Academic Affairs	Decatur	Non-rotating
Barbara Obrentz	Chief Public Information Officer; Director of Marketing	Decatur	Non-rotating
Glenn Pfeifer	Assistant Director of Grants and Sponsored Programs	Lakeside	Non-rotating
Jeff Tarnowski	VP for Institutional Advancement	Decatur	Non-rotating
Robert E. Watts	Interim President	Decatur	Non-rotating
Rotating members			
Tracy Adkins	Director of Academic Technology; OIT	Lakeside	05/01/11
Katrina Allen	Alumni Representative	Clarkston	10/01/10
Keith Cobbs	Dean of Student Services	Newton	05/01/11

Peggy Curney Davis	Program Coordinator, CTL	Clarkston	07/1/09
Janan Fallon	Associate Professor of Spanish	Dunwoody	07/01/09
Andrea Hendricks	Associate Professor of Mathematics	Online	07/01/09
Rosalyn C. Jacobs	Assistant Professor of Humanities	Dunwoody	07/01/09
Tracie Justus	Assistant Professor of ESL/Foreign Languages	Clarkston	05/01/11
Pamela Leggett-Robinson	Associate Professor of Chemistry; Department Chair	Dunwoody	07/01/09
George Lonberger	Assistant Professor of Geography	Newton	07/01/09
Lee McKinley	Assistant Professor of Business Information Systems	Newton	07/01/09
Melora Mirza	Library Services	Dunwoody	10/01/10
Debi Moon	Associate Professor of Legal Environment of Business	Online	07/01/09
Linda Mullins	Assistant Professor of Accounting	Online	07/01/09
Nicolette Rose	Associate Professor of English	Dunwoody	07/01/09
Janet Shanteau	Assistant Professor of English	Dunwoody	07/01/09
Adam Stone	Associate Professor of Political Science	Dunwoody	07/01/09
Luise Strange De Soria	Professor of Chemistry	Clarkston	07/01/09
Diane E. White	Associate Professor of Nursing; Department Chair	Clarkston	07/01/09

Appendix 3. Attendance at QEP focus groups

Date	Campus/Group	Number of QEP Focus Group Attendees
March 31, 2011	Dunwoody/Alpharetta Campus	4
March 9, 2011	Department Chairpersons	22
March 26, 2011	Faculty Senate	10
March 20, 2011	Newton Campus	6
March 2011	Online (sent through learning management system as survey)	26

Appendix 4. Topics from the “Bringing Learning to Life” workshop series in Spring 2012

Date	Campus	Instructor	Workshop Title
26-Jan-2012	Clarkston CN-2220	Dr. Ian Toppin	Contextual Learning
09-Feb-2012	Clarkston	Dr. Miles A. Irving (from GA State)	Strategies for Making Teaching Relevant to Students from Diverse Backgrounds
11-Feb-2012	Decatur	Dr. Ian Toppin	Using Contextual Learning to Enhance Student Engagement and Outcomes
23-Feb-2012	Clarkston	Dr. Ian Toppin	Identifying Multiple Intelligences to Enhance Student Engagement and Performance
15-Mar-2012	Newton	Mary Elizabeth Tyler	Strategies for implementing service/ experiential learning activities to enhance student engagement and success
15-Mar-2012	Dunwoody	Kevin Schwemmin	Strategies for implementing service/ experiential learning activities to enhance student engagement and success
22-Mar-2012	Dunwoody	Katherine Perrotta	Strategies for Implementing Active Learning Literacy Activities in the Classroom
05-Apr-2012	Clarkston	Dr. Teah Moore (FVSU)	Using Adventure- Based Learning (Games) to Increase Student Participation and Performance

Appendix 5. Top 15 courses with enrollments of more than 100 students with high non-success (DFW) rates, all GPC students

