



REAFFIRMATION AND THE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

The University of Texas at Arlington is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Every ten years, UTA must undergo a review process by SACS to reaffirm our accreditation. The reaffirmation process requires that we demonstrate compliance with certain requirements and standards, and that we develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).

What is a Quality Enhancement Plan?

The QEP is an ongoing strategic planning initiative that requires the University to develop specific educational programs based upon a central theme designed to enhance the value our students receive from their UTA experience.

What Steps Has the University Taken So Far in Developing the QEP?

The QEP itself must be developed in consultation with the academic community. To that end, we have obtained input through a series of strategic conversations with the President and Provost, an online faculty survey, a set of focus groups with faculty members, and discussions between the QEP Coordinator and various constituencies in the academic community. From this input, the central theme for the QEP – *active learning* – has emerged.

What is Active Learning?

Active learning puts the student at the center of the learning process, making him/her a partner in discovery, not a passive receiver of information. Active learners are “hands-on” learners. Active learning seeks to develop communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, and analytical skills through various in-class teaching and learning strategies, as well as outside experiences such as student research, internships, clinical placements, and service learning opportunities.

What are the Next Steps in Developing the QEP?

Using an RFP process geared to promote innovation, the QEP Coordinator and Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from the academic community, will identify exemplar programs that employ active learning. From there, the Committee, with feedback from the academic community, will develop a plan that focuses on these exemplars and how they can serve as models for other programs across campus. The QEP will be submitted to SACS in early 2007.

Why is the QEP Important to UTA and to the Community?

The QEP provides the University with an opportunity to define the type of student learning we wish to foster at UTA. The QEP will help us better identify and develop the core skills that our students should have. Upon each student’s graduation, employers will be able to know what skills they can expect a UTA graduate to possess. The skills developed through focused active learning enable graduates to “hit the ground running” in their post-graduation jobs.

How Can I Find Out More About UTA’s Quality Enhancement Plan?

For further information, you may visit the QEP website at <http://sacs.uta.edu>.