

Title/brief description of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) as initially presented: Georgia College & State University (GCSU) was one of the first institutions required to develop a QEP. Its QEP was entitled *Fostering Excellence and Challenging Students in the Classroom and Beyond Across the Student’s Career: A Mission-Driven Plan for Quality Enhancement*. The QEP theme was based on the university’s vision statement and was consistent with its mission. Six QEP initiatives loosely paralleled and supported student outcomes articulated in the University’s “Expectations of Students.”

Table 1 The original QEP model as compared to GCSU’s “Expectations of Students”

QEP INITIATIVES	EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS Students will:
1. Enhance student orientation programs for transfer students	1. set their own personal development goals and take responsibility for their own learning. 2. be prepared to learn and to be intellectually challenged.
2. Enhance student leadership opportunities.	3. strive for excellence in their studies and seek to achieve high academic expectations in all of their courses.
3. Enhance academic challenges within the curriculum to reflect the liberal arts mission. 4. Enhance recruitment of students and faculty to increase diversity.	4. acquire an inquisitive mind; respect for human diversity and individuality; a sense of civic and global responsibility; sound ethical principles; effective writing, speaking and quantitative skills; and a healthy lifestyle.
5. Enhance student involvement in the campus community and beyond.	5. be meaningfully engaged in and involved in the campus community.
6. Enhance preparation of students for post-graduate opportunities.	6. take full advantage of opportunities to develop and implement career plans.

GCSU had implemented numerous programs and activities for first-year students to encourage achievement of these expectations. However, after the first year, curricular design and student-life programming did not clearly focus on developing these behaviors. The QEP was intended to enhance student development of these behaviors throughout the undergraduate curriculum to better fulfill the institution’s mission.

A succinct list of the initial goals and intended outcomes of the QEP

1. Enhance Student Orientation Programs for Transfer Students. Transfer students will:
 - a) set their own personal development goals and take responsibility for their own learning;
 - b) be prepared to learn and to be intellectually challenged;
 - c) strive for excellence in their studies and seek to achieve high academic expectations in all of their courses;
 - d) experience the benefits of the public liberal arts experience.
2. Enhance Student Leadership Opportunities; Students in leadership programs will
 - a) value leadership-training opportunities;
 - b) display self-knowledge and confidence;
 - c) display knowledge of aspects of leadership from a wide range of perspectives;
 - d) learn and practice leadership skills, such as oral and written communication and interpersonal skills specific to various social settings;
 - e) acquire delegation, negotiation, and consensus-building skills;
 - f) network with, observe and learn from local and state leaders.
3. Enhance Academic Challenges within the Curriculum to Reflect the Liberal Arts Mission.
 - a) Students in all majors will demonstrate competency in:
 - i) Reading;
 - ii) Writing;
 - iii) Quantitative;
 - iv) Technical;
 - v) Oral Communication skills.

4. Enhance Recruitment and Retention of Students and Faculty to Increase Diversity. Students will: a) understand perspectives of others of racial and ethnically diverse groups; b) successfully interact with diverse groups; c) value being a member of a diverse community.
5. Enhance Opportunities to Engage Student Learning in the Classroom and Beyond. Students will: a) value being in a community of supportive peers; b) be involved in campus life; c) perform well in courses and make good progress toward degree; d) perform well in collaboration with other students; e) interact with instructors outside of the classroom; f) demonstrate crossover learning and apply it to external situations.
6. Enhance Preparation of Students for Success in Post-Graduate Opportunities.
 - a) Career Planning. Students will: i) pursue internship and practicum experiences related to their majors; ii) develop effective resume and cover-letter writing skills; iii) learn to research discipline-appropriate jobs effectively; iv) prepare to successfully interview for employment and admission to graduate programs; v) practice the most effective job search methodologies; vi) learn salary negotiation skills; vii) utilize internet technology and resources in all appropriate career and graduate study endeavors.
 - b) International Experience: Students will pursue: i) graduate study abroad and receive fellowships to support it; ii) employment in international and cross-culturally diverse corporations in Georgia/U.S.; iii) employment abroad.

