

Proposal Title:	Infusing the Power of Information Literacy
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## Section 1: Goals

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### Goals of the Information Literacy QEP

The primary goal of an Information Literacy Quality Enhancement Program (QEP) at UNF is to ensure that students are information literate and able to critically locate, evaluate and use information in a technology enhanced world. Information literacy is a key characteristic of lifelong learning and strongly connected to critical thinking.<sup>1</sup> They should be able to meet the challenges presented in a dynamic, technology-rich, information environment throughout their academic studies, careers, and personal lives. The QEP will....

- Improve students' ability to select and locate information needed for a particular activity
- Enable students to understand the range and types of publications and databases comprising the literature of the student's discipline
- Enable students to assess if information is usable and the value of an information source
- Enable students to manipulate and present the information in the most effective manner
- Improve students' ability to present information with a professional appearance using current technologies
- Increase students' understanding of information transmission and methods of technological communication
- Improve students' understanding of the legal issues and ethical responsibilities surrounding the use of information
- Improve students' understanding of privacy issues as it relates to personal information
- Enable students to think critically and manage learning throughout their careers and lives
- Strengthen faculty teaching quality by training faculty on pedagogies that lend themselves to the desired outcomes in critical thinking and information literacy approaches

### Relation of Goals to the University's Mission and to Student Learning Outcomes

Implementing an information literacy QEP will enhance the University of North Florida's pursuit of excellence. I have designed the QEP to support the primary focus of the University's mission—quality instruction, by insuring that students are able to recognize when and what information is needed and are able to locate, evaluate, and use it effectively. This QEP will have a positive impact on UNF's commitments to community involvement and scholarly activity as well. While information literacy has considerable overlap with information technology skills, it is broader and emphasizes content, communication, analysis, information searching, and evaluation in both electronic and non-digital forms.<sup>2</sup> As students become less and less willing to remember what they learn within specific courses, we must provide them with the tools they need to find information they have forgotten and the knowledge to learn new technologies that emerge in the future. Implementing an information literacy program is critical in fostering integrative thinking, creativity, and innovation both during their education and beyond graduation. Insuring that our students have life-long learning skills is paramount to our role as educators and to our stakeholders. This QEP initiative is central to create a learning environment that provides the best educational experience that prepares students for the explosion of information and knowledge that is being generated globally. UNF's commitment to quality instruction will be realized thru this QEP by enhancing six key elements through which UNF meets its strategic goals:<sup>3</sup>

1. **Student learning** is the key to institution sustainability in academia. This QEP initiative will support key elements of the strategic plan, the first of which is University's student learning.<sup>4</sup> Information literacy has often been flagged as a fourth basic skill beyond the three 'R's.' It embodies critical thinking and reasoning, skills that all individuals need for life-long learning. UNF includes transformational learning experiences (TLO) as a key element of achieving student learning. First introduced by Jack Mezirow in 1978, a TLO is a learning experience that

transforms the way concepts are learned so that the meaning is understood<sup>5</sup>. This understanding is the root of information literacy—ensuring that students know the meaning of information so they can effectively use it. This QEP will ensure that students have the skills needed to learn on their own whether in an academic discipline or other life activities. The QEP includes student-centered learning activities that drive students to find, assess, and use information to make decisions. The strategic plan supporting UNF’s mission includes student support services as another key element of student learning. The library is a crucial student support services support in the learning experience as it is a custodian of information.

