

Proposal for Quality Enhancement Plan Project Cover Sheet

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We understand that the project proposal elements listed below must be included in all proposals considered by the UWF Quality Enhancement Steering Committee. Refer to the Rubric for Evaluating Programs for guidance in developing each program element.

- Abstract (100 word limit)
- Project Rationale
- Relationship to the University's QEP Goals (See Appendix A)
- Project Student Learning Outcomes Associated With This Proposal (See Appendix B for University level outcomes for Project Management)
- Instructional strategies and evidence of rationale for their selection
- Assessment Plan for the Project. (How will student learning be measured? See Appendix C For Suggested Format for SLOs. How will the success of the project be measured? What is the relationship of this assessment to the University's outcome assessment effort?)
- Plan for Formative Assessment (how will ongoing assessment be used during the life of the project to improve the process and/or outcomes?)
- Information Dissemination Plan (How will the strategies and results be shared with the campus and the broader academic community?)
- Institutionalization Plan (How likely is that this project be extended to other programs/disciplines? How can this project be institutionalized at UWF?)
- Resources Needed (Include all resources required. See Appendix D for suggested budget format. Budget requests should be specific and appropriate to the project. Budget requests should be for direct support of the project. Budget requests should be thoroughly justified.)
- Timeline for Project Activities and Events (What is the sequence of project activities? Include proposed implementation date.)

University of West Florida Quality Enhancement Plan

Project Proposal Narrative

Project Title: Data-Driven Authentic Research CAPSULES: Community Action Projects Utilizing Leadership and E-based Statistics

Contact Person: Dr. Carla Thompson

Abstract

The proposed project will engage COPS graduate students in managing, conducting, and delivering authentic data-driven research community action projects utilizing leadership and e-based statistics skills spearheaded by the COPS educational research/statistics program. Project objectives include: (1) restructuring educational research/statistics courses to include authentic active learning and authentic assessment; (2) providing opportunities for graduate students to engage in team-driven quantitative research prior to the thesis or dissertation experience with projects generated from community agencies/educational institutions; and (3) connecting graduate students with community action projects as research managers and presenters. Anticipated student outcomes include increased statistics, research, and project management knowledge/skills.

Project Rationale and Description

The rationale for the proposed *Data-Driven Authentic Research CAPSULES: Community Action Projects for Students Utilizing Leadership and E-based Statistics* project is based in authentic learning theory and stems from a three-fold need: (1) Student Need: Although COPS graduate students are each required to produce a high quality original research work in the form of a thesis or dissertation for completion of the masters or doctoral degree, few opportunities currently exist within the COPS graduate program of study for students to engage in planning, designing, conducting, and interpreting hands-on real world research projects; (2) Community Need: Many of the professional agencies and school districts within the UWF community lack the financial resource, expertise, and personnel for conducting critical research projects for their respective agencies; and (3) Department, College, and University Need: The need to restructure the educational research and statistics courses within the Department of Professional and Community Leadership to increase the use of active learning,

student engagement, e-based technologies, and authentic assessment opportunities and refine program and course-level outcomes as well as provide opportunities for faculty and staff development related to improving student learning has been expressed in departmental, college, and university committee meetings. The proposed project will address each of these three need areas. COPS graduate students will serve as research managers actively engaged in specific authentic instructional activities and authentic assessments related to increasing students' learning of Project Management skills.

A brief description of the project reveals three areas of sound authentic active learning characteristics: (1) a strong community service component; (2) a powerful student engagement with authentic learning activities; and (3) a rigorous effort addressing authentic student research and authentic assessment tasks. Community action research projects identified by community agencies and school institutions provided to COPS graduate students through cooperative planning meetings between students, project staff, and community professionals will be designed, conducted, analyzed, and interpreted by COPS graduate students using e-based research and statistics courses within the department of professional and community leadership. A partnership between project staff, four local school districts, and four local social services agencies will be solidified for the project. These eight community agencies will serve as the host sites for the data-driven authentic research CAPSULES. Formal and informal meetings between UWF students, project staff, and community leaders focused on authentic research projects will be an integral part of the proposed project. In addition to these cooperative sharing meetings focused on active research projects generated by the community and passed to COPS graduate students for purposes of hands-on experiences with real world research activities, students will also meet community leaders upon completion of their efforts to deliver research findings in formal power point presentations to community leaders. A major characteristic of the proposed project is the ongoing authentic assessment plan that will be utilized for formative and summative evaluation and project decision-making efforts. In addition, the proposed project will serve as a sound pilot test of the restructuring of the pedagogy and content of the educational research and statistics course offerings. Data retrieved from the proposed project will serve a dual role in project evaluation by providing appropriate project assessment information and by supplying empirical evidence for making decisions regarding the restructuring of the educational research and statistics courses. The proposed project will collect data throughout the three semester implementation of the CAPSULES component. The interchange between the University and the community in promoting authentic teaching and learning as well as developing students' Project Management and technology/e-based skills and the rich body of data anticipated from the authentic assessments and evaluation procedures defined for the project identifies the proposed project as a high quality instructional/learning enhancement plan.