Changes Made: GCSU implemented all six initiatives. However, a new university president engaged stakeholders in a faculty-driven Strategic Focusing Initiative (SFI) for the purpose of opening conversations about its public liberal arts mission, identifying points of institutional focus (*pillars of distinction*), and creating opportunities to build greater distinctiveness and external recognition as a public liberal arts university. Five stakeholder conferences (2005-2008) examined mission progress in the context of strengths/weaknesses of the QEP and other endeavors. This resulted in the emergence of three *pillars of distinction*: academic programs of distinction, residential learning communities (RLCs), and learning beyond the classroom (LBTC). The QEP initiatives were then deemed not equally vital to the university mission or to creating the student engagement beyond the classroom and excellence in programs of distinction defined as the University's future. QEP initiatives were refocused, reprioritized, and, in some cases, dropped from consideration. Initiatives 1 and 4 were primarily human resource endeavors rather than learning-centered initiatives. The linkage between the initiatives, the desired student learning outcomes, and the assessment methods used was not always optimal, resulting in inability to judge progress on the QEP in a valid way.

Consequently, Initiatives 3 and 5 became central to refocused efforts to enhance academic challenge and excellence in and beyond the classroom, but were reframed. Initiative 3 originally focused on review of the general education curriculum. The GCSU University Senate did in fact pass (2006) a new general education curriculum linked to QEP initiatives (contingent on approval of an implementation plan). New requirements included foreign language/culture; more advanced math, and writing-speaking intensive/global-diversity exposures. A 2007 University System of Georgia (USG) moratorium on new core proposals led GCSU to refocus on enhancing challenge in degree programs through effective assessment. Initiative 4 (diversity) was then reframed from a recruitment initiative to the enhancement of global perspectives in the curriculum, which complemented its original intent to support curricular reform, its learning outcomes, and efforts to enhance challenge in and beyond the classroom.

Initiative 5 originally focused on expanding learning communities. The 2006 general education proposal required a thematic, writing-speaking learning community for all freshmen, but we were unable to proceed due to the USG moratorium. Consequently,

GCSU broadened its approach to embrace a wider array of experiential learning opportunities in support of the LBTC Pillar of Distinction. An enriched approach to Initiative 5 created links with Initiative 2 (leadership) and Initiative 6 (internships and post-graduate experiences). A sixth stakeholder conference validated the approach.

Although GCSU implemented Initiative 1 (transfer student orientations) and collected the data originally planned, there were no clear links to other initiatives. The intent was to raise transfer student retention rates rather than to enhance learning, the means of assessment did not address the poorly formed outcomes, and these did not clearly relate to the initiative. GCSU dropped this initiative from consideration as a component of the reframed QEP, despite limited success. Transfer student attendance increased significantly at targeted orientations from 2005 (42.2%) to 2006 (69.1%) and remained stable thereafter. Nevertheless, the percentage of transfer students attending orientations never reached that of generic freshmen (93% in 2008). There was no significant increase in retention rates between the 2004-2005 cohort of transfer students (76.38%) and those who attended GCSU after the transfer student orientations were initiated (76.91% 07-08). However, average transfer student GPA in the fall term of their third year increased from 2.82 (2003 cohort) to 3.03 (2006 cohort), as compared to all undergraduates (2.85 in 2003 to 2.96 in 2006). GCSU transfer students also have the lowest mean time to graduation among USG state/regional universities and compare very favorably to those at research institutions (table 3; Appendix). Limited progress was made, but this project was primarily a human resources endeavor.