2. **Flagship programs** are being established by UNF with the aim of achieving national prominence in select program areas. No program should be promoted as ‘the best’ without insuring students understand how to critically evaluate and use information especially as it relates to their respective discipline. By integrating information literacy learning initiatives, UNF’s programs, including those designated as flagships, will become more marketable as graduates add competence in information literacy to their knowledge.
3. **Research and scholarship** complement the learning environment by engaging students in every aspect of information literacy. In order to participate in research and other forms of scholarship, students must understand what information is needed, the range and types of publications and databases comprising the literature of the discipline, how to find the information and assess its value, and how to manipulate and present the information in the most effective manner using current technologies. It is imperative students also understand their legal and ethical responsibilities surrounding the use of information, a key learning objective in information literacy that addresses intellectual property and moral issues.
4. **Connections to the community** are a key element of UNF’s strategic plan. Connections are strengthened and contribute to society by our involvement with the Northeast Florida communities. In providing community research needs, our students need to be familiar with the same types of informational literacy skills as with academic research. The QEP is designed to deliver these essentials. To continue the demand from businesses, health care facilities, K-12 school systems, engineering and computing facilities, and other entities, we need to generate qualified graduates. The influx of more information available due to technological changes means that knowledge learned while enrolled as a student will become quickly outdated. This QEP initiative will insure students learn how to learn so that they can continue to serve the needs of the community and companies for which they work.
5. **Quality students** are recruited more easily by Universities with programs that exemplify excellence and hold state, national, or regional reputations. Once the QEP is implemented, it may take a few years to infuse graduates into the community and generate a reputation that reflects the changes. The increase in the quality of UNF’s output (graduates) should increase the quality of the input (applicants), which in turn, will result in a higher student profile and hopefully, increased admission standards. Increasing the quality of recruited students has the potential to generate additional scholarship donations from constituents.
6. **Quality faculty** will become a more critical resource under the QEP as they are the key resources that will develop, implement, and assess student’s information literacy skills. Because most faculty are knowledgeable in their discipline and not trained as educators, the QEP will provide resources for professional development and ongoing support in improving teaching and learning strategies, especially in implementing critical thinking which is the root of information literacy.

As we move into the future, the amount of information and the formats in which it will be available will continue to expand. Students often settle for information found through a Google<sup>®</sup> search even though it may not be relevant. A 2001 study conducted by the National Center for

Postsecondary Improvement entitled “A Report to Stakeholders on the Conditions and Effectiveness of Postsecondary Education” found that only 48 percent of students felt confident in their ability to find information.<sup>6</sup> Equipping students with the relevant skills needed to learn on their own will give them the power to handle any information and related technologies which may arise in their futures.

## **Section 2: Benefits and Broad-Based Involvement**

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### **Benefits the QEP Design Will Secure for the University and its Students**

A QEP in information literacy provides several benefits, a number of which are fundamental to UNF’s commitment to excellence. This QEP will support the University’s mission by contributing to the pursuit of excellence through student learning and quality instruction. The University’s ability to meet a number of its strategic plan goals will be directly impacted, primarily with the student learning aspects of the plan, along with clear impacts on community connections and research and scholarship. Potential student benefits include:

- Improvement of student learning through knowledge that enables students to select and locate information, assess the value of a source, and evaluate information
- Improvement of student’s ability to manipulate and present the information in the most effective manner with a professional appearance
- Improvement of student learning within their own academic discipline through their enhanced understanding of the range and types of publications and databases comprising their discipline literature
- Improvement of students’ understanding of current technologies involving the transmission, communication, storage and retrieval of information
- Improvement of students’ understanding of the legal, ethical, and privacy issues and responsibilities surrounding the use and providing of information
- Improvement of students’ ability to think critically about information and manage learning throughout their careers and lives
- Enhanced understanding of the globalization effects on information

Potential University benefits include:

- Improvement of the quality of students through improved critical thinking skills creating a strong student-centered learning environment
- More productive student-faculty research projects
- Strengthening of faculty teaching quality by providing training in critical thinking and information literacy approaches
- Overall enhancement of the undergraduate experience
- Generation of better qualified graduates to meet needs of employers and the Northeast Florida communities
- Enhanced University reputation that draws a larger base of high quality students
- Increased perception of the University as a quality institution by potential donors
- Establishment of a continual assessment plan able to flag deficiencies and successes
- Enhancement of the University’s ability to meet its strategic plan ‘student learning’ goals with positive impacts on community connections and research and scholarship output
- Strengthening UNF’s compliance with information literacy and critical thinking SACS’ and discipline-specific accreditation criteria
- Enabling the University to fully comply with Section 3.4.14 of SACS criteria

A key benefit of this QEP is its ability to better prepare students for their careers by improving their information literacy skills, a skill deficiency that a number of studies have identified both in the U.S. and globally. A white paper presented by Bonnie Cheuk at the 2002 Information Literacy Meeting of Experts in Prague iterated the importance of the need to be information literate in work settings because of the need to access, manage and use the vast amount of information delivered through multiple channels.<sup>7</sup> In his book published in 2002, *Information Literacy and Workplace Performance*, Thomas Goad points out that information literacy is the crucial skill that today's workers need to develop to deal with a knowledge-based environment.<sup>8</sup> As a regional University that provides a significant portion of the Northeast Florida workforce, UNF will help the community grow by providing a more qualified pool of graduates. In turn, a more qualified pool of applicants will be available for UNF.

