

3. "Fostering Critical Thinking and Writing:

Freshman Seminars and Faculty Workshops"

Title and Brief Description of QEP Topic:

"Fostering Critical Thinking and Writing: Freshman Seminars and Faculty Workshops"

In disciplines from accounting to zoology, professionals testify that the best prepared employees are those who can think critically and speak and write persuasively. In the years in which our current students will work, the content or information of their jobs—even the basic nature of their employment—will change over and over but their need to make judgments and voice those judgments will not.

At Loyola, through courses in the common curriculum, such as English 122, through our majors, and through the Writing across the Curriculum Program, we have always stressed critical thinking and writing. Our proposal is to build on that emphasis, as well as improve retention and the unity of the common curriculum, by instituting a freshman seminar program.

We thus suggest that to further stress critical thinking and writing skills across the curriculum, the university institute freshman seminars, which can count as one of the student's common curriculum courses, its slot depending on the department of the teacher who offers it. These classes, which students can elect to take during their first semester, will be focused around a common topic (religious intolerance, globalism) or will involve multidisciplinary topics chosen and developed by individual faculty. Each class will enroll fifteen students who will encounter active learning opportunities within the classroom and coordinated events outside of it.

To consider various methods of stressing critical thinking and writing, participating faculty will attend a workshop, for which they will receive a stipend. There they will consider the methodologies for these seminars:

- critical thinking activities
- writing assignments
- oral performance opportunities
- small-group involvements
- information literacy (discussed in coordination with the Monroe Library's Information Literacy Program)

A Co-Curricular Component: Within the seminar period and beyond it, students will also participate with their group and with others in appropriate service learning opportunities, undertaken along with critical reflection and writing assignments that help students analyze these activities. They will also attend lectures and other events that pertain to the class topic. Further co-curricular activities extending beyond the first semester, for which professors will be given funding, will help students maintain contact with a core group as they take other common curriculum courses and enter their majors.

As teachers participate in the training workshops, they will be considering various instructional design models that enhance critical thinking and writing. Their discussions can also focus on the best means of fostering these key skills throughout the common curriculum and within our majors.

Proposal submitted by:

Katherine H. Adams, Mary A. McCay, Melanie McKay

Brief explanation of how the topic is "creative and vital to the long-term improvement of student learning at Loyola":

The freshman seminars will involve students in active instructional methodologies: in writing assignments, in critical thinking activities, in oral performance, in small groups, and in opportunities for co-curricular activities, including service learning. Because the seminar will concern a multidisciplinary theme, it will encourage students to integrate ideas from various courses. Because it will foster an involved group considering questions together, it will engage students as active learners. Because the teacher can serve as an advisor and mentor, it will also help students with their adjustment to the university.

Evidence (or potential sources of evidence) suggesting the need to address this topic [optional]:

Studies suggest that students profit from the diversity of subjects covered within general education, but that overarching themes help them to process and organize this information. Many universities, such as Purdue and the University of Toronto, which report their results through the National Resource Center for the First-Year Experience, have found that heightened learning and retention stem from the seminar model's active classroom, co-curricular activities, and connections to faculty. Many researchers, such as Peter Facione of Loyola University Chicago, have especially praised the emphasis on critical thinking that these seminars involve. The freshman seminar will help students to approach subject matter actively and critically and to integrate ideas and approaches from various disciplines while also giving them a "home" on campus.

Current and planned activities at Loyola related to this topic [optional]:

In the College of Arts and Sciences, the development of a first-year experience involving a shared reading has proven the efficacy of shared academic content and activities. The College of Business's mentor programs also testify to the effect of early interaction between faculty and students. Student groups, such as the Loyola Society for Civic Engagement, have demonstrated the students' desire for treatment of academic subject matter in co-curricular events.

6. “Retrieving/Renewing the Jesuit Education Tradition: Fostering the Virtues of Speaking and Listening.”

The Society of Jesus founded in 1540 soon became known as “the School Masters of Europe.” Much has changed in four-hundred and sixty-five years, but the Jesuit educational tradition rooted in its founder’s own experience contains much that still speaks to a contemporary Jesuit university such as Loyola University New Orleans.

Ignatius saw learning as essentially something to be shared with others. Thus in mentioning learning (as next in importance after the example of a holy life), he included also “a method of expounding” this learning (Constitutions #304 [169-70]). I suggest that we emphasize the cultivation of our students’ capabilities to present and explain to others what they have learned by fostering numerous opportunities in our classes to give oral and multi-media presentations, to participate in panels, to share their insights by pairing students in classes as study partners, to demonstrate their mastery of content in oral examinations, to do projects for actual clients that they present to them, and so forth. We might think of this “speaking and listening across the curriculum.”