Fall 2009			Spring 2010			Fall 2010			Spring 2011		
MATH	2431	54.3%	MATH	0098	56.8%	MATH	0098	58.8%	MATH	0098	60.5%
MATH	0098	52.7%	ENGL	0099	56.0%	MATH	0097	54.5%	ENGR	1603	60.2%
MATH	2432	49.2%	ENGR	1603	54.2%	ENGR	1603	52.8%	MATH	0097	57.3%
MATH	0097	49.0%	MATH	0097	54.0%	GEOL	1122	52.3%	MATH	1111	56.6%
CSCI	1300	48.7%	MATH	2432	49.8%	ENGL	0099	51.1%	ENGL	0099	53.1%
HUMN	1301	48.6%	MATH	1111	49.3%	MATH	1113	49.5%	HUMN	1301	51.0%
MATH	1111	47.8%	PHYS	2211	49.0%	MATH	2431	47.4%	CSCI	1300	50.9%
ENGL	0099	47.2%	CHEM	1211	48.6%	MATH	2432	46.9%	MATH	2431	48.7%
MATH	1113	45.8%	READ	0098	47.0%	HUMN	1301	46.0%	CHEM	1211	48.4%
CHEM	1211	45.8%	MATH	2431	46.9%	MATH	1111	45.3%	MATH	1113	48.2%
PHIL	2120	45.5%	CSCI	1300	45.9%	CHEM	1211	44.9%	READ	0098	47.4%
ASTR	1020	45.2%	MATH	1113	44.8%	MATH	1101*	44.9%	MATH	1101*	44.7%
CLMA	0097	44.2%	HUMN	1301	44.7%	CSCI	1300	44.4%	SPAN	1001	43.1%
GEOL	1122	43.6%	MATH	1101*	44.4%	PHYS	1111	43.5%	ENGL	0098	42.9%
BIOL	1403	43.3%	BIOL	1403	42.4%	ENGL	2131	42.7%	ENGL	2131	42.8%

* MATH 1101 was replaced by MATH 1001 in Fall 2011

Appendix 6. Top FY11 courses with enrollments of more than 100 students with high non-success (DFW) rates by academic division

	Fall 2010		Spring 2011	
Business/ PHED/ SLIP	ACCT 2101	37.1%	ACCT 2101	34.5%
	PHED 2670	31.9%	ECON 2105	33.5%
	ECON 2106	27.8%	ECON 2106	30.1%
	BISM 2601	27.1%	BUSA 2106	28.6%
	BUSA 2106	27.0%	BISM 2601	27.1%
	ECON 2105	25.5%	PHED 2670	21.9%
English	ENGL 0099	51.1%	ENGL 0099	53.1%
	ENGL 2131	42.7%	READ 0098	47.4%
	READ 0098	41.0%	ENGL 2131	42.8%
	ENGL 0098	34.8%	ENGL 1101	36.9%
	ENGL 1102	33.0%	READ 0097	35.8%
Humanities/ Fine Arts/ Foreign Language/ ESL	HUMN 1301	46.0%	HUMN 1301	51.0%
	ENSL 0091	40.4%	SPAN 1001	43.1%
	SPAN 1001	38.8%	THEA 1301	41.7%
	THEA 1301	33.9%	PHIL 2020	40.6%
	FREN 1001	33.6%	PHIL 2010	35.7%
	RELI 1301	33.5%	ENSL 0091	35.1%
	PHIL 2641**	32.7%	FILM 1010	33.9%
	PHIL 1301	31.1%	FILM 1010	33.9%
	SPAN 1002	30.6%	PHIL 2030	32.4%
MUSC 1301	30.2%	MUSC 1301	30.3%	
Mathematics/ Computer Science/ Engineering	MATH 0098	58.8%	MATH 0098	60.5%
	MATH 0097	54.5%	ENGR 1603	60.2%
	ENGR 1603	52.8%	MATH 0097	57.3%
	MATH 1113	49.5%	MATH 1111	56.6%
	MATH 2431	47.4%	CSCI 1300	50.9%
	MATH 2432	46.9%	MATH 2431	48.7%
	MATH 1111	45.3%	MATH 1113	48.2%
	MATH 1101*	44.9%	MATH 1101*	44.7%
	CSCI 1300	44.4%		
Science	GEOL 1122	52.3%	CHEM 1211	48.4%
	CHEM 1211	44.9%	GEOL 1122	41.4%
	PHYS 1111	43.5%	BIOL 1403	40.7%
	BIOL 2107	41.1%	BIOL 2107	40.1%
	BIOL 1403	40.3%	GEOL 1121	38.8%
Social Sciences	GEOG 1101	37.5%	GEOG 1101	39.1%
	HIST 1112	35.0%	HEDS 1011	38.2%
	HEDS 1011	34.5%	HIST 2112	36.1%
	PSYC 1101	31.2%	HIST 1111	34.4%
	HIST 2112	30.7%	HIST 2111	32.1%