Relationship to QEP Goal

The proposed project extends the quality of teaching and learning opportunities beyond the current practices of the COPS graduate program by focusing on the quality enhancement of instructional/learning strategies targeted at the Project Management (PM) domain. The proposed project will engage COPS graduate students in managing, conducting, and delivering real world data-driven research community action projects utilizing leadership and e-based statistics skills spearheaded by the COPS research/educational statistics program. Project objectives include: (1) restructuring the COPS research/educational statistics courses to include active learning and authentic assessment; (2) providing opportunities for graduate students to engage in team-driven quantitative research projects prior to the thesis or dissertation experience with projects generated from community agencies/educational institutions; and (3) connecting graduate students with community action projects as research managers and presenters. Anticipated student outcomes include: increased cognitive and affective statistics, research, project management, and authentic assessment skills. The alignment of the proposed project with QEP goals is depicted in Table 1: Alignment of Project to QEP Goals.

Table 1

Alignment of Project to QEP Goals

QEP Goals	QEP Descriptors	Proposed Project Goals
Goal One	Improve student learning of knowledge, skills, and values relevant to PM	COPS graduate students will fulfill the role of community action research project managers.
Goal Two	Increase use of active learning and student engagement instructional strategies and related assessments for development of PM skill, knowledge, and values	Proposed Project will: (a) restructure and refine educational research and statistics courses to provide graduate students with increased active learning opportunities for engaging in hands-on real world experiences prior to their thesis or dissertation experience; (b) integrate authentic instruction and assessment practices into the graduate educational research and statistics program; (c) incorporate direct and indirect cognitive and affective authentic

		assessments into the teaching and learning of educational research and statistics.
Goal Three	Provide opportunities for faculty and staff development related to improving student learning of PM.	Proposed Project will incorporate professional development in authentic learning and assessment for faculty, staff, and community participants.

Project student learning outcomes

The proposed project includes specific student learning outcomes that cohesively align with outcomes suggested by the Academic Learning Compact Project Management Domain and are presented in Table 2: Alignment of Proposed Project to ALC PM Domain.

Table 2

Alignment of Proposed Project to ALC PM Domain

PM Domain	ALC PM Domain Outcomes	Proposed Project Outcomes
Project Conceptualization	Selects and defines realistic problem to be solved; Identifies relevant resources and potential obstacles and Develops strategies execution in relation to constraints; Integrates discipline concepts appropriately and Identifies criteria for successful completion; Accurately assesses quality of plan.	Students will engage in real world community action research projects, plan and design community action research projects according to specific project needs aligned with appropriate strategies and data analysis procedures/constraints, utilize research, statistics, leadership, and project management skills in the successful completion of quality research studies, and discuss and report reflections relative to project designs and planning activities.
Self-Regulation	Sets appropriate goals for completing project; Manages appropriate timeframe; Executes appropriate priorities; Shows flexibility by planning back-up strategies; Accurately identifies quality of individual process.	Students will establish time lines, appropriate strategies, statistical procedures, and identify specific alternative strategies and assessments for appropriately executing and communicating research project findings.

Team-work Skills	Completes responsibilities as team member; Practices appropriate ethical judgment; Contributes positively to task completion; Manages conflict among team members; Assesses quality of contribution accurately.	Students will work in teams on each of the community action research projects including cooperative meetings, managing research project planning, performing analyses, and presenting results.
Project Delivery	Delivers acceptable product on time; Effectively presents results using appropriate oral, written, and/or visual means; Responds effectively to feedback for process/product improvement.	Students will deliver high quality research findings to appropriate community agencies using power point presentations and formal written reports.

Instructional /learning strategy enhancements

The proposed project incorporates a strong instructional/learning strategy enhancement plan focused on active learning/student engagement activities stemming from a rigorous theoretical framework based in authentic learning theory that directly and indirectly impacts student outcomes. The theoretical framework, instructional/learning strategies and active learning/student engagement activities with anticipated student outcomes are graphically presented in Figure 1.