I also suggest that we take Ignatius “Presupposition,” about putting the best interpretation of what others’ say as a virtue to be cultivated in our listening, especially. Such a developed ability is essential to friendly dialogue, which in 2004 seems so lacking in our currently polarized public life and media. What some have called the “hermeneutical principle of charity,” was stated in striking form by Ignatius in #230 of the *Spiritual Exercises*: “...it should be presupposed that every good Christian ought to be more eager to put a good interpretation on a neighbor’s statement than to condemn it. Further if one cannot interpret it favorably, one should ask how the other person means it. If that meaning is wrong, one should correct the person with love; and if this is not enough, one should search out every appropriate means through which, by understanding the statement in a good way, it may be saved.” This principle requires us to develop our ability to enter into an other person’s way of thinking by repeated questioning and listening in which we try to get beyond our prejudices and preconceptions. This principle or presupposition needs to be modeled in classes, faculty meetings, advising sessions, public lectures, and so on.

Proposal Submitted by: Stephen Rowntree, SJ

Brief explanation of how the topic “is creative and vital to the long-term improvement of student learning” at Loyola: The ability to explain to others what one has learned requires an active mastery of course material that goes far beyond simply recognizing a correct answer when it is provided. Those who teach know how much must be mastered to be able to teach or explain it to others. While a stimulus to learning any subject, being able to speak articulately, confidently, and cogently is fundamental for the day to day work in many fields and professions. Students who have developed their skills in their areas will stand out. And confidence in speaking in public is very much a matter of having had to speak/present many times in many contexts. Practice makes for assured confidence in speaking situations.

As one committee mentioned concerning philosophy: philosophy which is so central to Loyola's Common Curriculum has its fundamental existence as conversation and dialogue (see Plato's *Dialogues*, for example, and numerous examples of this genre in the history of philosophy).

Evidence (or potential sources of evidence) suggesting the need to address this topic:

Contemporary talk radio, network and cable T.V. talk shows, political advertising, political documentaries, and so on. One reads that the number 1 fear people mention when surveyed is not fear of dying of cancer, or losing one's job, but fear of speaking in public.

Current and planned activities at Loyola related to this topic: The Civic Discourse initiative addresses some of these concerns. For the most part, however, we propose the addition to the courses we currently teach of all kinds of speaking assignments (class reports, panels, dialogues, presentations to imagined or actual clients, oral examinations, study partnerships and so forth). Perhaps the initiative might begin as a pilot project. A number of teachers might be recruited to work together to develop speaking and listening components to their courses. I would think that many schools and programs already include such speaking activities. We surely have teachers who have been making such oral communication central to their courses. We could recruit them to serve as resource persons. [By the way, we think that quality writing is essential for most quality speaking, and hence an initiative focused on speaking should provide reinforce quality writing. Reading aloud what one has written, with or without actual listeners, helps to improve one's writing.]

We can post a statement of the Ignatian "presupposition," on the walls of all our classrooms, meeting rooms, assembly halls, residence hall rooms and common areas, and on banners hanging from our buildings.

8. Loyola as a Community of Learners

Proposal due date: Monday, November 15, 2004

Submit electronically to dgoforth@loyno.edu

Or, if you prefer, submit a paper copy to David Estes, 242 Marquette, Box 7

View proposed topics at the QEP Web site—<http://www.loyno.edu/sacs/qep/>

Title and brief description of QEP topic: Loyola as a Community of Learners

The focus of the proposal would be to develop and expand opportunities for collaborative learning among all Loyola students. Current students are products of an educational philosophy that promoted "individualized instruction" in the schools. Numerous students come to Loyola without any experience in group learning environments. In fact, first-year students at Loyola, in the 2002 NSSE survey, scored the benchmark activity of Active and Collaborative Learning at Loyola below the mean for both comparison schools categories.

Proposal submitted by [optional]: Edward Kvet

Brief explanation of how the topic is “creative and vital to the long-term improvement of student learning” at Loyola: A study by the Labor Department entitled "The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills" cited as basic competencies for new employees "working in teams" and "exercising leadership".

