



TO: Steven McLaughlin
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

COPY: Ángel Cabrera, President
Chaouki T. Abdallah, Executive Vice President for Research
Mike Shannon, Interim Executive Vice President for Administration
Finance and Interim Chief Business Officer
Frank Neville, Senior Vice President for Strategic Initiatives/Chief of Staff
Jennifer Herazy, Assistant Vice President/Deputy Chief Business Officer
Jason Matt, Senior Director for Academic Administration

FROM: Laurence Jacobs, Senior Vice Provost for Education and Learning (co-chair)
Steven P. Girardot, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (co-chair)
Georgia Tech’s 2025 QEP Topic Selection Committee (see Appendix A)

DATE: May 24, 2023

RE: Recommendation for 2025 QEP Topic:
Leadership in Progress and Service: Creating Intentional and Transformative Learning Experiences

In November 2022, Provost McLaughlin charged a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Topic Selection Committee to recommend a QEP topic by spring 2023. The members of this committee are listed in **Appendix A**. Specifically, this committee was charged to identify potential QEP topics based on Georgia Tech’s Strategic Plan 2020-2030: Progress and Service for All and Georgia Tech’s Transformative Teaching & Learning (TTL) Strategy, collect existing data and campus input relevant to those topics, and recommend a topic for QEP development for Georgia Tech’s 2025 Reaffirmation. The process and methodology used by the committee are summarized in **Appendix B**.

Through this process, a total of 47 topics were submitted and considered by the committee. Three topics with the strongest support and the closest alignment with Georgia Tech’s TTL Strategy emerged:

- Topic 1: *Transformative Academic Advising*
- Topic 2: *Leadership in Progress and Service: Creating Intentional and Transformative Learning Experiences*
- Topic 3: *Transformative Teaching through Experiential Learning*



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The abstracts for these three topics are included in **Appendix C**. The committee was very supportive of all three topics, believing that each would benefit from an investment of resources and attention and would present an opportunity to continue the successful legacy of Georgia Tech’s previous two QEPs from 2005 and 2015. After soliciting, receiving, and examining additional input on these three topics from a wide range of campus stakeholders, and following further discussion and deliberation, the committee recommends Topic 2: *Leadership in Progress and Service: Creating Intentional and Transformative Learning Experiences*.

Rationale

The committee recommends this QEP topic as an opportunity to build on Institute strengths while advancing commitments essential to our mission. From its founding, Georgia Tech has embraced experiential learning, a “hand and mind” philosophy of learning-by-doing. Our founding curriculum in mechanical engineering incorporated a shop class. Generations of leadership, academic and administrative, have built out an abundance of experiential learning opportunities, now including co-ops and internships, laboratories and capstones, research and innovation, service learning, study-abroad, and study-away. Also from its founding, Georgia Tech has embraced our motto ‘Progress and Service’ as the directional purpose of a Georgia Tech education. The mission statement in our current Institute Strategic Plan (ISP) renews the embrace encapsulated in this motto, acknowledging our distinctive role as a public research institution committed to “developing leaders who advance technology and improve the human condition.”

This QEP topic will enable us to marshal our resources, campus-wide creativity and expertise, and collaborative spirit to expand our experiential learning opportunities with intentionality tied to advancing our mission via the ISP. This QEP topic focuses on these three strategic commitments:

(1) Prepare our students for the multi-faceted challenges of present-day leadership in ‘Progress and Service.’

The ISP *Amplify Impact* focus area states our aspiration to provide transformative learning experiences to all students to enable them to “grow as creative, ethical, globally aware, technologically sophisticated leaders who can define and solve problems to improve the human condition.” Transformative learning intentionally designed to foster the growth of future leaders in ‘Progress and Service’ will benefit from collaborative contributions that span disciplines as well as academic and administrative units to create new learning opportunities designed to prepare students for present-day leadership challenges.



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(2) Employ evidence-based best practices in the design, delivery, assessment, and continuous improvement of transformative learning experiences.

