

“ [REDACTED] ”

tell your story

communication skills for the artist



A Quality Enhancement Plan for the
University of North Carolina School of the Arts

ONSITE REVIEW: MARCH 1 - 3, 2016

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

**SCHOOL
OF THE
ARTS**

contents

1	Executive Summary	4
2	Selecting a Topic.....	8
2.1	The Mission of the School.....	8
2.2	Discussions in Provost Council Meetings.....	8
2.3	Campus-wide Survey.....	8
2.4	Discussions in Institutional Effectiveness Meetings.....	8
2.5	Discussions in School and Division Faculty Meetings	10
2.5.1	General Communication Skills	10
2.5.2	Communicating your Struggles.....	10
2.5.3	Communicating About Yourself and your Art	10
2.5.4	QEP Steering Committee.....	10
2.5.5	Discussions in Faculty Development Event	11
2.5.6	Discussions in Staff Council Meetings.....	11
2.5.7	Discussions in Student Government Association Meeting	11
3	Researching the Topic.....	14
3.1	Tell Your Story	14
3.2	Defining Passion.....	16
3.3	The Value of Critique.....	17
3.3.1	The Role of the Artist	19
3.3.2	The Role of the Responder	20
4	Defining Goals and Learning Outcomes.....	24
4.1	Relationship of QEP to Strategic Plan	24
4.2	Goals of the QEP.....	24
4.2.1	Implement a clear plan for developing specific communication skills in our students.....	24
4.2.2	Implement common evaluative criteria.....	25
4.3	QEP Student Learning Outcomes	26
4.3.1	Student Learning Outcome 1.....	26
4.3.2	Student Learning Outcome 2.....	27
4.3.3	Student Learning Outcome 3.....	27
5	Identifying the Actions to Be Implemented.....	30
5.1	Constituent Actions	30
5.1.1	Defining Constituencies.....	30
5.1.2	Initial lists from Deans in September.....	30
5.1.3	School of Dance	30
5.1.4	School of Design and Production.....	31
5.1.5	School of Drama.....	31

5.1.6	School of Filmmaking.....	32
5.1.7	School of Music.....	32
5.1.8	Division of Liberal Arts	32
5.1.9	Institutional Research.....	33
5.1.10	Writing Center.....	33
5.1.11	Teaching and Learning Center	33
6	Establishing the Timeline for Implementation.....	36
6.1	Pilot Testing Assessment Tools.....	36
6.2	Faculty Development	38
7	Organizing for Success.....	42
7.1	Vice Provost and Dean of Academic Affairs	42
7.2	Institutional Effectiveness Executive Team.....	42
7.3	QEP Director	42
7.4	QEP Steering Committee.....	43
7.5	Teaching and Learning Center	44
7.6	Writing Center.....	44
7.7	Office of Academic Planning and Institutional Research	44
8	Identifying Necessary Resources.....	48
8.1	Funding for QEP Director	48
8.2	Funding for Assessment Tools.....	48
8.3	Faculty Development Funding	48
9	Assessing the Success of the QEP.....	52
9.1	Development of Rubrics for QEP Student Learning Outcomes	52
9.2	Direct Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes	52
9.3	Annual meetings with constituencies to analyze assessment data	53
9.4	Key Indicators for Success of the QEP	54
9.4.1	Overall Participation in Assessment	54
9.4.2	Balanced Assessment of All QEP Learning Outcomes	54
10	Works Cited	56
11	Appendices	58
11.1	Appendix 1 - Minutes from the QEP Steering Committee Retreat.....	58
11.2	Appendix 2 - Draft for assessing QEP student learning outcomes	72
11.3	Appendix 3 - Participants in QEP assessment workshops.....	75



executive summary

The University of North Carolina School of the Arts trains students for professional careers in the performing, visual, and moving image arts. An important skill for professional artists is the ability to tell the story behind their work and the passion that drives them to pursue it. Artists are often called upon to do this clearly and succinctly in a variety of situations, in written and verbal form. Developing this skill requires practice and deep personal reflection and critique. The process of critiquing their own work and the work of others in a meaningful way helps them improve their work and clarify their focus and intent. Consequently, they are better able to explain to others the motivation behind their artistic choices and how their work sets them apart from that of their peers.

The institution currently lacks a unified approach to developing this set of communication skills for our students. It is clear that this is an important skill we desire for our students, as evidenced by the requirement that all applicants to UNCSA write an artistic statement. We also have evidence that these skills are being taught in various ways in each of our departments. However, currently there is no formal consensus on the learning outcomes and no institution-level assessment data to show how effectively our students are acquiring

these skills. We intend to focus our Quality Enhancement Plan on this issue.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THE QEP

STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Clearly communicate passion for their professional career.
- Effectively critique their own work.
- Effectively critique the work of others.

Each of our arts schools and our Division of Liberal Arts have identified opportunities in their curriculum where these learning outcomes can be taught and assessed. We have developed rubrics for each of these learning outcomes that can be used to assess students in all five schools. It is our goal to test and refine these rubrics and then use them in a unified assessment plan across campus. This assessment data will then be used to help faculty identify areas in which students need further instruction. We will also use this assessment data to help us identify institutional initiatives aimed at further developing these essential skills.

More information can be found at <http://www.uncsa.edu/qep>. The QEP Director, Jason Romney, is an Associate Professor in the School of Design and Production. He can be reached by phone at (336) 734-2937 and by email at romneyj@uncsa.edu.







selecting a topic

selecting a topic

2.1 The Mission of the School

The University of North Carolina School of the Arts provides gifted emerging artists with the experience, knowledge, and skills needed to excel in their disciplines and in their lives, and it serves and enriches the cultural and economic prosperity of the people of North Carolina and the nation. UNCOSA is the state's unique professional school for the performing, visual and moving image arts, training students at the high school, undergraduate and master's levels for professional careers in the arts.

Throughout the process of identifying potential topics for our QEP, we continued to compare ideas against this mission of preparing students for professional careers in the arts. This has been a key test for any topic or action we considered implementing for the QEP. It needs to help our students succeed as professional artists.

2.2 Discussions in Provost Council Meetings

The Provost Council is made up of Deans and the Provost. This group began discussing potential QEP topics in January 2014. Through their discussions, four broadly defined potential topics were identified: critical thinking, communication (written and verbal), entrepreneurship, and internationalism. It was decided that a survey would be sent out to the campus to solicit input on these proposed topics.

2.3 Campus-wide Survey

In Fall 2014 a survey was distributed to faculty, staff, and students asking for their feedback on the proposed topics. Participants in the survey were asked to rate the overall relevance of the list of potential topics and then asked to rate the relevance of each topic individually. Although the response rate was very small (only 83 out of potentially ~1,400), the data indicated that the topics were relevant to our campus and the majority of respondents rated the topic of Communication Skills as the most relevant to our student learning experience.

2.4 Discussions in Institutional Effectiveness Meetings

In the October 23, 2014 meeting of the Institutional Effectiveness Executive Team the survey results were reviewed and it was decided that the QEP would focus on communication skills. At that time the team began recruiting people to participate in the development of the QEP topic including a position description for a QEP Director. The goal was made to identify a member of the faculty who could accept the responsibility of QEP Director. The faculty member would receive a stipend and course release to offset the additional duties and responsibilities.

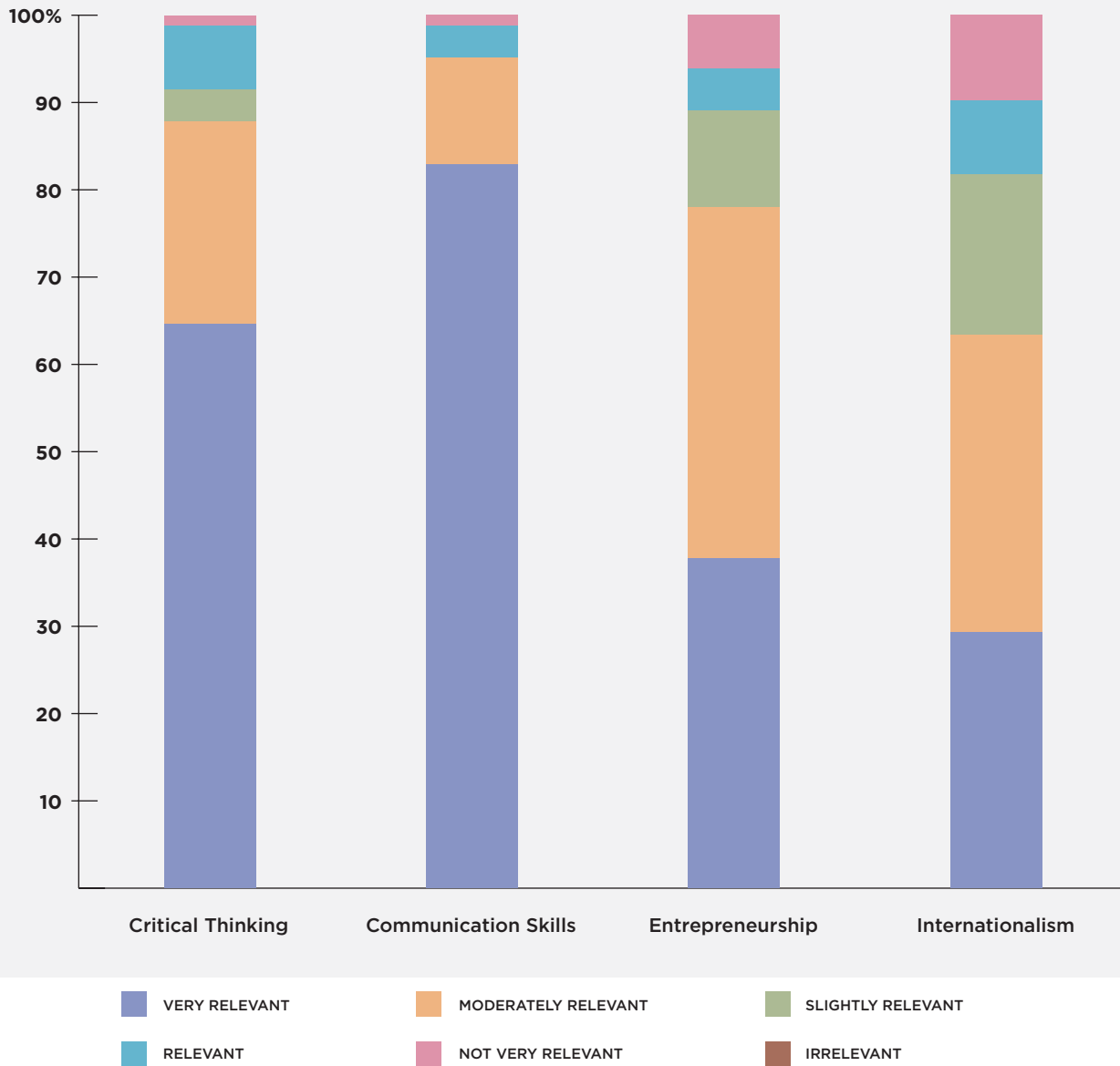


Figure 1 - Results of Campus Survey of Potential QEP Topics

selecting a topic

2.5 Discussions in School and Division Faculty Meetings

In April 2015 the newly appointed QEP Director began meeting with faculty in each arts school and the Division of Liberal Arts to brainstorm ideas for focusing the topic of communication skills into some specific goals and learning outcomes. At these meetings, three questions were asked:

1. *In what ways could your students be better communicators?*
2. *Of these areas of improvement, which would have the most positive impact on students' academic and professional success?*
3. *If they were to improve in these areas, how would we know?*

As the faculty in each area discussed these three questions, their ideas fell into the following three main categories.