The student learning benefits of integrating information literacy into the curriculum have received a lot of attention over the past several years. Most students have the skills to send email and instant messages, download music and videos to an iPod®, and engage in social networking that results from creating a *MySpace* or *Facebook* website. However, many have very limited knowledge about how to effectively evaluate online resources and synthesize and integrate ideas, including the ethical and legal issues that accompany the intellectual property.<sup>9</sup> The recently released results of 6,300 students who took Educational Testing Service's (ETS) 2006 iSkills® Assessment test (formally ICT Literacy) confirmed that students may not have the critical thinking skills needed for academic success in using information.<sup>10</sup> On the other end of the information spectrum, students need to understand the implications of online dangers, such as sharing their lives and exposing their privacy on social networks, blogs, and chat rooms.<sup>11</sup> The information literacy QEP is intended to address both extremes by ensuring that students understand effective information *use* and what is acceptable information to *provide* to others.

An obvious short-term benefit of implementing this QEP is compliance with SACS criteria. However, this initiative achieves more than the task of establishing a QEP. An information literacy program will help satisfy the SACS' requirement of complying with SACS 3.4.14 which states the institution's use of technology must enhance student learning to meet program objectives and that students have access to and training in the use of technology. Preliminary findings of the Student Technology section of UNF's Institutional Effectiveness Committee indicate that sufficient evidence does not currently exist for this criteria.<sup>12</sup> Creating an information literacy QEP program that teaches students about information sources and uses will enable UNF to comply with this particular criterion. Implementing this QEP will help ensure compliance with a number of UNF's program-level accrediting bodies as well.

The benefits of information literacy have recently been addressed by a number of other regional and discipline-specific accrediting agencies as many have begun to include information literacy as a key outcome for higher education. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education began its information initiative in 1989 and now requires information literacy skills as a key standard.<sup>13</sup> The New England Association of Schools and Colleges<sup>14</sup> and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges<sup>15</sup> also recognize information literacy in their standards. The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business<sup>16</sup> (AACSB International), the accrediting body for the Coggin College of Business, and the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education<sup>17</sup> which accredits UNF's College of Education and Human Services require information literacy outcomes in both sets of standards. Other agencies with similar requirements include the American Psychological Association's Board of Educational Affairs<sup>18</sup> and the American Chemical Society's "Standards for the English Language Arts" formulated by the National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association. While all of some of these entities do not use the 'informational literacy' terminology, they all imply that students should understand assessing and using information. This QEP will also benefit UNF's compliance with the Academic Learning Compacts<sup>19</sup> mandated by the Board of Governors by putting a focus on critical thinking.

A key benefit of this QEP is the implementation of a framework for assessment of student learning. For the most part over the past few decades, faculty have agreed that students should be able to think critically and be able to use information for academic purposes. However, most accreditation requirements required no ongoing assessment program. This QEP builds in a process for reliable and valid ongoing assessment data that will provide critical information for UNF's stakeholders. Faculty will benefit from assessment data by using it to tweak program and course learning objectives to meet the University's goal of providing quality student learning. Ongoing assessments will provide information necessary to clearly report UNF's success to current and prospective students, employers, the Board of Trustees, Board of Governors, and regional and program level-accreditation agencies.

An information literacy QEP has sound faculty development benefits. Most faculty hold academic degrees with no education or teaching-related courses. Their teaching styles have likely been formulated based on memories of one or more of their own professors. This QEP initiative will provide professional development training to help faculty develop pedagogies to meet the challenges of teaching students how to critically evaluate the quality of information and how to use it most effectively. Ultimately, our students will become more literate and better qualified to deal with the challenges information in the future.

Implementing this information literacy QEP has the potential to make UNF look more favorable to donors as the impact of more qualified graduates begins to filter into the workplace. Alumni that receive an education under the QEP initiative should develop a stronger appreciation for their UNF education which could result in larger donations to their alma mater. Because this QEP will provide students with the skills they need to learn on their own, students should become more confident about their learning abilities which may increase retention. The ultimate benefit of this QEP will be the enhancement of UNF's commitment to quality student learning.