*Figure 1
Theoretical Framework, Instructional/Learning Activities, and Anticipated Student Learning Outcomes Network*

Authentic Learning Theory (Carlson, 2002 & Kersley & Shneiderman, 1999)	Active Learning/ Student Engagement	PM & ALC Outcomes
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Theoretical Framework Constructs	Instructional/Learning Activities	Anticipated Student Outcomes
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<u>Construct One:</u> Authentic Task Focus	Students will engage in CAPSULES: Community Action Projects for Students Utilizing Leadership and E-based Statistics; Students will plan, design, manage, conduct, and interpret research and statistics	Positive reflections on specific real world research projects; Increased PM, research and statistics cognitive and affective outcomes.
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	projects.	
<u>Construct Two:</u> Active Learners	Students will engage in hands-on e-based statistical laboratory experiences embracing real world research projects. Students will engage in collaborative meetings with community agency leaders. Students will engage in authentic assessment activities including reflections/presentations.	Increased statistics skills and use of <i>SPSS software applications</i> . Positive formative discussions. Positive feedback on meta-cognitive reflections and high quality power point presentations.
<u>Construct Three:</u> Team Project Based	Students will engage in cooperative learning by team planning and management activities to complete authentic research projects. Students will engage in peer review authentic assessment activities.	Positive group discussion transcript summaries and project staff observations Positive feedback in discussions and on task completion checklists

Assessment Plan for the Project

The assessment plan proposed for the project stems from Authentic Learning Theory assessment strategies (Kearsley & Shneiderman, 1999; Carlson, 2002; and Hsiao, 2005). Student learning outcome assessment procedures that will be used in the course of the project include the following authentic measures and anticipated student outcomes:

- (A) Objective: Graduate students will design, plan, and perform appropriate research procedures and statistical analyses for managing and conducting e-based statistical research projects for community agencies and local educational institutions/school districts.
Authentic Assessment: This objective will be measured using formative reflection discussions, formal reflective reports, and summative power point presentations delivered to community agencies.
Anticipated Outcomes: Students will report positive reflections regarding project management, research, statistics, and presentation skills; Students will produce high quality power point presentations.

(B) Objective: Graduate students will connect and interact with community agencies and local school districts to access data for conducting authentic research projects and for delivering final research findings via power point presentations in a service learning capacity.

Authentic Assessment: This objective will be measured by formative assessment procedures in the form of ongoing transcripts of meetings (agenda and minutes) and summative measures of feedback forms provided to community participants relative to power point presentations and overall assessment of students' efforts.

Anticipated Outcomes: Students and community participants will report positive feedback interchanges from meeting minutes and from community agency feedback forms.

(C) Objective: Graduate students will conduct group authentic research projects as preliminary efforts supporting the thesis and dissertation experience via a restructured educational research and statistics program.

Authentic Assessment: This objective will be measured using follow-up interviews of students who participated in the project and are actively completing the thesis or dissertation phase of their program.

Anticipated Outcomes: Students will report positive alignment of the project experience with the thesis or dissertation experience with qualitative comments and a reflection checklist.

Plan for Formative Assessment of the Project

Several formative assessment procedures will be utilized to measure the progress of the proposed project. Data retrieved from each assessment period will be used to drive decision-making throughout the project duration. Assessment procedures will involve the three contributing audiences involved in the project: students, project staff, and community leaders. The plan for formative assessment of the project is presented relative to these three focus groups in Table 3

Table 3

Formative Assessment and Data Driven Decision Making (D³M) Strategies

Audience	Period One	Period Two	Period Three
Graduate Students	Reflection Reports	Concept Inventories	PowerPoint Development Checklists
Project Staff	Student Group Observations	Data Decision Making Meetings	Student Presentation Evaluations/Reports
Community Leaders	Reflection Checklists	Interviews Data from Project Staff	Student Presentation Evaluations/Reports

Information Dissemination Plan

The proposed project dissemination plan includes both internal and external dissemination procedures as delineated in Figure 2.

Figure 2
Project Information Dissemination Plan

Internal Dissemination Procedures	External Dissemination Procedures
1. Project staff will present at fall, 2008 QEP annual meeting	1. Project staff will co-author article for publication of project results.
2. Project staff will distribute student research project abstracts to COPS faculty	2. Students and project staff will make presentations to all community agencies involved in the project.
3. Students will present within graduate classes.	3. Students will be encouraged to submit papers to Florida Educational Research Association annual meeting.

Institutionalization Plan

The proposed project is focused on restructuring the existing instructional approach to the teaching and learning of educational research and statistics by replacing traditional instructor-centered lecture courses with student-centered active authentic learning strategies incorporating authentic community action research projects for graduate students to plan, design, conduct, interpret, and present/disseminate findings. Data retrieved from the proposed project will assist in determining the potential for incorporating the proposed project strategies into the regular routine of instruction for educational research and statistics. In addition, resulting success aspects of the proposed project will be incorporated into the online educational research and statistics courses via virtual laboratories and e-based connections to community agencies.