The ISP *Lead by Example* focus area states our aspiration to be a “model of excellence through continuous improvement, deliberate innovation, and best practices” Intentional design of these transformative learning experiences will benefit from the expertise and collaborative contributions of professionals in the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), the Office of Academic Effectiveness (OAE), and the Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE), in addition to the extensive network of faculty and administrative professionals currently delivering transformative learning experiences reflecting best practices.

(3) Ensure that transformative learning experiences are, in fact, provided to those students who would benefit most from these experiences.

The ISP *Expand Access* focus area states our aspiration to “empower people of all backgrounds ... to learn and contribute to technological and human progress”. We know that some students who would benefit the most participate the least in transformative learning experiences. Intentional design will incorporate effective communication, encouragement, and support for these student populations, with a particular emphasis on those least likely to participate, including under-resourced, limited income, and first-generation students. This will require collaborative contributions from academic advising leadership and the distributed network of academic advisors across campus as well as administrative leadership and staff engaged in outreach and support for students historically underserved. This will also involve ensuring advisors have the tools they need for this proactive work.

Next steps

After the QEP topic has been approved, the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and Senior Vice Provost for Education and Learning will begin the design and implementation phase in the summer and fall of 2023, in accordance with the timeline and guidance from the Associate Provost for Academic Effectiveness. Next steps will include:

- Communicating to faculty, academic leadership, students, and the campus community the decision on the QEP topic, an outline of next steps, and a preview of opportunities to connect to advance work on the QEP.
- Finalizing approval of the QEP budget plan. The QEP budget will be operationalized within the Office of Undergraduate Education (OUE) and will include funding for immediate operational positions (e.g, assessment, communication, and project management support) as well as a QEP Director. It is anticipated that the QEP Director will report within OUE.



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- Establishing a QEP Planning Committee (QEP-PC). A chair or co-chairs will be appointed and working closely with the QEP Director, will coordinate QEP-PC planning and activities and serve as primary drafters of the QEP proposal. QEP-PC membership will include faculty as well as leadership from OUE, Education and Learning, Academic Effectiveness, Institutional Research & Planning, and other key administrative units involved.

Acknowledgments

The committee would like to acknowledge that QEP Topics 1 and 3 received significant support in committee deliberations. The essential collaboration and contributions of academic advising and of faculty development to the success of the recommended QEP topic reflect, in part, the strength and value of the other two proposed topics. In addition, the committee would like to acknowledge significant input and considerable discussion that emerged from faculty, school chairs, and students about the pressing need to invest in strengthening and enhancing our undergraduate academic advising system, ensuring that students have the opportunity for holistic advising and that advisors have the tools they need to work effectively with our students.

Appreciation

In closing, the members of this committee greatly appreciated the opportunity to engage in this process and are excited about the next steps in this work. If the Provost and other members of the Executive Leadership Team have questions or would like additional information, we would be happy to follow up.



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Appendix A: QEP Topic Selection Committee Membership

- Shatakshee Dhongde, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, IAC of Liberal Arts
- Luoluo Hong, Vice President for Student Engagement & Well-Being, Division of Student Engagement & Well-Being
- Javier Irizarry, Associate Dean and Professor, School of Building Construction, College of Design
- Aisha Johnson, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs & Outreach, Georgia Tech Library
- David Joyner, Executive Director, Online Education & OMSCS, College of Computing
- Loraine Phillips, Associate Provost for Academic Effectiveness, Office of the Provost
- Hunter Richardson, Undergraduate Student and Vice President of Academic Affairs, Undergraduate SGA*
- Carrie Shepler, Assistant Dean for Teaching Effectiveness, College of Sciences
- Mitchell Walker, John W. Young Chair and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Engineering
- Kate Williams, Assistant Director for TA Development and Future Faculty Initiatives, Center for Teaching and Learning: Interim Director of Transformative Teaching and Learning Faculty Initiatives
- Craig Womack, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs, Scheller College of Business
- Juana Cunningham (*ex officio*), Senior Consultant, Georgia Tech Strategic Consulting
- Daniel J. Lyczak (*ex officio*), Data Scientist, Institutional Research & Planning
- Cara-Joy Wong (*ex officio*), Program and Portfolio Manager, Office of the Senior Vice Provost for Education and Learning, Office of the Provost

**NOTE: The student representative changed in January 2023 due to the original student representative (Aanjan Sikal) departing for a study abroad program.*



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Appendix B: Outline of QEP Topic Selection Committee Processes

The QEP Topic Selection Committee began its work in September 2022, concluding in May 2023. Over the course of these nine months, the committee communicated about the QEP topic selection process across campus, collected input from campus on potential QEP themes or topics, facilitated a second campus feedback exercise, and delivered its QEP topic selection recommendation to the Provost. Below is a timeline and description of the committee’s QEP topic selection process.

September 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QEP Topic Selection Committee is assembled and charged by Provost McLaughlin • Committee is briefed on SACSCOC 2025 guidelines, timelines, and process • QEP reference materials and resources are shared with the Committee for consideration • Communication plan discussions regarding campus engagement and involvement begin with Institute Communications • QEP topic selection timeline is drafted
November – December 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimated QEP topic selection timeline is established • Committee chairs, Larry Jacobs and Steven Girardot, facilitate two listening sessions with school chairs
January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QEP topic selection process is communicated campus-wide, including the launch of the QEP webpage and a feedback form to gather topic suggestions and concept papers • Committee encourages campus engagement through two campus town halls/listening sessions and respective school/college QEP introduction meetings
February 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee reviews all campus feedback received, including topic suggestions and two-page concept papers
March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee rates topic suggestions and decides on three main topic areas: Transformative Academic Advising, Leadership in Progress and Service: Creating Intentional



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	<p>and Transformative Learning Experiences, Transformative Teaching through Experiential Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee organizes a communications strategy for a second round of campus feedback to gather input on the three main topic areas • Topic area “abstracts” are shared on the QEP website and socialized a second time on campus with various groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Executive Leadership Team (ELT) ○ Academic leadership, including deans, associate deans, vice provosts, school chairs ○ Campus town hall ○ Dedicated staff town hall ○ Dedicated academic associate deans and academic partners listening session ○ Dedicated school chairs listening session ○ Two dedicated student feedback sessions (both graduate and undergraduate students engaged)
April 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee reviews input from the secondary feedback process – almost 200 feedback submissions from faculty, staff, undergraduate students, and graduate students • Chairs Larry Jacobs and Steven Girardot present the abstracts and collective campus feedback to Provost McLaughlin for consideration
May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee presents Provost McLaughlin with a QEP topic recommendation (this memorandum)



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Appendix C: Candidate Finalist Topics

Topic 1: Transformative Academic Advising

The recently released Boyer 2030 report challenges research universities to ensure that all students receive holistic advising, defined as “[advising] that is student-centered and encompasses academic, career, and basic needs guidance.” Nearly five years ago, a 2018 provost-sponsored task force on undergraduate academic advising at Georgia Tech came to a similar conclusion among its recommendations. As we seek to enhance access and close attainment gaps for students who are not fully represented here, which includes limited income (Pell), first-generation, and other underrepresented students, we must first acknowledge that access without support is not access. Academic advising is the cornerstone to achieving this goal and is often cited in the student success literature as one of the most important indicators of student satisfaction. Addressing our gaps and inconsistencies in advising practice across the Institute; providing more intentional academic support for transfer students (a key pipeline for many of the student populations noted above); leveraging our strengths in artificial intelligence and technology-enhanced learning; and redesigning advising to be holistic (as defined in the Boyer report) will establish a foundation to support students in fully engaging Tech’s transformative teaching and learning and in achieving academic and career success.

Topic 2: Leadership in Progress and Service: Creating Intentional and Transformative Learning Experiences

From its start, Georgia Tech’s undergraduate education has followed an experiential learning or “hand and mind” philosophy: students learn by doing. At the same time, Georgia Tech recognized and embraced “Progress and Service” as the directional purpose of a Georgia Tech education; we prepare our graduates to contribute and lead in “Progress and Service” in their professional, personal, and civic lives. The proposed Progress and Service Certificate will prepare students to be leaders through their transformative learning experiences. This will be accomplished by a new type of undergraduate certificate (or other type of credential) that is centered on compelling interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, or disciplinary themes. Examples could include an interdisciplinary lab that teaches students how to communicate across disciplines; courses that integrate architecture, engineering, and computing; or embedding an ethicist alongside faculty from almost any discipline to bring multiple dimensions into the student learning experience. The certificate will be designed to integrate high-impact classroom, experiential, and reflective learning, to develop student leadership, to expand opportunities for students to pursue this learning in interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary fields, and to promote thematic coherence in students’ general education coursework without adding credits to the degree. To implement this, we must provide support for faculty to expand experiential learning opportunities in their course and curriculum design through stronger connections with Center for



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Teaching and Learning (CTL) faculty as well as academic leadership/staff of existing high-impact practices (e.g., Vertically Integrated Projects (VIP), Serve-Learn-Sustain (SLS), study abroad, undergraduate research, co-op).

Topic 3: *Transformative Teaching through Experiential Learning*

In the Institute Strategic Plan, we established the bold goal to “provide all students with transformative learning experiences to grow as creative, ethical, globally aware, technologically sophisticated leaders who can define and solve problems to improve the human condition.” Embedding high quality experiential learning and high-impact practices into existing coursework brings knowledge to life and inspires students to see connections between course content and their communities and future careers. While our physical location in midtown Atlanta and connections across Georgia, the southeast, and beyond have helped Georgia Tech establish strong internship, co-op, and research experiences for undergraduates, this QEP would center experiential learning at the heart of our classroom pedagogies. Building on the momentum from SLS, VIP, and other high-impact programs, this QEP would expand access to transformative learning experiences by building them into the space that all students share – the classroom. Experiential learning will be embedded into existing courses that satisfy degree requirements without increasing the time to graduation. This project would bring together a variety of undergraduate co-curricular experiential learning opportunities across the Institute, support faculty as they embed experiential learning in their courses and connect Georgia Tech to alumni and other local and statewide leaders. To implement this, we must provide support for faculty to explore experiential learning as it applies to their course design through stronger connections with CTL faculty, with faculty across Schools and Colleges, with leadership of existing high-impact practices, and with community partners.



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Appendix D: QEP Topic Concept Paper & Survey

Georgia Tech is seeking input, feedback, and ideas from faculty, staff, and students to select a topic for its next Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), a key part of the Institute’s reaffirmation of accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). As defined by SACSCOC, the Institute’s new QEP must be a carefully designed course of action that addresses a well-defined topic or issue related to enhancing student learning and student success. Georgia Tech’s next QEP topic will emerge from the **Transformative Teaching and Learning goals** identified in the Institute strategic plan.

Using this form, the Georgia Tech community may submit ideas and topic suggestions for our next Quality Enhancement Plan. Community ideas may be submitted as either a brief description or a concept paper for the QEP Topic Selection Committee to consider. Submissions will be accepted through **Friday, February 3, 2023**.

Please contact Cara-Joy Wong at carajoy.wong@gatech.edu for questions about the QEP topic selection process.



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Brief Topic Description Submission

Submission Option 1: Brief Topic Description

Please use the space below to describe an idea, topic, or issue related to enhancing undergraduate student learning and/or student success.

***Note:** If you are not ready to submit your idea, you can save your entries up to this point and come back to this form later. Please be sure to come back to this Qualtrics link using the same browser.*

Concept Paper Submission

Submission Option 2: Concept Paper

If preferred (but not required), you may submit a Concept Paper that addresses issues related to enhancing undergraduate student learning and/or student success. Specific submission details are as follows:

- Concept papers should be brief, succinct, and limited to only one page of narrative with one optional/additional page for abbreviated appendices, references, or supporting data. Concept papers that exceed two pages will be returned for revision or may not be considered.
- Narratives should describe a carefully designed course of action that addresses the following:
 1. The names/titles/affiliations of all contributors to the concept paper
 2. A well-defined and focused topic or issue related to enhancing student learning and student success; proposed student learning outcomes should also be stated
 3. A description of how the topic is directly connected to the Institute Strategic Plan, specifically the Transformative Teaching and Learning Strategy
 4. Examples of institutional data, relevant educational literature, or other sources of information that inform the proposed topic
 5. Initial thoughts on the assessment plan and how student learning outcomes will be assessed
- Concept papers should be submitted as a PDF document.



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