Evidence (or potential sources of evidence) suggesting the need to address this topic [optional]: as

Current and planned activities at Loyola related to this topic [optional]:

1. Collaborative learning issues
2. Residential "Learning Communities"
3. "Team work" opportunities
4. Residential campus concept
5. Faculty and staff residential hall living and teaching opportunities

9. Connecting Loyola to New Orleans: Thinking and Writing Critically about New Orleans

Proposal due date: Monday, November 15, 2004

Submit electronically to dgoforth@loyno.edu

Or, if you prefer, submit a paper copy to David Estes, 242 Marquette, Box 7

View proposed topics at the QEP Web site—<http://www.loyno.edu/sacs/qep/>

Title and brief description of QEP topic:

Connecting Loyola to New Orleans: Thinking and Writing Critically about through the study of Religion, Science, History, Literature, and Information Literacy

This first year seminar would be a one-semester, three-credit course aimed at building a sense of community among students and improving first year learning via the study of the rich and diverse culture and history of New Orleans. Each section will be led by an anchor instructor, and lecturers from multiple disciplines will visit each section throughout the semester. Students will focus on improving skills in three main areas: information literacy, writing, and oral communications. Peer assistants will be on hand to help students complete their writing, research and technology assignments.

Proposal submitted by [optional]:

Alicia Hansen, Mary McCay, Melanie McKay, Beth Orgeron, Brad Petitfils

Brief explanation of how the topic is “creative and vital to the long-term improvement of student learning” at Loyola:

I. Building a sense of community among first year students

This first-year seminar focuses on the city of New Orleans and emphasizes social constructivism as an exploratory tool for learning. Guest lecturers from different disciplines will speak on topics ranging from ethnic diversity and cultural traditions to architecture and geography. Peer discussions and experiential learning exercises will allow students to make independent, well-informed decisions and effectively present their convictions as they search for their place in the world. Field trips and out-of-class group activities will promote bonding among students in the course.

The first-year seminar, “New Orleans Texts and Contexts,” taught in Fall 2004, offers a model. The seminar consists of linked courses (English T125 and History X194) which explore the cultural, historical, and literary diversity of the city that Loyola calls home. Student Affairs (SA) staff collaborate with the course instructors to conduct experiential learning activities related to the seminar’s major themes. Writing assignments include short researched analytical essays to analytical essays and position papers. Oral communication assignments include class debates and panel discussions.

II. Improving first year learning

A key goal of the seminar will be to develop students' epistemological awareness. Discussions and activities will emphasize strategies for helping students to recognize how they learn as well as what they are learning. To encourage this recognition, students will self-assess through academic journal writing and peer engagement. They will be responsible for leading class discussions, research teams, and oral presentations. All assignments will integrate technological skills, scholarly research (critical and ethical use of information), and writing.

Evidence (or potential sources of evidence) suggesting the need to address this topic [optional]:

- Retention – students enrolled in similar seminar courses are more likely to stay and finish their degree programs
- Learning – students enrolled in similar seminar courses have consistently earned higher GPAs in their respective majors

Current and planned activities at Loyola related to this topic [optional]:

- **First-Year Experience**

The College of Arts and Sciences has a well-established first-year experience program, one that include common readings for incoming students, as well as lectures, events, and activities in early fall related to that reading. Moreover, the College has offered several experimental first-year courses in recent years—courses involving linkages between courses from different disciplines, courses incorporating the first-year reading text into class discussion and writing assignments, and courses involving collaboration between faculty and staff from Student Affairs.

- **Monroe Library instruction and technology services**

Students have access to workshops and individual instruction on finding and using scholarly information properly and ethically, and on using technology to enhance projects and learning development.

- **WAC peer tutoring**

WAC tutors are undergraduates trained to assist others in all phases of the writing process, from planning and pre-writing to revision and editing. WAC tutors are available daily in the Writing Center to assist students with writing assignments. Tutors are trained to help others with thesis statements, organization, paragraph development, and sentence structure. WAC tutors help students recognize strengths and weaknesses in their writing so that writers can begin to spot their own errors and correct them.

WAC also supports first-year programming by providing trained writing tutors to Learning Community instructors whose courses involve significant writing assignments. The Learning Community in the first-year psychology program offers an example of this support. WAC writing tutors serve the LC faculty as peer assistants (PAs) who help the students with a writing assignment that is done in segments and integrated at semester's end. These PAs are assigned to first-year students in Psychology 100 in a ratio of 1 PA to 10 students.

10. Changing Minds: A Transformative Liberal Education

Proposal due date: Monday, November 15, 2004

Submit electronically to dgoforth@loyno.edu

Or, if you prefer, submit a paper copy to David Estes, 242 Marquette, Box 7

View proposed topics at the QEP Web site—<http://www.loyno.edu/sacs/qep/>

Title and brief description of QEP topic: Changing Minds: A Transformative Liberal Education. This proposal targets the core educational mission of Loyola as a Jesuit university in a changing world, and specifically the transformative character of a liberal education in the Jesuit tradition. The core curriculum should be organized around four critical transformations: (1) from information consumers to critical thinkers, (2) from passive learners to engaged learners, (3) from local citizens to global citizens, and (4) from autonomous selves to men and women for others.