2.5.1 General Communication Skills

Ideas within this category of general communication skills include understanding when and how to use various forms of communication such as email, telephone, texting, face to face, etc. There were several comments about the skill of formal business or academic communication. This could take the form of formal written research papers or communicating verbally in a formal, professional way.

2.5.2 Communicating your Struggles

Several people observed that in the demanding and stressful environment of our

campus, students are often ill-equipped to know how to communicate to others when they are struggling. Often faculty don't find out that a student is having problems until the student withdraws from school. Suggestions were made regarding ways we could train our students to communicate better with their advisors and peers about the issues with which they struggle.

2.5.3 Communicating About Yourself and your Art

Most of the suggestions from faculty centered around specific communication skills required of the professional artist to effectively communicate with others about themselves and their work. Artists must often be self-promoters in order to find an audience, seek funding, and fuel enthusiasm for their work. The performing arts are inherently collaborative efforts and require special skills for the artist to organize those collaborations, give and receive criticism, and build a network of peers. These specific skills are not unique to artists, but they are important skills for any artists to possess. Many observed that we haven't had a clear plan for developing these skills in our students.

2.5.4 QEP Steering Committee

In May 2015, a committee was formed with representatives from each arts school and the Division of Liberal Arts. This committee is chaired by the QEP Director and was given the charge to analyze the information collected thus far, narrow the focus, define the student learning outcomes, and design a framework for implementation of the QEP.

The committee held a retreat on July 27-28, 2015 to begin their work. Prior to the retreat, each member of the committee was assigned some reading materials identified by the QEP Director as relevant to the issues identified by the faculty. As the committee met and discussed what they had read, a title and focus of the QEP emerged. The title of Tell Your Story: Communication Skills for the Artist was chosen. The committee then discussed and developed three student learning outcomes for the QEP and an implementation timeline that they felt was manageable for their respective constituents. See Appendix 1 for the minutes from this retreat.

2.5.5 Discussions in Faculty Development Event

On August 13, 2015 the university held its annual all-school faculty enrichment day. Most of the faculty attended and participated in various workshops and discussions about important issues. One of these sessions focused on the Quality Enhancement Plan. By this time, the steering committee had identified the three learning outcomes and the essential focus of the QEP. At this event, faculty were able to offer initial feedback. The response from the faculty was overwhelmingly positive and there was a general consensus that we had identified a QEP topic and focus that was a good fit for our institution. Much of the discussion involved the wording of the student learning outcomes. The learning outcomes were revised based on this feedback.

2.5.6 Discussions in Staff Council Meetings

In September and October 2015 the QEP Director attended meetings of the Staff Council. The October meeting was attended by several staff council representatives and the October meeting was attended by the majority of the staff across campus. The executive summary of the QEP was presented and feedback was solicited.

There were several suggestions for implementation of the QEP. In particular, it was suggested that due to their unique experiences with the students, key staff representatives could be involved in developing the assessment plan. This suggestion was well received and several staff members were in attendance in both of the QEP assessment workshops that were held in Fall 2015.

2.5.7 Discussions in Student Government Association Meeting

In October 2015 the QEP Director attended a meeting of the Student Government Association. The executive summary of the QEP was presented and feedback was solicited. The student representatives responded positively and agreed to help in the efforts to build interest and awareness of the QEP among their peers. They also offered suggestions for actions that could be implemented to help students develop the QEP learning outcomes.

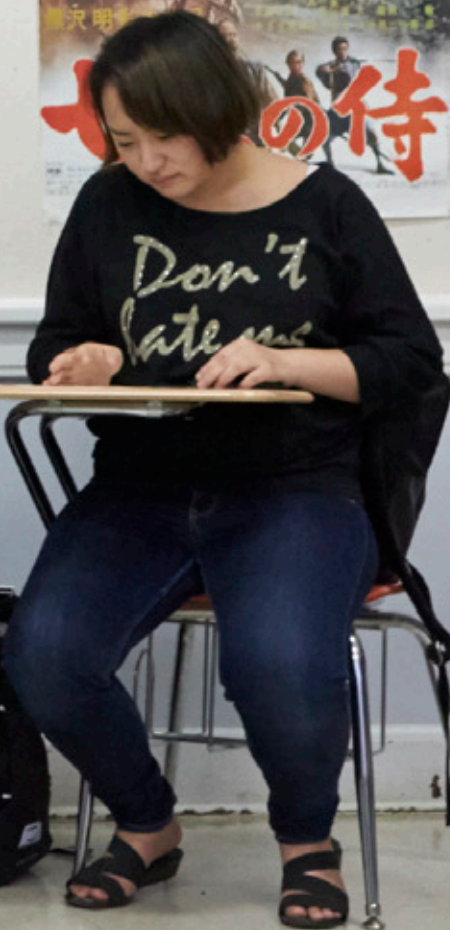
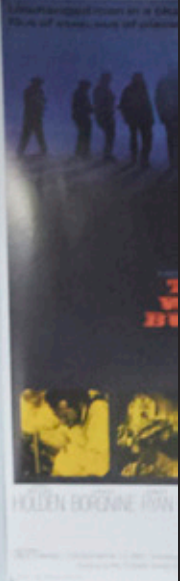


ADULT MOVIES
This poster contains information regarding the rules and regulations for the viewing of adult movies in the school library. It includes a list of movies and their ratings, and a section for the school's policy on adult movies.

STUDENT LEARNING
This poster contains information regarding the school's learning objectives and standards. It includes a list of learning objectives and standards, and a section for the school's policy on student learning.



researching the topic



researching the topic

3.1 Tell Your Story

“At the most basic level, music is about communication and sharing.”

– ANGELA MYLES BEECHING

The performing arts are essentially a communication tool. The artist has an idea, message, or feeling that he or she wants to communicate to an audience and develops a performance to accomplish that goal. We call this “storytelling.” In conversations with various campus constituencies, all agreed that communication was a core element of our curriculum. Many observed that communication is a focus of almost every course, master class, studio, and performance. If communication is so fundamental to everything we do, many asked, why do we need to focus a QEP around this topic? The response that emerged is this: While students develop a mastery of storytelling while at

UNCSA, they seem to struggle employing those same skills when communicating about themselves and their work in a professional environment.

Our mission is to prepare our students for professional careers in the arts. Our research has convinced us that regardless of their artistic talent and skill, in order to succeed professionally our students need to be able to employ their storytelling skills in their efforts to network, promote, and advocate for their work. To this point, the writer and artist Austin Kleon offers the following career advice to today’s professional artists:

The stories you tell about the work you do have a huge effect on how people feel and what they understand about your work, and how people feel and what they understand about your work effects how they value it (93). . . Every client presentation, every personal essay, every cover letter, every fund-raising request—they’re all pitches. They’re stories with the endings chopped off (101). . . You should be able to explain your work to a kindergartner, a senior citizen, and everybody in between (106).

We have heard several anecdotes from faculty who observed that their students seem surprised when they leave school and find that they have to spend a large portion of their time networking and building professional relationships. They are constantly advocating for their work and trying to build a network of collaborators while at the same time building

an audience that appreciates their work. This involves much more than simply performing an audition or delivering a portfolio. To succeed, our students need to be able to talk about themselves and their work in a way that excites people.

Much has been written about this critical skill. Global headhunter Bill Simon says that “When you tell a purposeful story demonstrating your attitude and passion, suddenly the data, facts and figures of your CV become memorable. The story you tell will hit your listeners’ hearts and stay top of mind long after you’ve left” (qtd. in Buster 60).

Music entrepreneurship consultant Angela Myles Beeching wrote that artists need to “communicate what makes you distinctive. In order to get bookings, media attention, and an audience, you will need to be able to communicate what is special about you and your music making. You must be able to communicate an engaging and concise ‘pitch’ of what you have to offer others” (12).

Beeching goes on to caution artists against relying on others to advocate for them: “You are the best person to tell your story. The challenge lies in creating promotional materials that effectively communicate who you are and what is distinctive about you and your music” (46).

In a similar statement, leadership consultant Annette Simmons points out the need for artists to tell people stories that connect to their work in a personal way. “Despite decades of pretending our work isn’t to be taken personally, storytelling proves that if it isn’t personal, it doesn’t matter” (5).

3.2 Defining “Passion”

A life of passion happens when an emotional nature meets a consuming profession.

– DAVID BROOKS

Our first learning outcome uses the word “passion” to describe the way our students should be talking about their career. Passion has been used to describe UNCSA and its students for many years. In her book *A Passionate Preference: The Story of the North Carolina School of the Arts*, Leslie Banner quotes Robert Frost saying, “The time for a young artist to begin to be an artist, to have a passionate preference for art come over him, is somewhere between fifteen and twenty-five . . . The tenderest thing you can have as a patron of the arts is a sense of that, almost unexpressed in the young person . . . his first passionate preference” (2).