### **Implementation Involvement of Multiple University Constituencies**

The following areas of the university will be involved with the implementation of the information literacy QEP:

- Faculty in all colleges and College/Departmental curriculum committees
- Associate Provost for Assessment, Academic Affairs
- Information Literacy Advisory Council (new)
- QEP project director (new)
- Office of Faculty Enhancement staff
- Information Literacy Director (new)
- Center for Instruction and Research Technology (CIRT)
- Undergraduate Studies Council
- Graduate Council
- Academic Programs Committee
- The library
- Academic Center for Excellence (ACE)
- The Writing Program
- First Year Experience Committee/Staff
- Information Technology Service (ITS)
- Administration and Finance

Faculty in all five Colleges will be the primary resources involved in the QEP implementation as they will design and implement the assignments and other learning opportunities. They will also create assessments and modify instructional methods as necessary to achieve the desired learning outcomes. The Office of Faculty Enhancement, and the Center for Instruction and Research Technology (CIRT) will provide guidance and training for faculty.

I recommend the establishment of a Information Literacy Advisory Council (ILAC) comprised of faculty applicants from each College, an Information Literacy Director (to be hired), and members selected from the Library and CIRT. Bob Smallwood can be a valuable resource member. The ILAC's role is to provide assistance and professional development training in developing information literacy standards, classroom implementation, and assessment. The faculty members of this committee should be selected from faculty who apply to be Information Literacy Leaders. Compensation of 50% course release time should be provided. These Leaders should be trained in information literacy teaching methods and concepts by CIRT, the Information Literacy Director, and/or attendance at professional development workshops. They are expected to work closely with CIRT and the Information Literacy Director in providing workshops for other faculty.

The Undergraduate Studies Council, the Graduate Council, and the Academic Programs Committee will be involved in their roles of approving curriculum and program changes that result from the QEP implementation and assessments. The library has a significant role given they are the keepers of information. They will assist students and faculty as requested. The Academic Center for Excellence should provide student tutors to help students with information literacy questions. The Writing Program would play a key role as well, as information understanding is needed to support most writing assignments. The First Year Experience Committee should work with the Undergraduate Studies Council to plan orientation programs that relate to the QEP initiative. Given that technology is a significant component of information literacy, Information Technology Services should provide support for technology needs as they relate to achieving the learning outcomes.

Finally, the Administration and Finance department will need to allocate funds to provide course releases for Information Literacy Leaders, professional development training for the Leaders, increases in CIRT and Faculty Enhancement staff, and other components of the QEP that require funding. Faculty will provide key input into identifying the resources needed to effectively implement the information literacy into an expected level of excellence at the department or course level. Articulation of the QEP with the strategic planning efforts of the University is crucial to insure that significant support and sufficient resources are allocated to the information literacy initiative to make it successful.

### **Section 3: Student Learning**

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#### **Importance of QEP Design to Student Learning**

A number of notable studies relating to the need for information literacy in the curriculum have been published during the last few decades. Much of the research began with librarians in the late 1980s.<sup>20</sup> In 1990, the National Forum on Information Literacy, comprised of over 90 education, technology, and business entities joined forces to expand and support information literacy.<sup>21</sup> Shortly thereafter in 1995, California State University (CSU), the largest higher education system in the U.S., created its Information Competence Initiative.<sup>22</sup> CSU's goal was to remedy student deficiencies in understanding information and applying new knowledge that had been identified by its librarians. In 2000, the Association of College and Research Libraries issued *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* which has since served as a landmark for subsequent information literacy programs. It includes performance indicators and learning outcomes that have been widely used by U.S. and international institutions to assess student progress.<sup>23</sup> A year after its publication, it was endorsed by the American Association for Higher Education. The 2006 iSkills<sup>®</sup> test cited earlier in this proposal confirms that students lack critical thinking skills needed for academic success in using information. In fact, on the average students got less than half of the points possible correct.<sup>24</sup>

UNF began participating in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) survey during 2006. Because we have no comparative data for the same group of students during their freshman and senior years, we may not be able to use the 2006 data as relevant support for student learning. For the

most part, the study revealed that UNF freshman appeared to be under challenged by the work effort required of them compared to students at selected peer and Carnegie institutions. This is sad news given the decline in the quality of the K-12 public school systems, especially in Florida. Subsequent NSSE data will provide us a good comparison with the 2006 base period data for assessing the impact of the QEP once it is implemented.