Proposal submitted by [optional]: .Thomas Smith

Brief explanation of how the topic is “creative and vital to the long-term improvement of student learning” at Loyola: This model is creative in that curriculum will be designed from standpoint of desired outcomes that implicate not only mastery of skills and knowledge, but of a more comprehensively conceived "metanoia" that implicates the whole person.

Evidence (or potential sources of evidence) suggesting the need to address this topic [optional]: Models of core education that connect knowledge with life (experiential learning, service learning), that make connections between disciplines (interdisciplinarity), and that stress the collaborative and communitarian approach to learning have been shown to produce enhanced learning. Further, globalization and internationalization of curriculum have been prominently featured as the next task of higher education. At Loyola, the Common Curriculum as currently structured does not evidence an overarching structure or strategy keyed to student learning, nor is the university's mission prominent in the core educational experience, except for the presence of substantial hour requirements in Religious Studies and Philosophy.

Current and planned activities at Loyola related to this topic [optional]:

16. Institutionalizing undergraduate research

Proposal due date: Monday, November 15, 2004

Submit electronically to dgoforth@loyno.edu

Or, if you prefer, submit a paper copy to David Estes, 242 Marquette, Box 7

View proposed topics at the QEP Web site—<http://www.loyno.edu/sacs/qep/>

Title and brief description of QEP topic: Institutionalizing undergraduate research

Proposal submitted by [optional]: Gary Talarchek

Brief explanation of how the topic is “creative and vital to the long-term improvement of student learning” at Loyola: "Mentoring is the highest form of teaching," said a faculty member when discussing student research. Undergraduate research to be successful, both pedagogically and in terms of an outcome, such as a publication or presentation, requires that both the student and faculty member understand it as a joint enterprise. UG research reinforces Loyola's mission and status as a primarily undergraduate institution (PUI). As defined here, undergraduate research does not exclude graduate students in business, law or other graduate programs or students in the arts; it does give undergraduate students the kinds of experiences and opportunities most students only get in graduate school. A by-product of UG research is enhanced faculty research and research outcomes.

Evidence (or potential sources of evidence) suggesting the need to address this topic [optional]: A well developed network of elite PUIs exists, as well as two national organizations (the Council on Undergraduate Research and the National Council on Undergraduate Research). Experience and research at those institutions has demonstrated the many benefits to students of an UG research program. Recruitment, retention, and admission to graduate schools and professional schools are some of the more obvious benefits.

Current and planned activities at Loyola related to this topic [optional]: **Here at Loyola, like most universities, undergraduate research is most concentrated in the sciences. However, other departments and colleges can point to student journals, publications, and presentations. The vision of a university that has successfully institutionalized student research, includes incentives for faculty, student research in all units of the university, summer research projects, support for student research, support for student travel to deliver papers and performances and a day set aside to celebrate student research achievements through presentations. The national organizations mentioned above can provide guidance to Loyola in the form of workshops and consultants on the road to institutionalizing student research.**

17. “Research and Technology”

Proposal due date: Monday, November 15, 2004

Submit electronically to dgoforth@loyno.edu

Or, if you prefer, submit a paper copy to David Estes, 242 Marquette, Box 7

View proposed topics at the QEP Web site—<http://www.loyno.edu/sacs/qep/>

Title and brief description of QEP topic: “Research and Technology”

A credit-bearing, hands-on course designed to equip students with powerful tools to master research, writing and presentation skills. Students will learn to define, access, manage, integrate, evaluate, create, and communicate information. This is not only necessary for academic success, but also to prepare students for their roles as leaders and professionals in a global and technological society.

The success of this course is dependent on strong collaboration between library and teaching faculty to tailor this program to the curriculum (e.g. First-Year Experience, Common Curriculum, academic major).

Proposal submitted by [optional]: Alicia Hansen, Beth Orgeron, Brad Petitfils, Deborah Poole

Brief explanation of how the topic is “creative and vital to the long-term improvement of student learning” at Loyola: A primary purpose of the information literacy program is to enable students to achieve information literacy competency as defined by the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) Standards for Information Literacy Competency for Higher Education and International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) National Education Technology Standards for Students.

See:

- <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/informationliteracycompetency.htm>
- http://cnets.iste.org/students/s_stands.html

Upon the completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Access needed information effectively and efficiently (use online databases, understand the organization of information).
- Use information ethically and legally (demonstrate an ability to create a bibliography and cite resources used, recognize and use copyrighted media appropriately).
- Practice the responsible use of technology systems, information, and software.
- Use telecommunications to collaborate, publish, and interact with peers, experts, and other audiences.