* MATH 1101 was replaced by MATH 1001 in Fall 2011

**PHIL 2641 became PHIL 2020 in Spring 2011

Appendix 7. Non-quantitative version of EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric for instructor self-evaluation

Georgia Perimeter College EDGE Rubric for Instructor Self-Evaluation			
Please circle the one statement from each ROW that best describes this course.			
Relevance explained	My course does not attempt to explain relevance beyond the class/ activity.	My course explains relevance, but this is not a major focus of the course.	My course demonstrates the relevance of course information (through assignments, activities, etc.) to daily living, community issues, or jobs/careers.
Level of engagement behavior	My course materials and exercises do not encourage active participation.	My course has minimal to moderate materials and exercises encouraging active student participation.	My course materials and exercises encourage original thought and perspective in discussions. Students maintain active involvement throughout the course. Course is clearly student focused. Instructor serves as facilitator guiding students in inquiry-based learning.
Simulates real-world activities	My course does not incorporate real-world applications/ problem sets, projects, etc.	My course incorporates some applications/ problem sets, projects, etc. but stops short of application in a real-world setting.	My course incorporates real-world applications problem sets, projects, etc. and students gain practice in applying what they have learned to real-world situations.
Facilitates active student reflection	My course materials and exercises do not engage students in reflection about what they have learned.	My course materials and exercises engage students in reflection on some new concepts.	My course materials and exercises actively engage students in reflection after each new concept is introduced. Ongoing reflection is implemented and valued as an important strategy for reinforcing the course.
<p>Please indicate the degree to which you have used each of the following techniques in teaching this course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative learning (students working in pairs, small groups, or teams to complete projects or assignments) <input type="checkbox"/> Very often <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never • Problem-based learning (students learning about the subject by doing research to solve problems presented to the class) <input type="checkbox"/> Very often <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never • Service Learning (students working in a community site to apply what they know and reflecting on those experiences in class) <input type="checkbox"/> Very often <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never • Community-based research (students doing research to help solve a problem in the community) <input type="checkbox"/> Very often <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never 			

Appendix 8: Quantitative version of the EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric that may be used to convert non-quantitative instructor self-ratings and student ratings to quantitative ratings and may be used by the EDGE Advisory Team to make independent assessments of the level of EDGE involvement in a course based on review of course syllabi and EDGE portfolio materials.

Georgia Perimeter College EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric Quantitative Version				
Criteria	EDGE Inactive (0)	EDGE Emerging (1)	EDGE Intensive (2)	Score
Relevance explained	Course does not attempt to explain relevance beyond the class/ activity.	Course explains relevance, but this is not a major focus of the course.	Course demonstrates the relevance of course information (through assignments, activities, etc.) to daily living, community issues, or jobs/careers.	
Level of engagement behavior	Course materials and exercises do not encourage active participation.	Course has minimal to moderate materials and exercises encouraging active student participation.	Course materials and exercises encourage original thought and perspective in discussions. Students maintain active involvement throughout the course. Course is clearly student-focused. Instructor serves as facilitator guiding students in inquiry-based learning.	
Simulates real-world activities	Course does not incorporate real-world applications/ problem sets, projects, etc.	Course incorporates some applications/ problem sets, projects, etc. but stops short of application in a real-world setting.	Course incorporates real-world applications problem sets, projects, etc. and students gain practice in applying what they have learned to real-world situations.	
Facilitates active student reflection	Course materials and exercises do not engage students in reflection about what they have learned.	Course materials and exercises engage students in reflection on some new concepts.	Course materials and exercises actively engage students in reflection after each new concept is introduced. Ongoing reflection is implemented and valued as an important strategy for reinforcing the course.	
Total Score				
<p>Please indicate the degree to which each of the following techniques has been used in this course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative learning (students working in pairs, small groups, or teams to complete projects or assignments) <input type="checkbox"/> Very often <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never • Problem-based learning (students learning about the subject by doing research to solve problems presented to the class) <input type="checkbox"/> Very often <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never • Service Learning (students working in a community site to apply what they know and reflecting on those experiences in class) <input type="checkbox"/> Very often <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never • Community-based research (students doing research to help solve a problem in the community) <input type="checkbox"/> Very often <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never 				