Many of the current recruitment materials for UNCSA employ the phrase: “Your Passion Today. Your Profession Tomorrow.” The same brochures encourage students to “Embrace who you are.”

What is this “passion”? Why is it important for our students to possess it? How do we know when they have it? These are questions we sought to answer as we developed our QEP.

The necessity for passion in the professional artist is mentioned several times in the literature we reviewed. At the beginning of his book *The Savvy Musician*, David Cutler asks the reader: “Are you passionate about music? If your answer to [this] question is anything but a resounding ‘affirmative,’ you are definitely in the wrong field” (4). Percussionist Vic Firth stated, “Whatever you set out to do, you have to have a magnum passion for it, and you’ve got to work beyond what you ever dreamed you’re gonna work to succeed at the level that you want to succeed at.”

Although we agree that passion is necessary, we need to better understand what it is and what it looks like in order to assess our students’ ability to express it. Angela Myles Beeching, discussing the role that passion plays in the career of an artist, writes, “The connecting threads of interests and skills that run from one project to the next are a kind of through line, a sustaining passion” (323). New York Times columnist David Brooks takes the idea further by saying, “People who live with passion start out with an especially intense desire to complete themselves . . . By doing some outward activity [the passionate] understand and define themselves . . . A life of passion happens when an emotional nature meets a consuming profession.”

These observations tell us that passion is more than a powerful emotion; it is a driving force that motivates artists to pursue their career because the work that they do is inseparably connected with their personal identity. This passion provides clarity and focus to their work in a way that attracts collaborators and audiences.

3.3 The Value of Critique

“The more artists clarify their focus, the more intense and deep the dialogue becomes.”

—LIZ LERMAN AND JOHN BORSTEL

Another important communication skill we identified is the process of critique. The performing arts are an inherently collaborative experience for the artist and collaboration requires honest and constructive critique. Beeching writes, “People realize their dreams by talking about them with others and sharing their enthusiasm—which often leads to more ideas, collaborators, plans, and action. Do not underestimate the importance of other people; projects require collaboration, they take a team, if not a village” (17).

Management consultant Marty Brounstein writes that an important quality for any member of a collaborative team is the ability to “Give and receive criticism constructively” (80).

Our faculty have observed that nearly every class, performance, or other activity in which our students engage requires them to question, analyze and critique the work they have done or witnessed. This is often an uncomfortable reality for developing artists who are so personally invested in their work. Having it questioned and challenged can often feel like a personal attack.

The process of critique helps artists improve their work and clarify their intent. As they gain greater understanding of their work—its meaning and impact—they gain greater insight into themselves as artists. Given our goal to strengthen our students’ ability to tell their story and advocate for their work, it is vital that we also help them develop the skill to question and critique the work in which they engage.

researching the topic

In their book *Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process*, Ms. Lerman and John Borstel provide plenty of insight on the role of critique in the artistic process and the communication skills required to do it well. They say that the process “emphasizes the benefits of getting artists to think about their work in a fresh way, as opposed to telling them how to improve their work or asking them to defend it” (21).

Angela Myles Beeching wrote: “If you are serious about moving ahead in your career, you need to be willing to confront what needs changing and then work on making improvements. Because we are not usually our own best judges, it’s important to get objective feedback” (17).

We have identified a need to develop a systematic approach to training our students in critique skills. In our research, we found that we are not alone in our lack of information about this process. In her article

in the *Journal of Dance Education*, Cynthia Williams observes: “Even though many good texts on the art of dance composition are available, there are few texts on the topic of one of the most central activities of the dance composition classroom: the giving and receiving of feedback.”

Despite this lack of unified criteria and best practices for critique, we have identified some values that will make up a good critique. There are two main roles in the critique process that we can measure in our students: the role of the Artist, and the role of the Responder. Lerman and Borstel suggest that another vital role in the process is the Facilitator and in most cases, this role will be filled by our faculty.

3.3.1 The Role of the Artist

“The point when an artist is ready for feedback is as important as any event in the development of a work of art.”

—JOHN BORSTEL

The work of the artist is typically the focus of a critique, and in order for a critique to be helpful the artist needs “to be at a point where they can question their work in a somewhat public environment” (Lerman and Borstel, 14). If the artist is unwilling to question or discuss his or her work and accept the possibility that it can be improved, the process of critique will become frustrating and the artist will become defensive. Lerman says, “When defensiveness starts, learning stops” (21).

Developing this attitude of questioning their work and being open to improvement is vital for artists. “Career advancement involves two kinds of work: the internal and the external. The internal work involves self-reflection and assessment . . . It takes maturity to ask for and to process this kind of critical feedback. Be humble and astute enough to ask for input, and then use it to improve your work—these are the hallmarks of a committed professional” (Beeching, 17).

researching the topic

3.3.2 The Role of the Responder

In every critique process, there is a responder. This is someone who has seen or experienced the work of art and is in a position to offer feedback. The responder could be a teacher, a peer, or even a complete stranger. Often, artists are also expected to respond to their own work.

Responders need to be invested in the artist's success. They need to “sincerely want this artist to make excellent work” (Lerman and Borstel, 14). If they are invested in helping the artist succeed, they will actively participate in a way that helps the artist receive criticism and learn from it.

Lerman and Borstel suggest that a key skill for the responder is to understand the artist's goals and place the work within an appropriate context before offering input or opinions. “[Responders] listen to the artist's response for indications that the

opinion you have in mind may be either very valuable or irrelevant to the artist's concerns” (32). Similarly, Marty Brounstein writes, “Don't become a critic until you thoroughly understand what the speaker is saying. It's amazing how a solid understanding sweeps away hasty criticism. So remind team members to hold off passing judgment and, instead, go for understanding first and foremost” (149).

Another important skill is learning to ask “neutral” questions, or questions phrased in a way that does not state or imply opinion or judgment. “For many people, forming a neutral question is not only difficult, but a seemingly ridiculous task if criticism is the point,” write Lerman and Borstel. “But the actual process of trying to form opinions into neutral questions enables the responder to recognize and acknowledge the personal values at play. Often these are the very questions that the artist needs to hear” (21).







defining goals and learning outcomes

defining goals and learning outcomes

4.1 Relationship of QEP to Strategic Plan

Initiative B of the UNCOSA strategic plan is titled *Enhancing the Living and Learning Environment*. In the plan this initiative is described:

Building on the greatest traditions of conservatory education, UNCOSA will leverage contemporary innovations in performance and media to prepare emerging artists who engage new audiences with deeply relevant and outstanding work.

The quality enhancement plan is one strategy stated in the plan for sub-initiative B-4. We expect that the success of this QEP will serve as a starting point for implementing similar strategies for launching transformative programs and curricula.

4.2 Goals of the QEP

4.2.1 Implement a clear plan for developing specific communication skills in our students

Through the process of identifying a topic for our QEP we were able to identify key communication skills that each constituency agreed were important for our students to have. We were also able to identify many activities throughout the curriculum where students have the opportunity to develop these skills. What was lacking was a clear plan to develop and assess these skills in our students. The main focus of the curriculum in each arts school is the actual discipline of creating and performing the work of art. Dancers need to know how to dance, actors need to know how to act, musicians need to know how to play their instruments, etc. Each of the five arts schools offers some sort of career development course that addresses some of the QEP learning outcomes. However, these courses are not required for every student and the criteria for success varies widely.

The only current co-curricular activity we were able to identify relevant to the QEP learning outcomes is part of the application process. Every student who applies for admission to UNCSA is required to write an artistic statement. All constituencies agree that this is an important exercise for potential students to complete. However, we found no evidence of criteria for a successful artistic statement or a plan to assess these statements.

Since we have a consensus that the specific communication skills connected to our QEP learning outcomes are important for our students to possess, one goal for our QEP is to implement a clear plan for developing these skills across the curriculum.

4.2.2 Implement common evaluative criteria

The highly specialized nature of our conservatory training programs leaves little room for true interdisciplinary curricular goals. We have unified general education requirements but although each conservatory is developing professional artists, there are no program learning outcomes common to all five conservatories. Now that we have identified a set of learning outcomes that each conservatory agrees are important for

their students, we would like to implement a campus-wide assessment plan that involves unified evaluative criteria. This is something we have never attempted in the history of the school. In the process of developing the QEP we have already developed the first drafts of rubrics that each conservatory agrees can be used to assess their students. As we proceed with implementing this QEP, we want to maintain this element of common evaluative criteria and find a way to conduct a truly interdisciplinary assessment in our arts curriculum.

4. defining goals and learning outcomes

4.3 QEP Student Learning Outcomes

1.

Clearly communicate passion for their professional career

4.3.1 Student Learning Outcome 1

Passion, as we have defined through our research, is much more than a powerful emotion. It is the driving force that motivates artists to pursue their career. Communicating this to others can take many forms including short biographies, grant proposals, interviews, elevator pitches, portfolio reviews, auditions, artist statements, and more. These forms can be both written and verbal. To succeed, artists must communicate with clarity and passion what motivates them, guides their artistic choices, and sets their work apart from others.

2.

Effectively critique their own work

4.3.2 Student Learning Outcome 2

In order to succeed professionally, artists must be able to question, challenge, and evaluate their work. The creative process is iterative and requires ongoing refinement and improvement. Artists need to be able to clearly identify their intentions, objectively evaluate how well their work fulfills their intentions, and implement actions to improve the work based on these observations.

3.

Effectively critique the work of others

4.3.3 Student Learning Outcome 3

The performing arts are collaborative in nature. Just as artists must continually engage in self-critique, they must also be skilled in critiquing the work of their peers, mentors, and collaborators. Doing this effectively involves being able to place the work within an appropriate context, being invested in the success of the artist and his or her work, and being balanced in the feedback they provide.





identifying the actions to be implemented

5. identifying the actions to be implemented

5.1 Constituent Actions

5.1.1 Defining Constituencies

Comprehensive Standard 3.3.2 of the SACSCOC *Principles of Accreditation* states that there needs to be “broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies” in the implementation of the QEP. For our purposes we are defining six constituencies involved in curricular implementation. These are: the Division of Liberal Arts, the School of Dance, the School of Design and Production, the School of Drama, the School of Filmmaking, and the School of Music. The Office of Institutional Research, Teaching and Learning Center, and Writing Center will also play important roles.