- Evaluate and select new information resources and technological innovations based on the appropriateness for specific tasks.
- Use a variety of media and formats to communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences (understand the importance of utilizing media in presentations in order to target various learning styles, create presentations that incorporate PowerPoint, Web pages, and other types of media such as scanned images, charts and graphs, and clip art).
- Use technology for solving problems and making informed decisions (research topics using library resources, understanding the impact of media as a tool for communicating ideas).
- Develop positive attitudes toward technology use that support lifelong learning, collaboration, productivity and the pursuit of personal interests.

Evidence (or potential sources of evidence) suggesting the need to address this topic [optional]: We can't ignore that the millennial student lives in a world dominated by media: television, Internet, file sharing, cell phones, and online chat. It's a challenge for librarians and teachers to prepare their students to navigate information sources and make discriminating decisions in this media-driven world.

Many of our students come to Loyola comfortable with computers; however, we've observed that their skills are limited to basic web browsing. With millions of web pages available, we're swimming in information, much of it not suitable for academic research. It seems that students do not have the skills to find, manage, or synthesize information, and as a result are overwhelmed by the simplest research assignments.

Current and planned activities at Loyola related to this topic [optional]: **Several activities between the library and teaching faculty illustrate the integration of information literacy into the curriculum. These are only a few examples:**

- **Electronic portfolio creation – departments across campus are beginning to experiment with this summative tool that tracks student progress throughout their undergraduate career. In Education and Counseling, students are using e-Portfolios as a type of annotated electronic resume in job interviews.**
- **Authentic assessment via web page creation assignments, e.g. Michelle Johnston (CBA), Tim Cahill (A&S), Ed McCaughan (A&S), etc. Students learn how to do research, and how to design and publish web pages that present their findings; in CBA, students are assigned a local small business (chosen by the Small Business Development Center) that does not currently have a website, are then divided into teams and compete against one another to build the winning website.**
- **English 122, Professor Jennifer Shimek, dedicates a week of classes to engaging students in learning how to use the library's online catalog and information resources (such as databases,**

indexes, and evaluating web sites). Working in groups, students learn search techniques and become familiar with navigating various media to accomplish their information needs. Information literacy skills are applied to researching and analyzing a contemporary issue.

- **Cells and Heredity, Professor Maureen Shuh.** Students were required to view a web tutorial created using RoboDemo software that showed how to find scholarly articles in the biological sciences. After viewing it on Blackboard, students were required to prepare bibliographies of scholarly research using appropriate citation format. Librarians checked students' work before they submitted their assignments to Dr. Shuh.
- **Technology Tuesdays/Thursdays:** open clinic time in the library with an Instructional Technologist. Students independently seek assistance with technology, e.g. PowerPoint, web page design, Excel, video production, scanning.
- **Presentation equipment installations increasing in classroom pool and stated intentions to add more** (see UPT Objectives, 2004-2005 and Academic Affairs Strategic Plan); additional equipment installations in library and departmental classrooms; increasing demand for portable multimedia use by faculty and students (data projectors, laptops, digital cameras, video cameras--see Media Services Annual Report, 2004).
- **The Dean of Libraries and Library Instruction Coordinator visited each dean with a plan to implement information literacy as a two-hour, pass/fail, course that would integrate research methodologies with technology skills. It would impart the "how to's" of research, evaluation of information and bibliography creation through various technology projects.**

18. Fostering Global Citizenship from a Jesuit Perspective

Proposal due date: Monday, November 15, 2004

Submit electronically to dgoforth@loyno.edu

Or, if you prefer, submit a paper copy to David Estes, 242 Marquette, Box 7

View proposed topics at the QEP Web site—<http://www.loyno.edu/sacs/qep/>

Title and brief description of QEP topic: Fostering Global Citizenship from a Jesuit Perspective

To become an effective citizen of the world, one must first become an effective citizen at home. Learning to truly appreciate the world view of others goes far beyond mere tolerance, and requires inquiry, examination and immersion into the historical, philosophical, and cultural perspectives of the panoply of diversity among people and traditions found at home and abroad. This QEP proposal seeks to focus and ground this inquiry and examination within the context and ideals of Jesuit higher education including, but not limited to, linking faith with justice, special concern for the poor and oppressed, commitment to service, and learning from experience. As contemplatives in action, the campus would have the opportunity to have access to the City of New Orleans and the surrounding region, unique in its history, location and development, and to fully utilize its cultural and educational resources.

Proposal submitted by [optional]: The Division of Student Affairs

Brief explanation of how the topic is “creative and vital to the long-term improvement of student learning” at Loyola: To designate "The City as a Classroom" creates a host of unique learning environments and learning communities for students throughout the spectrum of the curriculum and allows students to put theory into practice. This creates an ideal environment in which Academic Affairs and Students Affairs can work together in creative partnership to build a seamless learning environment inside and outside the classroom. This can also create a focus for Business Affairs and Institutional Advancement to open new doors in grant writing, foundation giving and other partnerships that, in turn, may result in strengthening all of the university's programs.