In early 2006, President Bush announced the American Competitive Initiative (ACI) and issued a “call for advances in research, science, and technology and for improvements in American education and workforce.”<sup>25</sup> The Summit was sponsored by the National Forum on Information Literacy, the Committee for Economic Development, the Educational Testing Service, the Institute for a Competitive Workforce, and the National Education Association. It addressed how the U.S. should adequately prepare students to be lifelong learners with the skills necessary to compete in a rapidly changing world.” The key points emphasized how vital information literacy is to the competitive advantage of people, nations, and the business community, the latter of which is a crucial ally for the development of academic programs and policies by institutions.<sup>26</sup>

According to Dr. Robert Rosen, CEO of Healthy Companies, and author of *Global Literacies*, four drivers are affecting everyone in the world today: the explosion of knowledge, the technology revolution, the pace of change, and globalization.<sup>27</sup> All four of these drivers are facets of information literacy. Not only is there new information due to the explosion of knowledge and new forms of information access, storage and manipulation, the rate of growth and change are incredibly fast. This creates a challenge for academicians to ensure that students learn how to learn so they can handle the new technologies and volume of information. As globalization trends cause economic development to become more dependent upon the information literacy skills of the workforce,<sup>28</sup> it is crucial that graduates have strong information literacy knowledge. Not only are higher education institutions competing globally for quality students, technology requires that students deal with global information. Perhaps even more convincing is the report prepared by the U.S. Department of Labor Secretary’s Commission on Achieve Necessary Skills<sup>29</sup> (SCANS) prepared in 1992 which declared information literacy as one of the five essential competencies for solid job performance. Though 15 years old, information literacy is not a pervasive student learning outcome in many educational institutions.

### **Student Learning Outcomes Expected**

The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) has created a number of well-defined student learning outcomes developed by Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education<sup>30</sup> which formed the basis for this QEP’s outcomes. ACRL based its studies on "the systematic collection of external information" related to "social, economic, and political" trends that may affect an organization’s future.<sup>31</sup> An information literate individual will be able to:

- Determine and locate relevant information is needed for a particular activity
- Understand the range and types of publications and databases comprising the literature of the student’s discipline
- Assess the value of an information source critically
- Manipulate and present information and express ideas in the most effective manner using current technologies
- Present information with a professional appearance
- Evaluate how well information meets the needs of an activity or purpose
- Understanding information transmission and methods of technological communication
- Understand the legal issues and ethical responsibilities surrounding the use of information
- Understand implications of providing information online as it relates to privacy
- Think critically
- Discover and use relevant information to expand one’s knowledge base
- Actively expand one’s knowledge through life-long learning

Integrating information literacy into the general education program, upper level undergraduate programs, and graduate programs will help UNF produce information literate graduates.

### **How the QEP Design Will Support Student Learning**

Ignoring information literacy in any educational environment is not an option. It is an attribute that all graduates must possess to survive in their careers and personal lives. The QEP topic is not an option as evidenced by American Competitive Initiative announced by President Bush and the Summit which followed shortly thereafter. Information literacy has come to be one of the basic skills we expect students to possess. These skills must be practiced to be learned through many practice opportunities throughout their college years.<sup>32</sup> This information literacy QEP initiative is designed to establish a learning environment that produces information literate students who are able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use the information effectively. The QEP's focus on learning will help ensure that students are prepared to meet the challenges of a changing world.

## **Section 4: Institutional Capability and Implementation**

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### **Practicality of the QEP Design**

A number of influences make information literacy both relevant and practical for students. Changes due to economic factors, technological changes, and globalization are key influences on the amount of information that exists. These influences create pressure on educators to develop curriculum that supports the importance of information to society. The evaluation of information and critical thinking go hand in hand with each other, as one cannot be information literate without critically thinking about the content. Critical thinking and decision making skills are demanded in every career choice. Faculty must provide learning experiences that help students learn what they should know about information to be successful.

The consequences of equipping students with information literacy skills stretch beyond the classroom. It is a life long skill that will spill over into the workplace and community. Critical thinking was cited by 92.1% of employers that responded with a list of the top four most important skills. Critical thinking encourages self-directed inquiries in the workplace, from part-time jobs to internships to positions requiring more autonomy as graduates move up the ladder in every career path. Because critical thinking is a key component of information literacy, it makes this QEP even more crucial to achieving UNF's goals.

