

Top Ten Things to Know about Trevecca's QEP

1. **"QEP" stands for Quality Enhancement Plan.**
2. **The purpose of the QEP is to improve student learning.**
 - Every SACS-accredited institution must propose and implement a five-year QEP that will improve student learning as part of their reaccreditation process.
3. **Trevecca's QEP is undergraduate research.**
 - Our QEP involves traditional undergraduate students & curriculum only;
 - We define "undergraduate research" very broadly to include creative scholarship in the arts and humanities;
 - We emphasize the process of acquiring research skills, not just the outcome or result of the research;
 - We emphasize faculty mentoring of students (builds on one of the University's strengths: student interaction with faculty);
 - Students and faculty in all traditional undergraduate academic programs can participate in the QEP's implementation.
4. **Trevecca's QEP has three student learning outcomes and five process outcomes (p. 21).**
 1. Students will be able to demonstrate understanding of scholarship topics in their discipline.
 2. Students will be able to demonstrate skills related to conducting scholarship in their discipline.
 3. Students will be able to communicate their research findings through written, performance, and/or oral presentations.

The five process outcomes will contribute to creating a culture of undergraduate research at Trevecca:

1. Develop a curriculum that introduces students to research skills early in their Trevecca education and becomes a foundation for future research experiences;
 2. Provide additional opportunities for participation in undergraduate research;
 3. Increase the visibility of undergraduate research;
 4. Increase support for undergraduate research at Trevecca Nazarene University;
 5. Improve student perceptions about Trevecca's academic culture.
5. **During the past two years, a wide range of University members worked [very hard] to solicit topics, choose a suitable topic, and develop the QEP.**
 - QEP Topic Selection Committee: 13 participants from all schools on campus; faculty, librarians, staff, administrators, student representatives (p. 5)
 - QEP Development Committee: 18 members (and 8 additional people who worked on subcommittees); participation from schools of Religion, Education, Business, Arts & Sciences; faculty, administrators, librarians, staff, student representatives (pp. 6, 77)

6. **The QEP Topic Selection Committee chose the topic through a process that was communicated to campus members and constituents. Possible QEP topics were solicited from students, faculty, staff, administrators, board of trustees members, and alumni/interested stakeholders (pp. 7-10; 88-90).**

The QEP Topic Selection Committee:

- Led focus groups in faculty/administrator meeting (February 2011).
- Emailed survey to students, faculty, staff, administrators, BOT members, and alumni/interested stakeholders to solicit possible topics (spring 2011).
- Encouraged discussion of possible topics during department meetings, resident hall meetings, faculty/administrator meetings, faculty development workshops, teacher/student meetings, staff appreciation luncheon, employee meetings, and BOT meetings. (Almost 1000 topics were identified during spring-summer 2011).
- Reviewed 2011 results of National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).
- Synthesized topics into four possibilities: critical thinking, effective communication, academic rigor, and student research (summer 2011).
- Solicited mini-white papers that would connect in some way to the four topics. Nine mini-white papers were submitted for consideration (fall 2011).
- Administered second electronic survey, soliciting more input on four topics (fall 2011).
- Chose the three highest-rated mini-white papers and requested that those be developed into full-white papers (fall 2011).
- Selected full-white paper on undergraduate research as most feasible QEP topic and submitted the topic for consideration to the University Cabinet (January 2012).
- Announced topic at faculty/administrator meeting (February 2012).

7. Trevecca's QEP will be implemented gradually over a five-year period (2013-2018).

Levels of Undergraduate Research Curriculum:	Implementation:
<p><u>Research Foundations</u> (imbedded in ENG 1020, ENG 1080, and INT 1100): Exposes 90-99% of freshmen to basic research concepts in their chosen discipline (pp. 29-31; 91-95). (Meets SLO #1)</p>	<p>Pilot in spring 2014; implement in all sections of ENG 1020, ENG 1080, & INT 1100 in fall 2014; continue through 2018</p>
<p><u>FLARE (Faculty-Led Academic Research Experiences)</u>: Faculty members propose a research project that will be completed with a group of students, under faculty-mentor's guidance. Faculty member chooses students to participate (minimum of 8 students ideally); funding & release time awarded to faculty member; faculty member develops a rubric suitable for his/her project as a means of assessing student learning (pp. 31-33; 96-101). (Meets SLO #1, #2, possibly #3)</p>	<p>Promote & solicit proposals in spring 2014; select FLAREs in fall 2014; first FLAREs occur in fall 2015; continue through 2018</p>
<p><u>499A/B/C courses (individualized faculty-mentored student research)</u>: Students interested in individualized research can register for: 499A Research/Creative Project Proposal (1 credit) – student develops an individualized original research or creative project; 499B Research/Creative Project Completion (1 credit) – successful execution of an individualized research or creative project under the mentorship of a faculty member and consistent with the practices in their discipline; 499C Research/Creative Project Presentation (1 credit) – revision and presentation of research findings or creative project developed in 499A and B (pp. 33-34; 102-105). (If all three courses taken, meets SLO #1, #2, and #3)</p>	<p>Begin application process in spring 2016; courses begin in fall 2016; continue through 2018</p>

Trevecca will promote a culture of undergraduate research with: chapel/convocation speakers on undergraduate research; workshops exploring research activities; funding 499 projects; membership in Council of Undergraduate Research; faculty-mentor training; a website on Trevecca undergraduate research; a "Trevecca Scholar/Researcher" designation; expanding the existing undergraduate research symposium into a larger "Research on the Hill" event that involves concerts, poster presentations, a film festival, art shows, one-act plays, etc., etc. (pp. 36, 38-41).

8. Trevecca has adequate resources to successfully implement the QEP.

- The QEP budget is reasonable and will adequately meet the needs of the QEP over a five-year period (pp. 50-54).
- Existing staff includes a QEP coordinator. Future hiring will include a director of undergraduate research and a grants/contracts officer (p. 50).
- The QEP has widespread support and involvement from various offices and departments on campus (p. 49).
- A proposed timeline identifies the steps associated with the QEP's initiation (pre-planning), implementation (Years 1-4), and final assessment (Year 5) (pp. 41-47).

9. Trevecca has a detailed assessment plan for the QEP (pp. 55-73).

Each student learning outcome is linked to University mission and/or educational goals, and each outcome correlates to levels and attributes in the Research Skills Development (RSD) Framework. Means of assessment and criteria for success are also identified.

- As part of the Research Foundations subcommittee, faculty members in the Department of English are developing rubrics to evaluate student research assignments in ENG 1020 and ENG 1080 (pp. 91-94). Subcommittee members also developed a rubric for the assignment in INT 1100 (p. 95).
- FLARE faculty members will develop their own rubrics for assessing student learning outcomes in their particular project, using the Research Skills Development (RSD) Framework as a guide (p. 99).
- A 499 subcommittee developed rubrics to assess student achievement in 499A, 499B, and 499C courses (pp. 103-105).

Student responses on several items from NSSE and the Trevecca Experience Survey will also be used for indirect assessment. Attendance and participation in various research activities will also be tracked.

10. We must promote awareness of the QEP!

- Register at <http://urtheqep.com/>
- Read the QEP at MyTNU → Departments → Academic Affairs. (Dr Pusey also e-mailed it to us earlier.)
- Talk to students, colleagues, alumni, anyone and everyone about the QEP.