A+CE

Academic Achievement through Community Engagement

UHD

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

"Prepare Students to
Think Critically about Community Issues"

2016

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I. Executive Summary

I.   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of Houston-Downtown is four-year urban university with limited graduate programs and a diverse student population reflecting the demography of the region. While the University ended open admissions in 2014 with the introduction of admissions standards, its mission remains focused on providing Houstonians with access to strong academic programs and career preparation and on serving the needs of the local community. In developing its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), the University sought to fulfill these aspects of its mission.

Entitled "A$^+$CE: Academic Achievement through Community Engagement," the University of Houston-Downtown's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) emerged from a two-year inclusive planning process involving careful research, campus-wide deliberations, and consultations with experts. Aligned with the mission, vision, and strategic plan of UHD, A$^+$CE is a curricular initiative to develop critical thinkers by embedding strategies for improving critical thinking through community engagement within selected lower-division courses, including online classes and many Core Curriculum courses. With its focus on critical thinking, the initiative responds to internal UHD data on areas of student academic performance needing improvement, an internal faculty survey on general education competencies, national surveys on employer needs, and the Texas Core Curriculum learning outcomes. The initiative allows UHD to capitalize on its strength in Community Engagement in order to help students develop crucial academic skills. A$^+$CE thus highlights the UHD mission to provide students with "strong academic and career preparation" and to "address the needs and advance the development of the region." The community-engagement context demonstrates to students that the University honors the communities of which they are a part and provides them with educational skills to improve their own lives as well as those of others in their communities. The A$^+$CE Quality Enhancement Plan articulates the commitment to prepare UHD students with the critical analysis tools required not only for their academic success, but also for their meaningful participation as citizens of their home communities and of the larger global society.

A$^+$CE will be implemented from Fall 2016 and will continue from AY 2017 through AY2021. The A$^+$CE initiative involves the following components:

- **A$^+$CE-designated courses**. The courses are selected Core Curriculum courses and/or courses open to students in their first or second year They must include at least one the A$^+$CE Student Learning Outcomes and include an A$^+$CE Signature assignment. Instructors of individual courses may apply for the A$^+$CE designation, and a number of multiple-section courses have received blanket pre-approval for the designation, including the UHD 13XX freshman seminars, ENG 1302 Composition II, PSY 1303 Introduction to Psychology, and BIO 1310 Human Biology, among others.

- **A$^+$CE Student Learning Outcomes.** Each A$^+$CE course will have at least one of the following outcomes:
  SLO 1: Students will be able to analyze community issues with respect to different perspectives, theories, or solutions.
  SLO 2: Students will be able to identify or design creative strategies to address an aspect of a community issue.

- **Faculty Development and Support.** The A$^+$CE QEP will include a number of faculty development activities and resources to help faculty integrate effective strategies for teaching critical thinking and effective Signature Assignments. These activities will include expanded faculty teaching circles, an annual faculty "Big Read" focusing on

critical-thinking, critical thinking workshops, and funds for attending pedagogical conferences.

- **Assessment and Evaluation.** Direct assessment measurement strategies will include assessment of the embedded Signature Assignments as well as results from the Collegiate Learning Assessment + (CLA+). Indirect assessment measurement strategies include student responses on the IDEA Student Ratings Instrument for each A⁺CE-designated course and data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).

- **Milestone Celebrations and Engaged Scholar Recognitions.** As students complete milestones throughout their first two years, they will receive digital badges on their Comprehensive Student Records expanded transcript; students who have completed four A⁺CE-designated courses while maintaining a required GPA will also be recognized as "Engaged Scholars" at an award celebration.

The program will be administered out of the Provost's Office by the A⁺CE Faculty Director, with the assistance of the A⁺CE Assistant Director, the A⁺CE Advisory Committee and the A⁺CE Implementation Committee. These two committees are comprised of the appropriate stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, and community members. In addition, various aspects of the initiative will be supported by the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CCESL) and the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE).

To carry out this initiative, UHD has committed a budget of $1,996,946 for personnel, assessment activities, faculty development, communications/promotions, and general administrative expenses related to the A⁺CE QEP's implementation through AY2021. In addition to funds allocated specifically to A⁺CE, a number of existing resources will be used to support A⁺CE, including the Dykes Library, the Writing and Reading Center, and Information Technology (the Comprehensive Student Record software).

II. The Process used to Develop the QEP

II.   THE PROCESS USED TO DEVELOP THE QEP

UHD Institutional Profile

Situated in the third largest metropolitan area in the United States, University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) is a federally qualified Hispanic-Serving Institution and Minority-Serving Institution and is one of the most ethnically diverse liberal arts institutions in the Southwest, with a student body that is 43% Hispanic, 26% African American, 18% White, and 10% Asian/Pacific Islander. UHD's rich diversity accurately reflects the Houston community, which includes a wealth of cultures, languages, and nationalities. As one of four component universities within the University of Houston System, UHD offers an array of baccalaureate programs and a limited number of masters programs. While primarily a transfer institution, UHD also welcomes some 900 new freshmen each fall. Approximately 61% of its 14,439 students receiving some form of need-based federal financial aid. Approximately 70% of UHD's students are first-generation college students. In 2014, UHD end its open-admissions policy and implemented more selective admissions standard, but it retains its fundamental commitment to provide Houstonians access to quality, affordable academic programs and career preparation.

The University also engages with the Houston community to address its needs and has forged robust community partnerships over the years. Indeed, a symbiotic relationship exists between the University and the city, which requires an informed and engaged citizenry to maintain its prosperity. UHD was the only institution in Houston and one of only five institutions in Texas to earn the 2015 Community Engagement Classification by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

The University's mission statement identifies the University's programmatic latitude, its focus on academic and career preparation, its dedication to diversity and inclusivity, its strong commitment to serving the students and the Houston Metropolitan area as a whole, and its tripartite commitment to teaching excellence, service, and scholarly research.

Mission Statement
The University of Houston-Downtown is a comprehensive four-year university offering bachelor's and selected master's degree programs and providing strong academic and career preparation as well as life-long learning opportunities. Located in the heart of the city, the University reflects the diversity of the Greater Houston Area, and through its academic programs, engages with the community to address the needs and advance the development of the region. UHD is an inclusive community dedicated to integrating teaching, service and scholarly research to develop students' talents and prepare them for success in a dynamic global society.

To fulfill its mission, the University of Houston-Downtown has developed a strategic plan to meet six over-arching goals, including student success; student access; programmatic advancement; research, scholarship, and creative activities; external partnerships; and administrative and infrastructure investment. Within these goals, specific objectives relate to enhancing academic achievement, expanding community engagement programs, and strengthening community partnerships.

Development of the QEP

Mindful of its mission to provide students access to strong academic programs and to provide Houston with an educated and engaged citizenry, the University spent two years developing a mission-appropriate QEP to improve student learning. Over the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 Academic Years, UHD engaged the wider university community in selecting its QEP topic, Academic Achievement through Community Engagement (A⁺CE), which focuses on developing critical thinking skills through engagement with community issues. The development process involved two phases: an initial phase of exploration and an advanced phase of formulation, development, and planning facilitated by the QEP Steering Committee.

Initial Exploration

Throughout 2014, the University had a number of activities to develop the QEP by exploring a range of possible topics focused on improving student learning. These activities fostered university-wide participation in the topic-selection process.

- **The Leadership Retreat, August 15-17, 2014**. In Summer 2014, the long process began with the identification of four initial areas of focus indicated by programmatic and institutional assessment data. These topics were presented to faculty, staff, and student leaders attending the Leadership Retreat held August 15-17, 2014:

  - *Barrier Courses* are those with high enrollment and a high failure rate. UHD's 2006 QEP focused on three barrier courses and there was ongoing concern by faculty about additional courses with consistently high attrition rates beyond the initial three focused on in the 2006 QEP. Focusing on barrier courses at the 2000 and 3000 level in the new QEP would allow capitalizing on previous successful efforts.
  - *High-Impact Practices (HIPs)* have been proven to foster enhanced student learning, resulting in increased retention and graduation rates. Currently at UHD, HIPs tend to be offered primarily in upper-division courses. Faculty were interested in integrating HIPS practices into lower-division courses as a strategy to increase student success and persistence.
  - *Online Education* is a growing area of enrollment, but course quality and student achievement of outcomes analogous to those in face-to-face courses remain concerns. In response to faculty concerns about student success in online courses, the University established a faculty sub-committee for online learning in the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence. These faculty were interested in exploring strategies to increase retention and student success in online courses.
  - *Writing and Critical Thinking* were identified as crucial to student learning by faculty members across all disciplines. These issues go beyond grammar and writing mechanics and constitute a pervasive, ongoing problem, as evidenced by both internal and nationally-normed assessment data.

- **Appointment of the QEP Topic Selection Committee, Fall 2014.** President Flores appointed the QEP Topic Selection Committee (see Appendix C) and charged its members with soliciting broad input from across the University in order to identify the most appropriate QEP topic consistent with the UHD mission, vision, and strategic plan.

- **Solicitation of QEP Proposals Fall 2014**. The committee solicited the university community for QEP proposals, and in addition to expressions of interest in the four topics above, the committee received one additional topic submission from faculty:

- o *"Community-University Partners: Transforming Neighborhoods, Changing Lives,"* which proposed improving writing, communication, critical thinking, and social responsibility through community engagement. Linking with the Texas Core Curriculum learning outcomes, this topic would create opportunities for students to examine the underlying causes of social issues in order to create innovative solutions.

- **Presentations to Faculty Senate and greater University Community, Fall 2014**. After looking at the larger assessment data bearing upon each of the five potential topics, the QEP Selection Committee presented them to Faculty Senate in Fall 2014. The presentations were recorded and made available to University constituents on the QEP Topic Selection Website, with multiple emails and other communications to the University community inviting them to visit the website, view the videos, and provide comments electronically. The Selection Committee received twenty comments on the proposed topics; solicited comments and members of the Selection Committee expressed similar concern with the breadth of the topics. The committee included this feedback in their subsequent report to the President.

- *What is a QEP?* **Video Presentation, Fall 2014**. Provost Ed Hugetz and then-Senate President Susan Henney recorded a video named "What is a QEP?" to inform the University of the meaning and purpose of the QEP. A link to this video, available on the QEP topic selection website, was also emailed to the university community.

- **Focus Groups, Fall 2014**. The Selection Committee also conducted for each QEP topic a focus group, comprised of staff, students, and faculty from each academic college. A total of 51 people participated in the focus groups, including 22 faculty, 15 staff, and 12 students.

- **Development of Potential Student Learning Outcomes, December 2014**. In anticipation of finalizing its recommendations, the Topic Selection Committee finalized conducted exercises to develop solid, measurable learning outcomes for each QEP topic.

- **Topic Selection Committee Report, December 2014.** On December 12, 2014, the QEP Topic Selection Committee submitted its report to President Flores with an executive summary for each of the five proposed topic areas, organizing the information by the number of votes. The committee voted to recommend two topics: (1) a streamlined version "Community-University Partners: Transforming Neighborhoods, Changing Lives" that focused on community engagement and writing and (2) Writing/Critical Thinking.

- **President's Email to the University, December 12, 2014**. President Flores forwarded a link to the report to the UHD community, soliciting feedback by January 16, 2015**.**

- **President's Announcement of a Provisional Topic.** On January 20, 2015, the President sent a university-wide email proposing the provision selection of "Community Engagement and Writing" as the QEP topic.

QEP Development and Planning Process

From January 2015 through January 2016, a new formed QEP Steering Committee worked to develop the "Community Engagement and Writing" topic, which evolved over the year into a plan focused on developing students' critical thinking skills through engagement in community issues. A number of activities contributed to the evolution of the plan.

- **Appointment of the QEP Steering Committee**. On January 22, 2015, President Flores appointed the QEP Steering Committee (see Appendix D) , which met with President Flores on January 26, 2015, to receive the charge that included developing the Quality Enhancement Plan. President Flores met in early February 2015 with the academic colleges and other stakeholders to present an overview of the QEP. To facilitate development of the QEP, the Steering Committee created a number of subcommittees drawing on the enthusiasm and expertise of faculty and staff. These include the Professional Development, Marketing, Data and Assessment, Vision and Learning Objectives (LOs), Literature Review/Best Practices, Curricular and Co-Curricular (later Curricular Committee only due to change in focus), Organization Structure and Timeline, and Budget subcommittees.

- **Consultations with SACSCOC Vice President**. A QEP outline with a tentative budget was submitted to Dr. Charles A. Taylor, Vice President of Southern Association of Colleges and Schools/Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), on February 16, 2015. Development of the QEP continued with the subcommittees focusing on their areas, reporting regularly to the Steering Committee to ensure broad-based involvement of the UHD community. The QEP Steering Committee conferred with the SACSCOC Vice President Taylor during his campus visit March 5, 2015, and in response to his comments, they decided to narrow the focus for a revised version. On May 22, 2015, a QEP update was emailed to the entire UHD community. During the summer of 2015, members of the Steering Committee developed a draft document based on the work of the subcommittees and the regular feedback of stakeholders.

- **Communication with Colleagues at Other Institutions**. In addition to conferring with members of the UHD community throughout the planning and development process, QEP Steering Committee conferred with colleagues from other institutions about the QEP. Committee members attended relevant sessions at the SACSCOC Annual Meeting in Nashville, Tennessee, in December 2014 and in Houston, Texas in December 2015. Members of the QEP Steering Committee held a conference call on March 27, 2015, with the leadership of the Radford University QEP to discuss Radford's experience honing their plan.

- **SACSCOC Summer Institute July 2015**. UHD sent a team of five to the SACSCOC Summer Institute. Sessions on assessment in particular led the Steering Committee to reconsider the plan to have the QEP extend throughout the undergraduate experience and the University's capacity to implement, assess, and sustain a project of that breadth. The Steering Committee decided to focus the QEP on full-time, first-time-in-college students in the first two years of the baccalaureate degree to help enhance foundational skills.

- *Communication of Revised Plan.* During the summer of 2015, the members of the QEP Steering Committee continued to meet and hone the plan based on information

gleaned at the SACSCOC Summer Institute, on research, and on university feedback. The Steering Committee chair and co-chairs held meetings with stakeholders such as selected chairs and coordinators to discuss the options for incorporating community engagement in Core courses and to encourage participation of the various disciplines. These discussions were particularly valuable in identifying concerns or misunderstandings about the QEP, prompting the Steering Committee to clarify the key concepts and to remain cognizant of workload issues. Aligning the QEP with aspects of the Core Curriculum minimized some of the concerns. In early Fall 2015 semester, the Steering Committee chair, co-chairs, and Director of Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning addressed faculty at college and department meetings as well as Faculty Senate. Feedback from these gatherings assisted in refining the plan. The Steering Committee leadership also made a QEP slide presentation with a Q&A session in September at President Flores' 2015 UHD Leadership Retreat, which was attended by 100 faculty, students, staff, and administrators.

- **SACSCOC 2015 Annual Meeting**. Taking advantage of the SACSCOC 2015 Annual Meeting held locally in Houston in December 2015, UHD sent 65 faculty and professional staff members. The Steering Committee's subsequent discussions about the information presented in the QEP sessions and consultations with experts concerning the evolving QEP contributed to their decision to emphasize critical thinking, which had emerged in discussions with faculty as the General Education competency that most needed emphasis. The Committee chose to retain a community-engagement framework to provide opportunities for the students to improve their skills as critical thinkers, especially in lower-division courses.

- **Faculty Senate and Student Government Association Approval**. After the QEP leadership's final presentation to the Senate on January 19, 2016, the Senate unanimously passed a resolution approving the final form of the A[+]CE on February 2, 2016. The QEP leadership also met with Executive leadership of the Student Government Association on February 2, 2016, and the Council of Student Organizations on February 5, 2016; at these meetings, student representatives confirmed their support for the A[+]CE.

III. Identification of the Topic

III.   IDENTIFICATION OF THE TOPIC

UHD's QEP, "A⁺CE: Academic Achievement through Community Engagement," is consistent with the University's vision: "The University of Houston-Downtown will be a premier city university engaging every student in high-impact educational experiences and ensuring that students graduate with 21st century skills." The research literature on such skills identifies critical thinking as essential to academic achievement, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board—the governing body of Higher Education in the State of Texas—has established critical thinking as one of the six objectives of the Texas Core Curriculum. The University has chosen to capitalize on its record of success in community engagement efforts and use engagement in community issues as a vehicle for students' acquisition of critical thinking skills. This plan will deepen student learning in intentional ways, increase persistence, and provide students with the tools and skills to be more engaged in the University and in the community. Furthermore, UHD has an already established infrastructure conducive to experiential learning, including faculty development, to support this endeavor. UHD has multiple centers in place to foster student and faculty engagement with the community in order to hone students' critical thinking skills.

QEP Scope

Entitled "A⁺CE: Academic Achievement through Community Engagement," UHD's QEP focuses on enhancing undergraduates' critical thinking, particularly that of first-time-in-college students. Students entering in Fall 2016 and in succeeding years will be offered a set of critical-thinking focused curricular experiences in designated lower-division courses. This topic enables UHD to build on its strength in community engagement in order to provide experiences in which students can develop and apply critical thinking skills to social problems as part of the curriculum of A⁺CE-designated Core courses. A⁺CE-designated Core courses are open to all lower-division students.

The Importance of Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is an intellectual capacity that undergirds nearly all skills vital to academic success, including writing, quantitative, and empirical research skills. Ennis's (1993) encompassing definition of critical thinking as "reasonable reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or what to do" points to critical thinking as the *sine qua non* of intellectual activity. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) has identified critical thinking as one core objective in the Texas Core Curriculum required of all undergraduate students in Texas state-supported colleges and universities, mandating critical thinking as a learning outcome in every foundational component area of the Core. In its description of the Texas Core Curriculum (fully implemented in 2014), the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board defines critical thinking as "creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information" (2011a). This definition aligns with the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Creative Thinking VALUE rubric and the Inquiry & Analysis VALUE rubric. In these rubrics, AAC&U defines Creative Thinking as "both the capacity to combine or synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of thinking, reacting, and working in an imaginative way characterized by a high degree of innovation, divergent thinking, and risk taking"; inquiry as "a systematic process of exploring issues, objects or works through the collection and analysis of evidence that results in informed conclusions or judgments"; and defines analysis as "the process of

breaking complex topics or issues into parts to gain a better understanding of them." Through its *A⁺CE* QEP, UHD seeks to improve student learning by ensuring that students develop the analytical and creative aspects of critical thinking as a foundation for their academic success.

Factors in Choosing Critical-Thinking Emphasis

A number of factors indicated the need to focus enhance students' critical thinking skills. These influences helped to determine the shape and scope of the *A⁺CE* plan.

Faculty Senate Spring 2015 Survey
As part of a review of UHD's General Education Program, the Faculty Senate conducted a General Education "Beyond the Core" Survey in Spring 2015. Of UHD's 317 full-time faculty members, 163 (51.4%) responded. When asked to rate the importance of 15 general education competencies currently incorporated in UHD's General Education program, faculty members rated critical thinking the highest, with 36.8% of respondents rating Critical Thinking as the #1 competency. In addition, many respondents identified the ability to think critically in their responses to the survey's open-ended question, "In your opinion, what does it mean to be an educated person?" The survey confirmed strong faculty support for emphasizing critical thinking in general education courses. Results of the survey are summarized in the Faculty Senate Minutes of September 15, 2015, which are included in Appendix K.

The Revised Texas Core Curriculum, implemented 2014
The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) approved th new 42 semester-credit-hour Texas Core Curriculum for undergraduate students in Texas to be implemented in Fall 2014. All Texas universities are required to adopt and assess the six Texas Core Curriculum Objectives distributed across nine Foundational Component Areas of the Core: Communication; Mathematics; Life and Physical Sciences; Language; Philosophy and Culture; Creative Arts; American History; Government/Political Science; and Social and Behavioral Sciences. As the Coordinating Board notes, "The purpose of the Core Curriculum is to ensure that Texas undergraduate students enrolled in public institutions of higher education will develop the essential knowledge and skills they need in order to be successful in college, in a career, in their communities, and in life" (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board 2014). A primary objective of the Coordinating Board is to incorporate critical thinking throughout all the courses in the Core; the Board defines critical thinking as "creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information."

Employer Priorities
The needs and concerns of students' potential employers constitute another factor in the University's decision regarding which areas of student learning should be the focus of the QEP. Since 2005, the American Association of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) has been commissioning surveys and focus groups of employers to determine their views on how higher education can best prepare students for success in the 21st century marketplace. They encourage institutions to emphasize "critical thinking, complex problem-solving, written and oral communication, and applied knowledge in real-world settings" (American Association of Colleges & Universities, 2013). Figure 1 illustrates the results of the survey.

Figure 1: AAC&U Employer Survey 2013

Percent of Employers Who Want Colleges to "Place More Emphasis" on Essential Learning Outcomes

CRITICAL THINKING AND ANALYTICAL REASONING SKILLS	82%
THE ABILITY TO ANALYZE AND SOLVE COMPLEX PROBLEMS	81%
THE ABILITY TO EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE ORALLY	80%
THE ABILITY TO EFFECTIVELY COMMUNICATE IN WRITING	80%
THE ABILITY TO APPLY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO REAL-WORLD ISSUES	78%

Hart Research Associates (2013). It takes more than a major: employer priorities for college learning and student success - an online survey among employers conducted on behalf of The Association of American Colleges & Universities. Retrieved from http://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/2013.EmployerSurvey.pdf

In another study conducted by the American Management Association (AMA) in 2012 asking members to rate the following skills by their level of importance in helping to the organization grow based on the assumption of an expanding economy: 1) Critical thinking and problem solving, 2) Effective communication, 3) Collaboration and team building, and 4) Creativity and innovation. Critical thinking topped the list at 70%.

Student Needs Assessment: Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA/CLA+)
The data on student learning gleaned from standardized assessment were another factor influencing the decision to focus on critical thinking. Results from the Collegiate Learning Assessment indicate a disparity in critical thinking skills acquisition that the QEP could ameliorate. The CLA evaluates students' performance on specific higher-order skills: Analytic Reasoning and Evaluation, Writing Effectiveness, Writing Mechanics, and Problem Solving. The first version, CLA, was given to 101 freshmen and 97 seniors in 2013. An updated version, CLA+, was given to 95 UHD seniors in 2015. UHD students scored significantly lower on test scores when compared with matched peers in both 2013 and 2015. For example, freshmen taking the CLA in 2013 ranked in the 31st percentile, and seniors in the same year ranked in the 15th percentile, as shown in the table below. Of the freshmen taking the CLA in 2013, only 57% listed English as their primary language. Having a large cohort (43%) for whom English is not the primary language has profound implications for developing higher-order skills in English. The results are summarized in Table 1, below.

Table 1: CLA Results 2012-2013						
	Freshmen			Seniors		
	Number	Mean Score	Mean Score Percentile Rank	Number	Mean Score	Mean Score Percentile Rank
Total CLA Score	97	1012	31	92	1081	15
Performance Task	50	1039	45	49	1106	18
Analytic Writing Task	47	983	18	43	1053	8
Make-an-Argument	47	989	19	43	1032	7
Critique-an-Argument	47	976	21	44	1074	11

Factors in Choosing Community Engagement as Pedagogical Strategy

Although the Carnegie Foundation defines community engagement as "collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity," community engagement also encompasses the initial identification and analysis of community issues. While community engagement is a positive value in itself, consistent with UHD's mission and vision, it may also be used as a pedagogical tool to foster a culture of inquiry wherein students practice critical thinking skills by applying them to community problems and social issues, connecting academic work with real-world situations.

Existing Community Engagement Record and Infrastructure
UHD has a strong record of community engagement and public service in keeping with its mission. The University was named to the 2012 U. S. President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction, a recognition from the Corporation for National and Community Service, and received the 2015 Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. As evidenced by these two awards, UHD has been successful at providing experiential learning opportunities for its students, including research with faculty, study-abroad, civic engagement, capstone courses, and similar initiatives. Such opportunities have thus far been primarily for upper-division students. Such learning experiences would also be valuable for lower-division students because they allow students to achieve higher-order thinking as they pair their classroom learning with "real-world" experiences, helping to keep them academically engaged as they proceed toward degree completion.

FTIC Prior Experience with Community Engagement
To enhance the learning process, UHD must provide students with opportunities to practice the skills needed to become critical thinkers. Applying these skills to social and community issues is most appropriate for an urban, ethnically diverse university recognized nationally for its community engagement. To gather information in 2015 about the familiarity of entering

freshmen with this concept, the University included questions related to students' prior community-engagement experiences in the student survey traditionally distributed at the end of Freshman Convocation discussion sessions. Of the 399 responses, 73% indicated they had participated in community engagement in high school. Surprisingly, 28% had completed 76 or more hours of engagement, and 18% had completed 100 or more hours of engagement. This background will assist UHD in designing lower-level course experiences and assignments that allow students to develop and apply critical thinking skills to community issues. Inasmuch as many of UHD's first-time-in-college students are from underserved communities, the intersection of classroom curriculum and urban issues may also resonate with particular relevance for UHD students.

A⁺CE as a Vital Strategy for Improving Student Learning

The UHD QEP's emphasis on developing critical thinking by engaging community issues provides a vital strategy for improving student learning in lower-division coursework. UHD faculty surveys, employer surveys, CLA and NSSE data, and the Texas State Higher Education Coordinating Board requirements all provide impetus for focusing on critical thinking as the area of student learning most in need of enhancement at UHD. The A⁺CE program provides a perfect opportunity to capitalize on the University's great strength in Community Engagement activities to help students improve critical thinking skills and thereby improve academic achievement and persistence.

IV. A+CE
Student Learning
Outcomes

IV.   A⁺CE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The State of Texas requires Texas public institutions to place an emphasis on critical thinking in all General Education Common Core courses. In the context of the Core Curriculum, the State defines critical thinking skills to include "creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information" (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board 2011b).

Based upon this definition, UHD faculty established student learning outcomes that all courses in UHD's Core must address. Students who complete the UHD General Education Core will be able to:

- Think creatively and innovate.
- Conduct inquiry and analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information.

Given the focus on critical thinking in UHD's Core courses and the focus of UHD's QEP on critical thinking in 1000- and 2000-level courses that are mostly in the Core, UHD developed its QEP learning outcomes to build upon the foundation of critical thinking in the Core. The emphasis on community engagement in UHD's QEP topic is designed to engage students in activities that are inherently interesting and require them to apply academic skills and course content to real-life issues. UHD's QEP student learning outcomes are:

- A⁺CE Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 1: Students will be able to analyze community issues with respect to different perspectives, theories, or solutions.

- A⁺CE Student Learning Outcome (SLO) 2: Students will be able to identify or design creative strategies to address an aspect of a community issue.

UHD recognizes the need to assess the A⁺CE SLO's. To ensure a robust body of student work for this purpose, faculty in A⁺CE course sections will be required to develop A⁺CE Signature Assignments. The Signature Assignments must be connected to the community issue with either the AAC&U Inquiry & Analysis or the Creative Thinking rubric. The student work produced by the Signature Assignments will be the embedded assessment forming the foundation of the A⁺CE SLO's assessment plan. Examples of these kinds of A⁺CE Signature Assignment artifacts will include, but are not limited to, essays, oral presentations to members of the University or other communities, and the presentation of information in a multimedia format.

V. Review of Literature & Best Practices

V.   REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND BEST PRACTICES

An extensive body of literature supports the tenets of A⁺CE: Academic Achievement through Community Engagement. Highlights of the research are reviewed here, and the References Section in Appendix A include additional materials. Research for the purpose of this QEP focused on the following:

> A. Critical Thinking
> B. Community Engagement as a Vehicle for Critical Thinking

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking, according to Scriven and Paul, "is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action" (1987, p. 766). However, definitions of "critical thinking" vary, with no single definition receiving universal acceptance. In the Paul-Elder framework (Paul and Elder 2007), critical thinking is considered to be analysis, evaluation, and improvement of thinking (or using what one has learned).

Although definitions of "critical thinking" vary, certain characteristics of a "critical thinker" emerge in the consensus of scholarly opinion. Considered self-disciplined in their thinking, they tend to be described as being fair-minded, rational, reasonable, and empathetic (Elder, 2007). Aware of the complexities of society, they continue honing their intellectual tools as they strive to improve the human condition. Halpern (2003) considers critical thinkers to be self-correcting and willing to explore new options as they reconsider past problems. In "The Delphi Report," Facione (1990) chronicles a two-year series of exchanges in which a panel of critical-thinking experts build consensus on recommendations for teaching and assessing critical thinking and on the characteristics of the ideal critical thinker. The qualities highlighted by these experts include being "habitually inquisitive, well informed, trustful of reason, open-minded, flexible, [and] fair-minded in evaluation" (Facione, 1990, p. 3). Empathy, intellectual flexibility, and fairness are recurrent themes in the literature, and these nuanced components of critical thinking are the very traits that can be developed effectively in the context of community engagement.

The prominent taxonomies may differ in their categorization; however, they all reveal a progression to higher-order thinking that typically includes analysis and synthesis. Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives (1956) offers a hierarchal approach for education goals with six major categories: knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The last four of these categories are considered to be indicative of higher-order thinking. Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) revised Bloom's Taxonomy, redefining the six categories as remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. This version considers creating new knowledge or information as the highest level of learning. Fink's (2003) Taxonomy of Significant Learning, which builds on Bloom's work, does not take the hierarchal approach. The six categories identified are as follows: foundational knowledge, application, integration, human dimension, caring, and learning how to learn. This model captures the human significance of learning, particularly applicable to UHD's students applying critical thinking skills to social and community issues.

Although higher education regards teaching students to become critical thinkers as a major goal, Derek Bok (2006) argues that higher education has achieved limited success in honing the reasoning skills. He suggests that freshmen often arrive in "ignorant certainty," convinced that all problems have specific answers known by selected experts. Instead, they need to understand the underlying concepts of the subject matter in order to apply what they are learning to new situations. Bok advises teaching different strategies for solving problems and encouraging students to reflect on their learning processes. King and Kitchner agree that first-year students tend to "fall back on simply believing what they want to believe" (1994, p. 224) when they encounter complex or unstructured problems. Shelpelak et al (1992) and Giancarlo and Facione (2001) argue that freshman courses should combine instruction on critical thinking skills with opportunities to apply these skills.

Community Engagement as a Vehicle for Critical Thinking

Research indicates that community engagement accompanied by reflection contributes to building critical-thinking skills. Examining the literature leads to a recognition that multiple terms fall under the rubric of "community engagement." These include experiential learning, applied learning, service learning, community-based learning, community involvement, civic engagement, etc. Most of the research refers to service learning inasmuch as it has generated more extensive study than the other models. Nevertheless, community engagement tends to be the umbrella under which a breadth of experiential learning models exist.

Recent research cites the importance of the institutions providing an environment in which students are encouraged to question existing social and institutional conditions. The curriculum should also provide a foundation for them to enhance their academic skills and community ties (Maldonado et al, 2005). Further, Myers-Lipton (2002) cites service learning as one factor leading to the development of curricular and pedagogical strategies through which students question existing conditions and recognize universities as environments conducive to the transformation of the student and the society.

Reviews of the origins of community engagement often begin with references to Ernest Boyer. The New American College that he envisioned was "a connected institution . . . committed to improving, in a very intentional way, the human condition "(Boyer, 1994, p. A48). He urged higher-education institutions to connect to real life the ideas being discussed in the classroom. In fact, he challenged universities to engage in solving the problems that beset urban areas, placing community engagement at the nexus of social change.

Many universities in the late 1990s embraced the concepts of community engagement and service learning in particular, fostering curricular and pedagogical strategies intended to address social problems. *The Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* published its first issue in 1997, becoming the first peer-reviewed journal on the topic. Connections between the campus and the community were revivified with an emphasis on partnerships and collaboration. Composition studies, with a history of attempting to broaden students' discourse communities and to support social justice, tended to align composition instruction with a call for social action. Service learning "is at heart a pedagogy of action and reflection, one that centers on a dialectic between community outreach and academic inquiry "(Deans, 2010).

Connecting critical thinking and community engagement has been shown to influence cognitive advancement. As Batchelder and Root (1994) note:

Participation in a college service-learning program facilitated student development in several areas. The participants made greater gains than students in traditional classes on several dimensions of thinking about social problems, such as multidimensionality. Service-learning appears to have influenced participants' use of prosocial decision-making and advanced forms of prosocial reasoning as well as their tendency to reflect on occupational identity issues. (p. 354).

Peterson (2015) cites additional benefits to students, including improvements in civic, community, and social justice knowledge; intercultural understanding; academic and career development; and personal knowledge. Reporting on a comprehensive study they conducted, Eyler and Giles (1999) argue that service learning participation influenced students' openness to new ideas, elements of critical thinking, and problem solving. Opportunities for structured reflection and integration into the course were among the factors contributing to the level of learning and intellectual growth.

Best Practices in Pedagogical Strategies

Problem-Based Learning
The QEP Steering Committee's research into pedagogical best practices has informed the shape of the A⁺CE plan. The pedagogy of problem-based learning was particularly influential in developing the A⁺CE. Problem-based learning includes any learning environment or condition established to engage students in addressing real-world scenarios that require critical thought and often collaborative effort to solve. Such environments are established through providing opportunities for students to gain an awareness of important issues and challenges while providing them with the appropriate tools to engage effectively and solve problems. These opportunities can occur in or outside a classroom and can be accomplished with a variety of approaches such as Team-Based Learning (TBL) or the use of Case Studies. With any model, effective problem-based learning requires careful planning and special consideration for classroom management and efficient assessment of learning. A structured model like Team-Based Learning can be very helpful for establishing effective strategies to overcome the challenges of implementing a problem-based approach.

Successful QEP Models
The QEP Steering Committee also studied successful QEP models from other institutions, including all those represented in Table 2 below. In addition, the Provost and members of the QEP Steering Committee held a conference call on March 27, 2015, with the leadership of the Radford University QEP. When the Provost heard their presentation at the December 2014 SACSCOC Annual Meeting, he noted its relevance to what UHD was planning. The Steering Committee was particularly interested in the Scholar-Citizen track Radford created for students who sought a robust community engagement experience. The "Engaged Scholar" track aspect of UHD's A⁺CE QEP was informed by the Radford model.

Table 2: Best-Practices QUEP Models		
Institution	**Program**	**Best Practices**
Angelo State University	CONNECT!	Aligned with the Texas Common Core; experiential learning, connecting campus to community; Center for Community Engagement
Clemson University	Clemson Thinks[2]	Focus on critical thinking, second year students, and faculty development
North Carolina State University	TH!NK: Higher-order Skills in Creative and Critical Thinking	Faculty development, focus on first-year students, faculty development
Radford University	Scholar-Citizen	Emphasis on high-impact-practices, responsible citizenship
University of Louisville	IDEAS TO ACTION: Using Critical Thinking to Foster Student Learning and Community Engagement	General Education component, critical thinking skills, problem solving, faculty development, citizenship, culminating experience
University of North Texas	Soar Beyond the Classroom	Action-based experiential learning in the context of communities— public or private sector— in order to develop communication, teamwork, and critical thinking skills
West Texas A&M	Engaging Our First Year Students	Infusing project-based learning into the Core Curriculum;
Virginia Tech	Pathways to Success	Problem solving and inquiry skills, integration of learning skills, discipline specific first year experiences

VI. Implementation

VI.   IMPLEMENTATION

UHD will begin implementing A[+]CE, with the Freshman Seminars in Fall 2016, and ENG 1302 in Spring 2017 serving as pilot courses (see Figure 3). Because most FTIC students take the Freshman Seminar in the first semester of enrollment, UHD anticipates an enrollment of between 700-900 students in the fall semester, and 700 in the spring semester depending on enrollment. As students progress through the first two years of their undergraduate coursework, they will take A[+]CE designated courses that 1) emphasize critical thinking and 2) provide opportunities to apply these skills to community issues. Research indicates that such a curriculum hones students' analytical skills and prepares them for more rigorous learning experiences arising in upper-level courses. Moreover, this approach is consistent with the contemporary reframing of liberal education wherein students develop inquiry skills and acquire social/civic responsibility as they engage in seeking solutions for unscripted, real-world problems, resulting in a "new civic frontier" (Schneider, 2014). As more A[+]CE courses are added in Year 2 of implementation, students may take more than one A[+]CE course per semester.

Figure 2: A+CE Course Pathway, Years 1 and 2
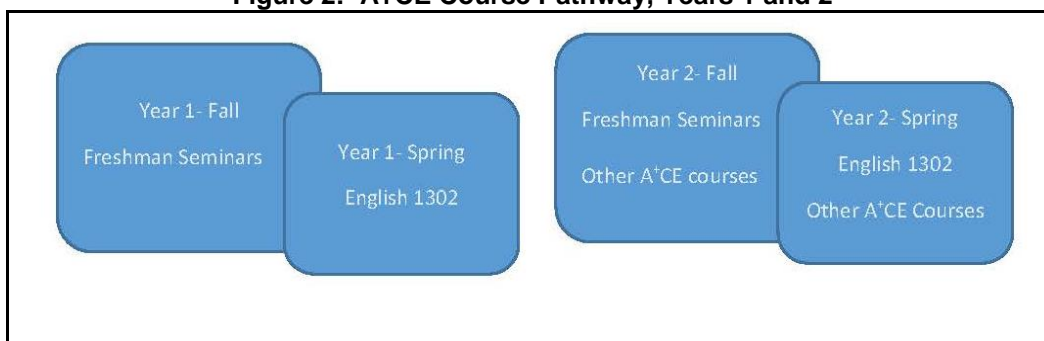
The program will be administered through the Office of the Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs/Provost. The Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs is the SACSCOC Liaison and will guide the implementation over the five years, and the A[+]CE Faculty Director will be responsible for the execution of the plan. The Director will work with the A[+]CE Assistant Director and the A[+]CE Implementation Committee. The A[+]CE Advisory Committee comprised of various stakeholders will provide oversight. (The administrative and committee structures for A[+]CE are described more fully in Section VIII.)

A[+]CE-Designated Courses

To receive an A[+]CE course designation, a course must meet the following criteria:

- be a Core Curriculum course or a course open to first-time-in-college students in their first or second year;
- include at least one of the two A[+]CE student learning outcomes related to critical thinking;
- develop an A[+]CE Signature to assess the A[+]CE student learning outcome(s).

In accordance with existing university processes, specific guidelines have been established for classifying courses as A[+]CE by one of two pathways:

- "Blanket" approval by the A+CE Advisory Committee is given for all sections of eligible multiple-section courses if the department/discipline agrees that all sections will meet A+CE criteria.
- Faculty teaching individual sections of other eligible courses may apply to the A+CE Advisory Committee to receive the A+CE designation for their sections of the courses.

The following courses have already met the designation criteria and have received blanket approval for A+CE designation:

- UHD 13xx: Freshman Seminars
- ENG 1302: Composition II
- COMM 1304: Introduction to Speech Communication
- COMM 1306: Beginning Public Speaking
- PSY 1303: Introduction to Psychology
- SOCW 2361: Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare
- BIO 1310: Human Biology
- BIO 1312: Ecology & Environmental Biology

Table 3: Course Scalability						
	Year 1 of QEP		Year 2 of QEP		Year 3 of QEP	
Courses	Number of Sections in Fall	Number of Sections in Spring	Number of Sections in Fall	Number of Sections in Spring	Number of Sections in Fall	Number of Sections in Spring
Freshman Seminar	30	5	30	5	30	5
English 1302		40	20	40	20	40
Psychology 1303			12	10	12	10
Communication 1304			15	7	15	7
Communication 1306			10	8	10	8
Social Work 2361			4	5	4	5
Biology 1310			7	8	7	8
Biology 1312			5	4	5	4
Individual A+CE Sections of Other Courses			25	15	40	30
Potential Additional courses					49	25
Total Sections	30	45	128	102	183	142

Alignment with the Core and Existing Assessment Processes

Critical Thinking is a Core Objective in all Texas Core Curriculum courses. Therefore, many Core Curriculum courses will be eligible for the A+CE, including those listed above. As the plan evolves, faculty will also be encouraged to apply for A+CE designation for other lower-division courses. The assessment processes of both the Core Curriculum and the A+CE student learning outcomes will be aligned, enabling the collected artifacts to serve both purposes. Course assignments/artifacts will be submitted through Blackboard, a course management system to which both the Core assessment team and the QEP assessment team will have access. (All faculty have a Blackboard site established for each of their courses.) Table 4 below shows the steps in process of A+CE curriculum implementation.

Table 4: Steps in the A⁺CE Curriculum Implementation Process		
Step	Action	Agent
1	Complete and submit application for blanket or individual section A⁺CE designation, uploading syllabus and A⁺CE Signature assignment	Individual instructors for individual sections or coordinators/chairs for blanket designations
2	Review and approve course designation applications and signature assignments	A⁺CE Advisory Committee
3	Upload A⁺CE student artifacts via Blackboard.	A⁺CE Instructors
4	Collect A⁺CE student artifacts at the end of every semester	A⁺CE Implementation Committee
5	Assess student artifacts from the academic year at the Summer Assessment Summit	A⁺CE Implementation Committee and faculty evaluators

Modes of Engaging Community Issues in the Classroom

The A⁺CE Steering Committee and the various faculty participating in the QEP development process have identified three modes of engaging community issues in the classroom that will allow the faculty sufficient latitude to craft the applied-learning activities appropriate to their respective courses and disciplines. These modes suggest how the intellectual skills developed in the classroom could be applied to community situations.

- *Awareness* of the intersection of the classroom and the community.
Students become aware of community and social issues through coursework examining those issues. The course assignment might include a book discussion, case study, a position argument, or research project. (For example, within the context of the discipline, the class studies a social issue such as hunger, immigration, racial inequity, water scarcity, etc.)

- *Integration* of external community expertise in the course.
Students may engage with community issues through coursework enhanced with guest speakers, panels, documentaries, public deliberation events, etc. (For example, in addition to studying an issue such as hunger, the students attend an on-site presentation that enables them to make connections among the various elements inherent in any social/community issue.)

- *Involvement* of students applying classroom learning in the community.
Students may connect coursework with community experiences/projects that require direct engagement with the partners in the field. (For example, in addition to studying an issue such as hunger, the students visit Target Hunger, a community agency, and interview the leadership or interact with the staff or the constituents served).

Milestone Celebrations

Establishing academic milestones or measurable achievements that indicate academic success enables the University and the students to track their progress. Students who have completed a minimum of four A⁺CE courses with a maximum of one *C* in the courses and have earned a 2.5 or higher overall GPA by the end of the second year will be recognized as "Engaged Scholars" at an award celebration, receiving this designation on the expanded student record/transcript. As the students complete milestones in the A⁺CE program throughout the first two years, they will receive digital badges as well as pins they can display on graduation caps or commencement stoles. Among the milestones are completing 30 semester credit hours in a year (two long semesters and summer), maintaining an overall GPA of 2.5 or above while enrolled in 12 or more credit hours each long semester, and completing two A⁺CE courses a year. The University will hold Milestone celebrations for the A+CE students at the end of each academic year.

Introducing the Freshman Cohort to the QEP

Freshman Orientation
Beginning in 2016, UHD will introduce entering freshmen to the QEP as they attend the required orientation events during the summer. Among the strategies are presentations/websites about the A⁺CE courses, advising sessions preparatory to receiving a degree map for the selected major and registering for the first semester, and videos of current students highlighting the benefits in applying critical thinking skills to community issues.

Freshman Common Reader and Convocation
Having had a Freshman Common Reader and Freshman Convocation program for the past six years, UHD is adapting these common intellectual experiences to align with the QEP. Faculty play a major role in selecting the common reader. Beginning this year, they will also be involved in identifying a "Big Question" that reinforces the selected common reader and encourages students, faculty, and staff to explore a broad theme from an academic perspective. All freshmen receive a copy of the common reader text as part of Freshman Orientation.

Faculty Development and Support

To ensure that faculty are equipped with the best pedagogical tools for teaching critical thinking, the University will provide a range of faculty development activities and support coinciding with the A⁺CE QEP.

- *Orientations for Faculty Teaching or Proposing A⁺CE Courses*
  In the spring and fall of implementation years, the A⁺CE Faculty Director will hold an orientation session for faculty teaching A⁺CE-designated courses for the first time. These sessions will provide an overview of the A⁺CE program and assessment procedures, and will be coordinated with the Critical Thinking Workshops.

- *Expansion of Faculty Teaching Circles*
  A⁺CE Faculty will participate in coordinated teaching circles where faculty share strategies, assignment prompts, and opportunities that may be widely adapted and used in a wide range of course formats, including face-to-face, online, and hybrid.

- *Annual Faculty Critical Thinking "Big Read"*

All participating faculty will read a book on pedagogical approaches to critical thinking. The QEP Steering Committee has already selected *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking Concepts and Tools, 7th edition,* for the Spring 2016 event, and the book to be used in future years will be selected by faculty teaching in A+CE and other Core courses. Faculty will meet to discuss the book and its applicable lessons for teaching critical thinking lower-division courses. Discussion groups will be held at a variety of times to accommodate both full-time and part-time faculty.

- ***Critical Thinking Workshop***
  UHD will bring in nationally-recognized experts in critical thinking to conduct annual workshops on critical thinking, creativity, best practices in teaching/assessing critical thinking, and designing assignments that align with the AAC&U Inquiry & Analysis and Creativity & Innovation Rubrics.

- ***Pedagogical Conferences***
  Faculty will be able to apply for A+CE travel funds to attend or present at pedagogical conferences related to critical thinking, creativity, and associated topics.

- ***Connections to Community Partners***
  Several academic and administrative centers, such as the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning, will help faculty to connect to appropriate community partners, speakers, etc., so that faculty may incorporate community issues into their classroom in meaningful ways.

Assessment and Evaluation

Rigorous assessment is essential in analyzing QEP outcomes. Results assist in identifying best practices for achieving the stated goals. Moreover, they inform the decision-making process to determine what adjustments to the plan may need to be made to improve student learning and program effectiveness.

- ***Assess Annually QEP Student Learning Outcomes***
  The A+CE Implementation Committee will facilitate the collection of student artifacts at the conclusion of each long semester and coordinate the faculty evaluation of those artifacts each summer through the "Assessment Summit"

- ***Administer the NSSE, IDEA, and CLA+***
  The NSSE (indirect measure) is administered in the Spring 2016, 2018, and 2020 to provide program-level assessment of curriculum. UHD conducts IDEA as the mechanism through which students evaluate faculty and the classroom instruction. It is intended to improve the learning process. The institution will administer both a pre- and post CLA+ assessment of the 2016-2018 FTIC cohorts. Pre-assessments will be conducted during the each cohort's first fall semester. The post-assessment will be conducted during the spring semester of each cohort's sophomore year. Comparison of pre- and post-assessment data will allow the university to determine the amount of growth students are experiencing during their first two years at UHD.

- ***Conduct Event/Program Participant Surveys***

In-house surveys and focus groups will be administered to assess events/programs in support of the A⁺CE curriculum, including panels, invited speakers, and faculty development.

- ***Submit Annual Assessment Report***
  Data collected annually will be included in a summary report submitted each December beginning in 2017 to the President, the Provost and the University community. Each report will emphasize strategies for improvement and will provide follow-up on the implementation of improvements from prior year.

- ***Submit Summative Program Evaluation***
  The QEP Impact Report, due 2022, will serve as the summative evaluation of "Academic Achievement through Community Engagement" and will include a summary of improvement strategies implemented during the previous five years and recommendations for long-term implementation of strategies.

VII. Timeline

VII. TIMELINE

The activities for planning and implementing UHD's QEP, "A⁺CE: Academic Achievement through Community Engagement," have been divided into four component phases, reflected in the following four timelines:

- *Timeline for Planning and Pre-Implementation.* This table presents a chronology of the various activities leading up to the submission of the QEP to SACSCOC, including the activities of the QEP Selection and the QEP Steering Committees.

- *Timeline for Faculty Development.* This table presents a timeline of the planned faculty development activities devoted to preparing faculty who are teaching A⁺CE courses as part of the QEP.

- *Timeline for A⁺CE Courses.* This table presents a timeline for scheduling and rotation of the A⁺CE courses, including the pilot courses in 2016.

- *Timeline for Assessment.* This table presents a brief overview of the timeframe for key assessment activities.

A Note on Assessment: The A⁺CE Implementation Committee, which is composed of a cross disciplinary group of faculty and staff, will be responsible for ensuring that the A⁺CE assessment plan is implemented. Specifically the A+CE Implementation Committee is responsible for:

- ensuring that data are collected per the A⁺CE Assessment Plan
- ensuring that the embedded assignments are assessed by faculty volunteers
- summarizing findings for each of the measures each summer;
- sharing assessment results and soliciting feedback on the assessment data each fall;
- soliciting broad input on strategies to improve both processes each fall;
- drafting the annual A⁺CE Assessment Reports;
- assisting the A+CE Advisory Committee in soliciting feedback and finalizing the annual A⁺CE Assessment Reports for submission to the President and Provost (due each December);
- ensuring that strategies for improvement are implemented effectively, beginning in the spring semester following finalization of the assessment report in December.

Additional information on UHD's assessment plan for the A⁺CE can be found in "Section 9: Assessment."

Table 5: Timeline for Planning and Pre-Implementation			
Date	**Activity**	**Product**	**Participants**
Summer 2014	Report released by IE on 4 areas related to student learning: Barrier Courses, High-Impact Practices, Online Education, and Writing & Critical Thinking	Report and Powerpoint Presentation	Office of Institutional Effectiveness; faculty, staff, and student leaders at the Leadership Retreat
Fall 2014	QEP Topic Selection Committee appointed and	Five proposals	President Flores, QEP Selection Committee

	charged with soliciting and evaluating proposals		
Fall 2014	Selection Committee presented to Faculty Senate Meeting and on the QEP Topic Selection Website	PowerPoint Presentation and QEP Topic Selection Website	QEP Selection Committee, Faculty Senate, and UHD community
Fall 2014	"What is a QEP?" video featuring Interim Provost Ed Hugetz and Faculty Senate President Susan Henney created and posted on the QEP Topic Selection Website	Online Video	Provost Hugetz, Senate President Henney, Office of Multimedia Services
Fall 2014	Focus groups conducted for each proposed QEP		22 faculty members, 15 staff members, 12 students, and QEP selection committee
Fall 2014	Learning outcome development exercise conducted for each proposed topic, based on AACU rubrics	Potential student learning outcomes	QEP Selection committee
December 6-9, 2014	SACSCOC Annual Meeting in Nashville attended by key administrators, faculty, and QEP Selection Committee members		Representatives of the QEP Selection Committee, Faculty, and Administration
December 12, 2014	Report on five topic areas with Selection Committee's recommendation submitted to President Flores.	Report	QEP Selection Committee
December 12, 2014	Email announcement with link to the Selection Committee report sent to the University community by President Flores soliciting comments by 1/16/15.	Email message link to Report	President Flores
January 20, 2015	Provisional QEP topic announced to University Community via email: Community Engagement and Writing		President Flores
January 2015	QEP Steering Committee appointed by President Flores and held initial meeting to discuss charge		President Flores and QEP Steering Committee
February 2015	Meetings with academic colleges and other		President Flores; faculty, staff, and students

	stakeholders held by President Flores		
February 2015	Steering Committee forms various subcommittees, including Faculty Development, Marketing, Data & Assessment, Learning Outcomes, Literature Review & Best Practices, Curricular & Co-curricular elements, and Budget		QEP Steering Committee and additional personnel with designated expertise.
February-March 2015	Feedback on QEP outline and tentative budget received from SACSCOC liaison		QEP Steering Committee and Dr. Charles Taylor
March 27, 2015	Telephone conference between QEP Steering Committee and Leadership of the Radford University QEP to discuss incorporating Community Engagement elements		QEP Steering Committee, Radford University representatives
April 2015	Working luncheon held by QEP Leadership for faculty who already embed critical analysis of social issues in courses		QEP Steering Committee Leadership
May 22, 2015	QEP update emailed to UHD community		QEP Steering Committee
Late Spring-Early Fall 2015	Meeting Between QEP Leadership and departmental faculty, chairs and coordinators to explore possibility of "blanket" approvals for all sections of relevant courses to be incorporated into QEP	Agreements to include UHD 13xx (Freshman Seminars), ENG 1302, COMM 1304, COMM 1306, PSY 1303, SOCW 2361, BIO 1320, and BIO 1312 .	QEP Leadership, representatives from relevant departments
Summer 2015	Draft of QEP document developed based on subcommittees' work and stakeholder feedback		QEP Steering Committee
Summer 2015	Curricular Subcommittee held regular meetings to identify target courses, based on Steering Committee decision to focus the QEP more		Curricular Subcommittee and relevant faculty

	narrowly on curricular elements.		
July 2015	SACSCOC Summer Institute attended by five members of the QEP Steering Committee		Faiza Khoja, Chris Birchak, Vida Robertson, Nell Sullivan, and Liza Alonzo
July-August 2015	QEP-honing continued, based on information gleaned at the Summer Institute, holding meetings with department chairs and degree coordinators about integrating QEP elements in designated courses		QEP Steering Committee, department chairs and coordinators
Fall 2015	Periodic meetings of full QEP Steering Committee		QEP Steering Committee
August – September 2015	Presentations at College, Department, and Faculty Senate meetings by QEP Chair, Co-chairs, and Director of the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning	Refined focus distinguishing between QEP's community engagement component and service learning, stressing the QEP's focus on connecting classroom curriculum & social/community issues	QEP Leadership, Director of CCESL, various faculty and academic administrators.
Sept 17-18, 2015	PowerPoint Presentation and Q&A on working version of QEP at President's Leadership Retreat, relating the QEP to UHD's Strategic Plan	PowerPoint Presentation	QEP Steering Committee Leadership; 100 invited faculty, students, staff, and administrators.
November 2015	Presentation on QEP to UHS Board of Regents	PowerPoint Presentation	QEP Leadership, UHS Regents
December 2015	SACSCOC Annual Meeting attended by 65 faculty, staff, and administrators, including QEP Steering Committee members, resulting in a decision to refine the focus of the QEP to improving Critical Thinking through Community Engagement rather than generalized "Academic Achievement."		QEP Steering Committee members
January	Meetings with Colleges and		QEP Steering Committee

2016	Departments held by Steering Committee to refine focus on Critical Thinking through Community Engagement; Presentation to Faculty Senate		members; various faculty and academic administrators
January-February 2016	QEP draft finalized by Steering Committee & QEP writers		QEP Steering Committee
February 2016	Faculty Senate passes resolution supporting the final form of the QEP	Senate resolution to approve the A+CE	Faculty Senate
February 23, 2016	QEP submitted to SACSCOC	Quality Enhancement Plan	Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs

Table 6: Timeline for Faculty Development				
Implementation Year Zero				
Date	Activity	Resources	Participants	Costs
Feb 2016	Faculty Critical Thinking Big Read (different focus each year) 2016: *Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking Concepts and Tools, 7th edition*	Books	Faculty Teaching A+CE Courses	$300
Mar 2016	Critical Thinking Workshop/Orientation Faculty develop and refine the A+CE Signature Assignments Evaluation of Big Read & Workshop	Speaker travel + honorarium Faculty stipends	Faculty Teaching A+CE Courses	$10,500
Mar/Apr 2016	Forming A+CE teaching circles for Fall 2016 to support faculty in developing best practices in course design and student assessment	Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE)	Faculty Teaching A+CE Courses	$12,000
Implementation Year One				
Date	Activity	Resources	Participants	Costs

Date	Activity	Resources	Participants	Costs
Aug 2016	Mini Critical Thinking Workshop/Orientation for faculty teaching in Fall 2016	CTLE and Director of Assessment	Faculty teaching Fall 2016 A+CE Courses	
Nov 2016	Critical Thinking Workshop/Orientation for faculty teaching in Spring 2017	CTLE and Director of Assessment	Faculty teaching Spring 2017 A+CE Courses	
Feb 2017	Faculty Critical Thinking Big Read (different focus each year)	Books	Faculty Teaching A+CE Courses	$1,600
Mar 2017	Critical Thinking Workshop Faculty develop and refine the A+CE Signature Assignments Evaluation of Big Read & Workshop	Speaker travel + honorarium Faculty stipends	Faculty Teaching A+CE Courses	$10,500
Mar/Apr 2017	Forming A+CE teaching circles for Fall 2017 to support faculty in developing best practices in course design and student assessment	Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence	Faculty Teaching A+CE Courses	$12,000
Spring 2017	Conference Travel to learn and present at relevant conferences	Provost's Office	Faculty teaching A+CE Courses	$10,000
Implementation Year Two				
Date	**Activity**	**Resources**	**Participants**	**Costs**
Aug 2017	Mini Critical Thinking Workshop//Orientation for faculty teaching in Fall 2017	CTLE and Director of Assessment	Faculty teaching a Fall 2017 A+CE Courses	
Nov 2017	Critical Thinking Workshop for faculty teaching in Spring 2018	CTLE and Director of Assessment	Faculty teaching a Spring 2018 A+CE Courses	
Feb 2018	Faculty Critical Thinking Big Read (different focus each year)	Books	Faculty Teaching A+CE Courses	$1,600
Mar 2018	Critical Thinking Workshop Faculty develop and	Speaker travel + honorarium Faculty stipends	Faculty teaching A+CE Courses	$10,500

	refine the A+CE Signature Assignments Evaluation of Big Read & Workshop			
Mar/Apr 2018	Forming QEP teaching circles for Fall 2018 to support faculty in developing best practices in course design and student assessment	Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence	Faculty teaching A+CE Courses	$12,000
Spring 2018	Conference Travel to learn and present at relevant conferences	Provost Office	Faculty teaching A+CE Courses	$10,000
Implementation Year Three				
Date	**Activity**	**Resources**	**Participants**	**Costs**
Aug 2018	Mini Critical Thinking Workshop/Orientation for faculty teaching in Fall 2018	CTLE and Director of Assessment	Faculty teaching Fall 2018 A+CE Courses	
Nov 2018	Critical Thinking Workshop for faculty teaching in Spring 2019	CTLE and Director of Assessment	Faculty teaching Spring 2019 A+CE Courses	
Feb 2019	Faculty Critical Thinking Big Read (different focus each year)	Books	Faculty teaching A+CE Courses	$1,600
Mar 2019	Critical Thinking Workshop Faculty develop and refine the A+CE Signature Assignments Evaluation of Big Read & Workshop	Speaker travel + honorarium Faculty stipends	Faculty teaching A+CE Courses	$10,500
Mar/Apr 2019	Forming A+CE teaching circles for Fall 2019 to support faculty in developing best practices in course design and student assessment	Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence	Faculty teaching A+CE Courses	$12,000
Spring 2019	Conference Travel to learn and present at relevant conferences	Provost Office	Faculty teaching A+CE Courses	$15,000
Implementation Year Four				