Appendix 9. Non-quantitative version of the EDGE Course Evaluation Rubric for student evaluation of EDGE-targeted courses.

Georgia Perimeter College Student Ratings of EDGE-Targeted Classes			
Please circle the one statement from each ROW that best describes this course.			
1. Relevance	This course did not attempt to explain relevance beyond the class/ activity.	This course explained its relevance, but this was not a major focus of the course.	This course demonstrated the relevance of course information (through assignments, activities, etc.) to daily living, community issues, or jobs/careers.
2. Engagement	The course materials and exercises did not encourage my active participation.	This course had minimal to moderate materials and exercises encouraging my active participation.	The course materials and exercises encouraged original thought and perspective in discussions. I maintained active involvement throughout the course. This course was clearly student focused. My instructor served as a facilitator, guiding me in inquiry-based learning.
3. Real-world	This course did not incorporate real-world applications/ problem sets, projects, etc.	This course incorporated some applications/ problem sets, projects, etc. but stopped short of application in a real-world setting.	This course incorporated real-world applications problem sets, projects, etc. and I gained practice in applying what I learned to real-world situations.
4. Reflection	The course materials and exercises did not engage me in reflection about what I learned.	The course materials and exercises engaged me in reflection on some new concepts.	The course materials and exercises actively engage me in reflection after each new concept was introduced.
<p>Please indicate the degree to which each of the following techniques was used in this course:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative learning (students working in pairs, small groups, or teams to complete projects of assignments) <input type="checkbox"/> Very often <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never • Problem-based learning (students learning about the subject by doing research to solve problems presented to the class) <input type="checkbox"/> Very often <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never • Service Learning (students working in a community site to apply what they know and reflecting on those experiences in class) <input type="checkbox"/> Very often <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never • Community-based research (students doing research to help solve a problem in the community) <input type="checkbox"/> Very often <input type="checkbox"/> Often <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Never 			

Appendix 10. Letter of Support for the QEP Signed by the Vice President for Financial and Administrative Affairs and the President of Georgia Perimeter College.



Financial & Administrative Affairs

3251 Panthersville Road
Decatur, GA 30034
p: 678.891.2515
f: 678.891.2522

July 27, 2012

SACSCOC Onsite Review Committee

Dear Committee Members:

Georgia Perimeter College is pleased to pledge its full support, financial and otherwise, for the proposed Quality Enhancement Plan, entitled EDGE: Engagement Drives GPC Education.

GPC pledges the following budgetary support for the EDGE QEP:

- Full salary support for the Executive Director of the QEP, the Community-Based Learning Coordinator, and an Administrative Assistant from FY 13 - FY 18.
- 25% salary support for the Executive Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning FY 13 - FY 18.
- \$4500 for travel to conferences and for local travel for faculty development activities on all GPC campuses FY 13 - FY 18.
- Operating costs as follows:
 - FY 13 - \$17,400
 - FY 14 - \$7,700
 - FY 15 - \$6,700
 - FY 16 - \$8,700
 - FY 17 - \$7,700
 - FY 18 - \$7,700

Alpharetta Site
3705 Brookside Parkway
Alpharetta, GA 30022
404.413.7878

Center for Continuing & Corporate Education
652 North Indian Creek Drive
Clarkston, GA 30021
678.891.3000

Clarkston Campus
555 North Indian Creek Drive
Clarkston, GA 30021
678.891.3200

Decatur Campus
3251 Panthersville Road
Decatur, GA 30034
678.891.2300

Dunwoody Campus
2101 Wornack Road
Dunwoody, GA 30338
770.274.5000

Lawrenceville Site
1000 University Center Lane
Lawrenceville, GA 30043
678.407.5000

Newton Campus
239 Cedar Lane
Covington, GA 30014
770.278.1200

Conyers/Rockdale Site
1064 Culpepper Drive
Conyers, GA 30094
770.278.1200

This pledge of support is made gladly in light of the anticipated benefit to students from the proposed Quality Enhancement Plan.