Evidence (or potential sources of evidence) suggesting the need to address this topic [optional]: A cursory look at local, national and international events strongly suggests that a polarizing dualistic world view is the prevailing trend. (e.g. "red states v. blue states", "our values v. their values") By uniting in our commitment to engage in experiences and utilize pedagogies that foster critical thinking, reflection, civil discourse and personal integrity, without rancor, we can help to set in motion within the individual, a life-long commitment to learning through inquiry, thoughtful examination and reflection.

Current and planned activities at Loyola related to this topic [optional]:

- 1. Cultural immersion/study abroad opportunities: locally, nationally and internationally**
- 2. Service learning programs involving the local community and beyond**
- 3. "Global perspectives" addressed throughout the curriculum and in co-curricular venues**
- 4. Student leadership training programs and retreats**
- 5. Hosting of international conference and study abroad programs**
- 6. Increased focus on the mechanisms and skill development necessary in cultivating civil discourse such as : critical thinking, clarity in the written and spoken word, listening skills, confrontation skills and ethics**
- 7. Greater knowledge and utilization of Jesuit pedagogies**
- 8. Suitable for potential tie-ins to Freshman Year Experience programs and activities**
- 9. Model UN programs**

19. Critical/Creative Thinking in Action: Strengthening Student-Centered Learning

Proposal due date: Monday, November 15, 2004

Submit electronically to dgoforth@loyno.edu

Or, if you prefer, submit a paper copy to David Estes, 242 Marquette, Box 7

View proposed topics at the QEP Web site—<http://www.loyno.edu/sacs/qep/>

Title and brief description of QEP topic:

Critical/Creative Thinking in Action: Strengthening Student-Centered Learning in Departments and Programs

Increasingly, students attend (or leave) a university because of a specific program or major and hope to be engaged in that major early in their college career. They also expect the college experience at a small liberal arts institution such as Loyola to be focused on the student with learner-centered classes different from the traditional "lecture to the masses" format. However, students at Loyola have complained about the rigor of classes taken early in their career as well as a lack of involvement in their chosen field of study. These criticisms could be addressed by increasing the number of student-centered experiences both in common curriculum and in early major courses. Loyola could move toward national preeminence by increasing rigor and focusing on a student learning outcome that all programs, from the the sciences to the humanities to the common curriculum, could share: Improving critical and creative thinking through student-centered experiences. Programs supported by this QEP could include:

- Developing student-centered classes, within the major and in the common curriculum which break from the traditional lecture format
- Continued support for service-learning projects that engage students in the community, provide for reflection on their experiences, and promote the Jesuit ideals of the university
- Expansion of undergraduate research programs which allow students to become engaged in their field of interest
- Development of first-year programs within departments to engage freshmen eager to participate in their chosen field of study

We envision this QEP to be driven by initiatives developed by academic programs within the university as there are many benefits to a discipline- or program-based approach.

- 1) The QEP is inclusive. By strengthening a universal student outcome, all academic units can participate (including the common curriculum, women's studies, honors, WAC, etc).
- 2) The QEP provides motivation for wide participation. Because this QEP deals with discipline-specific opportunities, faculty should be interested in participating for the good of their majors.
- 3) This approach can increase Loyola's national reputation. By developing outstanding programs of study, admission counselors can recruit students who are interested in studying these specific content areas.
- 4) This approach would focus on one of Loyola's central goals. We advertise as a "critical thinking" university. Encouraging this skill through student-centered learning within each major would demonstrate commitment to the university's mission.

To manage this QEP we propose that the Loyola Leadership team institute an RFP system where departments, programs, and academic units can propose projects to increase student-centered learning. These programs will manifest themselves in different ways depending on the emphases and strengths of the department. For instance, the departments in the sciences might focus on undergraduate research opportunities, English might focus on freshman writing seminars, and social science departments might focus on community-based experiential learning and social justice.

Proposal submitted by [optional]:

Elizabeth Yost Hammer, Psychology

Thom Spence, Chemistry

Brief explanation of how the topic is “creative and vital to the long-term improvement of student learning” at Loyola:

Every department has critical or creative thinking as a goal or student-learning outcome of its major. This QEP would provide support for this outcome to be strengthened through discipline-specific and faculty-endorsed student-learning experiences. This outcome could be assessed through each department's proposed SACS assessment plan.