Resources Needed

To accommodate the needs of the proposed project the following personnel, technology, and other resources are listed relative to their purpose and alignment to the project. Project personnel will include the following: Project Staff: Dr. Carla Thompson, PI/PI and student facilitator for project; Dr. Leslie Keeler, Community Liaison and student facilitator for project; and Dr. Mary Rogers, Community Liaison Contact; and a full time Graduate Technology Lab Assistant provided by the COPS Department of Professional and Community Leadership. In addition, assistance from IT relative to the operational concerns of updating the Graduate Computer Research Lab will be incorporated into the proposed project.

Table 4
Resources Requested

Budget Item	Description	Unit Cost	Total Item Cost	TOTAL
Technology (a) Flash-drives	(a) Flash-drives for faculty and students to capture and transport data;	\$450	\$450	
(b) Software Upgrades	(b) SPSS and e-Desktop upgraded in graduate lab on all computers	\$700	\$700	
Travel (a) Local Travel	(a) Mileage for project staff meetings with community agencies	\$375	\$375	
(b) Conference Travel	(b) Mileage for staff and selected students to present at FERA (6 @ \$176 each	\$1056	\$1056	
Conference (FERA): Registration and Lodging for 6	Registration (6 @\$85) and lodging (6 @\$150) for dissemination of project at FERA	\$510	\$510	
		\$900	\$900	
Miscellaneous Supplies	Printer paper, expendables, Blank CDs & Notebooks	\$1000	\$1000	\$4991

Timeline for Project Activities and Events

Table 5
Timeline

	Fall 2006	Spring 2007	Fall 2007	Spring 2008
Phase I: Preliminary Activities				
Contact Agencies	Project Staff			
Solidify Research Project Requests from Agencies	Project Staff			
Acquire materials and equipment	Project Staff			
Develop authentic assessment tools and project evaluation instruments	Project Evaluator			
	Fall 2006	Spring 2007	Fall 2008	Spring 2008
Phase II: Implementation				
Assign grad students enrolled in to specific local community		Grad students enrolled in EDF 6404 and EDF 7407	Grad students enrolled in EDF 6404 and &407	

agencies/educational institutions				
Connect students to specific research projects with community agencies/educational institutions		Establish formal face to face and email contact information between students and organizations	Establish formal face to face and email contact information between students and organizations	
Conduct group research CAPSULES and develop project findings delivery strategies		Students work in groups with weekly progress monitored and assessed by project staff	Students work in groups with weekly progress monitored and assessed by project staff	
Assess students using authentic assessment tools as well as commercial cognitive and affective instruments		Project Staff	Project Staff	
Final Project Products are delivered to community agencies/educational institutions		Students deliver final reports and power point presentations of findings to community agencies/educational institutions	Students deliver final reports and power point presentations of findings to community agencies/educational institutions	Project Staff will revisit the Community Agencies/Educational Institutions
Phase III: Project Evaluation & Follow-up Component				
Formative assessment of students in project manager roles		Project Staff Observations	Project Staff Observations	Student Reflections
Cognitive and Affective Pre/Post Assessments		Project Staff Proctor	Project Staff Proctor	Project Staff Score/Code Assessments
Summative evaluations and cumulative assessments of student products		PowerPoint Presentations delivered to Community Agencies/Educational Institutions	Power Point Presentations delivered to Community Agencies/Educational Institutions	Interviews with Community Agencies/Educational Institutions
Follow-up Presentation of Project to UWF QEP				Project Staff will present at the annual UWF QEP

References

- Carlson, A. (2002). *Authentic learning: What does it really mean?* Retrieved from Washington University Innovative Teaching Showcase September 5, 2006 from http://pandora.cii.wvu.edu/showcase2001/authentic_learning.htm
- Hsiao, J. (1996). *CSCLE theories*. Retrieved September 5, 2006 from <http://www.edb.utexas.edu/csclstudent/Dhsiao/theories.html>
- Kearsley, G. and Shneiderman, B. (1999). *Engagement theory: A framework for technology-based teaching and learning*. Retrieved September 5, 2006 from <http://home.sprynet.com/~gkearsley/engage.htm>

Appendix: Preliminary Listing of Community Contacts for QEP :

Area Public School Districts:

Pam Henson, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Baldwin County Schools

Paul Fetsko, Assistant Superintendent
Escambia County Schools

Tim Wyrosdick, Assistant Superintendent
Santa Rosa County Schools

Guyla Hendricks, Chief Academic Officer
Okaloosa County Schools

Area Social Services Agencies and Organizations:

Debra Thompson, Executive Board Member
Independence for the Blind

Danielle Malone, Counselor
Catholic Charities

Kismet Rideau, Member
101 Black Men

Dolly Berthelot, Past President
East Pensacola Heights Association