### **Institutional Capability and Resources**

#### **Phase 1 - Preliminary Work - June through August 2007**

1. QEP Steering Committee requests pre-proposals and identifies six for full proposal submission. Complete
2. Administrators select information literacy as the University's QEP.

#### **Phase 2 - Assignment of Qualified Individuals - July – August 2007**

Key human resources responsible for administration, progress monitoring, and reporting should be identified. The individuals should be selected from all academic programs across campus.

1. Identify and select a project manager for the development of the QEP. Responsibilities will include project management for the QEP and associated resources, including implementation of the QEP, managing the QEP budget, and preparing assessment and other reports.

2. Hire/appoint an Information Literacy Director for the Faculty Enhancement office. Responsibilities will include recruiting faculty participants and coordinating their professional development/training as Information Literacy Leaders and training for CIRT staff, planning, coordination, management of QEP assessment training, and maintenance of Information Literacy resource websites separately for faculty and students.
3. Recruit in-house Information Literacy Leaders to work closely with the Information Literacy Director in providing workshops and one-on-one training for other faculty in implementing information literacy standards, classroom implementation, and assessment.
4. Establish a QEP task force on Information Literacy comprised of Information Literacy Leaders, the Information Literacy Director, and individuals from the Library, CIRT, the Academic Center for Excellence, and the QEP project manager.
5. Educate the University community on the QEP. One effective idea is to develop a QEP quiz such as the one created by Florence-Darlington Technical College<sup>33</sup> for students, staff, and faculty members. Posting on BlackBoard is one option.

### **Phase 3 - Establish a Work Plan - August-September 2007**

The primary goal of the work plan is to identify resources needed for QEP development and implementation of the information literacy plan. A search of best practices implemented by other institutions will be beneficial. Among the institutions that are in the process of, or have already implemented an information literacy QEP include the University of Central Florida, the California State University system, Philadelphia University, North Georgia College and State University, and the University of California at Berkley. A number of other schools including FIU and FSU have established information literacy programs though not under a QEP program. A number of workshops and conferences are available that will be helpful for key personnel to understand practical approaches to build a quality program such as the Regional Information Literacy Institute sponsored by ACRL's Institute for Information Literacy scheduled in July of this year. The following steps are considered necessary to establish an adequate work plan for the information literacy QEP:

1. Determine a detailed time line for implementation of the QEP.
2. Identify best practices for the QEP topic.
3. Identify measures for student learning by course level.
4. Identify, evaluate, and select QEP actions.
5. Create a proposed schedule to implement actions.
6. Coordinate with the Academic Center for Excellence to create a plan for ongoing academic support services.
7. Develop a comprehensive assessment plan (including program reporting forms) to assess improvement in student learning at every course level from freshman to graduate students.
8. Develop a remediation plan.
9. Educate the University community.
10. Build an online Information Literacy Resource website for faculty.
11. Build an online Information Literacy website for students that addresses each of the QEP's expected outcomes.
12. Establish an annual grant program for all full-time faculty to support information literacy projects.
13. Develop a QEP implementation 5-year budget of resources.

### **Phase 4 - Implementation - September 2007 to April 2008**

A number of different approaches have been undertaken to implement information literacy programs in higher education institutions. The ACRL approved a document titled, *Best Practices Initiative Institute for Information Literacy* in 2003 which identifies and describe features notable in information literacy programs of excellence.<sup>34</sup> While some institutions have developed a separate information literacy

course, this document suggests integrating information literacy across the curriculum. Given that information literacy is applicable to all disciplines, the model proposed for UNF takes the same approach of integrating into all academic programs from the lower-level general education curriculum through the graduate level. The following steps are suggested to successfully implement an information literacy QEP at UNF:

1. Provide a workshop on the QEP initiative, goals, and outcomes to faculty by College (responsibility assigned to the Information Literacy Director and the QEP project manager)
2. Provide training/workshops in information literacy concepts to CIRT/Faculty Enhancement staff and Information Literacy Leaders.
3. Implement an annual grant program for faculty wishing to integrate QEP learning outcomes into courses. .
4. Schedule iSkills<sup>®</sup> testing for students to obtain baseline data for comparison. (see Section 5 of this proposal)
5. Coordinate with the General Education Council as necessary.
6. Implement a data collection system for course specific data, NSSE, and iSkills<sup>®</sup>.
7. Implement a comprehensive assessment plan. (see Section 5 of this proposal)
8. Implement a plan for remediation.
9. Monitor and upgrade the Information Literacy website for faculty.
10. Monitor and upgrade the Information Literacy website for students.
11. Submit the initial QEP draft by April 2008 to SACS.

#### **Phase 5 – Ongoing Practices - 2008 to 2013**

The Project Manager will provide oversight and report annual progress to the UNF community and SACS. The Information Literacy Director is responsible for ongoing operations management. Given the long-term nature of this Information Literacy plan, a number of changes will likely be made to improve the learning outcomes. Other annual activities necessary include:

1. Continue the data collection system and analysis.
2. Continue an assessment plan, analysis, and dissemination of information to faculty.
3. Implement the plan for remediation.
4. Recruit and train new classes of Information Literacy Leaders annually.
5. Provide ongoing workshops and faculty assistance.
6. Continue the annual grant program.
7. Provide ongoing QEP communications and annual reports to the university community including the Board of Trustees.
8. Maintain the Information Literacy website for students.
9. Maintain the Information Literacy website for faculty with updates of UNF best practices.
10. Assess progress and complete data forms to provide assessment data each academic year.
11. Make changes as necessary based on assessment.

#### **Evidence of Sufficient Financial and Physical Resources**

The University of Central Florida allocated \$4 million towards its 5-year QEP effort.<sup>35</sup> Given that UCF has close to three times more students than UNF, a reasonable investment for us may be around \$1.5 million. Physical resources necessary will include additional office space and related facility costs, computers and peripherals, and salaries for new resource personnel such as the Director of Information Literacy. Given constraints and limited cost estimates, the Budget Office will need to provide assistance in estimating financial resources.

#### **Academic and Human Resources to Implement and Sustain Outcomes**

Faculty from all of UNF's five Colleges will contribute to the QEP effort. Academic support systems such as the Academic Center for Excellence, the General Education Council, Information

Technology Services, CIRT, Faculty Enhancement, and Academic Affairs will be active in the implementation of the information literacy QEP. Faculty input and training, including part-time faculty, will be continuing resources towards achieving the learning outcomes of this QEP throughout the five-year implementation period and beyond. Information Literacy Tutorials can be effective academic resources to help students understand information literacy as well. A number of institutions have created online tutorials including the University of Central Florida's Library Research tutorial, the TILT tutorial created by the University of Texas, Searchpath created by Western Michigan University, and the CSU Information Competence tutorial by Cal Poly State University.

Human resources who are responsible for the administration, monitoring of progress, and reporting that were flagged in phase 2 will come from all academic programs across campus. These will include a QEP project manager, Information Literacy Director for the Faculty Enhancement, Information Literacy Leaders (faculty), and CIRT staff.

### **Plan for Initiating and Monitoring Progress.**

The QEP project manager will insure the implemented QEP occurs as planned. UNF's Strategic Plan should be modified to incorporate the QEP initiative so that sufficient resources are allocated to sustain the program over the long-term. Faculty in all academic departments are expected to participate in order to integrate the QEP across the curriculum. Considerations must be given to training faculty on pedagogies that lend themselves to the desired outcomes. The CIRT and Faculty Enhancement offices will hold a central role in educating faculty through training the Information Literacy Leaders, holding workshops, and other initiatives. Similar to its current support for students needing assistance with general education courses, the Academic Center for Excellence will be expected to provide tutoring for students needing help acquiring information literacy skills. The library will maintain a key role in planning, implementing, and maintaining learning resources for students as well.

Progress reports will be prepared by each academic department periodically and provided to the QEP project manager. To be most effective, these reports should include grades, outcome achievements, and other assessments within programs. Faculty will use this data to modify or implement effective program learning objectives. The QEP project manager will prepare an annual evaluation report to be provided to the University's stakeholders. This report will include an overview of all implementations, summaries of training workshops, projects, and assessments, as well as an assessment of UNF's progress towards goals and outcomes in the QEP plan. Changes will be made as needed based on progress. Full implementation will likely take three to six years.

## **Section 5: Assessment and Continuous Improvement**

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### **Assessment of the Progress and the Effectiveness of the QEP**

The QEP project manager should develop assessment forms which capture the desired data such as specific learning objectives, the nature of the assessment, etc. He or she will prepare meaningful reports which reflect the degree to which the learning outcomes were achieved. Four types of assessments are proposed under the Information Literacy QEP: standardized testing, employer surveys, the program and course level, and an assessment of the degree to which the QEP assessment methods are effective.

#### **Standardized testing assessments**

Administering two standardized tests, NSSE and iSkills<sup>®</sup>, will provide two baseline comparisons of the QEP effectiveness. Because UNF already participates in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), baseline data exists for 2006. NSSE is a reliable assessment tool with participation by more than 610 colleges and universities that can help UNF measure critical thinking learning outcomes through its assessment of mental activities.<sup>36</sup> This assessment gauges

students' perceptions of the degree to which they perform mental activities based on Bloom's Taxonomy: memorizing, analyzing, synthesizing, making judgments, and applying concepts. The iSkills® assessment is a comprehensive information and communication technology proficiency test managed by Educational Testing Service (ETS). It requires students to perform scenario-based tasks and measures both technical and cognitive skills.<sup>37</sup> One goal in its initial development was to provide support for information literacy initiatives, which makes it a good assessment tool.

### **Employer survey assessments**

Surveys completed by employers that recruit on campus will be helpful in assessing life-long learning skills. These instruments will be administered periodically as recruiters participate in on-campus informational sessions and interviews.

### **Program and course level assessments**

Discipline-related learning objectives will be assessed using instruments developed by faculty in each program. The University of Central Florida's online handbook which provides a thorough approach to assessment at the program level entitled *Guidelines for Planning and Implementing Quality Enhancing Efforts of Program and Student Learning Outcomes*<sup>38</sup> is a useful tool for assessment. A QEP leader should be identified in each academic program that will work with the campus Information Literacy Leaders. The faculty step must create information literacy learning outcomes specific to their discipline. These can be primarily driven by the State-mandated Academic Learning Compacts that already exist. Faculty in each academic department should work with the Information Literacy Leader(s) of his or her College to identify and implement curriculum activities that tie to each of the department's QEP learning outcomes. One or two assessment methods should be identified for each expected outcome. Examples of some assessment methods include Capstone projects, portfolios, case studies, course-embedded questions, and grading rubrics. A plan to collect data and summarize it should be created in collaboration with the Information Literacy Leaders. Faculty may choose to use a standardized assessment test that disaggregates data by individual class sections. Referred to as CLASSE (Classroom Survey of Student Engagement), it was recently developed by Bob Smallwood and his colleagues.<sup>39</sup> The final step is to use the results to make changes if desired improvements are not achieved.

### **Assessment of QEP assessment methods**

The last assessment is the QEP assessment process to ascertain that the methods of assessment are producing relevant results.

### **Continuous Improvement.**

The key issue of assessment is to use tools that measure the outcome that is intended to be measured and that provides evidence of improvement. Comparing current with data from previous years is more effective when the assessment approach is the same. Faculty may have to modify the curriculum if information literacy skills do not appear to have improved. This may include changes in pedagogical practices, revisions of prerequisites or the sequence of courses, or changes to course content.<sup>40</sup> In some cases, changes must be made to academic processes such as technology improvements, changes in personnel including reduction of part-time faculty, additional faculty training, or changes in admission criteria.<sup>41</sup> The Information Literacy Leaders will work with faculty and departments to create an effective assessment and improvement plan. The results should be published online to provide all constituents the progress of the initiative.

## **A Few Final Words.....**

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Information literacy is currently one of the ‘hot’ concepts impacting the academic and educational theory landscape. An information literacy QEP is the best choice for UNF because it affects all students and all programs and will improve critical thinking and the ability to deal with information. Because every course requires students to investigate information in some manner, applying information literacy skills should be a component of every course. A number of higher education institutions have already implemented an information literacy program and have developed objectives, pedagogies, and outcomes that can be coupled with internal ideas.

The information literacy QEP has the potential for broad institutional impact well after the anticipated five-year SACS implementation period. This QEP embodies a keen sense of the educational and professional needs of the Northeast Florida community and the benefits the graduates will provide in the future. Improving student learning is a critical ingredient to our success, and this QEP is a perfect opportunity to achieve this for the University of North Florida.

## Appendix

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