Evidence (or potential sources of evidence) suggesting the need to address this topic [optional]:

From the recent survey of Arts and Science freshmen who did NOT return to Loyola, many mentioned that their decision was because they were not satisfied with their specific course of study. Further, admissions officers are always looking for unique characteristics of majors to use when recruiting. This QEP would encourage strengthening of specific majors. There is evidence that, at least early in students careers, there is a lack of rigor in classroom experiences and a lack of engagement with the student's department.

Current and planned activities at Loyola related to this topic [optional]:

Currently there are programs that support faculty engaging in innovative teaching (e.g., PIES). This QEP would allow a focus for these initiatives centered around the common student-learning outcome of critical/creative thinking.

20. Improving Accessibility in Academic Technology

Proposal due date: Monday, November 15, 2004

Submit electronically to dgoforth@loyno.edu

Or, if you prefer, submit a paper copy to David Estes, 242 Marquette, Box 7

View proposed topics at the QEP Web site—<http://www.loyno.edu/sacs/qep/>

Title and brief description of QEP topic: Improving Accessibility in Academic Technology

This initiative meets the criteria of "creative and vital" solutions for "... long-term improvement of student learning".

The process would involve Jesuit values, supporting freedom for all students to develop the whole range of potential and talents and to reach for excellence in a caring, interdisciplinary learning environment,

It is "an issue of substance ..., expected to lead to observable results." Students are empowered and excellence is supported.

Proposal submitted by [optional]: Sheila A. Sullivan

Brief explanation of how the topic is “creative and vital to the long-term improvement of student learning” at Loyola: Accessibility issues extend beyond building codes – particularly in an academic library. Accessibility issues could be taken into account when planning and implementing computing and other technology resources within the academic community.

These modifications are inexpensive, requiring only authorizations to have them added to existing and future computing resources.

Students with subtle computer input issues (such as carpal tunnel syndrome), can be "mainstreamed" with little or no interruption of the research and learning process. With device drivers and other capabilities integrated seamlessly into classroom, lab and library computing, the experience for the student is purposely enriched.

Evidence (or potential sources of evidence) suggesting the need to address this topic [optional]: These provisions meet demonstrated needs of students, and reflects a concern in students' well-being, future health and capabilities. They assist and protect students' basic health, limiting long-term damage precipitated by the requirements of constant, daily computer use, so prevalent in society today.

Current and planned activities at Loyola related to this topic [optional]: Disability Services has been working with students to address their needs on a broader scale, outside of what can be supplied by the Academic Recourse Center. Needs have been isolated and communications and implementations have been addressed in the Visual Art Department and have been begun in the Monroe Library.

This initiative, the seeds of which have been sown, can serve as a shining example of successful institutional implementation and organization for long-term benefits of its students. Loyola, and our excellent library and labs, would enhance and elevate the level of academic excellence, and continue to serve as a leader in technology in academia.

Speech-to-text and pen-input capability, provided on several laptops, would provide mobile flexibility and greater accessibility for students, particularly for research.

A general understanding of the underlying issues of ergonomics and the long-term affects of protracted computing input complications, both for the "traditional" and mature student is required. Loyola has the technology available; the concern is the purposeful, broad implementation of the technology throughout the online resources.

The generation now in college has grown up with increasing access to daily use of computers – for academic purposes, daily communications (e-mail) and video games – all of which require constant repetitive hand use in positions not usually ergonomic.

Computing may prove difficult for mature students, particularly if their employment either requires computer use or other repetitive tasks.

Thousands of students “could face a future fraught with debilitating injuries as computers become central to their lives....”

These reports will shed light on the issues involved:

<http://www.wired.com/news/culture/0,1284,21672,00.html>

<http://www.wired.com/news/culture/0,1284,20897,00.html>

<http://www.wired.com/news/culture/0,1284,21777,00.html>

Technology

<http://www.wired.com/news/politics/0,1283,8571,00.html>

Medical

http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761557098/Carpal_Tunnel_Syndrome.html

http://www.assh.org/Template.cfm?Section=Carpal_Tunnel_Syndrome

21. World Civilizations I&II

Department of History

The department of history seeks to continue its preeminence as one of the finest World Civilizations centers in the country. Loyola was one of the first history departments to require World Civilization in its core curriculum. The Department of History was one of the first departments to publish a World Civilizations website and an online journal. Unfortunately, recent enrollment trends have made World Civilizations courses large (45 students) and unwieldy. This trend works against Objective 1-K of the University's Draft Strategic Plan which includes an action plan to "Decrease the Student/Faculty ratio from 12/1 (AY 2001-2002) to that achieved by the top quartile reference group schools (approximately 11/1) by AY 2006-2007). Increased class size has also had a significant impact on student satisfaction (student evaluations of teaching of World Civilization courses indicate that students are not as satisfied with their World Civilizations experience as they are with their departmental courses). The sheer size of the World Civilizations classes also makes it difficult for professors to include a significant writing component in their courses. This difficulty is especially troubling to the history department because history, like other humanities courses such as English, is a literary field. The department is eager to decrease class sizes from 45 to an average of 30 in order to foster higher levels of student satisfaction and retention and to include more meaningful writing assignments that are consistent to the department's mission to foster critical reading and writing as a component of its classes.