Date	Activity	Resources	Participants	Costs
Aug 2019	Mini Critical Thinking Workshop/Orientation for faculty teaching in Fall 2019	CTLE and Director of Assessment	Faculty teaching Fall 2019 A+CE Courses	
Nov 2019	Critical Thinking Workshop for faculty teaching in Spring 2020	CTLE and Director of Assessment	Faculty teaching Spring 2020 A+CE Courses	
Feb 2020	Faculty Critical Thinking Big Read (different focus each year)	Books	Faculty teaching A+CE Courses	$1,600
Mar 2020	Critical Thinking Workshop Faculty develop and refine the A+CE Signature Assignments Evaluation of Big Read & Workshop	Speaker travel + honorarium Faculty stipends	Faculty teaching A+CE Courses	$10,500
Mar/Apr 2020	Forming A+CE teaching circles for Fall 2020 to support faculty in developing best practices in course design and student assessment	Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence	Faculty teaching A+CE Courses	$12,000
Spring 2020	Conference Travel to learn and present at relevant conferences	Provost Office	Faculty teaching A+CE Courses	$15,000
Implementation Year Five				
Date	Activity	Resources	Participants	Costs
Aug 2020	Mini Critical Thinking Workshop/Orientation for faculty teaching in Fall 2020	CTLE and Director of Assessment	Faculty teaching Fall 2020 A+CE Courses	
Nov 2020	Critical Thinking Workshop for faculty teaching in Spring 2021	CTLE and Director of Assessment	Faculty teaching Spring 2021 A+CE Courses	

Table 7: Timeline for A⁺CE Courses		
Implementation Year Zero		
Date	**Activity**	**Participants**
Fall 2015	Make Presentations about QEP and A⁺CE courses in Departments and Colleges	QEP Steering Committee Leadership; A⁺CE Faculty Director
Spring 2016	*Gather A⁺CE course commitments for Fall 2016	QEP Steering Committee Leadership; A⁺CE Faculty Director
Spring 2016	Designate A⁺CE courses for Fall 2016	A⁺CE Faculty Director; Student Affairs
Implementation Year One		
Date	**Activity**	**Participants**
August, 2016	Run Freshman Seminars as A⁺CE courses	Course instructors and students
Oct - Nov 2016	*Gather A⁺CE course commitments and designate course as A⁺CE for Spring 2017	A⁺CE Faculty Director, Assistant Director and Student Affairs
January 2017	Run ENG 1302 as A⁺CE courses	Course instructors and students
Mar – Apr 2017	*Gather A⁺CE course commitments and designate courses as A⁺CE for Fall 2017	A⁺CE Faculty Director; Student Affairs
April 2017	A⁺CE Student Milestone Celebration	Students, instructors, President, Provost, A⁺CE Advisory and Implementation Committees
Implementation Year Two		
Date	**Activity**	**Participants**
August, 2017	Run Freshman Seminars as A⁺CE courses	Course instructors and students
Oct - Nov 2017	*Gather A⁺CE course commitments and designate courses as A⁺CE for Spring 2018	A⁺CE Faculty Director, A⁺CE Assistant Director and Student Affairs
January 2018	Run ENG 1302 and other A⁺CE courses	Course instructors and students
Mar – Apr 2018	*Gather A⁺CE course commitments and designate courses as A⁺CE for Fall 2018	A⁺CE Faculty Director and Student Affairs
April 2018	A⁺CE Student Milestone Celebration	Students, instructors, President, Provost, A⁺CE Advisory, and Implementation Committees
Implementation Year Three		
Date	**Activity**	**Participants**
August, 2018	Run Freshman Seminars as A⁺CE courses	Course instructors and students
Oct - Nov 2018	*Gather A⁺CE course commitments and designate courses as A⁺CE for Spring 2019	A⁺CE Faculty Director, A⁺CE Assistant Director and Student Affairs
January 2019	Run ENG 1302 and other A⁺CE	Course instructors and students

Mar – Apr 2019	*Gather A+CE course commitments and designate courses as A+CE for Fall 2019	A+CE Faculty Director and Student Affairs
April 2019	A+CE Student Milestone Celebration	Students, instructors, President, Provost, A+CE Advisory and Implementation Committees

Implementation Year Four		
Date	**Activity**	**Participants**
August, 2019	Run Freshman Seminars as A+CE courses	Course instructors and students
Oct - Nov 2019	*Gather A+CE course commitments and designate course as A+CE for Spring 2020	A+CE Faculty Director, A+CE Assistant Director and Student Affairs
January 2020	Run ENG 1302 and other A+CE courses	Course instructors and students
Mar – Apr 2020	*Gather A+CE course commitments and designate courses as A+CE for Fall 2020	A+CE Faculty Director and Student Affairs
April 2020	A+CE Student Milestone Celebration	Students, instructors, President, Provost, A+CE Advisory and Implementation Committees

Implementation Year Five		
Date	**Activity**	**Participants**
August 2020	Run Freshman Seminars as A+CE courses	Course instructors and students
Oct - Nov 2020	*Gather A+CE course commitments and designate courses as A+CE for spring 2021	A+CE Faculty Director, Assistant Director and Student Affairs
January 2021	Run ENG 1302 and other A+CE courses	Course instructors and students
April 2021	A+CE Student Milestone Celebration	Students, instructors, President, Provost, A+CE Advisory and Implementation Committees
*Course Commitments: In addition to the courses listed in the table, there are either additional blanket designations of courses or specific sections in other disciplines that will be taught as QEP courses. Some examples are: COMM 1304, COMM 1306, PSY 1303, SOCW2361, BIOL 1310 and BIOL 1312 (all as blanket), HIST 2306, and UHD 2303.		

Table 8: TIMELINE FOR ASSESSMENT OF A⁺CE				
Phase: Assessment Year Zero				
Date	**Activity**	**Resources**	**Participants**	**Costs**
Spring 2016	NSSE	NSSE Instrument	FITC F2015 Cohort	Purchased out of AY2015 budget.
Phase: Assessment Year One				
Date	Activity	Resources	Participants	Costs
Fall 2016				
Fall 2016	Faculty implement A⁺CE Signature Assignments and submit student artifacts to assessment archive	N/A	Faculty teaching A⁺CE courses	N/A
Fall 2016	CLA+ Pre-assessment F2016 FTIC Cohort	Exam Subscription + Student Incentive 300@ $25/student	F2016 FTIC Cohort	$10,500 $7,500 Total: $18,000
Fall 2016	Survey of faculty participating in A⁺CE professional development (ongoing after each development activity)	N/A	Faculty participating in A⁺CE professional development	N/A
Fall 2016	IDEA is administered to students	N/A	Faculty and students in A+CE courses	N/A
Spring 2017				
Spring 2017	Faculty implement A⁺CE Signature Assignments and submit student artifacts to assessment archive	N/A	Faculty teaching A⁺CE courses	N/A
Spring 2017	Survey of faculty participating in A⁺CE professional development (ongoing after each development activity)	N/A	Faculty participating in A⁺CE professional development	N/A
Spring 2017	IDEA is administered to students	N/A	Faculty and students in A+CE courses	N/A
Summer 2017				
June 2017	Faculty evaluators assess a random sample of A⁺CE Signature Assignments	N/A	Faculty evaluators	$1,500
Summer 2017	A⁺CE Implementation Committee summarizes all assessment data	N/A	A⁺CE Implementation Committee	N/A

Phase: Assessment Year Two				
Date	Activity	Resources	Participants	Costs
Fall 2017				
August-September 2017	A⁺CE Implementation Committee: 1. Share summary of AY2017 assessment data with university community 2. Schedule opportunities for faculty to discuss results and recommend strategies for improvement.	N/A	A⁺CE Implementation Committee UHD community	N/A
Fall 2017	Faculty implement A+CE Signature Assignments and submit student artifacts to assessment archive	N/A	Faculty teaching A⁺CE courses	N/A
November 2017	A+CE Implementation Committee will draft the AY 2017 A+CE Assessment Report and submit to the A+CE Advisory Committee.	NA	A+CE Implementation Committee A+CE Advisory Committee	N/A
Fall 2017	CLA+ Pre-assessment F2017 FTIC Cohort	Exam Subscription + Student Incentive 300@ $25/student	F2017 FTIC Cohort	$10,500 $7,500 Total: $18,000
Fall 2017	Collection of survey data from faculty participating in A⁺CE professional development (ongoing after each development activity)	N/A	Faculty participating in A⁺CE professional development	N/A
Fall 2017	IDEA is administered to students	N/A	Faculty and students in A⁺CE courses	N/A
December 2017	A⁺CE Advisory Committee finalizes the AY2017 A⁺CE Assessment Report and submit to the Provost, President and University Committee	N/A	A⁺CE Advisory Committee UHD Provost UHD Present University Community	N/A
Spring 2018				
Spring 2018	UHD Implements improvement strategies outlined in the AY2017 A⁺CE Assessment Report.	As indicated by A⁺CE assessment data	UHD Community	$5,000
Spring 2018	Faculty implement A⁺CE Signature Assignments and submission of student artifacts	N/A	Faculty teaching in A⁺CE courses	N/A

Date	Activity	Resources	Participants	Costs
	to assessment archive			
Spring 2018	CLA+ Post-assessment F2016 FTIC Cohort	Exam Subscription & Student Incentives 100 @ 25/student	100 F2016 FTIC Cohort	$3,500 $2,500 Total: $6,000
Spring 2018	NSSE	Survey Subscription	FTIC Cohorts	$8,450
Spring 2018	Survey faculty participating in A+CE professional development (ongoing after each development activity)	N/A	Faculty participating in A+CE professional development	N/A
Spring 2018	IDEA is administered to students	N/A	Faculty & students in A+CE courses	N/A
Summer 2018				
June 2018	Faculty evaluators assess a random sample of A+CE Signature Assignments	N/A	Faculty evaluators	$1,500
Summer 2018	A+CE Implementation Committee summarizes all assessment data	N/A	A+CE Implementation Committee	N/A
Phase: Assessment Year Three				
Date	Activity	Resources	Participants	Costs
Fall 2018				
August-September 2018	A+CE Implementation Committee: 1. Share summary of AY2016 assessment data with university community 2. Schedule opportunities for faculty to discuss results and recommend strategies for improvement.	N/A	A+CE Implementation Committee and UHD community	
Fall 2018	Faculty implement A+CE Signature Assignments and submit student artifacts to assessment archive	N/A	Faculty teaching A+CE courses	N/A
November 2018	A+CE Implementation Committee will draft the 2018 A+CE Assessment Report and submit to the A+CE Advisory Committee.	NA	A+CE Implementation Committee A+CE Advisory Committee	N/A
Fall 2018	CLA+ Pre-assessment F2018 FTIC Cohort	Exam Subscription & Student Incentive	F2018 FTIC Cohort	$10,500 $7,500 Total: $18,000

Date	Activity	Resources	Participants	Costs
		300@ $25/student		
Fall 2018	Survey of faculty participating in A+CE professional development (ongoing after each development activity)	N/A	Faculty participating in A+CE professional development	N/A
Fall 2018	IDEA is administered to students	N/A	Faculty and students in A+CE courses	N/A
December 2018	A+CE Advisory Committee finalizes the AY2018 A+CE Assessment Report and submits to the Provost, President and University Committee	N/A	A+CE Advisory Committee UHD Provost UHD Present University Community	N/A
Spring 2019				
Spring 2019	UHD implements improvement strategies outlined in the AY2018 A+CE Assessment Report.	As indicated by A+CE assessment data	UHD Community	$5,000
Spring 2019	Faculty implement A+CE Signature Assignments and submit student artifacts to assessment archive	N/A	Faculty teaching A+CE courses	N/A
Spring 2019	CLA+ Post-assessment F2017 FTIC Cohort	Exam Subscription & Student Incentives 100@ 25/student	100 F2017 FTIC Cohort	$3,500 $2,500 Total: $6,000
Spring 2019	Survey of faculty participating in professional development. Survey of faculty participating in A+CE professional development (ongoing after each development activity)	N/A	Faculty participating in A+CE professional development	N/A
Spring 2019	IDEA is administered to students	N/A	All faculty students in A+CE courses	N/A
Summer 2019				
June 2019	Faculty evaluators assess a random sample of A+CE Signature Assignments	N/A	Faculty evaluators	$2,000
Summer 2019	A+CE Implementation Committee summarizes all assessment data	N/A	A+CE Implementation Committee	N/A
Phase: Assessment Year Four				
Date	Activity	Resources	Participants	Costs
Fall 2019				

August-September 2019	A⁺CE Implementation Committee: 1. Share summary of AY2016 assessment data with university community 2. Schedule opportunities for faculty to discuss results and recommend strategies for improvement.	N/A	UHD community	
Fall 2019	Faculty implement A⁺CE Signature Assignments and submit student artifacts to assessment archive	N/A	Faculty teaching A⁺CE courses	N/A
November 2019	A⁺CE Implementation Committee will draft the 2019 A⁺CE Assessment Report and submit to the A⁺CE Advisory Committee.	NA	A⁺CE Implementation Committee A⁺CE Advisory Committee	N/A
Fall 2019	Survey of faculty participating in A+CE professional development (ongoing after each development activity)	N/A	Faculty participating in A⁺CE professional development	N/A
Fall 2019	IDEA is administered to students	N/A	Faculty and students in A⁺CE courses	N/A
December 2019	A⁺CE Advisory Committee finalizes the AY2019 A⁺CE Assessment Report and submit to the Provost, President and University Committee	N/A	A⁺CE Advisory Committee UHD Provost UHD Present University Community	N/A
Spring 2020				
Spring 2020	UHD implements improvement strategies outlined in the AY2019 A⁺CE Assessment Report.	Based on A⁺CE assessment data	UHD Community	$5,000
Spring 2020	Faculty implement A⁺CE Signature Assignments and submit student artifacts to assessment archive	N/A	Faculty teaching A⁺CE courses	N/A
Spring 2020	CLA+ Post-assessment F2018 FTIC Cohort	Exam Subscription & Student Incentives, 100@ 25/student	100 F2018 FTIC Cohort	$3,500 $2,500 Total: $6,000
Spring 2020	NSSE	Survey Subscription	FITC Cohorts	$8,450

Spring 2020	Survey of faculty participating in A⁺CE professional development (ongoing after each development activity)	N/A	Faculty participating in A⁺CE professional development	N/A
Spring 2020	IDEA is administered to students	N/A	All faculty and students in A⁺CE courses	N/A
Summer 2020				
June 2020	Faculty evaluators assess a random sample of A⁺CE Signature Assignments	N/A	Faculty evaluators	$2,000
Summer 2020	A⁺CE Implementation Committee summarizes all assessment data	N/A	A⁺CE Implementation Committee	N/A
Phase: Assessment Year Five				
Date	Activity	Resources	Participants	Costs
Fall 2020				
August-September 2020	A⁺CE Implementation Committee: 1. Share summary of AY2016 assessment data with university community 2. Schedule opportunities for faculty to discuss results and recommend strategies for improvement.	N/A	UHD community	N/A
Fall 2020	Faculty implement A⁺CE Signature Assignments and submit student artifacts to assessment archive	N/A	Faculty teaching in A⁺CE courses	N/A
November 2020	A+CE Implementation Committee will draft the AY2020 A⁺CE Assessment Report and submit to the A⁺CE Advisory Committee.	NA	A⁺CE Implementation Committee A⁺CE Advisory Committee	N/A
Fall 2020	Survey of faculty participating in A⁺CE professional development (ongoing after each development activity)	N/A	Faculty participating in A⁺CE professional development	N/A
Fall 2020	IDEA is administered to students	N/A	Faculty and students in A⁺CE courses	N/A
December 2020	A⁺CE Advisory Committee finalizes the AY2020 A+CE Assessment Report and submit to the Provost, President and University	N/A	A⁺CE Advisory Committee UHD Provost UHD Present University	N/A

	Committee		Community	
Spring 2021				
Spring 2021	UHD implements improvement strategies outlined in the AY2020 A+CE Assessment Report.	Based upon A+CE assessment data	UHD Community	$5,000
Spring 2021	Faculty implement A+CE Signature Assignments and submit student artifacts to assessment archive	N/A	Faculty teaching A+CE courses	N/A
Spring 2021	Survey of faculty participating in A+CE professional development (ongoing after each development activity)	N/A	Faculty participating in A+CE professional development	N/A
Spring 2021	IDEA is administered to students	N/A	Faculty and students in A+CE courses	N/A
Summer 2021				
June 2021	Faculty evaluators assess a random sample of A+CE Signature Assignments	N/A	Faculty evaluators	$2,000
Summer 2021	A+CE Assessment Committee summarizes all assessment data	N/A	A+CE Assessment Committee	N/A
Phase: QEP-A+CE Impact Analysis				
Fall 2021				
August-September 2021	A+CE Implementation Committee: 1. Drafts summative assessment report in preparation for developing of the QEP Impact Report 2. Schedule opportunities for faculty to discuss results of the A+CE Program		UHD Community	
November 2021 –March 2022	A+CE Implementation Committee assists the A+CE Advisory Committee in drafting the QEP Impact Report.	N/A	A+CE Implementation Committee A+CE Advisory Committee UHD Provost UHD President	N/A
March 2022	UHD submits the QEP Impact Report	N/A		N/A

VIII. Organizational Structure

VIII.   ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Administration of the QEP

The QEP will be administered through the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs/Provost. The Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs is the SACSCOC Liaison and will guide the implementation over the five years, and the A⁺CE Faculty Director will be responsible for the execution of the plan. The Director will work with the A⁺CE Assistant Director and the A⁺CE Implementation Committee. The A⁺CE Advisory Committee comprised of various stakeholders will provide oversight.

Figure 3: A⁺CE QEP Organizational Chart
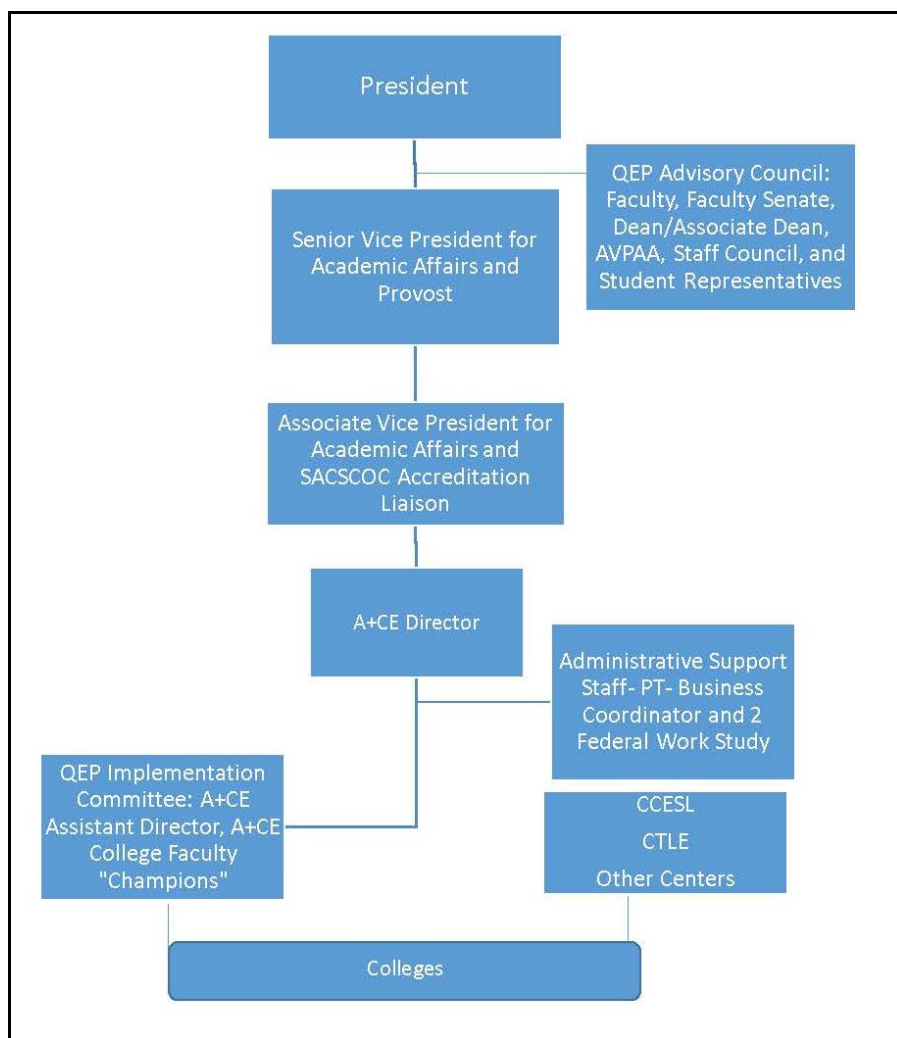
Description of Roles of QEP Team

Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) and Provost
The Provost oversees all academic activities in the University and will closely monitor the implementation of the QEP at UHD.

Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs (AVPAA) and SACSCOC Liaison

The AVPAA assists the Provost in academic matters. The AVPAA at UHD is the liaison for SACSCOC and provides guidance to the QEP team at UHD. The QEP Director will report to the AVPAA.

A$^+$CE Faculty Director

The A$^+$CE Faculty Director, who currently serves as the Interim Director of the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning, will spend 70% of her assigned time on the implementation of the QEP. The A$^+$CE Faculty Director will work with the Assistant Director of the QEP and the implementation team to ensure that the QEP is being successfully implemented across UHD. The director will:

- direct the activities related to A$^+$CE course designations, assessment, and faculty development;
- direct the administrative duties associated with the QEP;
- set up meetings and agendas for the QEP Advisory Committee;
- generate reports to share with the QEP Advisory Committee and AVPAA, for review and revisions;
- plan the annual A$^+$CE faculty orientations and other informational sessions for the UHD community;
- assist the A$^+$CE Implementation Committee with writing the A$^+$CE Assessment Reports.
- oversee the writing of the final QEP Impact Report, in cooperation with the A$^+$CE Implementation Committee and Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

A$^+$CE Assistant Director

The QEP Assistant Director, who also serves as the Assistant Director of the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning, will spend 50% of assigned time on the implementation of the QEP. The Assistant Director will:

- direct the assessment of the QEP;
- work with A$^+$CE Faculty champions to collect and organize assessment data;
- assist in writing the assessment reports;
- present assessment reports to the A$^+$CE Advisory Council;
- assist the Director in supervising QEP administrative staff.

A$^+$CE Faculty Champions

Faculty will be invited to apply to be A$^+$CE Faculty Champions in their colleges. Faculty Champions will:

- work with the QEP Assistant Director to collect and organize artifacts from their colleges for assessment;
- promote the development of A$^+$CE courses in their departments;
- assist faculty in their colleges who are teaching or preparing to teach an A$^+$CE course.

A$^+$CE Advisory Council

The A$^+$CE Advisory Council will consist of the A$^+$CE Faculty Director, AVPAA, faculty representatives from each department, representatives from faculty senate, staff, students, student affairs, library, alumni and community partners. With the exception of the A$^+$CE Faculty Director and AVPAA, the members will serve either one or two year terms. The council will meet two times per long semester. Six to eight members of the council will review the proposals for

A⁺CE designations during the long semester prior to the semester the course will be taught. The council members will:

- provide oversight of the implementation process;
- review the QEP reports and suggest revisions;
- review and approve proposals for A⁺CE course designations;
- act as liaisons for the stakeholder groups they represent.

A⁺CE Implementation Committee

The A⁺CE Implementation Committee will be composed of the A⁺CE Faculty Director, the A⁺CE Assistant Director, A⁺CE faculty champions, an IT representative, and the Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence. Members of this committee will:

- assist faculty applying for A⁺CE course designations;
- collect and maintain an inventory of all A⁺CE courses;
- collect and maintain an inventory of Signature Assignments from A⁺CE courses;
- collect representative A⁺CE artifacts for assessment.
- assist the A⁺CE Faculty Director with writing annual A⁺CE Assessment Reports and final QEP Impact Report.

Business Coordinator

The business coordinator in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness will have 25% of assigned time allocated to providing administrative support for seamless implementation of the A⁺CE QEP. The Coordinator will:

- provide administrative support for organizing events and initiatives;
- prepare University travel documents and other documents related to expenditures in compliance with university and state guidelines;
- prepare marketing material, etc.

Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CCESL)

The Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CCESL) was established in 2015 to centralize the efforts of UHD with its community partners. The purpose of the center is to prepare students to be engaged citizens who understand their civic responsibilities. The Center facilitates interactions between UHD faculty, staff, and students and the greater Houston community to enable students to apply classroom learning to community issues, thereby enhancing their learning and engaging them in citizenship.

Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE)

In 2014, UHD centralized its pedagogy-related professional development programs into a new Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE). The center provides faculty support, promotes evidenced-based instructional strategies, and cultivates an innovative and collaborative learning environment at UHD.

IX. Resources

IX.   RESOURCES

Budget

UHD is dedicated to a successful implementation of its QEP as can be seen by the allotted budget (see Table 9). This budget is new money dedicated to implementing the UHD QEP A⁺CE plan. It summarizes the costs of activities listed in the timelines above as well as other administrative costs. Below is a summary of the planned budget followed by Table 9: Budget.

Personnel

As mentioned earlier, two staff members in the Center of Community Engagement and Service Learning will serve as A⁺CE Faculty Director and Assistant Director and will dedicate a percentage of their assigned time to the QEP. We will hire full-time Administrative Assistant II as well. In addition to these staff members, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness will reallocate 25% of its business coordinator's assigned time to the A⁺CE to assist the A⁺CE Faculty Director with the business and financial aspects of the program. In Implementation Years 1 and 2, six A⁺CE College Faculty Champions will receive an annual stipend to assist in the implementation of the QEP. In Year 3 and beyond, as A⁺CE courses proliferate, we will appoint ten Faculty Champions. In addition, we will use federal funds to hire student workers for clerical support.

For purposes of assessment, in Year 1, 25 faculty evaluators will meet once a year at an "Assessment Summit" to score student artifacts using the Inquiry and Analysis Rubric and the Creativity Rubric. Each faculty member will receive a stipend per diem. After the first year, with an increased number of A⁺CE artifacts, we will have 35 to 40 faculty evaluators. In addition, 8 to10 peer tutors will be hired at an average of $12/hour and will serve in the Writing and Reading Center to assist faculty with the A⁺CE courses.

Assessment and Faculty Development

As mentioned in the Assessment Timeline above (see Table 8), UHD will administer the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA+), the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Individual Development and Education Assessment (IDEA), and Faculty and Student Survey. In addition, faculty will assess course-embedded assignments using the two AAC&U rubrics. The expenses for these test materials are itemized in the Assessment Timeline (Table 8 above) and are summarized in Table 9 below.

Faculty and staff will receive funding to attend professional-development workshops, seminars and conferences, both on- and off-campus, that center on strategies for teaching and assessing critical thinking skills. In addition, we have dedicated funds for bringing in consultants and guest speakers, for student pre-professional development (e.g., research presentation and conferences), and for stipends for students taking nationally normed tests.

Communication/Promotion

The University has also dedicated funds to ensure the communication and promotion of the A⁺CE QEP. Banners with the QEP topic and A⁺CE logo will be displayed throughout the campus, and QEP information will be displayed on hall TV monitors and on the screensavers of all campus public computers. The QEP topic and logo will be displayed on the wallpaper of all public computers on the campus. Promotional items such as water bottles, T-shirts, mouse pads, etc. will be distributed at various campus events to promote the QEP topic of Academic Achievement through Community Engagement.

General and Administrative

The University has also dedicated funds to administrative expenses associated with the QEP.

Table 9: A+CE Budget

	Year 0: 2015-16	Year 1: 2016-17	Year 2: 2017-18	Year 3: 2018-2019	Year 4: 2019-2020	Year 5: 2020-21	Total
Personnel (with benefits)							
A+CE Faculty Director	$88,900	$88,900	$91,567	$91,567	$95,230	$95,230	$551,394
A+CE Assistant Director	$41,275	$41,275	$42,513	$42,513	$43,788	$43,788	$255,152
A+CE Coordinator		$17,000	$17,000	17,000	$17,850	$17,850	$86,700
A+CE College Faculty Champions		$24,000	$24,000	$40,000	$40,000	$40,000	$168,000
Additional Peer Tutors in Writing Center		$40,000	$40,000	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000	$230,000
Subtotal:	**$130,175**	**$211,175**	**$215,080**	**$241,080**	**$246,868**	**$246,868**	**$1,291,246**
Assessment and Faculty/Student Development							
Assessment Materials		$10,500	$22,450	$14,000	$9,450 -		$56,400
Educational Materials	$300	$1,600	$1,600	$1,600	$1,600	$1,600	$8,300
Library		$4,000	$4,000	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	$23,000
Faculty Evaluator		$2,500	$3,500	$3,500	$4,000	$4,000	$17,500
Faculty Professional Development	$22,500	$25,500	$25,500	$25,500	$25,500		$124,500
Faculty Travel (conferences, presentations, etc.)		$15,000	$15,000	$20,000	$20,000	$10,000	$80,000
Student Development (Research Presentations/Conferences)		$5,000	$10,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$90,000
Student stipend		$7,500	$10,000	$10,000	$2,500		$30,000
Subtotal:	**$22,800**	**$71,600**	**$92,050**	**$104,600**	**$93,050**	**$45,600**	**$429,700**
Communication/ Promotion/ Celebration							
Marketing Visuals	$10,000	$1,500	$1,500	$1,500	$1,500		$16,000
Promotional material	$30,000	$1,500	$1,500	$1,500	$1,500		$36,000
Student Milestone Celebration		$3,000	$5,000	$5,000	$6,500	$6,500	$26,000
Subtotal:	**$40,000**	**$6,000**	**$8,000**	**$8,000**	**$9,500**	**$6,500**	**$78,000**
General & Administrative							
Maintenance & Operation	$5,000	$10,000	$10,000	$12,500	$12,500	$12,500	$62,500
Phones, Copying, Office Supplies	$3,000	$5,000	$5,000	$7,500	$7,500	$7,500	$35,500
Contingency fund		$20,000	$20,000	$20,000	$20,000	$20,000	$100,000
Subtotal:	**$8,000**	**$35,000**	**$35,000**	**$40,000**	**$40,000**	**$40,000**	**$198,000**
Totals	**$200,975**	**$323,775**	**$350,130**	**$393,680**	**$389,418**	**$338,968**	**$1,996,946**

Existing Resources

Library

W. I. Dykes Library supports the University's mission to provide students with "strong academic and career preparation" by providing the University's academic programs and students with learning resources and new technology and information services to meet their curriculum, research, and information needs. Library collections include 235 online databases, 342,903 electronic books, 94,649 electronic journals, 203,156 books and periodicals, 4,286 video and audio discs, and 72,600 online video and audio files.

Librarians provide students with reference assistance in person and via telephone, email, SMS texting, and a 24/7 online chat service. Librarians also provide one-on-one research consultations on specific topics. Library instruction is delivered through classroom sessions, online tutorials, and online research guides.

The library also provides research guides on higher education topics aimed at faculty and staff. This includes a research guide on topics related to the QEP at http://library.uhd.edu/qep.

Librarians are available to work with faculty and staff on providing support to classes that incorporate a community-engagement component and on locating research related to community engagement and critical thinking pedagogy. The library has a substantial collection of higher education journals and monographs.

The Writing and Reading Center

Located in the Academic Support Center in N925, the Writing and Reading Center (WRC) provides all UHD students tutoring support in both writing and critical reading to facilitate their academic success. Writing tutoring is also available by appointment at the UHD-Northwest location and online via the MyWCOnline portal. The WRC staff accommodates drop-ins, but students are encouraged to make an appointment by logging into the WRC's website or by visiting the WRC, especially during busy times of the semester. Additionally, the WRC staff develops instructional resources such as tip sheets, handouts, and new workshops on writing issues. Qualified students are hired and provided specialized training to serve as peer writing tutors who work with students one-on-one (in person or via the on-line conferencing). Some peer tutors may also serve as Writing Associates, tutors assigned to a specific instructor's course in order to facilitate student success in the course.

Technology: Comprehensive Student Record (CSR)

Awarded a grant by the Lumina Foundation, UHD is partnering with the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Offices (AACRAO), the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), and other universities in developing a comprehensive student record (CSR). The CSR exemplifies the emerging models of documenting student achievement that offer more than course names, credits, and grades. The goal of such a student record is to convey the breadth of learning experiences and achievements throughout a student's college career. To be launched for the QEP in Fall 2016, the CSR will allow UHD to identify A$^+$CE-designated courses on the transcript and provide students a means of demonstrating their competencies for career success.

X. ASSESSMENT

Developing a Theoretical Framework for Defining Learning Objectives for Students and Faculty

Ennis (1993) identifies a variety of reasons for assessing critical thinking including:

- Determining the levels of students critical thinking skills;
- Provide feedback to students about their thinking processes;
- Motivating students to become better thinkers;
- Informing faculty about the effectiveness of their instructional strategies and curriculum enhance critical thinking;
- Conducting research relevant to critical thinking;
- Determining students' readiness to enter a specialized area of study; and
- Evidence of students' attainment of critical thinking skills for the purposes of institutional accountability.

In undertaking an assessment of critical thinking, UHD is interested in a select subset of those reasons to include determining:

1. the degree to which students have achieved the A+CE critical thinking-focused learning outcomes (level of achievement);

2. the degree to which professional development activities have enhanced faculty's ability to teach and assess critical thinking (instructional effectiveness);

3. the effectiveness of using community engagement as a vehicle for enhancing students' critical thinking skills and improving student success (research);

4. other strategies, activities and support systems that improve students' critical thinking (research).

Well-constructed assessments of student learning requires a specific, clear articulation of the learning to be assessed (Brookhart, 2010, p. 17). Guided by best practice, UHD has established the following student learning outcomes for the A+CE courses:

A+CE SLO1: Students will be able to analyze community issues with respect to different perspectives, theories, or solutions.

A+CE SLO 2: Students will be able to identify or design creative strategies to address an aspect of a community issue.

In drafting these outcomes, the faculty considered the critical thinking learning outcomes in the University's Core Curriculum, Ennis's 1993 definition of critical thinking, the different modes of community engagement to be included in A+CE courses, and the developmental level of the students in A+CE courses. Since A+CE focuses on 1000- and 2000-level courses, the majority of which are also Core courses, it was important for A+CE learning outcomes to align with UHD's Core Curriculum critical-thinking learning outcomes, requiring students who complete the Core to be able to

- Conduct inquiry and analyze, evaluate and synthesis information;
- Think creatively and innovate.

Ennis (1993) defines critical thinking as "reasonable reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or what to do." This definition is relevant to UHD's focus on community engagement because very often when grappling with issues within our communities, we must reconcile contradictory information to determine our position on, or what we believe about, the issue. Once we have identified a position, we must then determine a course of action. Ennis' definition includes an emphasis on both determining beliefs and appropriate courses of action.

The final factors that influenced the focus of the A⁺CE outcomes were the need to have flexibility given the different modes in which community engagement would be applied and the need to have attainable outcomes appropriate for students who are in the early stages of their undergraduate education.

Assessment of the A⁺CE Student Learning Outcomes

Overview
A host of assessment experts (Allen, 2006; Palomba and Banta, 2009; Suskie, 2009; Wehlburg, 2006, e.g.) recommend using multiple methods to examine a learning outcome.   In light of that best practice, UHD has adopted both direct and indirect measurement strategies to determine the degree to which students are achieving learning.

Effective assessment instruments must always include tasks that require students to demonstrate the desired learning. Assessment of critical thinking requires that the assessment task:

- present "something for students to think *about";*
- be novel or new in nature, "thus not subject to recall";
- distinguish between levels of difficulty and thinking (Brookhart, 2010).

In addition to the elements noted above, effective assessment involves determining the level of performance needed to demonstrate that students achieved an appropriate level of attainment of learning (Brookhart, 2010).

The narrative below describes how each assessment method addresses the six elements of effective assessment of critical thinking. A brief summary of the processes of collecting data for each method is included.

Direct Assessment Methods: Embedded Assessment
UHD will use rubric-based evaluations of embedded assignments as the primary, direct method of determining the degree to which students are achieving the A⁺CE learning outcomes. Embedded assessment describes a process in which student artifacts, aligned with the targeted learning outcomes, are collected and evaluated by a group of expert reviewers. The student artifacts are evaluated using a rubric that supports the reliability of the evaluation process. The involvement of reviewers external to the course supports the objectivity of the evaluation (Wehlburg, 2008, pp.140-142).

Embedded assessment is especially suited to assessment of critical thinking. Student artifacts used in embedded assessment are generated in the context of the environment in which the learning is occurring and are well-suited for assessment of community service-learning (Allen 2006, p.157). Embedded assessment is classified as "authentic assessment" because this approach requires students to undertake complex tasks that allow for the measurement of

"specific student learning in the most direct and germane means possible" (Wehlburg, 2008, p. 138).

Furthermore, assignments used for embedded assessment are not restricted by time constraints and thus allow faculty to integrate tasks that are novel or new, require extensive thinking, and distinguish between different performance levels.

UHD selected the AAC&U VALUE Rubrics for the evaluation of the student artifacts because:

- The dimensions and scales of the rubrics are interdisciplinary and aligned with the A[+]CE Student Learning Outcomes;
- Each rubric was developed by cross-disciplinary teams of faculty from over 100 higher education institutions and thus provide an external benchmark of performance levels;
- Each was developed from the most frequently identified characteristics or criteria of learning for the learning outcome;
- Faculty are familiar with the VALUE rubrics since they are used in UHD's Core and in programmatic assessment.

The AAC&U VALUE Rubrics may be found in Appendix I.

The faculty identified a success criterion or level of acceptable performance for each measure of learning. The AAC&U VALUE rubrics, which are used in the embedded assessment, use a scale of zero to four in which level 0 reflects performance below what would be expected of entering freshman, level 1 is roughly aligned with the expected performance level of freshmen, level 2 with expected sophomore performance, and so forth. Since these rubrics will be applied to the work of sophomores, the UHD Core Assessment Plan established the success criterion of 2.5, which would be roughly between the sophomore and junior levels, for assessment of critical thinking in the Core. The A[+]CE Signature Assignments will use the same rubric and also be used to access sophomores. Therefore, we have adopted a similar success level of 2.5 for the A[+]CE assessment.

Banta and Palomba (2014) and Suskie (2010) note that assessment requires attention to the experiences that lead to those outcomes. Therefore, the data-collection process for the embedded assessment begins with the annual Faculty Critical Thinking Big Read and related workshop, which are discussed in Section VI. These activities are designed to ensure that A[+]CE faculty are implementing instructional strategies that support the development of analytical and creative thinking and are aligned with the AAC&U Inquiry & Analysis and Creative Thinking VALUE rubrics.

Each semester, faculty teaching A[+]CE sections will be required to assign an A[+]CE Signature Assignment related to at least one of the A[+]CE learning outcomes and will upload the student artifacts generated by the Signature Assignments to a central repository. Each summer, a random stratified sample of 200 SLO1-related artifacts created by FTIC sophomores will be selected from the archive for assessment. A smaller sample size of 100 artifacts created by FTIC sophomores in A+CE courses adopting A+CE LO2 will be selected. Because of SLO2's focus on creativity, we expect a smaller number of A+CE courses will adoptS LO2, and thus we will adopt a smaller sample size for that outcome.. Sample sizes were calculated based upon the assumptions above using a simplified formula for proportions size, with a 95% confidence level and ±5% precision (Yamane 1967, p. 886).

A$^+$CE SLO1:

N_0 = Population; estimated at 400 FTIC sophomores enrolled in courses focusing on A$^+$CE SLO1:

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{No}{1+No*e^2} = \frac{400}{1+400(.05)^2} = 200$$

A$^+$CE SLO2:

N_0 = Population; estimated at 133 FTIC sophomores enrolled in courses focusing on A$^+$CE SLO2:

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{No}{1+No*e^2} = \frac{133}{1+400(.05)^2} = 99.8123 \dots (rounded\ to\ 100)$$

Direct Assessment Methods: Collegiate Learning Assessment
UHD selected the CLA+ as a secondary direct assessment of A$^+$CE SLO 1 Analytical Thinking because:

- The CLA+ is a highly-reliable-at-the-institutional-level (Cronbach's alpha = .87) (Zahner, 2014), nationally-recognized assessment of analysis and critical thinking.
- The objectives of the instrument are well aligned with UHD's definition of analytical thinking;
- The instrument allows comparison to similar cohorts from other institutions;
- UHD has used the CLA+ (and its's previous version, the CLA) to assess is General Education program and thus has two cycles of benchmark data.

Performance assessments within the CLA+ are open-ended and "require students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities by generating their on solutions and response" (Zahner, 2014) rather than selecting from a list of multiple-choice options. Furthermore, the University has adopted a pre-/post-test assessment design that allows faculty to measure the degree to which students' analytical thinking skills change over the course of their participation in A$^+$CE courses.

UHD has two cycles of benchmark data for the CLA/CLA+, and one of the considerations in selecting critical thinking as the QEP topic was students' consistently low performance on this instrument. In both administrations, the majority of UHD's seniors performed at the "Basic" level as opposed to the "Proficient" level where the majority of students at peer institutions fell. While pre-post data were not available, we felt that if more students could be moved from the "Basic" level into the "Proficient" level by the end of their sophomore year, it would be reasonable to expect seniors' performance to improve. For these reasons, UHD has adopted the following success criterion:

- FTIC Cohort 1: 5% increase in number of students scoring at the "Proficient" (4) level or above between the freshman pre- and sophomore post-assessment in the areas of Analysis & Problem Solving.

- FTIC Cohort 2: 7% increase in number of students scoring at the "Proficient" (4) level or above between the freshman pre- and sophomore post-assessment in the areas of Analysis & Problem Solving.

Three-hundred randomly selected students from the Fall 2016, Fall 2017 and Fall 2018 FTIC cohorts will take the pre-test CLA+ in their first semester at UHD. These students will then be invited to retake the CLA+ in the spring of their sophomore year (Spring 2018, Spring 2019, and Spring 2020), and the pre- and post-test performance will be compared.

Indirect Assessment of Student Learning
Principle Two of the Nine Principles of Good Practice for Assessing Student Learning notes that "Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multidimensional [and] integrated" (Astin et al., 1997). While the direct measures of student learning help us understand the degree to which students' critical thinking skills are changing, UHD will also use indirect methods of assessment to understand how students perceive the learning experience and their own personal growth.

To access A+CE SLO1, UHD will use the following indirect instruments:

- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
- Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) Student Feedback

To access A+CE SLO2, UHD will use the following indirect instrument:

- Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) Student Feedback (custom questions)

The **National Survey of Student Engagement** (NSSE) is a nationally recognized survey of student engagement. Survey items "represent empirically confirmed 'good practices' in undergraduate education. That is, they reflect behaviors by students and institutions that are associated with desired outcomes of college. NSSE doesn't assess student learning directly, but survey results point to areas where colleges and universities are performing well and aspects of the undergraduate experience that could be improved" (NSSE 2015a).

UHD selected the NSSE as an indirect measure of the A+CE SLO1 because:

- Many NSSE questions align with the learning articulated in SLO1;
- Benchmark data are available back to 2008;
- NSSE is a national instrument, allowing UHD to make comparisons with similar geographic and Carnegie class institutions;
- NSSE data includes student ID's, thus allowing UHD to conduct detailed analysis with other available demographic data;
- Faculty and administrators are familiar with the instrument.

The NSSE instrument may be found in Appendix L. NSSE items that will be used in the A+CE assessment may be found in the detailed assessment plan at the end of this section.

UHD has NSSE data back to 2008 and on items relevant to the QEP topics, UHD students report levels of engagement that are on par with their peers at similar as well as with students across all institutions. UHD believes that if the QEP is well implemented, students should be reporting engagement that is above that reported by students at other institutions. Therefore, the success criterion for NSSE items was set as:

There will be a statistically significant positive difference between UHD's freshmen responses on the target survey items noted and that of their peers at similar Carnegie Class institutions.

UHD administers the NSSE electronically every third year, most recently in Spring 2016. In Spring 2018 and Spring 2020 all FTIC students will be invited to complete the survey. NSSE data includes the student ID and will allow the university's IR staff to conduct detailed analysis with other available institutional data such as GPA and with IDEA data.

The **Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA)** is a web-based course evaluation system that was developed at the University of Kansas in partnership with colleges and university from across the U.S. IDEA is uniquely suited for assessment of the A⁺CE SLO's because it requires students to articulate their perception of intellectual growth within the course. For example, the instrument asks students to describe the amount of progress made on "*Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view."*

The IDEA instrument is based upon extensive research, controls for extraneous circumstances (e.g. class size, student motivation), and allows faculty to compare their individual feedback with that of their peers in similar courses and peers across the institution. Faculty and administration use the reports generated by the IDEA system for improving individual faculty performance, modifying instructional strategy, and accreditation and institutional review processes (IDEA, 2015).

UHD selected IDEA as an indirect method because:

- The instrument was revised for AY2016 to include questions well aligned with UHD's QEP topic. In addition, IDEA also added questions that parallel the NSSE instrument.
- The instrument allows UHD to add institution-specific item;
- UHD has used IDEA for the past four years as its course evaluation system.   IDEA was request by UHD faculty and both faculty and administrators are familiar with the instrument.
- IDEA includes an extensive reporting system that allows for comparisons between courses as well as across the institution as a whole. In addition, IDEA allows UHD to develop custom reports which can compare how students are experiences learning in A⁺CE and non- A⁺CE sections.
- IDEA is cost-effective and allows UHD to gather indirect data every semester.

The IDEA instrument may be found in Appendix M. Specific IDEA questions that will be used in the assessment of A⁺CE may be found in the detailed assessment plan at the end of this section.

In this one instance, UHD lacked baseline IDEA data or other institutional targets to inform the success criterion due to the addition of new IDEA survey items. The scale on the survey items relevant to A⁺CE is:

No apparent progress
Slight progress: I made small gains on this objective
Moderate progress: I made some goals on the objective
Substantial progress: I made large gains on this objective
Exceptional progress: I made outstanding gains on this objective

The faculty felt that an expectation of moderate progress was reasonable and established the success criterion as:

> At least 80% of responding students in A+CE courses will report at least moderate progress.

Once actual data are available, the faculty will increase the success criterion if it is determined that "Moderate progress" is too low.

The IDEA will be administered every long semester to all students, of which roughly 900 will be FTIC. IDEA reports will be archived in a central repository. Findings from both the IDEA and the NSSE will be evaluated as part of the assessment of A+CE data.

Programmatic Assessment

UHD is also interested in assessing and improving the effectiveness of programmatic aspects of A+CE. These include:

- The impact of A+CE on student success;
- The effectiveness of professional development in engaging faculty in the A+CE program;
- UHD's ability to effectively assess A+CE student learning and related activities;
- UHD's ability to sustain the A+CE program.

As with the assessment of A+CE SLO's, the University has identified multiple measures and related success criterion.

Assessment of the Impact of A+CE on Student Success
The underlying premise of the A+CE program is that students' critical thinking skills will be enhanced by community engagement, resulting in greater academic success. To test this premis, UHD will compare the GPA's of students participating in the A+CE cohorts with the GPA's of student in prior years.

Success criterion have been established based upon the institution's performance in prior years, targets set in the UHD Revised 2020 Strategic Plan, and institutional policy that places students on probation if their GPA drops below 2.0 on the 4-point scale. UHD's Office of Institutional Research will provide data at the close of each long semester.

Assessment of A+CE Faculty Development
Effective professional development is critical in ensuring that faculty are able to develop pedagogy that promotes strong critical thinking skills. For there to be critical mass for improving student performance, a significant number of faculty must also be participating in professional development. Therefore, UHD will measure the following:

- Broad participation rates in A+CE-sponsored faculty development activities;
- The number of course sections receiving A+CE-designation;
- Faculty satisfaction with A+CE-sponsored faculty development; and
- Faculty's perceptions of their ability to effectively teach and assess critical thinking.

Success criterion for the measure of participation and number of courses with A+CE designation were based upon a calculation of the number of A+CE-designated sections needed to ensure that each FTIC cohort had significant opportunity to participate in one or more A+CE-designated courses. The success criterion for faculty satisfaction were based upon the UHD Revised 2020 Strategic Plan, which has established a university-wide minimum level for satisfaction surveys.

Participation rates will be evaluated each long semester based upon professional development sign-in sheets. The faculty satisfaction surveys will be administered at the close of each professional development activity, and the number of course sections receiving A+CE designation will be determined by reports generated by the Office of Institutional Research.

Evaluation of A+CE Assessment and Improvement Processes
While collecting data is important, the true value of assessment is in promoting improvement. Processes must be in place to support both aspects. To ensure that assessment processes are effective, UHD will analyze the degree to which UHD:

- manages and sustains data and evaluation;
- identifies and implements meaningful change to improve student learning and A+CE activities.

Data will be drawn annually from an analysis of the annual A+CE Assessment Reports on student learning and program effectiveness.

Sustainability of A+CE
To ensure that A+CE is sustainable, courses that receive A+CE designation need to retain that designation over multiple semesters. There should be evidence that A+CE-designated courses continue to actively engage students in critical thinking related to community issues. UHD will assess these two elements using:

- analysis of the number of course sections which retain A+CE-designation over multiple semesters;
- student responses to relevant questions on the NSSE.

Data on the number of sections retaining A+CE designation will be evaluated annually based upon reports generated by the Office of Institutional Research.

The A+CE Implementation Committee will manage assessment, including:

- ensuring that all scheduled data are collected;
- summarizing findings of both SLO and program effectiveness data;
- sharing assessment results with the A+CE Advisory Committee;
- soliciting broad input on strategies to improve;
- drafting the annual A+CE Assessment Reports;
- assisting the A+CE Advisory Committee in soliciting feedback and finalizing the annual A+CE Assessment Reports for submission to the President and Provost (due each December);
- ensuring that strategies for improvement are implemented effectively.

Analysis, Triangulation, and Reporting Assessment Findings

Analysis of Student Learning Data
Embedded assessment, the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), the National Survey of Student Engagement, and the IDEA course evaluation will be used to assess student learning and the environment in which that learning occurs.

A random stratified sample of 100 artifacts will be drawn from the A+CE Analysis Signature Assignment Archive each semester (200 total). Fifty papers will be similarly sampled from the A+CE Creative Thinking Signature Assignment Archive each semester (100 total). Each summer, faculty reviewers will participate in rubric-norming activities prior to evaluation of student artifacts. Multiple readers will evaluate each artifact, and a Cronbach's Alpha test will be used to calculate interrater reliability of scores.

Data will be collected annually and compared longitudinally using a one-way ANOVA. There should be a statistically significant improvement in student performance as faculty become more skilled in teaching and assessing relevant critical thinking skills.

UHD will use a pre-test/post-test design to analyze improvement of students on the CLA+. The improvement in each student's scale score on the assessment will be analyzed using a matched-pairs *t*-test. Statistical significance would imply that the A+CE activities are making a difference in the degree to which students can think analytically.

Additionally, UHD's CLA+ scores will be compared to prior UHD benchmark performance as well as to the CLA+ mean score percentile rank, the total CLA+ score, the total performance task, and the performance task subscore on analysis and problem solving. Statistical significance of these measures is calculated as part of the CLA+ reporting system. Statistically significant improvements in student performance on the CLA+ would imply that the A+CE is having a positive effect on students' critical thinking skills.

UHD will use regression analysis to determine if there is a statistically significant relationship between the improvement in a student's CLA scale score and the number of A+CE courses a student takes. The number of A+CE courses a student completes will be the independent variable, and the improvement of the student's scale score will be the dependent variable. A statistically significant relationship would imply that a student's analytical skills are related to the number of A+CE courses the student completes.

UHD's student responses on targeted NSSE items (see the A+CE Assessment Plan summary table below) will compared to prior years' responses and to those of their peers at Southwest Institutions and to those within the same Carnegie Classification. Statistical significance for these measures is calculated as part of the NSSE reporting system, and significant improvements would imply that the A+CE strategy is having a positive effect on students.

IDEA data will be used to analyze the degree to which students feel their analytical and creative thinking skills are improving and how they are experiencing the learning environment within A+CE courses.

Formative Evaluation of Program Effectiveness Measures
Formative data will be collected for program effectiveness measures such as professional development, growth in number of faculty seeking and acquiring A+CE designation, the breadth

of courses holding A⁺CE designation, number and breadth of courses maintaining the designation over multiple semesters, and improvement in student success and retention.

Descriptive statistics will be the primary method to analyze program effectiveness data. The focus of the analysis will be to ensure that activities have been implemented as planned, and to determine whether the activities are helping students achieve established standards of performance.

Triangulation and Reporting

As noted above, leading assessment experts recommend using multiple methods in assessing student learning. There are two benefits of this approach. First, measurement of learning occurs within a complex system in which many factors influence the validity and reliability of the findings. However, if multiple measures are used to examine an outcome and those measurements lead to the same conclusion, we have greater confidence that the findings, in total, accurately reflect students' level of achievement and how they experience learning.   In other words, if the findings are *consistent* from measure to measure, the findings are *triangulated* (Allen, 2006, p. 133).

Second, findings of multiple methods, when considered in light of one another, can also shed light on underlying factors that are hindering or supporting student attainment of learning. For example, if direct evidence suggests that students are not strong critical thinkers while the indirect measure indicate that students spend little time engaged in activities that support acquisition of thinking skills, the indirect evidence sheds light on strategies that might help students improve (Allen, 2006, p. 133). However, to take advantage of these benefits, findings of both direct and indirect measurements must be considered concurrently.

In light of best practice, faculty evaluators will analyze the findings of the direct and indirect measures of student learning concurrently with data from the programmatic assessment and integrate the findings into an annual report. The annual A+CE Assessment Reports will also include longitudinal data and a follow-up on the degree to which improvement strategies from the prior assessment cycle have been implemented.

The A⁺CE Implementation Committee, supported by the Office of Community Engagement and Service Learning and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, will facilitate the collection of data, facilitate evaluation processes, and draft the appropriate reports, including an annual A⁺CE Assessment Report.

The A⁺CE Assessment Report will be shared with the broader UHD community each October. Faculty and administrators will meet in partnership with student representatives to discuss the findings, progress made over the previous year, and strategies for improving both the students' critical thinking skills and the overall assessment process. Once strategies for improvement are determined, the draft assessment report will be shared with the UHD community for final comment and the finalized report presented to the Provost and President in December.

Overview of the A⁺CE Assessment Plan

QEP Goal 1: Foster students' learning and scholarship through critical analysis of community issues.

QEP Goal 2: Enhance students' ability to apply academic skills and knowledge to address regional, national, or global community issues.

TABLE 10: ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Assessment Strategy	Success Criterion	Collection & Evaluation	
		Data Collection	**Evaluation and Intervention**
SLO 1: Students will be able to analyze community issues with respect to different perspectives, theories, or solutions.			
Direct Assessment: Rubric-based evaluation of a stratified random sample of 200 student artifacts from the A⁺CE Signature Assignment archive using the AAC&U Inquiry and Analysis Rubric Relevant materials can be found in Appendix 1.	(From UHD's core assessment plan): At least 75% of evaluated students will be assessed at the 2.5 level or above on the AAC&U Inquiry and Analysis Rubric	Pilot F2016 Subsequent Semesters: Each long semester	Annually
Direct Assessment: Pre/Post Administration of Nationally Normed Exam CLA+ will be used as a measure of students' ability to think critically. 300 F2016, F2017, and F2018 entering FTIC will participate in a pre-assessment. These students will be invited back to take the CLA as a post-test at the end of their sophomore year. Relevant materials can be found in Appendix N	FTIC Cohort 1: 5% increase in number of students scoring at the Proficient (4) level or above between the pre- and post-test in the areas of Analysis & Problem Solving (Baseline: This is pending) FTIC Cohort 2: 7% increase in number of students number of students scoring at the Proficient (4) level or above between the pre- and post-assessment in the areas of Analysis & Problem Solving (Baseline: This is pending)	FTIC Cohort 1: Pre-Assessment: F2016 Post-assessment: S2018 FTIC Cohort 2: Pre-Assessment: F2017 Post-assessment: S2019 FTIC Cohort 3:	2018 2019 2020

Assessment Strategy	Success Criterion	Collection & Evaluation	
		Data Collection	Evaluation and Intervention
	Note: UHD will only be able to conduct three pre/post-cycles due to the time needed for CLA to create reports.	Pre-Assessment: F2018 Post-assessment: S2020	
NSSE: Responses of First-year Students on the NSSE. Note: All FTIC students will be invited to participate in S2016 (baseline), S2018 and S2020. In prior administration of the NSSE, response rate was roughly 400freshmen. The NSSE instrument can be found in Appendix L NSSE items related to UHD's QEP topic are: • Page 1: Connected your learning to societal problems • Page 1: Included diverse perspectives in course discussions or assignments • Page 1: Examined the strengths & weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue • Page 1: Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his/her perspective. • Page 1: Learned something that changed the way you understood an issue or concept	There will be a statistically significant positive difference between UHD's freshmen responses on the target survey items noted below and that of their peers at similar Carnegie Class institutions. Baseline Data (First-year student responses in 2013) Scale for the following items is: Scale: 1 = Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often, 4 = Very Often) ***During the current school year, about how often have you:*** ***Connected your learning to societal programs?*** (N = 206; UHD Mean: 2.6 vs. Carnegie Class Comparison Mean of 2.6) ***Included diverse perspectives in course discussions or assignments?*** (N = 204; UHD Mean: 2.6 vs. Carnegie Class Comparison Mean of 2.6)	Spring 2016 Spring 2018 Spring 2020	2018 2020

Assessment Strategy	Success Criterion	Collection & Evaluation	
		Data Collection	**Evaluation and Intervention**
	Examined the strengths & weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue (N = 207; UHD Mean: 2.8 vs. Carnegie Class Comparison Mean of 2.8) *Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his/her perspective.* (N 207; UHD Mean: 2.9 vs. Carnegie Class Comparison Mean of 2.8) *Learned something that changed the way you understood an issue or concept* (N = 206; UHD Mean: 2.8 vs. Carnegie Class Comparison Mean of 2.8)		
Indirect Assessment: IDEA: Student Evaluation of Courses: All students are invited to complete the IDEA each semester. Relevant materials can be found in Appendix M Specific survey items used: Describe the amount of progress you made on each (even those not pursued in this class) by using the following scale: No apparent progress; Slight progress: I made small gains on this objective; Moderate progress: I made some	For each survey item (21, 22, 23, 27, 28, 30, and 31), at least 80% of responding students in 1000- and 2000-level courses with the A+CE designation will report at least moderate progress.	Each semester	Annually

		Collection & Evaluation	
Assessment Strategy	**Success Criterion**	**Data Collection**	**Evaluation and Intervention**
goals on the objective; Substantial progress; I made large gains on this objective; Exceptional progress: I made outstanding gains on this objective: 21: Developing knowledge and understanding of diverse perspectives, global awareness, or other cultures; 22. Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decision) 23. Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course; 27. Developing skill in expressing myself orally or in writing. 28. Learning to find, evaluate and use resources to explore a topic in depth. 30. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view. 31. Learning to apply knowledge and skills to benefit others or serve the public good.			
SLO2: Students will be able to identify or design creative strategies to address an aspect of a community issue.			
Direct Assessment: Rubric-based evaluation of a stratified random sample of 100 student artifacts from the A⁺CE Signature Assignment archive using the AAC&U Creative Thinking Rubric Related coursework: Designated sections across the Core.	(From UHD's core assessment plan): At least 75% of evaluated students will be assessed at the 2.5 level or above on the AAC&U Inquiry and Analysis Rubric	Pilot F2016 Subsequent Semesters: Each long semester	Annually

		Collection & Evaluation	
Assessment Strategy	**Success Criterion**	**Data Collection**	**Evaluation and Intervention**
Indirect Assessment: IDEA: All students are invited to complete the IDEA each semester. Student Evaluation of Courses involved in the : Relevant survey items and institution-specific survey items: Describe the amount of progress you made on each (even those not pursued in this class) by using the following scale: No apparent progress; Slight progress: I made small gains on this objective; Moderate progress: I made some goals on the objective; Substantial progress; I made large gains on this objective; Exceptional progress: I made outstanding gains on this objective: 22. Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decision); 30. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view; Institution Survey Item 1: Learning to find and evaluate creative and innovative solutions to problems; Institution Survey Item 2: Developing knowledge and understanding of strategies for solving social and community issues;	For each relevant survey item (#22 and #30 and institutional-specific survey items) at least 80% of responding students in 1000- and 2000-level courses with the A+CE designation will report at least moderate progress.	Each semester	Annually

TABLE 11: PROGRAMMATIC ASSESSMENT

Effectiveness Outcome	Assessment Strategy	Success Criterion	Collection & Evaluation	
			Data Collection	Evaluation and Intervention
The A+CE Program will support and enhanced student success	**Institutional Research Reports:** Grade Distribution Reports	FTIC student cohorts will maintain a mean GPA of at least 2.25 with a maximum of 1 C in the A+CE-designated courses.	Annually	Annually
The "Engaged Scholar" designation will effectively motivate student participation in A+CE-designated courses.	Institutional Research Reports	FTIC cohort participation: At the end of FTIC Cohort Year 1, at least 40% of the cohort will have taken at least 4 A+CE-designated courses and earned 1 digital badge toward Engaged Scholar designation. At least 20% of each FTIC cohort will earn Engaged Scholar designation	Annually	Annually
The A+CE – sponsored faculty development will engage faculty and enhance their ability to design effective critical thinking activities and assessments and integrate critical thinking strategies into their class.	Faculty participate in the professional development	Each department within the institution will have faculty participating in QEP-sponsored professional-development programs. **Goal 1, Objective 5 Target:** At least 50% of Core faculty will participate in A+CE-sponsored faculty development programs.	Annually	Annually
	Faculty Survey: All faculty teaching in A+CE-sponsored professional development will be invited to complete the survey.	At least 75% of faculty participating in A+CE-sponsored professional development will agree or strongly agree that professional development: -increased their ability to design effective critical thinking activities and assessments; -integrate critical thinking strategies into their class	Annually	Annually
	Institutional Research Report: # of 1000- and 2000- level courses with A+CE designation	At least 50 % of first and second year course sections will be designated as A+CE sections.	Annually	Annually
UHD will develop	Institutional Research	Designate at least 10% of total	Annually	Annually

Effectiveness Outcome	Assessment Strategy	Success Criterion	Collection & Evaluation	
			Data Collection	**Evaluation and Intervention**
the course infrastructure to maintain effective elements of the A⁺CE program.	Reports	undergraduate course sections (avg. 1800 sections in two long semesters) as A+CE section by 2020, with a minimum of 25 sections incrementally every year. 50% of A+CE- designated sections that retain the designation over 5 semesters 75% of faculty teaching Community Engagement designated courses agree or strongly agree they are receiving necessary support to become/maintain CE designated.		
	NSSE: Responses of First-year Students on the NSSE. The NSSE instrument can be found in Appendix L NSSE items related to UHD's QEP topic are: • Page 1: Connected your learning to societal problems • Page 1: Included diverse perspectives in course discussions or assignments • Page 1: Examined the strengths & weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue • Page 1: Tried to better understand	There will be a positive statistically significant difference between UHD's freshmen responses on the target survey items noted below and that of their peers at similar Carnegie Class institutions. Baseline Data (First-year student responses in 2013) Scale for the following items is: Scale: 1 = Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often, 4 = Very Often) ***During the current school year, about how often have you:*** ***Connected your learning to societal programs?*** (N = 206; UHD Mean: 2.6 vs. Carnegie Class Comparison Mean of 2.6) ***Included diverse perspectives in***	Spring 2016 Spring 2018 Spring 2020	Fall 2016 Fall 2018 Fall 2020

Effectiveness Outcome	Assessment Strategy	Success Criterion	Collection & Evaluation	
			Data Collection	Evaluation and Intervention
	someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his/her perspective. • Page 1: Learned something that changed the way you understood an issue or concept • Page 3: How much does your institution emphasize: attending events that address important social, economic or political issues • Page 3: About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing the following: Doing community service or volunteer work? • Page 3: About how many of your courses at this institution have included a community-based project (service learning)?	*course discussions or assignments?* (N = 204; UHD Mean: 2.6 vs. Carnegie Class Comparison Mean of 2.6) *Examined the strengths & weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue* (N = 207; UHD Mean: 2.8 vs. Carnegie Class Comparison Mean of 2.8) *Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his/her perspective.* (N = 207; UHD Mean: 2.9 vs. Carnegie Class Comparison Mean of 2.8) *Learned something that changed the way you understood an issue or concept* (N = 206; UHD Mean: 2.8 vs. Carnegie Class Comparison Mean of 2.8) *How much does your institution emphasize: attending events that address important social, economic or political issues?* Scale: 1 = Very little, 2 = Some, 3 = Quite a Bit, 4 = Very Much (N = 206; UHD Mean: 2.5 vs. Carnegie Class Comparison Mean of 2.6) *About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing the following: Doing*		

Effectiveness Outcome	Assessment Strategy	Success Criterion	Collection & Evaluation	
			Data Collection	Evaluation and Intervention
		community service or volunteer work? Scale: 0 = 0 hours; 3 = 1-5 hours, 8 = 6-10 hours; 13 = 11-15 hours; 18 – 16-20 hours; 23 = 21-25 hours; 28 = 26-30 hours; 33 = More than 30 hours (N = 167; UHD Mean: 2.8 vs. Carnegie Class Comparison Mean of 2.4) *About how many of your courses at this institution have included a community-based project (service learning)?* Scale: 1 = None; 2 = Some; 3 = Most; 4 = All (N = 185; UHD Mean: 1.6 vs. Carnegie Class Comparison Mean of 1.7)		
Assessment processes for the A+CE program will ensure data collection and identification and implementation of interventions designed to enhance student learning.	Analysis of the degree to which UHD is able to: -Manage and sustain the collection and evaluation of data - Identify and implement meaningful change to continually improve student learning relating to the QEP LO's.	100% of data required for the assessment of the QEP will be collected, assessed and acted upon. 100% of identified interventions will begin implementation within one semester of identification.	Annually	Annually

Appendices
A - N

Appendix A: References

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APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY

Academic Achievement through Community Engagement. UHD's Quality Enhancement Plan, represented by the acronym A⁺CE.

A⁺CE. Acronym for the University of Houston-Downtown's Quality Enhancement Plan, "Academic Achievement through Community Engagement."

A⁺CE Advisory Committee. The committee responsible for oversight of UHD's A⁺CE program.

A⁺CE Implementation Committee. The committee charged with implementing the A⁺CE Quality Enhancement Plan.

CCESL. The acronym for UHD's Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning.

Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CCESL). This UHD center seeks to prepare educated, engaged citizens; to strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; to address critical social issues; and to build partnerships of knowledge and resources with the public and private sectors to enrich and enhance curriculum, teaching, and learning, thus providing students with high impact practices that enhance their academic careers at UHD. Website: https://www.uhd.edu/community-engagement/Pages/about.aspx

Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE). Housed in University College, this UHD Center, provides pedagogical support for UHD faculty, promotes evidenced-based instructional strategies, and cultivates an innovative and collaborative learning environment at UHD. The center's ongoing initiatives aim to achieve the student success objectives outlined in the UHD Strategic Plan and to support the University's continual growth and development as a vibrant teaching and learning institution. Website: https://www.uhd.edu/academics/university-college/centers-offices/teaching-learning-excellence/Pages/ctle-index.aspx.

CLA+. Acronymfor the Collegiate Learning Assessment+, which succeeded the CLA.

Collegiate Learning Assessment+ (CLA+). A nationally normed instrument that measures students' analytical and problem-solving abilities, scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical reading and evaluation, and ability to critique an argument.

Community Engagement. The Carnegie Foundation defines community engagement as "collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity." There are three modes of curriculum-based community engagement, reflecting varying levels of interaction between students and the community:
- Awareness of community issues through course-based analysis of the issues;
- Integration of outside community expertise in the course;
- Involvement of students in the community to apply classroom learning.

Critical Reflection. A discursive mode in which the writer analyzes and interprets the significance of an experience or personal belief. The A⁺CE-designated courses will include a critical reflection assignment as a learning exercise to foster deeper critical thinking.

Critical Thinking. According to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, critical thinking includes "creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information" (2011a).   Critical thinking is an active intellectual process of conceptualizing, analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating information and data in order to inform the thinker's actions, values, or beliefs.

CTLE. Acronym for UHD''s Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence.

Engaged Scholar. A designation to be awarded and to appear on the expanded student record/transcript for students who have completed a minimum of four A$^+$CE courses with a maximum of one *C* in one of the courses and earned a 2.5 or above overall GPA by the end of the second .

Faculty Champion. Selected faculty members who work with the A$^+$CE Faculty Director and Co-director to promote and facilitate the development and assessment of A$^+$CE courses in their departments.

IDEA Student Rating of Instruction System (SRI). A student course evaluation instrument that focuses on students' perceptions of student learning and related teaching methods.

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). A nationally recognized survey used as an indirect assessment measure. The NSSE's survey items reflect student and institutional behavior associated with desired educational outcomes. NSSE results help to identify areas of effective institutional performance as well as those areas needing improvement.

NSSE. Acronym for the National Survey of Student Engagement.

QEP Selection Committee. The committee charged by President Flores in 2014 with identifying possible topics for UHD's QEP.

QEP Steering Committee. The committee charged with developing a fully articulated Quality Enhancement plan based on the topic identified by the QEP Selection Committee.

Service Learning. According to the National Service Learning Clearinghouse, "Service learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities." Service learning is usually an advanced form of curriculum-based community engagement.

Signature Assignment. The major assignment in an A$^+$CE-designated course submitted for the assessment of the QEP program. The assignment focuses on community issues or community engagement and requires successful application of critical-thinking skills to these issues.

Texas Core Curriculum. A 42-semester-credit-hour foundational curriculum required for all undergraduates enrolled in Texas state-supported universities and colleges. It includes six Core Objectives, including critical thinking skills, communication skills, empirical and quantitative skills, teamwork, social responsibility, and personal responsibility. More information is available at http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/index.cfm?objectid=417252EA-B240-62F7-9F6A1A125C83BE08.

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). The agency empowered by the State legislature to oversee higher education at state-supported institutions in Texas and to make curricular and administrative regulations pertaining to those institutions. The THECB website is available at http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/.

University of Houston System (UHS). The university system of which the University of Houston-Downtown is a component university, along with the University of Houston, the University of Houston-Clear Lake, and the University of Houston-Victoria. The UHS is governed by the UHS Board of Regents and administered by the Sytem Chancellor, who also serves as the President of the University of Houston. Each component university has its own president. The UHS website is available at http://www.uhsystem.edu/.

Appendix C: QEP Selection Committee		
Committee Member	**Title**	**Unit Represented**
Susan Henney (Chair)	Faculty Senate President and Associate Professor of Psychology	College of Humanities and Social Science
Liza Alonzo	Executive Director, Presidential Affairs and Operations	President's Office
Ron Beebe	Chair and Associate Professor of Urban Education	College of Public Service
David Bradley	Vice President, Administration and Finance	Division of Administration and Finance
Ermelinda Delavina	Associate Dean, College of Sciences and Technology	College of Sciences and Technology
Shannon Fowler	Associate Professor of Criminal Justice	College of Public Service
Faiza Khoja	Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs	Office of VPAA/Provost
John Locke	President, Student Government Association	Student Government Association
Akif Uzman	Dean, College of Sciences and Technology	College of Sciences and Technology
Sarah Walker	Associate Professor of Management	College of Business
Pat Williams	Associate Professor of Psychology	College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Appendix D: Members of the QEP Steering Committee		
Name	*Role*	*Representation*
Chris Birchak	Chair	Dean, University College
Ron Beebe	Co-Chair	Chair and Faculty, Urban Education
Vida Robertson	Co-Chair	Faculty, English, and Director, Center for Critical & Race Studies
Susan Henney	Member	President, Faculty Senate (2014-2015)
Leigh Van Horn	Member	Dean, Public Service
Judith Harris	Member	Faculty, Criminal Justice
Poonam Gulati	Member	Faculty, Natural Science, and Director, Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning
Carolyn Ashe	Member	Faculty, MMBA
Windy Lawrence	Member	Faculty, Arts & Humanities
Jane Creighton	Member	Faculty, English
Faiza Khoja	Member	Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison
Cameron Waldner	Member	Volunteer Houston
Karine Parker-Lemoyne	Member	Texas-French Alliance for the Arts
John Locke	Member	President, Student Government Association
Graham Williamson	Member	Vice President, Student Government Association
Jackie Trahan	Member	Staff Council
Lea Campbell	Ex-Officio Member	Director, Academic Assessment
Greg Dement	Ex-Officio Member	Director, Center of Teaching & Learning Excellence
Liza Alonzo	Ex-Officio Member	Executive Director, Presidential Affairs and Operations
Gary Greer	Ex-Officio Member	Assistant Dean, Advising & Mentoring Center
Pat Ensor	Ex-Officio Member	Executive Director, Library
Wendy Wilson	Ex-Officio Member	Executive Director, Academic Advising Center
Tomikia LeGrande	Ex-Officio Member	Associate Vice President of Enrollment Management
Kassidy Green	Ex-Officio Member	IT- Project Manager and Business Analyst II
Nell Sullivan	Ex-Officio Member	Faculty, English, and SACSCOC Compliance Certification Editor

Appendix E: A⁺CE Advisory Council		
Name	*Role*	*Representation*
Poonam Gulati Salhotra	Chair	Faculty Interim Director, A+CE- Quality Enhancement Plan
Carolyn Ashe	Member	President-Elect, Faculty Senate (President – 2016-2017)
Vida Robertson	Member	Faculty, College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Judith Harris	Member	Faculty, College of Public Service
David Epstein	Member	Faculty, College of Business
Judith Harris	Member	Faculty, Criminal Justice
William Wallace	Member	Associate Dean, University College & Head of Freshman Experience
Crystal Guillory	Member	Staff
Isiah Brown	Member	Staff
Patrick Jefferson	Member	Assistant Vice President and Dean of Student Affairs
Faiza Khoja	Member	Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and SACSCOC Accreditation Liaison
Pat Ensor	Member	Executive Director, Library
Carolyn Ashe	Member	President-Elect, Faculty Senate (President – 2016-2017)
Liza Alonzo	Member	UHD Alumna, Executive Director, Presidential Affairs and Operations
Amanda Howard	Member	President, Garden Club
Weston Gameson	Member	Vice President, Student Government Association
Claudia Chavez-Pinto	Member	Principal, Crockett Elementary School (HISD)
Jenifer Wagley	Member	Deputy Director, Avenue CDC
Wendy Wilson	Member	Executive Director, Academic Advising Center

APPENDIX F: A$^+$CE Implementation Committee

This committee will be led by the A$^+$CE Assistant Director. This person will possess expertise in assessment strategies. The committee will also have A$^+$CE Faculty Champions from all the colleges. Since many of the 1000 and 2000 courses are taught in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS), three faculty champions (one per department) will be selected from that college and one each will be chosen from the other three colleges. There will be a person from IT to help with technology-related issues. The Director for the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE), who will work with QEP office and Office of Institutional Effectiveness to assist in faculty development related to A$^+$CE will also be a member of the implementation committee.

A$^+$CE Faculty Director

A$^+$CE Assistant Director

Faculty Champions   3 from CHSS

                                 1 from College of Business

                                 1 from College of Sciences and Technology

                                 1 from College of Public Service

IT Representative

Director, CTLE

APPENDIX G

A⁺CE Faculty Development Session Evaluation
Please help us make our sessions better!

I. Participant Reactions
What did you like most about the session?

What did you like least about the session?