Sincerely,

Ronald B. Stark
Executive Vice President for Financial
and Administrative Affairs

Robert E. Watts
Interim President

Appendix 11. Letter of Support for the QEP Signed by the Executive Director for Institutional Advancement and the GPC Foundation.



GPC Foundation
3251 Panthersville Road
Decatur, GA 30034
p: 678-891-2500
f: 678-891-2858

Alpharetta Center
3705 Brookside Parkway
Alpharetta, GA 30022
678-240-6000

Clarkston Campus
555 N. Indian Creek Drive
Clarkston, GA 30021
678-891-3200

Decatur Campus
3251 Panthersville Road
Decatur, GA 30034
678-891-2300

Dunwoody Campus
2101 Womack Road
Dunwoody, GA 30338
770-274-5000

Newton Campus
239 Cedar Lane
Covington, GA 30014
770-278-1200

GPC Online
555 N. Indian Creek Drive
Clarkston, GA 30021
678-891-2805
www.gpc.edu/online

July 19, 2012

To Whom It May Concern
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA 30033

Dear Commission:

The Georgia Perimeter College Foundation is pleased to pledge our support for the college's efforts to enhance some aspect of the learning environment at GPC through the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). In support of this engaged learning process, EDGE: Engagement Drives GPC Education, the GPC Foundation will provide funding to cover the associated costs of this process as follows:

- **"Leading EDGE Retreats"** in fiscal years 2013 through 2017: \$500 per year.
- **Promotional Prices** to increase student, faculty, and staff awareness in Fiscal Year 2013: \$600
- **Total support pledged: \$3,100**

As the college continues this work that is integral to the success of its mission, and in essence, the mission of the GPC Foundation, we are pleased to laud the efforts of the team and give our full commitment to its work.

Should you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at 678.891.2553 or vicki.carew@gpc.edu.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vicki Carew', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Vicki Carew
Executive Director
Institutional Advancement and GPC Foundation

Appendix 12. The EDGE Data Analysis Paradigm. When this paradigm is used, scores on a specific assessment measure are entered into the appropriate cell each semester, and pre-and post implementation (implementation indicated by the heavy stair-step line) scores on that measure are compared statistically.

This paradigm for data analysis will be used with many of the assessment measures specified in this plan.

Course	FA 12	SP 13	FA 13	SP 14	FA 14	SP 15	FA 15	SP 16	FA 16	SP 17	FA 17	SP 18
ENGL 1101	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
HIST 1111	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
ENGL 1102			NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
MATH 1001			NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
MATH 1111			NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
POLS 1101					NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?
CHEM 1211					NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?
ENGL 2131							NA	NA	?	?	?	?
ACCT 2101							NA	NA	?	?	?	?
PHIL 2020									NA	NA	?	?
PSYC 1101									NA	NA	?	?

Appendix 13. The EDGE Rating Scale. This rating scale will be used for instructor ratings, committee ratings, and student ratings.

Total EDGE Score	EDGE Rating
0 - 2	EDGE Inactive
3 - 5	EDGE Emerging
6 - 8	EDGE Intensive

Appendix 14. The EDGE Rating Spreadsheet. Percentage of courses rated as EDGE Emerging and EDGE Intensive by semester. This structure for data analysis will be used for instructor ratings, committee ratings, and student ratings.

Course	Rating	FA 12	SP 13	FA 13	SP 14	FA 14	SP 15	FA 15	SP 16	FA 16	SP 17	FA 17	SP 18
ENGL 1101	Emerging	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
	Intensive	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
HIST 1111	Emerging	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
	Intensive	NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
ENGL 1102	Emerging			NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
	Intensive			NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
MATH 1001	Emerging			NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
	Intensive			NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
MATH 1111	Emerging			NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
	Intensive			NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
POLS 1101	Emerging					NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?
	Intensive					NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?
CHEM 1211	Emerging					NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?
	Intensive					NA	NA	?	?	?	?	?	?
ENGL 2131	Emerging							NA	NA	?	?	?	?
	Intensive							NA	NA	?	?	?	?
ACCT 2101	Emerging							NA	NA	?	?	?	?
	Intensive							NA	NA	?	?	?	?
PHIL 2020	Emerging									NA	NA	?	?
	Intensive									NA	NA	?	?
PSYC 1101	Emerging									NA	NA	?	?
	Intensive									NA	NA	?	?

Appendix 15. Sample Common Course Outline (from MATH 1001)

Georgia Perimeter College Common Course Outline

Course Abbreviation & Number: MATH 1001

Course Title: Quantitative Skills and Reasoning

Credit Hours: 3 semester hours

Prerequisites:

Placement into college-level mathematics

Co-requisites:

None

Course Description:

This course places quantitative skills and reasoning in the context of experiences that students will be likely to encounter. It emphasizes processing information in context from a variety of representations, understanding of both the information and the processing, and understanding which conclusions can be reasonably determined.

NOTE: This course is an alternative in Area A of the Core Curriculum and is not intended to supply sufficient algebraic background for students who intend to take Precalculus or the Calculus sequences for mathematics and science majors.

Expected Educational Results:

As a result of completing this course students will be able to:

1. Solve real-world application problems using ratio, proportion, and percent.
2. Use geometric formulas and principles to solve applied problems.
3. Use logic to recognize valid and invalid arguments.
4. Apply fundamental counting principals and fundamental laws of probability to determine the probability of an event.
5. Compute and interpret measures of central tendency and variation.
6. Read and interpret data presented in various forms, including graphs.
7. Solve application problems involving consumer finance.
8. Students will create a scatter plot of data and determine if it is best modeled by a linear, quadratic, or exponential model.
9. Students will create models for data that is exactly linear and use the model to answer input and output questions in the context of applications.
10. Students will use the calculator to create models for data that is nearly linear, and use the model to answer input and output questions in the context of applications.
11. Students will use quadratic and exponential models to answer input and output questions.

General Educational Outcomes:

This course supports the general education outcomes that students will be able to “demonstrate the ability to interpret and analyze quantitative information; to apply mathematical principles and techniques; and to use mathematical models to solve applied problems”; as well as “demonstrate effective problem-solving and critical thinking

skills through interpreting, presenting or evaluating ideas.” In particular, students will be able to

1. Solve problems using Logic
2. Solve applied problems involving Financial Management
3. Use mathematical models to solve problems.
4. Use statistics to analyze data.

Course Content:

1. Applications of rates, ratios, and percent.
2. Graphs and measurement
3. Basic Probability
4. Data Analysis
5. Modeling from Data

Assessment of Outcome Objectives

Course Grade:

The course grade will be determined by the individual instructor using a variety of evaluation methods. A portion of the course grade will be determined through the use of frequent assessment using such means as tests, quizzes, projects, or homework as developed by the instructor. Some of these methods will require the student to demonstrate ability in problem solving and critical thinking as evidenced by explaining and interpreting solutions. A portion of the evaluation process will require the student to demonstrate skill in writing both correct prose and correct mathematics. A comprehensive final examination is required. The final examination must count at least one-fifth and no more than one-third of the course grade. The final examination should include items which require the student to demonstrate problem solving and critical thinking.

Course Assessment:

This course will be assessed in accordance with GPC policies. This course will be assessed at least once every three years.

An assessment instrument will consist of multiple choice questions and/or free response question developed by the Math 1001 committee.

This assessment will be administered to all sections as part of the final exam.

The criteria for success on each assessment item would be for 70% of the students to correctly answer each assessment item.

Use of Assessment Findings:

The Math 1001 committee will analyze the results of the assessment and determine implications for curriculum changes. The committee will prepare a report for the Discipline summarizing its findings.

Last Revised:

Spring 2012