Accordingly, the history department requests funding and permission to hire two additional extraordinary faculty (each teaching a twelve-hour load) to reduce the size of World Civilizations classes to foster a better student faculty ratio and to provide professors greater latitude to make their courses more writing intensive.

Proposed budget: \$25,000? + benefits X 2= \$50,000? + benefits.

22. History Department Image Bank

Department of History

The Department of History has been one of the most active leaders in exploring effective ways of using technology in the classroom since the PC revolution. In 1996, the department spearheaded the drive to build the Humanities Lab in order to provide much needed internet access (at the time there were only 7 public terminals connected to the internet on campus) and to create levels of student and faculty expertise in technological applications equal to the cutting edge of the discipline. It was the first department at the university to write a technology plan as one of its strategic planning documents. The department was also one of the first in the university to develop its own webpage and was the first to create individual webpages for its entire faculty. In creating its webpage, the department began construction of a web-based image bank that was the first of its kind in the nation. In its early stage of development, the construction of the image bank was halted as web design responsibility and resources were channeled to institutional advancement and IT.

In the ensuing years, individual members of the faculty have assumed the responsibility of developing their own image libraries and incorporating them in Power Point presentations for their classes. Two faculty members have been especially active in this regard, Fr. Robert Gerlich and Dr. Michael Ross. Gerlich's image bank focuses on images useful to World Civilizations and the European and non-European electives required in our curriculum. Ross's images are exclusively devoted to the U. S. History required courses. Currently, the image banks are not easy to share with other members of the department because they exist in Power Point lectures developed for each instructor's particular courses. Accordingly, we propose that these two professors receive a one-semester course release from all three of their classes to incorporate their images into a set of cd-roms (one for World and one for American history) and to reproduce the cds for distribution among the faculty. Additionally, we ask for funding to compensate Dr. Ross and Fr. Gerlich (\$500 each) to conduct faculty development seminars for the history department faculty.

Budget:

\$12,500 x 2 = \$25,000?? for full-time extraordinary faculty replacements for one-semester.

\$1,000 for cds and cd reproduction.

\$1,000 for faculty development seminar

Total = \$27,000

23. Development of a component of reflection on all experience-based learning

Proposal due date: Monday, November 15, 2004

Submit electronically to dgoforth@loyno.edu

Or, if you prefer, submit a paper copy to David Estes, 242 Marquette, Box 7

View proposed topics at the QEP Web site—<http://www.loyno.edu/sacs/qep/>

Title and brief description of QEP topic:

TITLE: Development of a component of reflection on all experience-based learning.

I think Loyola is already in the process of developing a number of initiatives around the concept of experience-based learning. These include study abroad, immersion experiences in other cultures, various internships, service learning, and a variety of forms of community-based learning. But the real educational value of these experiences comes in the learning that takes place, and that happens through the process of reflection. Without reflection, the "experiences" provide nice experiences or provide a service, but are not truly educational. With reflection, they have the potential to open up new ways of thinking and understanding, change perspectives, and truly transform people.

Proposal submitted by [optional]: Si Hendry, S.J.

Brief explanation of how the topic is “creative and vital to the long-term improvement of student learning” at Loyola:

I think that the real educational value of the varieties of experience-based learning that our students undergo consists not so much in the experience itself as in the learning that comes from it. Whether the "experience" is study abroad, an experience of immersion in another culture, an internship, service learning, or some other type of community service or community-based learning, the student reaps a benefit to the extent that there is some learning taking place. This happens through the process of reflection upon the experience. There is also a long tradition of Ignatian and Jesuit emphasis on the process of reflection. Furthermore, there is an element of social justice learning that takes place through experience-based learning that only happens through the process of reflection

In order for this process to be developed, it will also require faculty to reflect on their own experiences and to learn to help students to reflect on theirs. So there is an element of faculty development involved in this.

This reflection initiative would affect all academic aspects of the university that utilize any form of experience-based learning. It could also affect student affairs if students were also challenged to reflect on larger issues involved in their extra-curricular activities, as was recently done in the reflection sessions in Wolves on the Prowl, and the Justice Council's workshop "everyday justice."

Evidence (or potential sources of evidence) suggesting the need to address this topic [optional]:

Current and planned activities at Loyola related to this topic [optional]: