

1. Focus

The purpose of the UNCW QEP is to improve applied learning outcomes through the application of research-based instructional strategies vital to promoting highest quality learning experiences. The primary methodology for improvement will be faculty/staff workshops in applied learning pedagogy and requirements for integration into the curriculum. The effects on student learning will be measured through their critical reflections. Although intended outcomes will be specific to each experience, they will align with the UNCW Learning Goals of Critical Thinking, Inquiry, and Thoughtful Expression.

TITLE: eTeal: experiencing Transformative education through applied learning

Definition: *Applied learning is a pedagogical model that places students in authentic experiences, requiring them to employ theories, ideas, and skills that they've learned in new contexts, and thereby extending their learning.*

Definition: *Critical reflection is "[T]he intentional consideration of an experience in light of particular learning objectives" (Hatcher & Bringle, 1997, p. 153).*

2. Rationale

UNCW's mission provides a commitment "to learning through the integration of teaching and mentoring with research and service."

The QEP Topic Development Task Force began reviewing the findings from University Assessment (General Education Assessment, National Survey of Student Engagement, Applied Learning in the College of Arts and Sciences, etc.) and launched a campus-wide effort to solicit ideas and feedback on what we do well at UNCW and what we can improve in the arena of student learning. The CAS Applied Learning Report points out that the definitions of what individual experiences entail vary greatly, with some experiences clearly defined before they begin, and other unknown entering the experience (for instance, most internship duties were listed as "to be negotiated"). Assessment methods also differed greatly, from a voluntary student survey for study abroad, to supervisor-subjective evaluations in many internships, and project reports and presentations in some DIS experiences and all Honors projects. Our General Education Assessment findings demonstrate that while our students perform at the expected levels for Information Literacy, Written Communication, and Inquiry, our students perform below expectations in Critical Thinking, with the lowest scores in identifying context and assumptions, and tying conclusions to a range of information. Student impressions, however, are different, with more students at UNCW reporting that their coursework emphasizes high-order thinking skills than do students at other institutions in our Carnegie Class. These findings, along with UNCW's long tradition of offering (and requiring in the College of Arts and Sciences) applied learning experiences, support our Quality Enhancement Plan.

Our QEP will enhance applied learning at UNCW by training faculty and staff on eight principles of good practice through workshops, learning communities, and mentoring. The QEP will solicit proposals from faculty and staff from all divisions who wish to participate in this training and implement these eight principles in applied experiences they lead (for example: internships, course-based applied experiences, and student affairs leadership opportunities). From these proposals, an initial small group (5-10) of faculty will be selected and trained. The use of the principles in their applied learning venue will be assessed through critical reflection, faculty & student surveys, and syllabus review. Participating students will write

a critical reflection that will be assessed by trained scorers. The effectiveness of the training and QEP will be evaluated by determining if the extent to which the eight principles were implemented influenced student abilities to critically reflect. The trained faculty/staff will serve as mentors for subsequent groups and, when sufficient numbers of faculty are implementing the eight principles, learning communities will further develop principles of good practice in applied learning.

As the name suggests, the purpose of applied learning is to help students contextualize their learning and prepare them for their future (employment, further education and/or community involvement). Since the purposes for using applied learning as a pedagogy differ between experiences, so will the intended specific outcomes differ. Regardless of the intended outcomes, critical reflection is vital to enhancing student learning. With properly designed prompts and opportunities to reflect throughout an applied learning experience, critical reflection,

“ generates learning (articulating questions, confronting biases, examining causality, contrasting theory with practice, pointing to systemic issues), deepens learning (challenging simplistic conclusions, inviting alternative perspectives, asking “why” iteratively), and documents learning (producing tangible expressions of new understanding for evaluation)” (Ash and Clayton 2009, p. 27).

Therefore, broadly conceived, applied learning and critical reflection, when cultivated properly, provides opportunities for students to demonstrate a number of UNCW Learning Goals, especially Critical Thinking, Inquiry, and Thoughtful Expression. These reflections will also provide evidence of content-specific knowledge and skills that will benefit the individual major programs.