Table 2 Changes made to the QEP

New QEP Model	Changes Made	Supporting /Linked Endeavors
Theme: fostering excellence and challenging students in and beyond the classroom, with two primary initiatives	Implemented but dropped Initiative 1 (transfer orientations) from consideration of the impact on learning	Informed by the Strategic Focusing Initiative (SFI)
<u>QEP Initiative 3</u> Enhanced academic challenge to reflect the liberal arts mission	Shifted from gen ed revision to enhancing program challenge in support of the SFI.	*Revised Initiative 4 (enhance global perspectives of the curriculum); outcomes and assessment revised.
<u>QEP Initiative 5</u> (LBTC) with revised outcomes/means of assessment	Expanded focus to wide array of experiential learning opportunities in support of the SFI	*Initiative 2 (student leadership) and Initiative 6 (preparation for success in post-graduate experiences)

Impact on Learning: LBTC activities (Initiative 5) increased dramatically, particularly in service learning, study abroad, internships, and undergraduate research. Assessment resulted in curricular modifications to enhance challenge and achievement of learning outcomes (Initiative 3). Leadership participation (2), awareness of global perspectives (4), and internships (6) increased. More limited success occurred with tracking post-graduate experiences, suggesting the need for the next QEP to have a clearer focus.

Initiative 2 | Enhance Leadership Opportunities This initiative contributed to the LBTC pillar of distinction and links to QEP Initiative 5. Leadership initiatives addressed our mission to “provide communities and employers with graduates who exhibit professionalism, responsibility, service, leadership, and integrity.”

Strategies Implemented: GCSU awarded \$24,000 in Leader Scholars Program scholarships from a congressionally directed grant (2006-2008). Two recipients served as president and vice president of the Student Government Association. GCSU was among the first universities to participate in the American Democracy Project (ADP) and it developed a Leadership Lecture Series. These efforts supported the enhancement of the Leadership Certificate Program (LCP), which implemented four new courses (06-08).

Outcomes/Assessment Data: Outcome 1: Students will value leadership training opportunities. Assessment: Increase in participation. Results: Participation in the LCP increased (2006-2009) from 37 to 71 students per year for a total of 157. To date there have been 24 graduates. Since 2006, 83 students participated in the Georgia Education Mentorship program, where they were partnered with external mentors. 115 students were initiated into Omicron Delta Kappa. 472 students participated in leadership activities since 2006, including 42 students in the leadership RLC and 327 students who participated in extra-curricular leadership programs, such as the Gold Star Leadership Program and National Society for Leadership and Success (2006-2008). GCSU students won three first place co-curricular and one institutional second place ADP excellence awards. Two students in the American Humanics program (among 25 U.S. students) received Next Generation Leader awards from the Kellogg Foundation (2009).

Outcome 2: Students will: display self-knowledge and confidence | Outcome 3: display knowledge of aspects of leadership from a wide range of perspectives. | Outcome 4: learn and practice leadership skills, such as oral and written communication skills specific to various social settings. | Outcome 5: acquire delegation, negotiation, and consensus-building skills. Assessment for 2-5: Evaluation of student work. Results: Average results of mentor evaluations of student performance (n=124) over four semesters on a scale of 1 (low)-7 (high) indicate student mastery of leadership skills, such as motivation (6.59), contribution of good ideas (6.66), diplomatic communication skills (6.55), respect for others (6.71), and positive working relationships (6.61).

Outcome 6: Students will network with, observe and learn from, local and state leaders. Assessment: Student and mentor survey responses. Results: See mentor ratings above. Students completing optional program evaluations upon graduation strongly perceived that the program enhanced their leadership skills. Their average rating for questions such as "I improved my understanding of leadership" was 4.8 on a 5 point scale (5 = Strongly Agree).

Summary: Participation in leadership activities increased, GCSU significantly enhanced the LCP, and mentors evaluated students positively. Achievements contributed to overall LBTC efforts.

Initiative 3| Enhance Academic Challenge Within the Curriculum to Reflect the Liberal Arts Mission This initiative emerged from the SFI as central to our mission, but was refocused from general education to enhancement of degree programs consistent with the ideals of a liberal education. Assessment of learning outcomes proved to be central to this task.