5.1.2 Initial lists from Deans in September

In September 2015, Deans led their faculty in discussions about the actions they could implement related to the QEP student learning outcomes. In most cases, faculty were able to identify many opportunities for students to practice these skills and be assessed in activities that already exist within the curriculum. In a few cases, some new activities were identified that could be introduced into the curriculum. These ideas were submitted to the QEP Director for review and discussed by members of the QEP Steering Committee and others to identify

the activities that were the most appropriate for teaching and assessing QEP learning outcomes.

5.1.3 School of Dance

The School of Dance has identified several opportunities in the curriculum where QEP learning outcomes can be developed and assessed. First, is the Dance Perspectives series of courses that are taken by all students in the school. There are many projects in these courses where students can practice Learning Outcome 1 in written and verbal form.

Second is the Music Perspectives series of courses taken by all students in the school. This course requires students to attend dance concerts and write reviews. These reviews fall into the category of critiquing the work of others and can be assessed using the rubric for Learning Outcome 3.

Third is the Business Perspectives course where students have assignments in writing grant proposals, resume writing, interview skills, and others. These assignments fall into the category of Learning Outcome 1.

Fourth is the Dance Composition course where students have assignments in choreography. These assignments involve self and group critique related to Learning Outcomes 2 and 3.

Finally, the Emerging Choreographers capstone course requires all students to choreograph and present a substantial dance piece. The process involves written

proposals, and verbal presentations. These assignments can be assessed for Learning Outcomes 1 and 2. An assignment will also be added to this course where students will be required to write an artistic statement that can be assessed for learning outcome 1 and compared against the artistic statement they wrote when they applied to UNCSCA.

5.1.4 School of Design and Production

The School of Design and Production (D&P) has two activities in the curriculum where QEP learning outcomes can be developed and assessed that involve every D&P student. Every semester all students are required to submit evaluations of their student peers with whom they worked in their production class. Currently the information submitted about each student is used as an assessment tool for the production class. As an addition to the assessment of this exercise, each student will also be assessed on the evaluations they submit using the criteria for Learning Outcome 3. Students will also be asked to submit a production evaluation for themselves which can be assessed for Learning Outcome 2.

At the end of each academic year all D&P students are required to participate in a portfolio review where they display their work and speak with members of the faculty and other guests about their work. As part of this exercise, students will be assessed for Learning Outcomes 1 and 2.

The assessments from the production evaluations and portfolio reviews will be shared with each student during the arts advisor meetings that happen at least once each semester.

There are other opportunities throughout the D&P curriculum where the QEP learning outcomes can be assessed. These are too numerous to assess all of them but individual faculty will seek opportunities to assess QEP learning outcomes in their classes throughout each semester.

5.1.5 School of Drama

Students in the School of Drama have many opportunities to practice the skills related to the QEP learning outcomes. Now that we have a unified approach to assessing these skills across campus, School of Drama faculty will begin emphasizing with students the criteria for the QEP learning outcomes in class.

The School of Drama conducts an evaluation of each student at the end of each academic year. In this meeting, all faculty get together to discuss and assess the progress of each student. In this annual evaluation, second and third year students will be assessed using the QEP rubrics. The results of those assessments will be shared with the students when they begin their studies in the following

5. identifying the actions to be implemented

year. In the Business module of the Rehearsal and Performance class taken by students in their fourth year, an assignment will be given to write a new artistic statement that can be assessed for Learning Outcome 1 and compared against the statement the student wrote when they applied to UNCSA.

5.1.6 School of Filmmaking

Students in the School of Filmmaking participate in an annual portfolio review. During these portfolio reviews, students can be assessed for QEP Learning Outcomes 1 and 2. These portfolio reviews involve written and verbal artistic statements and self-evaluations.

There are several courses where students can be assessed in QEP learning outcomes. Every concentration has a Transition to the Profession course where there are several exercises where the students can practice and be assessed in QEP Learning Outcome 1. In nearly every practicum course students engage in self and group critique. It is not practical to assess every one of these critiques but faculty will establish a schedule for their course where these critiques can be assessed with the QEP rubrics on a regular basis.

5.1.7 School of Music

Students in the School of Music have many opportunities to practice critiquing their own work and the work of their peers. These critiques happen on a regular basis in every

studio and master class. Now that we have a unified approach to assessing these skills across campus, School of Music faculty will begin using QEP rubrics to assess these critique sessions. It is not practical to assess every critique but faculty will establish a schedule for their studio when assessments will be conducted. When necessary to avoid disrupting the session, those particular critiques will be recorded and reviewed by the instructor for assessment.

The artifacts for assessing QEP Learning Outcome 1 vary across the concentrations within the School of Music. For example, composition students are required to write biographies and artistic statements to accompany performances of their music. Collaborative keyboard and guitar students are required to develop a format for introducing their repertoire in their performance class. Each concentration will identify comparable exercises for their students and assess them for Learning Outcome 1.

5.1.8 Division of Liberal Arts

The Division of Liberal Arts (DLA) has many courses where QEP learning outcomes can be developed and assessed. In particular, the first-year Composition and the second-year core humanities course, Self, Society, and Cosmos, are well suited for incorporating exercises and assessments related to the QEP. Since these are introductory courses, it is

unlikely that students will reach the advanced levels in the QEP learning outcomes. Aside from these two course sequences, other DLA faculty have identified opportunities in their courses where QEP learning outcomes can be assessed. They are planning ways to incorporate those assessments into their course plan. These courses can serve as a foundation for developing skills that can be refined and developed further in the advanced courses taught in the arts schools.

5.1.9 Institutional Research

The Office of Institutional Research will be responsible for collecting, organizing, and analyzing the QEP assessment data. They will work closely with the QEP Director and QEP Steering Committee to ensure that assessments are effective and that the data is being delivered to the faculty, and students when appropriate, for analysis.

5.1.10 Writing Center

In some cases, students will be completing written assignments related to QEP learning outcomes. The Director of the Writing Center is a member of the QEP Steering Committee and will ensure that Writing Center staff are trained in QEP learning outcomes so they can provide appropriate guidance to students as they work on these written assignments.

5.1.11 Teaching and Learning Center

Our faculty will need training and guidance to prepare them to model and assess the QEP learning outcomes. We plan to host several faculty development events throughout the next five years to train our faculty in these learning outcomes, the assessment rubrics, the assessment tools, and ways to utilize the data generated from their assessments.

The Director of the Teaching and Learning Center is a member of the QEP Steering Committee and will coordinate these faculty development activities with the QEP Director. Currently we envision a two-day faculty development activity each summer where faculty will receive a summer stipend to participate in workshops led by guest artists and consultants. We also anticipate hosting a number of short workshops during the academic year for faculty. These would likely be led by faculty who have received the summer training.





establishing the timeline for implementation

establishing the timeline for implementation

6.1 Pilot Testing Assessment Tools

Since we have never conducted this kind of unified direct assessment of student learning outcomes across campus, we feel it is necessary to pilot test the process before it is widely implemented. Through the pilot test we hope to identify issues that can be improved in the rubrics, data collection system, and allow each school time to identify which activities in their curriculum are the most fruitful to assess QEP student learning outcomes.

The Pilot test phase will take place from Fall 2016 through Spring 2018. In the 2016/2017 school year we will engage two faculty from each constituency as pilot testers. As feedback is collected from these pilot testers we will make appropriate refinements to the assessment plan in time for the 2017/2018 school year. During the second year, the original group of pilot testers will continue to test the process. Depending on the size of the faculty in their respective constituency, we will engage one or two additional faculty to participate in this second pilot test.

During the summer of 2018 we will make the final revisions to the assessment plan based on the feedback from the pilot testers and prepare for full engagement of all faculty in each constituency who will be involved in assessing QEP student learning outcomes. At the Fall 2018 faculty enrichment day, a workshop will be held for all faculty who will be participating.

Year 1: 2016 - 2017	2 faculty from each constituency to pilot test assessment tools and provide feedback for improvement.
Year 2: 2017 - 2018	3 - 4 faculty from each constituency to pilot test revised assessment tools and provide feedback for improvement.
Year 3: 2018 - 2019	All faculty who have been identified in their constituency as QEP learning outcome assessors will begin using the revised assessment tools.
Year 4: 2019 - 2020	
Year 5: 2020 - 2021	

Table 1 - Implementation timeline for assessment of student learning outcomes

6. establishing the timeline for implementation

6.2 Faculty Development

We plan to offer several faculty development workshops during the pilot test phase. By the time we begin the full assessment plan in Fall of 2018 we hope to have the majority of participating faculty trained in the evaluative criteria for the QEP student learning outcomes. These development workshops will take place in the summer and faculty will receive a stipend for their participation. Our goal is to invite twelve faculty each summer

in 2016, 2017, and 2018 for these two-day workshops. During the school year we will ask these faculty to assist as facilitators for short workshops that will be made available for their peers who are not able to attend the summer sessions. At the end of the Fall 2018 semester we will evaluate the assessment data that has been gathered and the feedback received from participating faculty and decide whether further development workshops are needed.

Summer 2016	Year 1 pilot testers receive training on QEP learning outcomes and assessment systems.
August 2016	Workshop led by QEP Director will be offered at annual faculty enrichment day.
Fall 2016 / Spring 2017	Short workshops offered to faculty related to QEP learning outcomes.
Summer 2017	Year 2 new pilot testers receive training on QEP learning outcomes and assessment systems.
August 2017	Workshop led by QEP Director will be offered at annual faculty enrichment day.
Fall 2017 / Spring 2018	Short workshops offered to faculty related to QEP learning outcomes.
Summer 2018	Year 3 newly participating faculty receive training on QEP learning outcomes and assessment systems.
August 2018	All faculty participating in QEP learning outcome assessment receive training on the assessment system during the annual faculty enrichment day.
Fall 2018 - Spring 2021	Faculty development activities offered as needed.

Table 2 - QEP faculty development schedule



Organizing for success



organizing for success

7.1 Vice Provost and Dean of Academic Affairs

The Vice Provost and Dean of Academic Affairs serves as the SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison and chair of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee. He is a member of the QEP Steering Committee and oversees the QEP Director in the planning, implementation, and assessment of the QEP.

7.2 Institutional Effectiveness Executive Team

The Institutional Effectiveness Executive Team consists of key members of the faculty, staff, and administration who have responsibilities related to institutional effectiveness. This team was involved in early discussions about potential QEP topics. This team meets regularly and will provide oversight and guidance to the QEP as it progresses. Some of the team members are also directly involved in implementing various aspects of the QEP and will be able to provide ongoing status reports to the team. Current members of the team are:

- **David English**, Chair –
Vice Provost and Dean of Academic Affairs
- **David Nelson** – Provost
- **Jason Romney** – QEP Director
- **Renata Jackson** –
Chair of Educational Policies Committee
- **Joe Lopina** – Director of Teaching and Learning Center

- **Xiaoyun Yang** –
Senior Director of Academic Planning and Institutional Research
- **Michael Rothkopf** – Chair of Faculty Council
- **TaWanna Archia** – Academic Affairs Program Specialist
- **Carin Ioannou** – Senior Director of Business Affairs
- **Elaine Pruitt** –
Interim Dean and Headmaster of the High School Academic Program
- **Martha Golden**, High School Faculty, French

7.3 QEP Director

The QEP Director reports to the Vice Provost and Dean of Academic Affairs and oversees the planning, implementation, and assessment of the QEP. This is a faculty release position. The Director receives a half-time course release and summer salary to compensate for the time needed to oversee the QEP. Jason Romney, Associate Professor in the School of Design and Production, has been in the role of QEP Director since April 2015.

Duties of the position:

- Oversee and lead implementation of the institutions 2015-2025 Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), in collaboration with institutional representatives.
- Advance a broadly based and institution-wide plan for completion of the QEP objectives.
- Supervise the day-to-day activities of the QEP initiative.

- Formulate, charge, and chair the institutional QEP Steering Committee and serve as a resource to all QEP Committees, Schools, and Divisions.
- Work closely with stakeholders to oversee the student learning outcomes assessment process for the QEP.
- Partner with the Teaching and Learning Center to conduct needs assessments and facilitate institution-wide faculty development efforts related to the QEP.
- Work closely with the Office of Academic Planning and Institutional Research to analyze the impact of the Communications QEP on institutional measures.
- Prepare and submit annual QEP progress reports.
- Prepare results and findings for a five-year QEP evaluation report to SACSCOC.

7.4 QEP Steering Committee

The QEP Steering Committee consists of faculty representatives from each arts school, a faculty representative from the Division of Liberal Arts, the Director of the Writing Center, the Director of the Teaching and Learning Center, and the Vice Provost and Dean of Academic Affairs. This committee is chaired by the QEP Director and is responsible for the overall implementation of the QEP. The committee will meet as needed to analyze QEP assessment data, recommend actions to be implemented, and facilitate communication between their constituencies on matters related to the QEP. The members of this committee are accounting for their time as service to the institution that is expected of faculty members. Current members of the committee are:

- **Jason Romney**, Chair – QEP Director
- **David English** – Vice Provost and Dean of Academic Affairs
- **Elizabeth Klaimon** – Director of the Writing Center
- **Joe Lopina** – Director of the Teaching and Learning Center
- **Jeff Gredlein** – Division of Liberal Arts
- **Brenda Daniels** – School of Dance
- **Jamie Call Blankinship** – School of Design and Production
- **Geordie MacMinn** – School of Drama
- **Ron Stacker Thompson** – School of Filmmaking
- **Karen Beres** – School of Music

organizing for success

7.5 Teaching and Learning Center

The Teaching and Learning Center is a new office recently opened in Fall of 2015 in our new library building. The office is led by a Director that is currently a half-time faculty release position. There is also an administrative assistant. These people will work closely with the QEP Director to organize and host the faculty development workshops held in the summer and throughout the academic year. While this office is funded independently of the QEP, the faculty development activities related to the QEP will be funded from the QEP budget.

7.6 Writing Center

The Writing Center is a support service for students who need assistance with written assignments. Since many of the artifacts that will be assessed for QEP learning outcomes will be in written form, the Writing Center staff will be trained in the evaluative criteria for QEP learning outcomes. The Director of the Writing Center is a member of the QEP Steering Committee and will be responsible for keeping the writing center staff informed about the progress of the QEP.

7.7 Office of Academic Planning and Institutional Research

The Office of Academic Planning and Institutional Research will be responsible for collecting and organizing the QEP assessment data. This office has a full-time staff of two and will work closely with the QEP Director to continuously evaluate the data collection system and work to organize the assessment data into a format that can be analyzed and discussed by each constituency.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA SCHOOL OF THE ARTS
QEP ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

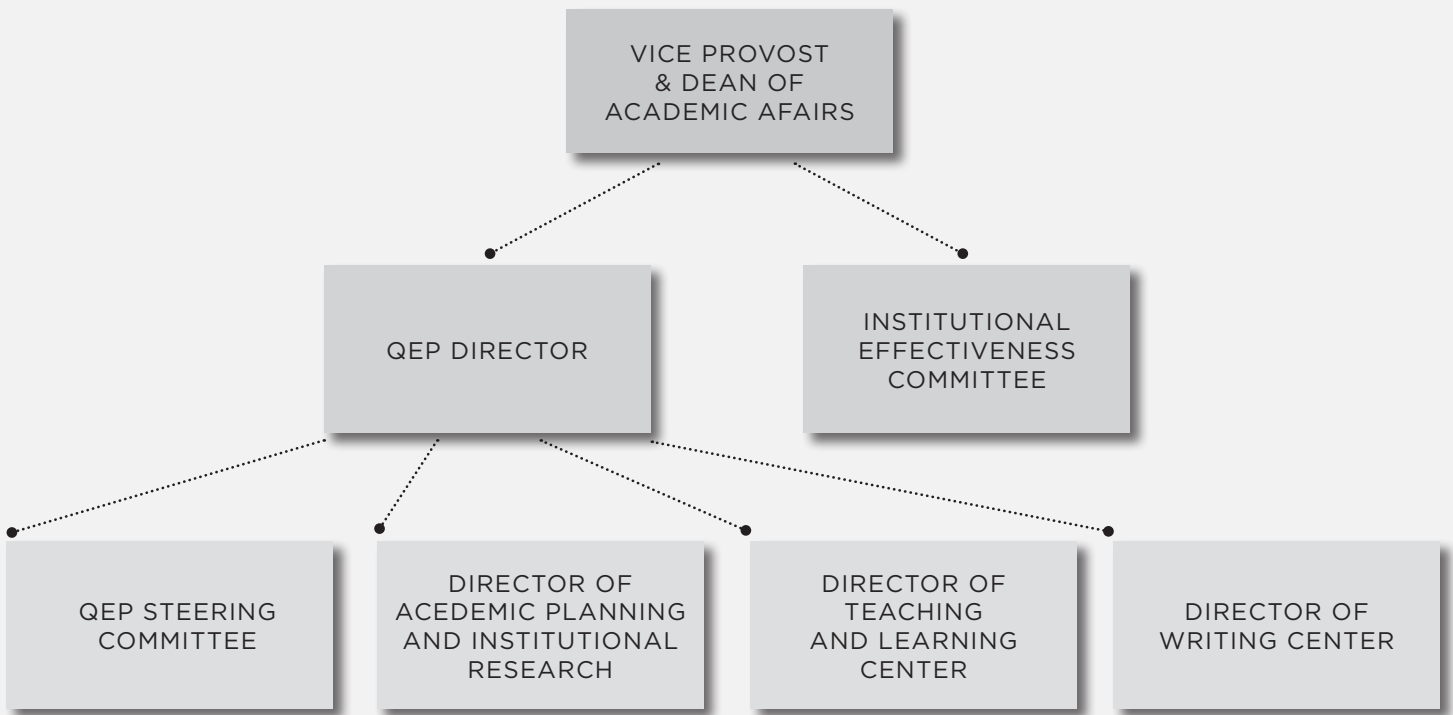


Figure 2 - QEP Organization Chart





identifying necessary resources

8. identifying necessary resources

8.1 Funding for QEP Director

A significant portion of our QEP budget will be personnel costs related to the QEP Director. The Director receives a half-time course release and funding is required to cover adjuncts to teach up to two courses per semester in place of the Director. The QEP Director also receives supplemental pay in form of one-month summer salary for work that is done during the summer months when faculty are off-contract.

8.2 Funding for Assessment Tools

We are currently investigating tools for collecting, organizing, and analyzing the assessment data for our QEP. We need a tool that will be simple and unobtrusive for our faculty to use when conducting these assessments. Since existing tools available to us are insufficient, we have budgeted funds to acquire additional technology for this purpose.

8.3 Faculty Development Funding

We will need financial resources to support the faculty development activities required of this plan. Faculty participating in the summer workshops will receive a stipend for their participation. We will plan to engage consultants with expertise in our QEP topic to lead these summer workshops. We have budgeted funds to pay for these consultants.

QEP BUDGET PROPOSAL						
	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Personnel	31,330	31,330	31,330	31,330	31,330	31,330
Assessment						
Software & recurring maintenance	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Other equipment	1,980	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Total	6,980	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000	7,000
Faculty Development:						
Consultants	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
Summer Stipends	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000
facilities/food/supplies	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Total	17,000	17,000	17,000	17,000	17,000	17,000
Operational Support	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Travel	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Marketing & Communication	13,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Total by Year	75,310	64,330	64,330	64,330	64,330	64,330
Five-year QEP Budget Request Grand Total:		\$321,650				
Project Grand Total (including 2015-2016):		\$396,960				

Table 3 - QEP Budget Proposal





assessing the success of the QEP

assessing the success of the QEP

9.1 Development of Rubrics for QEP Student Learning Outcomes

During the July 2015 retreat for the QEP Steering Committee, work began on creating rubrics that could be used by faculty to assess QEP student learning outcomes. On October 20, 2015 a workshop was held to further develop these rubrics. The workshop was led by Christine Robinson, Executive Director of the Office of Assessment and Accreditation at UNC Charlotte, and John Frederick, Director of Academic Planning and Assessment at UNC Charlotte. The workshop was attended by faculty and staff from across the institution. For a list of attendees at this workshop, see Appendix 3.

By the end of the workshop, three draft rubrics had been developed and there was a consensus among the participants that with further refinement these rubrics could be used to assess the students in their respective schools. On November 10, 2015 a second workshop was held under the direction of Dr. Robinson and Dr. Frederick. Again faculty and staff attended along with the student body president. For a list of attendees at this workshop, see Appendix 3. Suggestions for refinement to the rubrics were offered. The remainder of the discussion centered around identifying the assignments and assessment opportunities to use the rubrics in the curriculum in each school. For summaries of these plans see Section 5.1.

We will continue working to improve these rubrics and begin a two-year pilot test in Fall

2016. It is our goal that by Fall 2018 the rubrics will be ready to be deployed widely across campus. The current version of the rubrics can be seen in Appendix 2.

9.2 Direct Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

Each constituency has identified activities where direct assessment of the QEP student learning outcomes can happen. We do not have any experience conducting direct assessments of student learning outcomes across campus using a unified assessment mechanism. During the pilot testing phase of the QEP, faculty pilot testers will experiment with the rubrics to assess students in various activities. The goals of the pilot test are twofold: first, we need to test the rubrics to determine their effectiveness. Second, we need to test the mechanism for data collection. We have not identified this mechanism yet but we are currently evaluating various technologies and hope to identify the most appropriate system during the pilot test.

Throughout the pilot test, the QEP Steering Committee will stay in regular contact with the pilot testers to collect their feedback. As simple solutions to problems are identified, they can be implemented quickly. At the end of each semester the QEP Steering Committee will meet to discuss larger issues identified by pilot testers and work to address these issues.

Once the pilot test has been completed, in Fall 2018 we will begin conducting direct

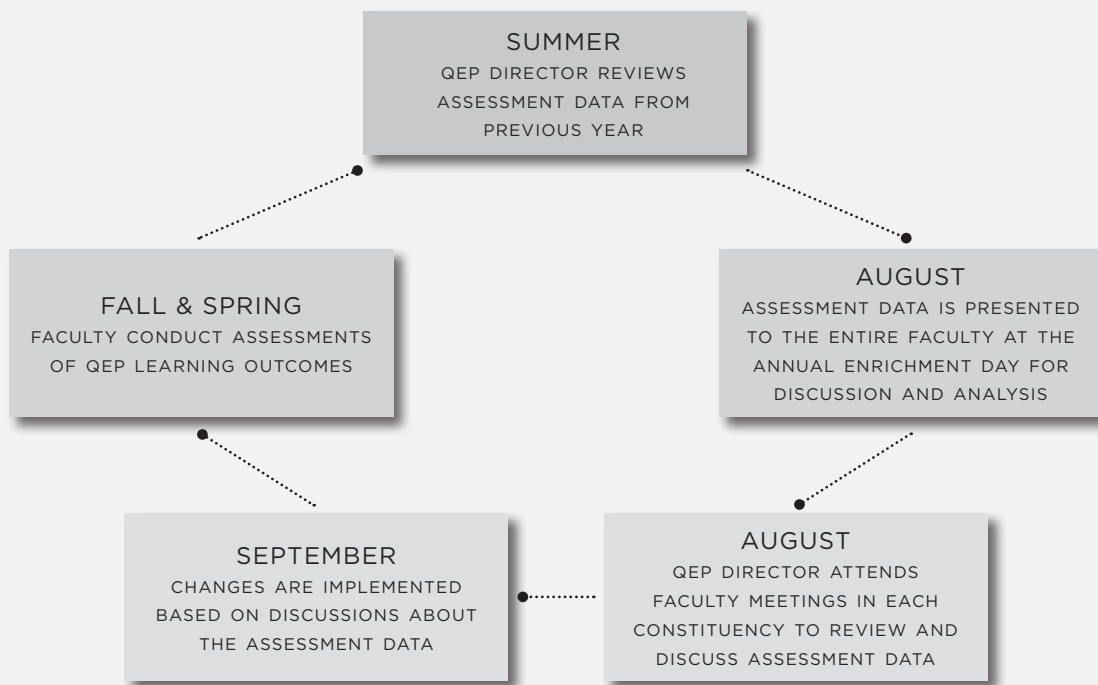


Figure 3 - QEP Assessment Cycle

assessments of QEP student learning outcomes by all faculty involved in courses that have been identified by each constituency.

9.3 Annual meetings with constituencies to analyze assessment data

Following the pilot test, each summer the QEP Director will analyze the assessment data collected during the previous academic year. When the faculty return in the fall for the annual faculty enrichment day, the QEP Director will present the analysis of the assessment data and present possible

improvements that can be made to the process. If there is a consensus that these improvements should be made, they will be implemented as soon as possible. Following the faculty enrichment day, the QEP Director, along with the respective representative on the QEP Steering Committee, will meet with the faculty in each constituency prior to the start of fall classes. The group will review the assessment data from their program and discuss actions that can be implemented in their program in response to this data.

assessing the success of the QEP

9.4 Key Indicators for Success of the QEP

9.4.1 Overall Participation in Assessment

One of our goals for the QEP is to conduct a true interdisciplinary assessment of a unified set of outcomes across campus. As the assessment is reviewed annually, one thing we will look for is that assessments are being conducted by a significant number of faculty in each constituency. If there are faculty who should be participating but are not, this may be indicative of problems with the process and we can work with those individuals to understand the obstacles standing in their way of participating. Whatever mechanism is used to collect assessment data, it will need to be capable of recording the identity of the faculty member submitting the assessment.

9.4.2 Balanced Assessment of All QEP Learning Outcomes

The process of critique will serve to help artists clarify their focus and passion. As students practice communicating their passion, they will recognize questions to ask when critiquing their work that will help them understand whether the work fits within their overall artistic goals. Consequently, we need to ensure that each constituency is conducting a balanced assessment of all three learning outcomes. If we see that a particular school is conducting a disproportionate number assessments of a particular learning outcome, we can work with them during their annual review to identify activities in their curriculum when the other outcomes can be assessed. Whatever mechanism is used to collect assessment data, it will need to be capable of demonstrating how well these assessments are balanced across the three learning outcomes.



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appendices

11.1 Appendix 1 – Minutes from the QEP Steering Committee Retreat

Minutes from UNCOSA QEP Steering Committee Retreat

JULY 27 – 28, 2015 AT GRAYLYN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTER

In Attendance:

Jason Romney (QEP Director), **Brenda Daniels** (Associate Dean of School of Dance), **Jeff Gredlein** (Division of Liberal Arts Faculty), **Laura Hart McKinny** (School of Filmmaking Faculty), **Geordie MacMinn** (School of Drama Faculty), **Karen Beres** (Interim Dean of School of Music), **Jamie Call Blankinship** (School of Design and Production Faculty), **David English** (afternoon of July 28, Vice Provost & Dean of Academic Affairs)

1. Overview of QEP Core Requirement 2.12, Core Standard 3.3.2
 - a. Discussion about key issues identified in SACSCOC Summer Institute
 - i. Philosophy & Intent
 - ii. Institutional Fit
 - iii. Focus on Learning
 - iv. Campus Engagement
 - b. Discussion of common problem areas identified in SACSCOC Summer Institute
 - i. Focus must be clear
 - ii. Scope must be appropriate for campus
 - iii. School must demonstrate capacity to complete the QEP
 - iv. Goals and outcomes must be clear
 - v. Goals and outcomes must be measurable
 - vi. QEP must address a significant student population
2. Discussion of reading assignments
 - a. *Critical Response Process* by Liz Lerman
 - i. Lots of helpful advice about how to give and receive criticism
 - ii. Being able to give and receive criticism is an important skill for students and professionals in the arts

- iii. The formal process described in the book is too time consuming to use all the time
 - iv. Some question how these rules would need to be adapted for a student/teacher relationship. For example, teachers do not need permission to criticize and share opinions regarding the work of their students. This permission is implicit in their role as a teacher. What is the responsibility of the teacher to prepare their student to receive the criticism?
 - v. Ms. Lerman has offered workshops on campus in the past. Perhaps she could be brought to campus again
- b. *Show Your Work* by Austin Kleon
- i. Author suggests that the key to engaging a modern audience is for the artist to share their work early and often, in as many ways as possible.
 - ii. Artists tend to be very protective of their work while under development. Audiences, however, want to know the story behind the work and how it was created.
- c. *Whoever Tells the Best Story Wins* by Annette Simmons
- i. Author suggests that storytelling is the key to effective communication.
 - 1. *“Once you can see these stories, it becomes obvious that the more stories you share the better your ability to communicate”*
 - ii. From the perspective of our campus population, storytelling is a core element of what we do and has been identified as a critical element of the curriculum of all of our programs.
 - 1. Perhaps the idea of storytelling as a communication tool could be a good angle for our QEP about communication.
- d. *Do Story: How to tell your story so the world listens* by Bobette Buster
- i. A similar message to Annette Simmons’
 - ii. Talks about the elements of a good story
 - iii. *“When you tell a purposeful story demonstrating your attitude and passion, suddenly the data, facts and figures of your CV become memorable. The story your tell will hit your listeners’ hearts and stay top of mind long after you’ve left.”* – Bill Simon

appendices

- e. *Managing Teams for Dummies* by Marty Brounstein
 - i. At its core, this is a book about communication skills
 - ii. Performing artists are almost always working in teams so much of this advice fits well for us.
 - iii. Ten Qualities of an Effective Team Player
 - 1. Demonstrates Reliability
 - 2. Communicates Constructively
 - 3. Listens Actively
 - 4. Functions as an Active Participant
 - 5. Shares Openly and Willingly
 - 6. Cooperates and Pitches In to Help
 - 7. Exhibits Flexibility
 - 8. Works as a Problem-solver
 - 9. Treats Others in a Respectful and Supportive Manner
 - 10. Shows Commitment to the Team
 - iv. These ten qualities capture well the expectations we have for our students.
- f. *Send: Why People Email So Badly and How to Do It Better* by David Shipley and Will Schwalbe
 - i. We could improve in this area as a campus
 - ii. Email has become the primary mode of communication for faculty and staff
 - iii. An important topic but perhaps one that has more to do with the faculty and staff than the students
- g. *Beyond Talent: Creating a Successful Career in Music* by Angela Myles Beeching
 - i. Though specifically about music, the principles could be applied to any performing artist
 - ii. Most of her advice revolves around communication skills
 - 1. How to communicate your value clearly
 - 2. Self promotion
 - 3. Various methods for building a professional network

- iii. Has some useful criteria for artist statements and introductions
 - 1. “At its best, an artist’s statement reads easily, is informative, and adds to the reader’s understanding of the artist, his intentions, and his work. At its worst, an artist’s statement is difficult to understand, is pretentious, and irritates rather than informs.”
 - iv. The author might be a good candidate for our QEP lead evaluator
3. Discussion on topic selection
- a. General topic “Communication” for QEP has already been decided
 - i. Survey went out to campus community fall 2014 asking for feedback on five proposed topics
 - ii. Survey results were discussed at Deans, Faculty Council, Institutional Effectiveness, and Executive meetings
 - iii. Topic of “Communication” was decided
 - iv. When Jason Romney was named the QEP Director in spring 2015, he visited with faculty in each arts school and DLA to solicit suggestions that would narrow the focus of the QEP topic.
 - 1. Three questions were asked:
 - a. In what ways could your students be better communicators?
 - b. Of these areas of improvement, which ones would have the most positive impact on their success as a student and professional?
 - c. If they were to improve in these areas, how would we know?
 - b. First task for us is to narrow the focus of the proposed topic
 - i. This is a rare opportunity we get as a university to come together around a common issue and actually have the resources to address it
 - ii. Whatever we decide to do, it should be something important enough to us that we would want to do it regardless of SACS influence
 - iii. UNCOSA mission statement was read and discussed
 - iv. Feedback from Spring 2015 visits with faculty in each school/division was reviewed. Feedback was organized into three main categories
 - 1. Students could improve their ability to communicate with others about themselves and their work.

appendices

- a. Examples include:
 - i. Film pitches
 - ii. Artistic Statements made at application to UNCSCA
 - iii. Professional promotion
 - iv. Collaboration with fellow artists
 - v. Grant writing
 - vi. Publicity events
 - vii. Managing a public persona
 - viii. Personal reflection and criticism of own work and work of others
 - b. Lots of potential here. These issues are core to the mission of UNCSCA and our professional goals for our students.
2. Students could improve their ability to communicate with others regarding their struggles.
 - a. Examples Include:
 - i. Keeping advisors informed about their academic progress
 - ii. Overcoming obstacles in communication
 - iii. Coping with stress
 - b. This is an important issue for our campus. One that needs attention. Would be difficult to justify this topic within the framework of the QEP core requirements and comprehensive standards.
 3. Students could improve their basic communication skills
 - a. Examples Include:
 - i. Civil discourse
 - ii. Appropriate uses of electronic communication
 - iii. Formal written communication
 - iv. Graduate Thesis in D&P
 - v. Language comprehension
 - vi. Listening/Empathy

vii. Understanding the appropriate form of communication for various scenarios

1. When to use email
2. When to use telephone
3. When to use text messaging
4. When to meet face to face

viii. Effective verbal communication

ix. Thoughtful speech (think before you speak)

b. These are important skills for anyone and we would hope to help students develop these skills within the framework of a more focused effort that fits the unique nature of our institution as a performing arts conservatory.

v. Potential topics

1. Artist Statements

a. Every applicant writes one

b. Not asked to do it again

i. Music and Film has students do something similar in a class

ii. Perhaps there could be an institutional initiative to help students do this more often and get better at it

c. What would be the learning outcomes of this?

i. Basic written communication skills

ii. Writing and talking about their work

iii. Communicating the story about why they do what they do

iv. Communicate what makes you distinctive

v. Explain what they have to contribute to a team

vi. Define what motivates them

d. 2015 Deans retreat identified storytelling and communicating with an audience to be a critical element of curriculum in every school.

e. The ability to do this is a critical skill for the profession. This speaks to the professional readiness element of our mission statement

appendices

f. Students need to be able to do this verbally and in writing

vi. The Topic

1. Tell/Share your story: Communication skills for the artist

a. The choice between Tell/Share needs further discussion.

b. Subtitle speaks to the unique nature of our campus

c. Encompasses all specific communication skills that are important for someone working in the arts, including the ability to communicate critically about your own work and the work of others as we read in Liz Lerman's Critical Response book.

vii. How do we justify the topic?

1. Outline the activities that led to this topic

a. Get the survey data from fall 2014

b. Get minutes from Deans, Faculty Council, IE, Executive Council meetings where this was discussed

c. Explain the suggestions solicited from the faculty in visits to each school in spring 2015

2. Identify existing activities on campus that demonstrate this is a subject that is already valued

a. Portfolio reviews in D&P and Film

b. Training in pitching in Film

c. Written evaluations of each drama student by faculty

d. D&P and Film peer evaluations

e. Music has introductory course in listening skills.

f. Studio classes where group critiques happen

g. Junior level career development class in Music where they learn how to conduct "informances"

h. Dance has senior year class where they learn verbal presentation skills

i. Sessions with 3rd and 4th year Drama students where they meet with the Dean and attempt to articulate their craft and process.

j. There are probably many more that could be identified

4. Discussion on learning outcomes for QEP
 - a. Communicate clearly their passion for a professional career
 - i. What does it mean to communicate clearly?
 1. Easily understood
 2. Succinct
 3. Unambiguous
 - ii. What is passion?
 1. Motivation
 2. Driving influence
 3. Purpose
 4. The word “passion” has been used often in the history of the school.
 - iii. Why say “professional career”?
 1. This is an important element of our mission statement
 2. The idea here is to explain why they are so passionate about this that they want to pursue it as their career
 - b. Communicate critically about their own work
 - i. Being able to self-reflect and criticize their own work is an important step to understanding their passion and driving influence
 - ii. The ability to discuss their work critically is a crucial skill for a professional career
 - c. Communicate critically about the work of others
 - i. Another crucial skill for the professional artist
 - ii. The desire and ability to help a collaborator or colleague find success in their work is important to the performing arts profession
 - d. Identify and explain next steps based on criticism
 - i. This can also be described as synthesizing.
 - ii. This is an important element of critical discussions
 - iii. This learning outcome was ultimately removed from the final list in order to simplify the plan.
 1. The idea being that this step is implicit in the process of criticism.
 2. Also the output of successful criticism is a clearer focus for the work which feeds back into the first learning outcome

appendices

5. Justification for the topic (Suggestions from the group)
 - a. Mission statement mentions the need to provide students with the skills to excel in their disciplines and their lives.
 - i. These kind of communication skills are critical to success in any of our disciplines
 - b. Mission statement mentions our goal to prepare students for a professional career in the arts
 - i. These kind of communication skills are critical for a successful career in the arts
 - c. Feedback we receive from employers and other industry leaders suggests that these kind of communication skills are critical.
 - i. We need to get formal evidence of this.
 - d. We have anecdotal evidence from faculty across the campus that the artistic statements required of all applications are not as effective as we would like.
 - i. We need to start conducting formal assessments of these artistic statements for students who enroll.
 - e. We have anecdotal evidence from D&P and Film faculty that 1st/2nd year design students are lacking the necessary skills to give and receive criticism. These skills are important for them to have in order to succeed in the 3rd and 4th year curriculum.
 - i. We're hearing this information second-hand. We need to get some actual data on this from the source.
 - f. Dance faculty have observed that dance students are not able to clearly talk about their own work.
 - i. Emerging choreographers projects were specifically mentioned.
 - ii. Could use some more info on this.
 - g. There used to be a session that 3rd and 4th year Drama students would have with Gerald Freedman where they would have to speak about their craft and process as they now understood it. Unsure whether this is still done in Drama.
 - i. Follow up on this to find out if something similar is still happening.
 - ii. Regardless, it speaks directly to an institutional interest in our QEP topic.
 - h. Schools of Dance and Music have added acting classes for their dance and singing students to help them develop verbal skills
 - i. Music is piloting a new freshman course this year involving critical listening and response.
 - i. We should find out more on this and see how we might collaborate on the assessment.

- j. We have heard from School of Filmmaking department heads that they have been in discussions about creating a “living portfolio” project for students and alumni to chronicle their process and work. The hope is that students can develop their skills in critiquing and discussing their work but also this could serve as helpful information for new students who need models for how students transition from the school into their career.
- k. DLA have been assessing students’ ability for personal reflection on their work and have noticed that the skill does improve between year 1 and year 2.
 - i. We should see what assessment data exists for this. Perhaps we could use this a baseline data and ideas for our institutional assessment mechanisms.
- l. Town hall meeting in spring 2015 showed us that we need more opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to engage in civil discourse about the school.
 - i. There were moments in that meeting where faculty and students were engaged in critical discussions about the curriculum.
- m. Some D&P graduate students are required to produce a written thesis. They struggle with this kind of formal research writing.
 - i. This is an important issue but may not have a clear connection to the goals of the QEP as currently outlined.
- n. There is currently no student newspaper on campus. The closest thing we have is the Every Friday Email but this is mostly a list of announcements. It would be nice if there was something where editorials and reviews could be written by students and published to the campus community.
- o. Most of what our students do on campus involves some form of collaboration. Effective communication skills are critical to successful collaboration.
- p. Color and Design class in D&P involves some exercises where group critiques happen and are assessed.
 - i. Let’s follow up on this and see what data exists and what we might learn from this.
- q. D&P peer production evaluations could benefit from questions about communication skills
- r. D&P portfolio reviews could benefit from better assessment mechanisms for the students’ presentation skills.
- s. Student grant programs on campus usually require the students to produce some form of artistic statement. Perhaps we could leverage this as an assessment opportunity.

appendices

- t. Music students are often required to give public speeches about their work at recitals. Many are uncomfortable with this.
 - i. Can we get a more clear statement from Music on this?
 - ii. Is there a way that this could be assessed?
 - u. There was a general consensus in the room that our students are uncomfortable speaking in public.
 - v. Also a general consensus that alumni seem to have better communication skills. So our goal is that they could show more improvement before they graduate.
 - w. 2015 Deans retreat observed that storytelling and communicating with an audience was a critical element of the curriculum across campus.
6. Discussion of potential actions to be implemented
- a. Need to nominate lead QEP evaluator. Some names were suggested. More are needed
 - i. Tony Strawn from Henderson Community College in Henderson, KY. Professor of Communication and QEP Director.
 - 1. Heard him speak at SACSCOC Summer Institute. Seems to have a good disposition for serving as a lead evaluator.
 - ii. Angela Myles Beeching. Author of *Beyond Talent*.
 - 1. Has an academic background in a conservatory setting.
 - b. SACS guidelines say that there needs to be broad involvement in the development and implementation of the QEP by all relevant constituencies.
 - i. We need to consult with the Staff Council, SGA, Alumni, BOT for their input
 - ii. As for faculty involvement, we will define “constituency” as an arts school or DLA.
 - 1. This way each school can decide the best way to implement the QEP in their area without having to worry about getting every faculty member involved in conducting assessments. Some classes are simply not a good fit and that’s OK.
 - c. We need to develop a plan to ensure that adequate faculty representation exists from each constituency for the duration of the QEP.
 - i. A QEP Steering Committee will be created with members rotating out every two years like other faculty committees
 - 1. DLA and each arts school will have a representative plus an alternate
 - 2. Director of the writing center should be on the committee

3. Director of teaching and learning center should be on the committee
4. Would be nice to have at least one Dean on the committee. This could double as the representative from one of the schools.
5. What about staff and student representation?
 - a. Someone from institutional research?
 - ii. Other committees may need to be created.
 1. Assessment committee?
 2. Research committee?
- d. At the faculty development day on August 13 we will give a presentation to the entire faculty and host a breakout session for Q&A.
 - i. Faculty will be invited to review the reading materials
 - ii. Faculty will be asked to discuss these learning outcomes and identify activities already happening in their school an classes where these learning outcomes can be assessed and developed.
 - iii. Faculty will be invited to participate on the QEP steering committee and/or some of the sub committees that might be created.
 - iv. Faculty will be invited to nominate people who could serve as our lead evaluator.
- e. Make reading materials available to the campus through the library
- f. Get a video booth for people to give short verbal artistic statements
 - i. Could be used to build interest and awareness of the QEP
 - ii. Faculty, staff, and students could participate
 - iii. Videos could be used in marketing material
 - iv. Could also be shows to the SACS committee
- g. Develop branding for QEP with page on new website
- h. Banners, posters, swag, etc.
- i. Seek alumni input during the Picklestock weekend in September.
- j. We need to nominate the lead evaluator for our QEP

appendices

7. Assessment

- a. Need to develop an assessment mechanism (rubric) that could be used across campus to assess QEP learning outcomes
 - i. Specific enough to assess what we need
 - ii. Generic enough that it can be used in any area on campus
- b. We need help with this. Perhaps hire a consultant?
- c. Ask students to write a new artistic statement when they graduate
 - i. This could be used as a capstone assessment mechanism
 - ii. If we are successful in all the work we will do in individual classes and departmental activities, we should see these artistic statements improve.
 - iii. We should start assessing the statements from incoming students now!
- d. Looked at NCC&U rubrics for written and verbal communication
 - i. Benchmark, Milestone, Capstone are good terms for assessment
 - ii. Some helpful stuff in here but we should really adapt to something better suited for us
- e. Attempt to identify values for rubrics for each learning outcome
 - i. Explain clearly their passion for a professional career
 - 1. Succinct/Clear
 - 2. Evidence of Passion
 - 3. Distinctive
 - 4. Delivery
 - ii. Communicate critically about own work
 - 1. Objectivity
 - 2. Acknowledges both positive and negative
 - 3. Engagement
 - 4. Synthesis
 - 5. Contextualize
 - 6. Brevity

- iii. Communicate critically about work of others
 - 1. Expressing opinions effectively
 - 2. Acknowledges both positive and negative
 - 3. Contextualize
 - 4. Honesty
 - 5. Collaborative Engagement
 - 6. Brevity
- iv. Attempts were made to describe benchmark, milestone, and capstone levels for each of these values. More work needs to be done on that.

8. Timeline

- a. Written QEP needs to be sent to the off-site review committed from SACS in January.
- b. Onsite visit is first week of March
- c. We would like to implement a phased roll out of the QEP to give us an opportunity to test our assessment tools before they are widely adopted
 - i. Some discussion about how to limit the roll out
 - 1. Limit to a specific population of students
 - a. Gets complicated and faculty involvement balloons
 - 2. Limit to specific numbers of faculty seems to work better
 - ii. Year 1 we engage two faculty in each constituency to test our assessment tools.
Revise as needed
 - 1. Ideally this would involve assessing 1st and 4th year students but this is not critical
 - iii. Year 2 we engage more faculty
 - 1. Ideally this would involve assessing 2nd and 3rd year students but this is not critical
 - iv. Year 3 all identified faculty are engaged

appendices

11.2 Appendix 2 – Draft for assessing QEP student learning outcomes

SLO#1: Clearly communicate passion for their professional career.

Defining the Criteria

Clarity: Communicating in a way that the message is easily understood by the audience.

Passion: A driving force motivating artists to pursue careers which are inseparably connected with their identity.

Distinctive: Communicating what sets your work apart from your peers.

Delivery: Ability to utilize various general communication skills and modes of communication.

CRITERIA	BEGINNING	MILESTONE 1	MILESTONE 2	ADVANCED
Clarity	Unable to communicate with clarity even when prompted.	Can communicate with some clarity when prompted.	Takes initiative to communicate with increasing clarity.	Communicates with confidence in an unambiguous and concise manner.
Passion	Communicates enthusiasm and temperament for their discipline.	Communicates how their work connects to them in a personal way.	Able to explain their motivation when presented with obstacles.	Demonstrates their passion in an infectious way.
Distinctive	Articulates their desire for conservatory training.	Can communicate some understanding of breadth and depth of their discipline.	Articulates their unique approach to their work.	Contextualize their unique approach within a greater body of work.
Delivery	Demonstrates sufficient command of language to engage their audience.	Experiments with different modes of communication.	Synthesizes a variety of modes to communicate their message.	Able to adapt their modes of communication to fit varying audience.

Comments:

SLO#2: Effectively critique their own work.

Defining the Criteria

Intent: Able to clearly state the artistic intent of the work.

Objectivity: Able to evaluate how well the work fulfills the artistic intent.

Synthesis: Using the information acquired through critique to revise and improve the work.

CRITERIA	BEGINNING	MILESTONE 1	MILESTONE 2	ADVANCED
Intent	Unable to make any coherent statement of artistic intent.	Able to state a generic or vague artistic intent.	Able to state a clear and detailed artistic intent.	Statement of artistic intent is clear, detailed, and placed within a supporting context.
Objectivity	Unable to identify or acknowledge anything that can be improved.	Able to acknowledge areas for improvement when suggested by faculty and peers.	Able to independently identify areas for improvement.	Able to independently identify areas for improvement that are in harmony with suggestions from faculty and peers.
Synthesis	Unable or unwilling to apply the information learned through critique to improve the work.	Willing to try applying information learned through critique when prompted by faculty or peers.	Able to apply information learned through critique without prompting from faculty or peers.	Able to independently devise unique solutions to problems by experimenting with information learned through critique.

Comments:

appendices

SLO#3: Effectively critique the work of others.

Defining the Criteria

Contextualize: Ability to place their observations about the work within a context that aligns with the artistic intent.

Balanced Perspective: Ability to acknowledge ways in which the work both succeeds and fails to fulfill the artistic intent.

Collaborative Engagement: Actively participates in helping the work succeed.

CRITERIA	BENCHMARK	MILESTONE 1	MILESTONE 2	ADVANCED
Contextualize	Makes no effort to understand the artistic intention before commenting.	Makes some effort to understand the artistic intention before commenting but often asks biased questions.	Makes an effort to understand the artistic intention before commenting. Asks neutral questions but may struggle to offer feedback that relates to the artistic intent.	Makes an effort to thoroughly understand the artistic intention before commenting. Asks neutral questions and offers feedback that relates to the artistic intent.
Balanced Perspective	Student presents an unbalanced perspective by stating only positive or negative aspects of the work.	Student may still present unbalanced perspective, but can offer balanced feedback when prompted.	Student independently presents a balanced perspective.	Student presents a balanced perspective with complex analysis and supportive views.
Collaborative Engagement	Limited engagement in the critique process. Questions and comments are often self-serving.	Will engage in the critique process when prompted. Tends to follow the lead of others when offering questions or comments.	Engages in the critique process without prompting. Contributes in ways that help the work improve.	Takes an active role in the critique process. Contributes in ways that helps the work improve, and supports dialogue.

Comments:

11.3 Appendix 3 – Participants in QEP assessment workshops

October 20, 2016 QEP Assessment Workshop Attendees:

Jason Romney – School of Design and Production and QEP Director
Brenda Daniels – School of Dance
Nic Muni – School of Music
Geordie MacMinn – School of Drama
Steve LaCosse – School of Music
Eric Rimes – School of Design and Production
Bland Wade – School of Design and Production
Aaron Ross – Department of Student Affairs
Steven Gallagher – Department of Student Affairs
Dean Wilcox – Dean of the Division of Liberal Arts
Jeff Gredlein – Division of Liberal Arts
Renata Jackson – School of Filmmaking
Henry Grillo – Associate Dean of School of Filmmaking
Ron Stacker Thompson – School of Filmmaking
Elizabeth Klaimon – Division of Liberal Arts and Director of the Writing Center
Joe Lopina – School of Filmmaking and Director of the Teaching and Learning Center
Susan Keely – Research Librarian
Quin Gordon – School of Drama
David English – Vice Provost and Dean of Academic Affairs

November 10, 2016 QEP Assessment Workshop Attendees:

Jason Romney – School of Design and Production and QEP Director
Eric Rimes – School of Design and Production
Allison Burkholder – Student Body President
Xiaoyun Yang – Director of Academic Planning and Institutional Research
Jamie Call Blankinship – School of Design and Production
Mike Wakeford – Division of Liberal Arts
Carolina Kava – School of Drama
Michael Rothkopf – School of Music and Chair of Faculty Council
Henry Grillo – Associate Dean of School of Filmmaking
David English – Vice Provost and Dean of Academic Affairs
Jeff Gredlein – Division of Liberal Arts
Ron Stacker Thompson – School of Filmmaking
Trish Casey – School of Dance
Elizabeth Klaimon – Division of Liberal Arts and Director of the Writing Center



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