3. Details of our QEP’s goals and measurable objectives in student learning

Our goals include the following:

- 1. To train faculty and staff in best practices of applied learning pedagogy*
 - a. 8 Principles of Good Practice from National Society for Experiential Education: (Intention, preparedness and planning, authenticity, reflection, orientation and training, monitoring and continuous improvement, assessment and evaluation, acknowledgment).*
 - b. Guide faculty in how to promote critical reflection in three domains of learning: cognitive, behavioral, and affective (see prompts).*
 - c. To provide opportunities for improving applied learning pedagogy across campus.*
 - d. To promote and measure “deep thinking” (metacognition) among students exposed to applied learning through critical reflection.*
- 2. Incorporate and apply the 8 principles of good practice in an applied learning setting.*
 - a. Customized for the context of applied learning opportunities*
 - b. Articulate links to UNCW’s Learning Goals as it relates to the specific applied learning experience*
 - c. Addressing Cognitive, Behavioral, and/or Affective domains of learning*
- 3. Students will participate in applied learning in authentic experiences.*
 - a. Intentionality of the applied learning experience will be outlined in advance.*

- b. *Formative assessment will be conducted during the monitoring process*
- c. *Critical reflection will be practiced throughout*
- d. *Final critical reflection product will be collected from students*
- e. *Assessment of critical reflection products will be conducted by trained scorers*

Student Learning outcomes

While individual applied learning experiences can address specific learning outcomes, student participating in all eTeal experiences will:

1. *Discuss how subject-matter content and skills-in-practice were combined to shape the experience or project, and*
2. *Reflect on their learning by examining prior knowledge and assumptions, outcomes of actions taken during the experience, their impact on or significance for others and/or the field, and the implications of these for their future experiences.*

Methodology & Assessment

UNCW intends to provide workshops each summer for faculty and staff to learn about the eight good practices for applied learning experiences. The workshops will be conducted by an **eTeal** Director, who will be an expert in applied learning and will be hired based on specific qualifications (TBD). Participation in the workshops will be available on a competitive basis with stipends for those who want to improve their instructional strategies in applied learning. Initially, we aim to reach 10 faculty and staff in the first year, who will be designated as **eTeal Scholars** and for whom relevant promotion (and tenure) credit will be provided. The workshop will consist of exploring the research literature on applied learning, the eight principles of good practice, examples of high quality applied learning opportunities, the importance of critical reflection to demonstrate deep thinking, the learning domains of cognitive, behavioral, and affective understanding, and the implementation requirements associated with **eTeal** support. Faculty and staff who are selected to participate in the workshop will implement these practices in their classes or student workshops during the following academic year, and throughout the year will meet regularly in a “teaching & learning community” to discuss with each other and our **eTeal** experts how their applied learning experiences are working out and what they can do to trouble-shoot during the process. The regular meetings of the “teaching & learning community” will provide additional supports and inspiration for faculty who are designated as **eTeal Scholars**.

Our assessment protocol will have two major facets. The first facet will measure the extent to which each **eTeal** experience incorporates the good practices that are the foundation of the improvement process. Implementation of these practices will be measured in three ways: (1) a syllabus and course materials review by the **eTeal** director; (2) self-assessment of the course by the faculty or staff member responsible for the experience; and (3) a student survey at the end of the course.

The second facet of the assessment will be the scoring of student critical reflections gathered from the **eTeal** experiences. These will be scored by a trained group of scorers using a rubric that will be developed (based on existing rubrics will some track record, such as the AAC&U VALUE rubrics of Ingetrative Learning and Lifelong Learning).

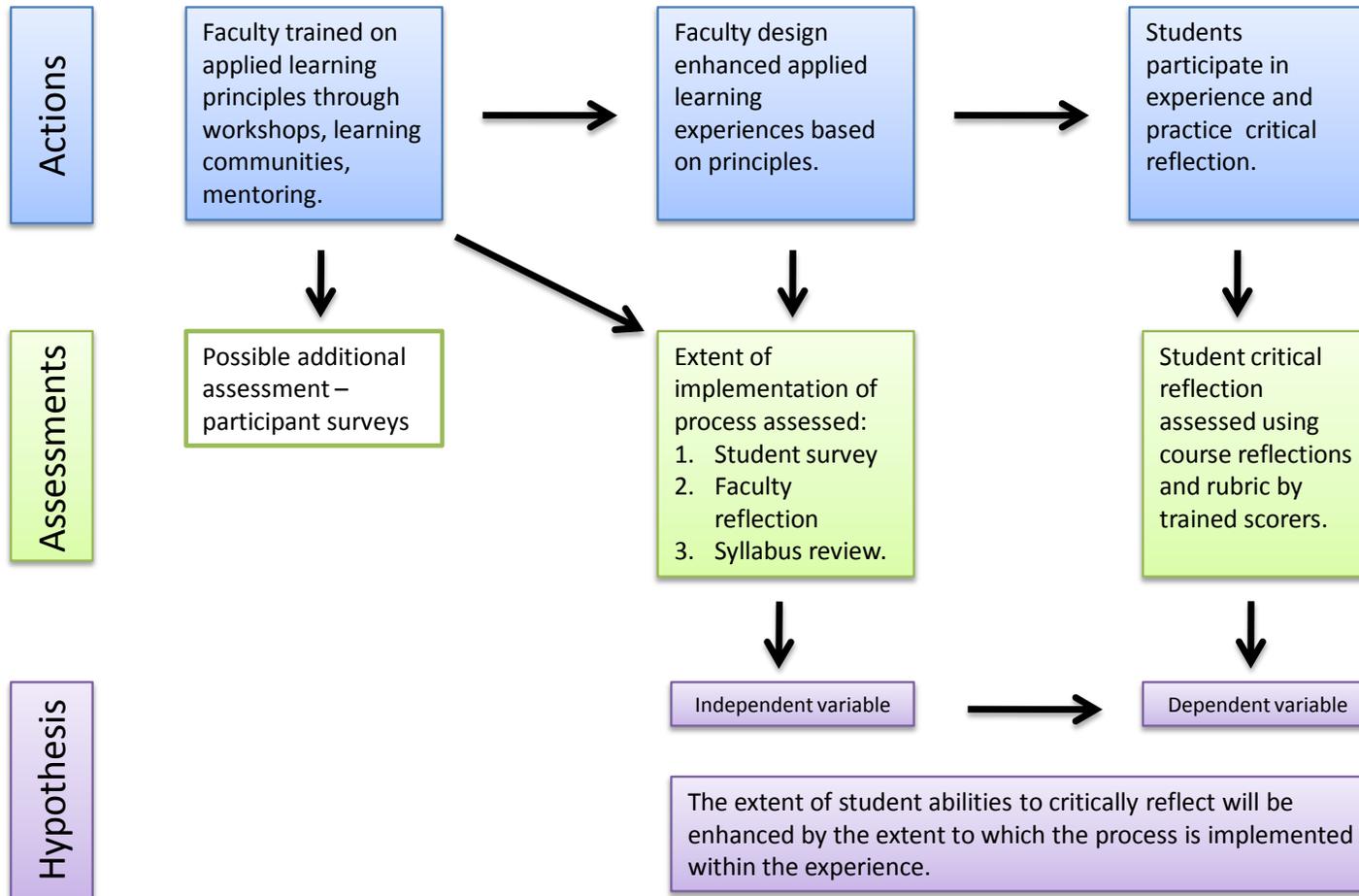
Finally, the results from the study of level of implementation of good practices will be compared to the results of student’s abilities to critically reflect. Students who participate in **eTeal** classes and do well academically,

will also earn the designation **eTeal Scholars**, which will be designated on their transcripts and can be reflected on their resumes, and will have special recognition upon graduation (cords for their regalia).