Strategies Implemented: Review of degree programs to ensure that learning outcomes supported QEP outcomes resulted in the 2005 implementation of the Assessment Planning Record (APR), an online assessment tool completed annually by all degree programs. Special attention has been given to capstone courses for assessment of program and QEP outcomes. As a result, programs enhanced curricular effectiveness. For example, psychology modified requirements to align with graduate school expectations (2005). In 2006 subscores on the psychology ETS major field exam increased in Learning/ Cognition (21%), Neuropsychology (10%), Abnormal (8%), and Developmental/Social (24%) and there were further increases by 2009. External review

confirmed that requirements aligned with new recommendations of the American Psychological Association (2009). More examples of modifications appear below.

Outcomes/Assessment Data: *Outcomes 1 and 2:* Students will demonstrate competency in reading and writing skills. *Assessment:* Regents' examinations (a low bar of academic challenge, but used as baseline data)/discipline-specific APRs. *Results:* Regents' examinations indicate that GCSU students (reading: 97.9% pass rate; writing 97.7% pass rate; 2006) compare very favorably to those of other USG institutions, including research institutions, whose admission standards are higher than our own (reading 97.3% pass rate; writing 93.4% pass rate; 2006). 98% of education students passed final portfolio evaluations by multiple raters using a common rubric in 2008; 80% passed with recognition, distinction, or honors. *Examples of Curricular Modifications:* Low scores for English majors evaluated by multiple raters using a common rubric on writing skills in capstone portfolios of 2.52 (2003 where 2 is "average"), led to implementation of a new prerequisite course for the capstone course. Ratings increased to 2.97 (2008) using a 4-point scale. Results of exit interviews (2007) using a common rubric in Chemistry showed that 102 of 106 met or exceeded expectations on ability to communicate scientific information. To further improve communication skills, a chemistry cohort in ENGL 1101/1102 was formed. Concerns about writing skills in senior thesis/upper level courses led the History program to develop a research methods course for juniors focused on writing skills (2005).

Outcome 3: Students will demonstrate competency in quantitative skills. *Assessment:* Standardized instruments/discipline-appropriate measures. *Results:* GCSU students generally achieve above the institutional mean scores on relevant Educational Testing Service (ETS) major field tests, with the exception of math and computer science. In 2006 Math scores were below the institutional mean, but have improved to a performance slightly above the institutional mean in 2009 (table 4). Math scores on the Health Education Systems, Inc. (HESI) exit exam increased after faculty changed the minimum pass score from 80% to 90% for medication calculation exams. *Examples of Curricular Modifications:* The College of Business noted lower than average performances in the quantitative areas of the curriculum (finance, accounting, statistics) and subsequently embedded more quantitative exercises across the curriculum. In finance, students got 37% of the questions correct (2005), which increased to 55% correct (2008). Accounting scores increased from 46 to 49 percent correct. As a result of low success rates in MATH 1262 (Calculus II), in 2007 MATH 1115-1116 (Integrated Calculus IA and IB) became an additional path into Calculus II to better prepare students for the course than MATH 1261 (Calculus I). Students completing MATH 1115-1116 had higher aggregated scores on a post-Calculus I (1.56) exam in 2008 than Calculus I graduates (1.16). The DWF rate in Calculus II declined by 6.1% by 2009.

Outcome 4: Students will demonstrate information technology literacy (revised). *Assessment:* Discipline-appropriate measures. *Sample Results:* Mean scores on Information literacy quizzes for composition resulted in of 83.02% (2008) and 77.81% (2009), prompting module revisions (2010). Scores for chemistry majors (2007) on the American Chemical Society (ACS) exam IT literacy section increased from pre-tests (25.68) to post-tests (35.30), as did those of non-majors (25.91 to 36.97), an increase of almost a full standard deviation of 12.13. *Examples of Curricular Modifications:* Mean scores for technology skills on student presentations in the management capstone course were 3.0 (average) on a scale of 1-5 (2006). Faculty members implemented common rubrics and technical instruction earlier in the term. Student feedback and test scores suggested to the CoE that delivery of the instructional technology course was "too little too late." Delivery of the Instructional Technology sequence changed from a three-hour course taken at the end of the program to three, one-hour courses taken over

the course of the undergraduate two-year program. Students now receive technology instruction in 3/4 of the semesters instead of 1/4. *Institutional Impact of Educational Technology on Degree Progress:* GCSU's iPod program attracted national attention. An institutional study of students in 52 course sections enhanced by iPods between 2002, when GCSU first began distributing iPods, and 2006 revealed that students who participated in iPod enhanced courses were likely to complete more hours per term (13 for undergrads; 12 for grads) than those that did not (12 for undergrads; 8 for grads) and more likely to have a GPA over 3.5 (51%) than those that did not (31%).

Outcome 5: Students will demonstrate competency in oral skills. *Assessment:* Discipline-appropriate measures. *Sample Results:* Nursing majors performed above the recommended level in therapeutic communication skills (largely oral) on the HESI exit exams (2006-2009). Evaluators using a common rubric passed 99% of CoE students on senior portfolio oral components (2008); 85% passed with recognition, distinction, and honors. *Examples of Curricular Modifications:* CoB faculty noted (2005) that only 50% of undergrad courses required presentations, mostly at the end of the term. Students received little feedback. Faculty developed common rubrics for assessment and, in the capstone course for management majors (2006), the mean score was 2.6 on a scale of 1-5 (where 5 is excellent), an improvement over previous years. Faculty members now require presentations earlier in the term and in more courses.

NSSE Data: GCSU compares favorably to benchmark institutions in the areas of academic challenge and enriching educational experience on the 2008 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), but without statistically significant differences. However, first-year scores generally increased in the level of academic challenge and active and collaborative learning (43.7 to 43.9) between the 2005 and 2008 surveys. Scores for seniors increased in all areas except academic challenge and faculty-student interaction between 2005-2008 (table 5).

Summary: Data show basic student achievement and limited progress with regard to selected learning outcomes. Improved NSSE responses are encouraging, but further assessment and curricular reform is necessary to enhance challenge.

Initiative 4| Enhance Global Perspectives in the Curriculum Initiative 4 was reframed as a curricular endeavor. The original learning outcomes more clearly related to the SFI focus on academic programs of distinction than to a human resources initiative.

Strategies Implemented: A USG grant funded a three-year project to internationalize the curriculum, culminating in the endorsement by the University Senate of an International Track option for all majors (2009). Eleven degree programs in four colleges embedded internationalized learning outcomes. Study abroad participation for academic credit increased by 168.86% (2003-2008), the largest increase in the USG.

The original human resources initiative provided an institutional context to support curricular reforms. GCSU increased numbers of minority faculty by 81% (2005-2009) and retained 97% of them as compared to 83% for the general faculty population (2008). GCSU increased the Hispanic student population through a special recruiter and scholarships provided by a gift of \$700,000 from The Goizueta Foundation. There was a significant increase in first-time Hispanic and minority freshmen (table 6). Retention rates for Hispanic first-time freshmen increased (83.33% in 2004 to 90.63% in 2008). In 2008, GCSU was the only USG institution with 100% of its Hispanic students retained either at home or in other USG institutions. Retention rates for first-time minority freshmen increased from 8.77% (of all students retained 2004) to 9.62% (2008).

Outcomes/Assessment Data: *Outcome 1:* Students will be aware of diverse cultural perspectives (revised). *Assessment:* Discipline-specific instruments and the NSSE survey. *Results:* A 2006 survey of employers administered one year post-

graduation by the College of Health Sciences (CoHS) rated the ability of BSN students to provide culturally sensitive holistic care. The mean score was 5 (4=prepared). Nursing students performed at or above the suggested score (850) on the human diversity subsection of the HESI Exit Exams (2006-2008). Education students (2009) met or exceeded Georgia State Exam for English Proficiency standards (79.9%) for “uses knowledge of students’ unique cultures ... to sustain a culturally sensitive classroom,” an increase from 2008 (74%). Scores for history majors on the world history portion of the ETS major field exam surpassed national means (2005/2006). Scores in African, Asian, Latin American history were at the national mean (44.9) in the fall (45) and above in the spring 2007 (48). Evaluators using a common rubric rated 100% of students in 2008-2009 core global issues sections as demonstrating strong ability to explain the global impact of issues across cultures. On the NSSE item “understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds,” mean satisfaction scores for seniors increased from 1.07 (2003) to 2.71 (2008, where 2= sometimes and 3=often).

Outcome 2: Students will successfully interact with diverse groups. **Assessment:** National surveys. **Results:** Members of RLCs rated their “*interactions with diversity*” on the Educational Benchmarking, Inc. Resident Study (EBI) as 5.51 in 2006, which increased to 5.64 in 2007. While only 33% of GCSU students surveyed said that they regularly take advantage of opportunities to learn about diversity, 58% said their participation in campus activities has changed their understanding of diverse perspectives. Satisfaction ratings on the NSSE survey increased for “had serious conversations with students who are of a different race or ethnicity than your own” from 2.5 (freshmen 2003) to 2.7 (same cohort as seniors in 2006) and on “had serious conversations with students who are very different from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values” from 2.5 (freshmen 2003) to 2.8 (seniors 2006, where 2= sometimes and 3=often).

Outcome 3: Students will value being a member of a diverse community. **Assessment:** National surveys and mentor evaluations. **Results:** Mentor evaluations of students in leadership courses over four terms on a scale of 1 (low) to 7 (high) resulted in an average of 6.61 on “values diversity.” Senior satisfaction ratings increased (2005-2008) on the NSSE for “enriching educational experiences,” which includes diverse perspectives, showing statistically significant differences between GCSU and benchmark institutions (Table 5). However, National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Student Voice Survey (NASPA) results indicated that GCSU students were below the national average ($p < .05$) for responses to questions about whether “the university should make a great effort to recruit and retain students and faculty from diverse backgrounds” and “I discuss diversity issues with friends,” and higher than the national average ($p < .05$) for responses to “I am tired of hearing about diversity.”

Summary: Greater awareness of diverse perspectives complemented curricular revisions. Despite this and modest increases in campus diversity, student perceptions of value of diversity were below the national average and need to be further addressed.

Initiative 5| Enhance Opportunities to Engage Student Learning in the Classroom and Beyond This initiative was refocused to include a broad array of LBTC activities, supporting the LBTC Pillar of Distinction that emerged from the SFI.

Strategies Implemented: GCSU implemented six thematic Residential Learning Communities (RLCs) in 2006, mentored by faculty advisors and offering a variety of co-curricular activities. Since 2006, 560 students have participated in RLCs, supporting another SFI Pillar of Distinction. RLCs are among a wide array of curricular, co- and extra-curricular learning experiences, including service learning, internships, volunteer experiences, undergraduate research, and study abroad that characterize LBTC efforts.

Outcomes/Assessment Data: Outcome 1: Students will value being in a community of supportive peers. Assessment: Surveys. Results: Over 50% of GCSU students responded positively on the NASPA survey to “As a result of participating in campus activities, my satisfaction with my collegiate experience has improved.” Satisfaction ratings on the EBI Resident Study for RLC students were higher than those of non-RLC students for key areas. Items are ranked on a 7-point scale (table 7).

Outcome 2: Students will be involved in campus life. Assessment: Increased participation in campus events and activities (revised). Results: Volunteer hours increased from 33,586 (2006) to 42,500 (2009). While in 2003 there were only 4 recipients of the Presidential Service Award, recognizing a minimum of 100 volunteer hours in a year, in 2009 there were 146. Responses to the NASPA survey indicated that over 50 percent of GCSU students participate in campus events, activities, and athletic groups, and gave positive responses to “as a result of participating in campus activities ... I have become involved with additional campus activities; my satisfaction with collegiate experience has improved; I have become more knowledgeable about the campus community; I feel part of the campus community.”

Outcome 3: Students will engage in academically challenging projects beyond the classroom (revised). Assessment: Increased participation. NSSE, and the NASPA survey (revised). Results: Student research conference presentations increased from 104 (2006) to 302 (2009). Since 2006, 64 students published GCSU research journal publications and 259 students gave joint professional presentations and/or co-authored peer-reviewed publications with faculty. Over 50% of students responded positively to “As a result of campus activities, am more likely to complete my degree at this college; and my critical thinking /problem-solving skills have improved.” NSSE ratings on “academic challenge” did not increase for seniors, but were comparable to benchmark institutions. Ratings did increase for “enriching academic experiences” (see table 5).

Outcome 4: Students will engage in active/collaborative learning (revised). Assessment: National surveys (revised). Results: GCSU compares favorably to NSSE benchmark institutions on active/collaborative learning and satisfaction ratings have increased since 2005 (table 5). 70% of students responded favorably on the NASPA survey to “as a result of participating in campus activities, my ability to work in a team has improved;” the score on this item was only slightly higher than the national average.

Outcome 5: Students will interact with instructors outside of the classroom. Assessment: Joint student-faculty research activities and national surveys (revised). Results: 259 joint presentations/publications mentioned previously. Students responses to “As a result of campus activities, I have been able to connect with faculty” were higher than the national average ($p < .05$). Relevant NSSE results were also positive (table 5).

Outcome 6: Students will apply learning to external situations (revised). Assessment: Increases in LBTC activities and survey results (revised). Results: Service learning hours increased from 12,328 (2006) to 30,000 (2009), while internships increased by 36 percent (2004-2007). Study abroad participants increased by 168.87% since 2003, the largest increase among USG institutions. Student responses to the NASPA item, “As a result of campus activities, I have gained experience/skills relevant to my academic major,” were higher than the national average ($p < .05$).

Summary: There were phenomenal increases in study abroad, service activities, and undergraduate research. Satisfaction ratings are higher or comparable to those of benchmark institutions in areas of the NSSE (2008) related to outcomes 3 (enriching experiences), 4 (collaboration) and 5 (student-faculty interaction). See table 5. With the exception of student-faculty interaction and academic challenge (seniors; first year increased), ratings have increased since 2005, making this our strongest QEP initiative.

Initiative 6 | Enhance Preparation of Students for Success in Post-Graduate Opportunities

This initiative supported the LBTC Pillar of Distinction and our mission to produce graduates who are well prepared for careers or advanced study and who have a sense of civic and global responsibility.

Strategies Implemented: The Career Center implemented workshops (2006) that focused on preparing resumes, interviewing, job search and negotiation, graduate school, job search technology, and exploring careers related to majors. GCSU hired an internship coordinator (2008) and implemented an online internship and job database.

Outcomes/Assessment Data: Outcome 1: Students will pursue internship and practicum experiences related to their majors. Assessment: Participants in internship/practicum programs. Results: Participation in workshops increased by over 400% (07/08 N = 48, 08/09 N = 297), and internships increased by 36% (04-07).

Outcome 2: Students will develop effective resume and cover-letter writing skills. Assessment: Employer evaluations of resumes and student responses to surveys (revised). Results: Forty-one employers (2009) rated resumes an average of 4.1 on a 5 point scale (5 = Excellent). Ninety-five percent of students (N=69) completing evaluations (08/09) reported that they “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that their knowledge of resume writing increased after the workshop; 4 percent “somewhat agreed.”

Students will: Outcome 3: learn to research discipline-appropriate jobs effectively. | Outcome 4: prepare to successfully interview for employment and admission to graduate programs. | Outcome 5: practice the most effective job search methodologies. | Outcome 6: learn salary negotiation skills. | Outcome 7: utilize internet technology and resources in all appropriate career and graduate study endeavors. Assessment: Increased student participation in relevant activities (revised). Results: Overall campus participation in career fairs increased by 77% (2007-2009). Total attendance at all career programs increased from 1243 (2007) to 3103 (2009). Senior participation in career fairs increased by 33% from 07/08 (N=168) to 08/09 (N=250). Senior participation in all workshops increased by 7.5% from 2007-2009.

Summary: Increased use of career center services resulted in significant increases in internships and positive employer evaluations of related skills.

In keeping with its efforts to internationalize the curriculum, GCSU also encouraged students to pursue international employment and graduate school opportunities.

Strategies Implemented: Since 2006, GCSU hired two full-time study abroad advisers. Approximately 400 students attend the Opportunities Abroad Fair, and State Department/Peace Corps visits annually.

Outcomes/Assessment Data: Students will pursue: Outcome 1: graduate study abroad and receive fellowships to support that study; Outcome 2: employment in international and cross-culturally diverse corporations in Georgia and the U.S.; Outcome 3: employment abroad. Assessment: Increased numbers. Results: There was a slight increase in requests for transcripts to institutions or employers abroad, from 86 (pre QEP) to 115 (2005-2009). Data from a job placement survey implemented in the fall of 2009 is not yet available. GCSU needs to improve assessment in this area.

Impact of the QEP on Learning: The reframed QEP resulted in enriched academic experiences in and beyond the classroom. GCSU had the largest increase in study abroad in the USG. Significant growth in internships (36%), study abroad (168%), student research presentations (300%), and service learning hours (57%) distinguish our efforts. While NSSE satisfaction ratings in the area of academic challenge suggest that continued progress is desired, curricular modifications and increased LBTC activities have enhanced our role as the state’s public liberal arts university.

Appendix: Data Tables

Table 3: USG Study (FY 08) on Mean Time to Graduation of Transfer Students

Institution/USG Sector	Mean Time to Graduation: Native Transfers [1]	Mean Time to Graduation: Non-Native Transfers [2]
GCSU	4.5	5.9
State Universities	5.4	7.4
Regional Universities	4.9	6.2
Research Universities	4.5	5.8

[1] Transfers within the USG [2] Transfers from outside the USG

Table 4: Scores on ETS Major Field Tests in Quantitative Areas

ETS MF Test	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-09	Insti. Mean Scores
Biology	150	154	154	152.2
Business	153	155	156	151.6
Economics		157	160	149.7
Psychology	155	159	160	156.3
Sociology	148	148	143	148.6
Computer Science	139	140	143	148.3
Math	148	149	156	154.5

Table 5: NSSE survey results from 2008

Satisfaction Category		GCSU 2005	GCSU 2008	USG 2008	P<	COPLAC 2008	P<	NSSE 2008	P<
Level of Academic Challenge	First-Year	51.0	52.4	51.6		51.8		52.9	
	Senior	57.8	56.4	56.2		55.8		56.5	
Student-Faculty Interaction	First-Year	35.7	35.4	34.6		30.8	.001	34.6	
	Senior	47.9	47.0	43.3	.001	39.6	.001	42.3	.001
Enriching Educational Experience	First-Year	28.8	28.8	27.9		26.4	.001	27.5	.05
	Senior	42.3	44.3	40.8	.001	39.6	.001	40.4	.001
Active and Collaborative Learning	First-Year	43.7	43.9	43.2		39.7	.001	42.5	.05
	Senior	52.0	54.4	52.4	.05	48.8	.001	50.8	.001

Table 6: Increase in Number and Percentage of Minority Students 2004-2008

Student ethnicity	2004	% Total	2008	% Total	%Incr.
All Hispanics	72	1.30	176	2.71	1.41
Hispanic Freshmen	18	1.95	53	4.51	2.56
Minority Freshmen	78	8.47	159	13.53	5.06
Minority grad students	222	23.27	272	26.85	3.58

Table 7: EBI Resident Survey Data 2006-2008

Student Satisfaction Category	06-07 RLC N=201	Non-RLC N=982	06-07 p <	07-08 RLC N=219	07-08 Non-RLC N=1,083	07-08 p <
Sense of Community	5.81	5.76	None	5.85	5.72	.05
Overall Learning Experience	5.47	5.31	.05	5.62	5.41	.01