Conclusion

With this program fully implemented, we anticipate that **eTeal** will have a transformative impact on our campus to enrich the quality of our academic community. Specifically, through the course of this project approximately 105 faculty/staff will be trained in the best practices of applied learning pedagogies. While they are required to implement these practices in at least one learning experience in the subsequent academic year, we anticipate the trained faculty/staff will continue to use these instructional strategies well beyond their contracted requirement and will also serve to inspire their colleagues to do the same. By a conservative estimate, approximately 2500 students, over the course of five years, will have direct benefits on our measurable learning goals such as Critical Thinking, Thoughtful Expression, and Inquiry skills. Students engaged in applied learning will also experience benefits that include such things as professional networking, marketable skills for employments, increased confidence and competence, and richer understanding of the world they inhabit. These opportunities will spill over into other classes and with thousands of other students, thus generating a ripple effect that will raise the quality of students and faculty/staff experiences at UNCW. Furthermore, faculty and staff will forge closer bonds with each other as the teaching & learning community enriches the culture of our campus by routinely providing a venue for discussions about how to teach, what to teach, and where to teach, across all units on campus.

QEP Process and Assessment Design Schema



QEP Assessment Heuristic

The goal of this document is to provide a common heuristic of model prompts for instructors to create applied learning experiences that foster intention and reflection. It has been created by synthesizing the elements called for by the National Society for Experiential Education (NSEE) and the time-honored domains of learning: cognitive, behavioral and affective.

Experiential Element →	Intention	Monitoring	Reflection
Domain Cognitive: <i>The domain of student behaviors that addresses intellectual capabilities such as recall, understanding and critical thinking that emphasizes logic and application.</i>	<p>Identify and discuss the course/disciplinary knowledge to be explored and enhanced through this project/task/research.</p> <p>Identify and discuss the course/disciplinary concepts or processes to be explored and enhanced through this project/task/research.</p> <p>What specific activities to be completed during this experience will relate directly to your exploration of course/disciplinary knowledge/concepts?</p> <p>How will you recognize your degree of success in improving your understanding of course/disciplinary knowledge/concepts through the completion of this experience (what will success look like?)?</p> <p>What course content do you think has helped prepare you for this assignment?</p> <p>Describe the impact you think this</p>	<p>What discipline content (vocabulary, theories, etc.) have become more clear to at this point in the project?</p> <p>Given how the project has gone so far, what concepts or processes do you need to study more deeply to successfully complete the project?</p>	<p>Prior learning</p> <p>What methods, theories, ideas, and skills that you learned or used in class/current curriculum/other experience were useful in completing this project/task/research?</p> <p>What experiences or preparation gleaned from this class/curriculum/other experience best prepared you for completing this project/task/research?</p> <p>What skills or knowledge that you gleaned from previous experiences or other contexts were useful in completing this project/task/research?</p> <p>Present experience</p> <p>What assumptions or conceptions (about yourself, others, or how things work) were confirmed or contradicted by the experience?</p> <p>What did you learn about the subject matter/discipline/research area that you</p>

	<p>experience will have outside the classroom.</p>		<p>had not known prior to having completed this project/task/research?</p> <p>Your future</p> <p>What could be the implications of what you learned from this experience for your future work/research/career?</p> <p>What artifacts have you created or derived from this experience that can help preserve the learning that occurred?</p>
<p><i>Behavioral: The domain of student behaviors that addresses physical and manipulative activities. Much of this may take place during the applied learning experience so the prompts may address behavior as a focus for intention and reflection.</i></p>	<p>What skill or behavior do you need to improve on or keep in mind in order to succeed on this assignment?</p> <p>Can you anticipate and rehearse your reactions to possible events or interactions for this project?</p> <p>Create a checklist of materials you will need to bring for this experience.</p> <p>How can you) behave so as to come across as a genuine practitioner in this project?</p>	<p>Based on how the experience has gone so far, what skills or behaviors do you need to improve on or keep in mind in order to succeed in this assignment.</p> <p>Did the anticipation and rehearsal process you engaged in help you in your responses and interactions so far?</p> <p>Is there anything you would change about your checklist given your experience so far?</p> <p>What behaviors have you adopted at this point to come across as a genuine practitioner in this project?</p>	<p>What specific skills do need to improve on in light of this assignment? What are specifics steps you can take to do so?</p> <p>If you could do the project/task/research again, what might you do differently to achieve improved results?</p> <p>What are two of the most significant things you did during the experience? Through those actions, how did you contribute to the success of the project/task/scholarly community/discipline?</p> <p>What artifacts have you created from this experience that offer evidence in your ability to do the skills called for?</p>
<p><i>Affective: The domain of student behaviors</i></p>	<p>What attitudes, emotions, values or other social dynamics might influence how you</p>	<p>What attitudes, emotions, values or other social dynamics have you confronted at</p>	<p>What areas of personal growth (attitudes, values, etc.) were revealed through this</p>

<p><i>that addresses attitudes, emotions, values, interests, feelings, etc.</i></p>	<p>approach this project?</p> <p>How can you prepare for aspects of this project that may make you feel uncomfortable or elicit other strong emotional reactions so that you are more likely to respond appropriately?</p> <p>What do you think it will feel like to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others through this project?</p>	<p>this point in the project?</p> <p>What aspects of the project have emerged as sources of discomfort for you and how are you managing those challenges?</p> <p>What aspects of the project have emerged as sources of pride for you?</p>	<p>experience and what next steps can you take to address them?</p> <p>What skills, knowledge, or experience did you wish you had prior to attempting this project/task/research that would have aided you to get more from the experience and/or achieve a better outcome?</p> <p>How will having participated in this experience change how you approach projects/tasks/research in the future?</p> <p>In what ways did you experience difficulties (e.g., interacting with others, accomplishing tasks) and what personal characteristics contributed to the difficulties(e.g., skills, abilities,perspectives, attitudes, tendencies, knowledge)? (Ash & Clayton, 2009)</p> <p>What artifacts have you created or derived from this experience that can help preserve the personal growth that occurred?</p> <p>What artifacts are you most proud of?</p>
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End of Experience Student Surveys
Draft 1/27/2012

These questions measure the extent to which the Eight Principles of Good Practice were incorporated into the experience.

To what degree did your applied learning experience meet the following expectations?

Not at all		Moderately well		Extremely Well		Not applicable
<input type="checkbox"/>						

OR

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your applied learning experience?

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	NA
<input type="checkbox"/>					

Form for internships

1. My instructor, supervisor and I clearly defined the educational purpose of the experience.
INTENTION
2. My instructor, supervisor and I clearly defined intended outcomes of the experience.
INTENTION
3. There was an overarching plan for the experience. PREPAREDNESS AND PLANNING
4. I was provided with information about the organization I worked with. ORIENTATION AND TRAINING
5. I was provided with training for the specific activities I was involved with.
ORIENTATION AND TRAINING
6. I provided information about myself to those I worked with. ORIENTATION AND TRAINING
7. A. I had the educational preparation (content knowledge and skills) necessary to undertake this experience. PREPARATION AND PLANNING
B. If you were under prepared, explain what knowledge and/or skills would have been beneficial. [OPEN ENDED] PREPARATION AND PLANNING
8. A. The experience was designed to provide a useful outcome for or helped the organization. AUTHENTICITY
B. The experience provided a useful outcome for or helped the organization.
ACKNOWLEDGMENT
C. Describe that outcome. [OPEN ENDED] ACKNOWLEDGMENT

9. There were multiple opportunities to reflect on the on-going experience. REFLECTION
10. The reflection process helped me transform the experience into a learning experience. REFLECTION
11. The reflection process helped me make adjustments to outcomes and/or my actions during the experience. REFLECTION
12. A. There were regular check points for monitoring the status of the experience and its outcomes. MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
B. My instructor participated in those checkpoints. [YES/NO]
C. My site supervisor participated in those checkpoints. [YES/NO]
13. A. The intended outcomes of the experience were met. ACKNOWLEDGMENT
B. The intended outcomes changed during the experience. MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
C. Describe any changes to the intended outcomes or why the original outcomes were not met. [OPEN ENDED] MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
14. A. My performance was assessed by my instructor. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION
B. My performance was assessment by my site supervisor.
15. My accomplishments were documented and shared with others. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

For form for individual experiences, such as Honors projects and DIS

1. My instructor and I clearly defined the educational purpose of the experience. INTENTION
2. My instructor and I clearly defined intended outcomes of the experience. INTENTION
3. There was an overarching plan for the experience. PREPAREDNESS AND PLANNING
4. I was provided with information about the organization/group I worked with or the needs of the people involved. ORIENTATION AND TRAINING
5. I was provided with training for the specific activities I was involved with. ORIENTATION AND TRAINING
6. I provided information about myself to those I worked with. ORIENTATION AND TRAINING
7. A. I had the educational preparation (content knowledge and skills) necessary to undertake this experience. PREPAREDNESS AND PLANNING
B. If you were under prepared, explain what knowledge and/or skills would have been beneficial. [OPEN ENDED] PREPAREDNESS AND PLANNING
8. A. The experience was designed to provide a useful outcome, such as added knowledge in my discipline. AUTHENTICITY
B. The experience provided a useful outcome, such as added knowledge in my discipline.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

C. Describe that outcome. [OPEN ENDED] ACKNOWLEDGMENT

9. There were multiple opportunities to reflect on the experience. REFLECTION
10. The reflection process helped me transform the experience into a learning experience.
REFLECTION
11. The reflection process helped me make adjustments to outcomes and/or my actions during the experience. REFLECTION
12. There were regular check points for monitoring the status of the experience and its outcomes. MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
13. A. The intended outcomes of the experience were met. ACKNOWLEDGMENT
B. The intended outcomes changed during the experience. MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
C. Describe any changes to the intended outcomes or why the original outcomes were not met. [OPEN ENDED] MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
14. My performance was assessed by the instructor. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION
15. My (our) accomplishments were documented and shared with others.
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Form for course-embedded and other group applied learning experiences:

1. The educational purpose of the experience was made clear. INTENTION
2. The intended outcomes of the experience were made clear. INTENTION
3. There was an overarching plan for the experience. PREPAREDNESS AND PLANNING
4. I was provided with information about the organization/group/individual I worked with.
ORIENTATION AND TRAINING
5. I was provided with training for the specific activities I was involved with.
ORIENTATION AND TRAINING
6. I provided information about myself to those I worked with. ORIENTATION AND TRAINING
7. A. I had the educational preparation (content knowledge and skills) necessary to undertake this experience. PREPARATION AND PLANNING
B. If you were under prepared, explain what knowledge and/or skills would have been beneficial. [OPEN ENDED] PREPARATION AND PLANNING
8. A. The experience was designed to provide a useful outcome for or helped the organization/group/individual I/we worked with. AUTHENTICITY
B. The experience provided a useful outcome for or helped the organization/group/individual. ACKNOWLEDGMENT
C. Describe that outcome. [OPEN ENDED] ACKNOWLEDGMENT

9. There were multiple opportunities to reflect on the on-going experience. REFLECTION
10. The reflection process helped me transform the experience into a learning experience.
REFLECTION
11. The reflection process helped me make adjustments to outcomes and/or my actions during the experience. REFLECTION
12. There were regular check points for monitoring the status of the experience and its outcomes. MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
13. A. The intended outcomes of the experience were met. ACKNOWLEDGMENT
B. The intended outcomes changed during the experience. MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
C. Describe any changes to the intended outcomes or why the original outcomes were not met. [OPEN ENDED] MONITORING AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
14. A. My performance was assessed by my instructor. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION
B. My performance was assessment by my site supervisor.
15. My accomplishments were documented and shared with others. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

eTeal Organizational Chart