II. Teaching & Facilitation
The facilitator demonstrated an understanding of critical thinking relevant to the topic. *(Circle one)*
STRONGLY DISAGREE   **DISAGREE**   **AGREE**   **STRONGLY AGREE**

The facilitator engaged me in the workshop and/or used engaging teaching techniques (discussion, hands-on time, group work, etc.). *(Circle one)*
STRONGLY DISAGREE   **DISAGREE**   **AGREE**   **STRONGLY AGREE**

The facilitator gave me critical thinking resources to use beyond today's session. *(Circle one)*
STRONGLY DISAGREE   **DISAGREE**   **AGREE**   **STRONGLY AGREE**

III. Outcomes
What benefit(s) did this workshop have for you?

To what extent has the professional development activity increased your ability to design effective critical thinking activities?
NO INCREASE   **MARGINALLY INCREASED**   **INCREASED**   **SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED**

To what extent has the professional development activity increased your ability to design effective critical thinking assessments?
NO INCREASE   **MARGINALLY INCREASED**   **INCREASED**   **SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED**

To what extent has the professional development activity increased your ability to integrate critical-thinking instruction into your course?
NO INCREASE   **MARGINALLY INCREASED**   **INCREASED**   **SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED**

Will you use information from this workshop in your efforts to assist students in developing critical thinking skills? *(Circle one)*
YES   **MAYBE**   **NO**

IV. Future Programming / Additional Comments
What topic(s) would you like the CTLE to do a session on? Do you have any additional comments / ?

APPENDIX H

Preparing Students to Think Critically about Community Issues

A⁺CE Course Designation Application

Please visit this link _____ to learn more about the levels of community engagement in courses.

1. Application Date

2. Lead Instructor (or Coordinator) Name

3. Lead Instructor Contact Information: department, room number, email, phone number

4. Which course designation are you applying for?

    _____ Blanket Course Designation for all sections of the course

    _____ Specific Section Course Designation

5. Course Name and Number

6. Course CRN (if available)

7. Approximate number of students/section

8. Which mode(s) of Community Engagement will you be using in your class(es)?

    _____ Awareness

    _____ Integration

    _____ Involvement

9. Briefly summarize the critical thinking activity or activities in your class.

10. Which student learning outcome(s) will you fulfill with the critical thinking activity?

    _____ A⁺CE Student Learning Outcome 1

    _____ A⁺CE Student Learning Outcome 2

11. If you course is the Core, which Core learning outcome aligns with the selected A⁺CE Student Learning Outcome?

12. What Signature Assignment will be connected to the A⁺CE Student Learning Outcome? Attached a copy of the assignment to this application.

13. Will you need funds to carry out the activity?

      _____ Yes

      _____ No

14. What amount of funds will you need? Please provide a budget with justification.

A⁺CE Activity	Amount of Funds Required	All CRNS for sections requiring funds

15. Attach a copy of your proposed syllabus for the A⁺CE course.

APPENDIX I: AAC&U RUBRICS

CRITICAL THINKING VALUE RUBRIC

A A C & U Association of American Colleges and Universities

Foundation Component Areas Where Critical Thinking is Taught: All courses in the Core

About the VALUE Rubrics

The AAC&U VALUE rubrics were developed by teams of faculty experts representing colleges and universities across the United States through a process that examined many existing campus rubrics and related documents for each learning outcome and incorporated additional feedback from faculty. The rubrics articulate fundamental criteria for each learning outcome, with performance descriptors demonstrating progressively more sophisticated levels of attainment. The rubrics are intended for institutional-level use in evaluating and discussing student learning, not for grading. The utility of the VALUE rubrics is to position learning at all undergraduate levels within a basic framework of expectations such that evidence of learning can be shared nationally through a common dialog and understanding of student success.

In developing an assessment plan for the CORE, the THECB strongly encouraged institutions to use "externally informed benchmarks"[1] in the assessment of the Core. As such, UHD has committed to using the VALUE rubrics as part of its assessment plan for the core.

THECB Definition of Critical Thinking

The THECB defines critical thinking as creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information. The THECB definition spans aspects of both the Creative Thinking VALUE rubric and the Inquiry & Analysis VALUE rubric so both are presented here.

Creative Thinking Framing Language

Definition

Creative thinking is both the capacity to combine or synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of thinking, reacting, and working in an imaginative way characterized by a high degree of innovation, divergent thinking, and risk taking.

Framing Language

Creative thinking, as it is fostered within higher education, must be distinguished from less focused types of creativity such as, for example, the creativity exhibited by a small child's drawing, which stems not from an understanding of connections, but from an ignorance of boundaries. Creative thinking in higher education can only be expressed productively within a particular domain. The student must have a strong foundation in the strategies and skills of the domain in order to make connections and synthesize. While demonstrating solid knowledge of the domain's parameters, the creative thinker, at the highest levels of performance, pushes beyond those boundaries in new, unique, or atypical recombinations, uncovering or critically perceiving new syntheses and using or recognizing creative risk-taking to achieve a solution.

The Creative Thinking VALUE Rubric is intended to help faculty assess creative thinking in a broad range of transdisciplinary or interdisciplinary work samples or collections of work. The rubric is made up of a set of attributes that are common to creative thinking across disciplines. Examples of work samples or collections of work that could be assessed for creative thinking may include research papers, lab reports, musical compositions, a mathematical equation that solves a problem, a prototype design, a reflective piece about the final product of an assignment, or other academic works. The work samples or collections of work may be completed by an individual student or a group of students.

Glossary
The definitions that follow were developed to clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.

- Exemplar: A model or pattern to be copied or imitated (quoted from www.dictionary.reference.com/browse/exemplar).
- Domain: Field of study or activity and a sphere of knowledge and influence.

Inquiry & Analysis Framing Language

Definition

Inquiry is a systematic process of exploring issues, objects or works through the collection and analysis of evidence that results in informed conclusions or judgments. Analysis is the process of breaking complex topics or issues into parts to gain a better understanding of them.

Framing Language

This rubric is designed for use in a wide variety of disciplines. Since the terminology and process of inquiry are discipline-specific, an effort has been made to use broad language which reflects multiple approaches and assignments while addressing the fundamental elements of sound inquiry and analysis (including topic selection, existing, knowledge, design, analysis, etc.). The rubric language assumes that the inquiry and analysis process carried out by the student is appropriate for the discipline required. For example, if analysis using statistical methods is appropriate for the discipline then a student would be expected to use an appropriate statistical methodology for that analysis. If a student does not use a discipline-appropriate process for any criterion, that work should receive a performance rating of "1" or "0" for that criterion.

In addition, this rubric addresses the **products** of analysis and inquiry, not the **processes** themselves. The complexity of inquiry and analysis tasks is determined in part by how much information or guidance is provided to a student and how much the student constructs. The more the student constructs, the more complex the inquiry process. For this reason, while the rubric can be used if the assignments or purposes for work are unknown, it will work most effectively when those are known. Finally, faculty are encouraged to adapt the essence and language of each rubric criterion to the disciplinary or interdisciplinary context to which it is applied.

Glossary

The definitions that follow were developed to clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.

- Conclusions: A synthesis of key findings drawn from research/evidence.
- Limitations: Critique of the process or evidence.
- Implications: How inquiry results apply to a larger context or the real world.

CRITICAL THINKING PART 1: CREATIVE THINKING VALUE RUBRIC

Based upon the AAC&U Creative Thinking and Inquiry & Analysis VALUE rubrics: http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/creative-thinking, and http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/inquiry-analysis

Definition: The THECB defines critical thinking as: creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
Foundation Component Areas Where Critical Thinking is Taught: All courses in the core

	Mastery (Senior Level) Point-value: 4	Proficient (Junior Level) Point-value: 3	Developing (Sophomore Level) Point-value: 2	Basic (Freshman Level) Point-value: 1	Skill is evident but performance falls below Freshman Level[2] Point-value: 0	No Evidence: Assignment may not elicit skill or student failed to articulate.
Acquiring Competencies *This step refers to acquiring strategies and skills within a particular domain.*	Reflect: Evaluates creative process and product using domain-appropriate criteria.	Create: Creates an entirely new object, solution or idea that is appropriate to the domain.	Adapt: Successfully adapts an appropriate exemplar to his/her own specifications.	Model: Successfully reproduces an appropriate exemplar.	Unable to successfully reproduce an appropriate exemplar.	
Taking Risks *May include personal risk (fear of embarrassment or rejection) or risk of failure in successfully completing assignment, i.e. going beyond original parameters of assignment, introducing new materials and forms, tackling controversial topics, advocating unpopular ideas or solutions.*	Actively seeks out and follows through on untested and potentially risky directions or approaches to the assignment in the final product.	Incorporates new directions or approaches to the assignment in the final product.	Considers new directions or approaches without going beyond the guidelines of the assignment.	Stays strictly within the guidelines of the assignment.	Fails to follow the intent of the assignment, critical pieces are missing.	
Solving Problems	Not only develops a logical, consistent plan to solve problem, but recognizes consequences of solution and can articulate reason for choosing solution.	Having selected from among alternatives, develops a logical, consistent plan to solve the problem.	Considers and rejects less acceptable approaches to solving problem.	Only a single approach is considered and is used to solve the problem.	Is unable to articulate a single, cohesive approach to solving a problem.	
Embracing Contradictions	Integrates alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas fully.	Incorporates alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas in a exploratory way.	Includes (recognizes the value of) alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas in a small way.	Acknowledges (mentions in passing) alternate, divergent, or contradictory perspectives or ideas.	Fails to mention alternative, divergent or contradictory perspectives or ideas	
Innovative Thinking *Novelty or uniqueness (of idea, claim, question, form, etc.).*	Extends a novel or unique idea, question, format, or product to create new knowledge or knowledge that crosses boundaries.	Creates a novel or unique idea, question, format, or product.	Experiments with creating a novel or unique idea, question, format, or product.	Reformulates a collection of available ideas.	Parrots a collection of available ideas in the format originally presented either from lectures or other sources.	
Connecting, Synthesizing, Transforming	Transforms ideas or solutions into entirely new forms.	Synthesizes ideas/solutions into a coherent whole.	Connects ideas or solutions in novel ways.	Recognizes existing connections among ideas or solutions.	Articulates incorrect or illogical connections among ideas or solutions.	

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[2] Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample that does not meet Basic (Freshman Level) performance. Evaluators are encouraged to check the "No Evidence" if the rubric dimension is not evident in the work. For example, a student who uses supporting materials that confuse the message or are offensive or unrelated, would receive a zero on Supporting Material. By contrast, there are no supporting materials, the "No Evidence" category would be selected. There is simply no evidence of whether or not the student knows how to use supporting materials.

CRITICAL THINKING PART 2: INQUIRY & ANALYSIS VALUE RUBRIC

Based upon the AAC&U Creative Thinking and Inquiry & Analysis VALUE rubrics: http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/creative-thinking, and http://www.aacu.org/value/rubrics/inquiry-analysis

Definition: The THECB defines critical thinking as: creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
Foundation Component Areas Where Critical Thinking is Taught: All courses in the core

	Mastery (Senior Level) Point-value: 4	*Proficient (Junior Level)* Point-value: 3	*Developing (Sophomore Level)* Point-value: 2	*Basic (Freshman Level)* Point-value: 1	*Skill is evident but performance falls below Freshman Level* Point-value: 0	*No Evidence: Assignment may not elicit skill or student failed to articulate.*
Topic selection	Identifies a creative, focused, and manageable topic that addresses potentially significant yet previously less-explored aspects of the topic.	Identifies a focused and manageable/doable topic that appropriately addresses relevant aspects of the topic.	Identifies a topic that while manageable/doable, is too narrowly focused and leaves out relevant aspects of the topic.	Identifies a topic that is far too general and wide-ranging as to be manageable and doable.	Unclear what the topic actually is. Topic may appear to shift over the course of the student's work.	
Existing Knowledge, Research, and/or Views	Synthesizes in-depth information from relevant sources representing various points of view/approaches.	Presents in-depth information from relevant sources representing various points of view/approaches.	Presents information from relevant sources representing limited points of view/approaches.	Presents information from irrelevant sources representing limited points of view/approaches.	Appears to be including a set number of sources because the assignment stipulated a minimum. Sources do not advance the understanding of the topic.	
Design Process	All elements of the methodology or theoretical framework are skillfully developed. Appropriate methodology or theoretical frameworks may be synthesized from across disciplines or from relevant subdisciplines.	Critical elements of the methodology or theoretical framework are appropriately developed, however, more subtle elements are ignored or unaccounted for.	Critical elements of the methodology or theoretical framework are missing, incorrectly developed, or unfocused.	Inquiry design demonstrates a misunderstanding of the methodology or theoretical framework.	Unable to determine if the student understands the methodology or theoretical framework.	
Analysis	Organizes and synthesizes evidence to reveal insightful patterns, differences, or similarities related to focus.	Organizes evidence to reveal important patterns, differences, or similarities related to focus.	Organizes evidence, but the organization is not effective in revealing important patterns, differences, or similarities.	Lists evidence, but it is not organized and/or is unrelated to focus.		
Conclusions	States a conclusion that is a logical extrapolation from the inquiry findings.	States a conclusion focused solely on the inquiry findings. The conclusion arises specifically from and responds specifically to the inquiry findings.	States a general conclusion that, because it is so general, also applies beyond the scope of the inquiry findings.	States an ambiguous, illogical, or unsupportable conclusion from inquiry findings.	Student does not articulate a conclusion.	
Limitations and Implications	Insightfully discusses in detail relevant and supported limitations and implications.	Discusses relevant and supported limitations and implications.	Presents relevant and supported limitations and implications.	Presents limitations and implications, but they are possibly irrelevant and unsupported.		

[2] Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample that does not meet Basic (Freshman Level) performance. Evaluators are encouraged to check the "No Evidence" if the rubric dimension is not evident in the work. For example, a student who uses supporting materials that confuse the message or unrelated, would receive a zero on Supporting Material. By contrast, there are no supporting materials, the "No Evidence" category would be selected. There is simply no evidence of whether or not the student knows how to use supporting materials.

APPENDIX J: QEP Logic Model

QEP Logic Model			
Inputs	**Activities**	**Outputs**	**Expected Outcomes**
All FTIC for first 2 years. Faculty teaching A+CE courses A+CE program personnel in the Office of the Provost. Academic and Administrative Centers. A+CE Advisory Committee. A+CE *Faculty Champions.* Community Partners. Writing Center. Library. Financial resources.	Identification and promotion of A+CE courses. Design of A+CE assignments, aligning with common core objectives when appropriate. Application process for A+CE course designation. Faculty development opportunities. Assessment and evaluation of A+CE artifacts. Recognition for students completing milestones by end Y1 and Y2. A+CE Course designations. Recognition of faculty who excel in teaching and/or research promoting critical thinking through community engagement. Focus groups of faculty, students and community partners. Program assessment.	A+CE Program Academic Achievement through Community Engagement. Inventory of A+CE Courses. Artifacts from A+CE courses. Faculty expertise in teaching and scholarship focused on critical thinking and/or problem solving applied to social issues. Curricular A+CE assignments developed. Rubrics developed for student learning outcomes, A+CE Annual report. Student/faculty presentations at symposium and other venues.	*Student Learning Outcomes* SLO 1: Students will be able to analyze community issues with respect to different perspectives, theories, or solutions. SLO 2: Students will be able to identify or design creative strategies to address an aspect of a community issue. Program Effectiveness *NOTE*: A+CE designation requires completion of SLO 1 or SLO 2 *Institutional Indicators* 1-Each FTIC cohort will maintain a mean GPA of at least 2.25. 2-Increased CLA+ score

UHD

Faculty Senate

Minutes recorded by: Trevor S. Hale

Date and Time: September 15, 2015 2:30 PM

Room Number: A300

Attendance: Ryan Pepper (President), Susan Henney (Past-President), Carolyn Ashe (President-elect), Trevor Hale (Secretary), Susan Baker, Steve Coy, Pamela Hurley, Pat Williams, Anne Kane, Jillian Hill, Jane Creighton, Claude Rubinson, Steven Coy, Dvijesh Shastri, Bernardo Pohl, Kendra Mhoon, Michael Connell, Azar Rejaie, Robin Jose, Maria Benavides, Zhenyu Zhang

Guests: Nell Sullivan, Ed Hugetz, David Bradley, Michele Moosally, Faiza Khoja, Ron Beebe, Gene Preuss, Pat Ensor, Lisa Berry, Chris Birchak, Hsiao-Ming Wang, Karen Kaser, Vida Robertson

Regrets: N/A

Absent: Charles Smith, Keith Wright, Katharine Jager

Call to Order: 2:34 PM

Meeting Proceedings

Presentation on UHD Faculty Handbook:

1. Nell Sullivan updated the assembly on the status of the Faculty Handbook.

    Question: Faculty Senate President Pepper asked Dr. Sullivan what the next steps are: Answer: Provost Hugetz replied that once the Faculty Senate reviews and signs off on the

    new version, the "interim" tag on the Faculty Handbook will be lifted.

    Question: Senator Kane asked if the Faculty Handbook could include information on faculty compensation.

    Answer: Dr. Sullivan noted that doing so was a good idea and would look into it.

2. Faculty Senate President Pepper opened the floor for nominations to be on the ad hoc Faculty Handbook Review Committee. Hearing none, he appointed Senators Hale,

Rubinson, and Benavides to the Faculty Senate Faculty Handbook Review Committee and charged them with reviewing the interim handbook and reporting back to the Senate by the middle of October.

Presentation by Mark Gurrola, Texas State Employees Union (TSEU):

1. Mark Gurrola of the Texas State Employees Union addressed the Faculty Senate.

   a. TSEU is a public sector union with ~12,000 members.

   b. Several members are from public universities.

   Question: Senator London asked if the TSEU has had any success making effective change.

   Answer: Mark Gurrola answered that the TSEU has indeed had some success and pointed to the shared services concern at the University of Texas as a success story for the TSEU.

   Question: Senator Creighton asked if the TSEU could leave some contact information. Answer: Mark Gurrola replied in the affirmative.

Presentation on the status of the QEP

1. Drs. Khoja, Birchak, Beebe, and Robertson addressed the Faculty Senate on the status of the QEP at UHD.
   a. The title of the QEP at UHD will be "Academic Achievement through Community Engagement."
   b. The main objective is to prepare students to think critically through three different levels of community engagement activities: Awareness, Integration, and Involvement.

   Question: Senator London asked if UHD students are actually the wrong type of student for this type of QEP.

   Answer: Dr. Robertson cited research that, actually, the UHD student body should gain the most by this type of QEP. Senator Creighton added that she was originally concerned with the QERP, but has since been convinced that this is the best way to go forward.

2. Dr. Birchak cited two pathways for community engagement:

a. Blanket approval for a set of courses (E.g., UHD 1300)

b. Singular course approval through an approval process initiated by the instructor.

Question: Senator Henney asked if the faculty are on board. She cited that the faculty in charge of POLS 2300 haven't been approached about their participation yet the course shows up as having blanket approval.

Answer: Dr. Birchak replied that the department chairs have been made aware.
Question: Senator Benavides asked when the program will be implemented.
Answer: Dr. Birchak replied the target is fall of 2016.
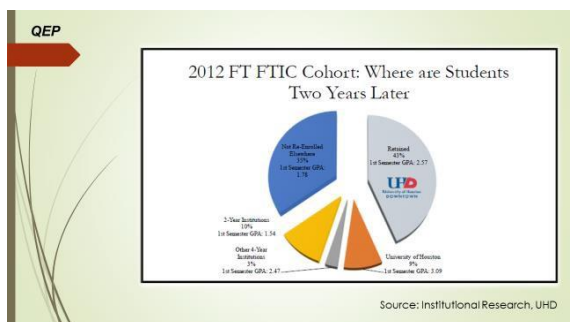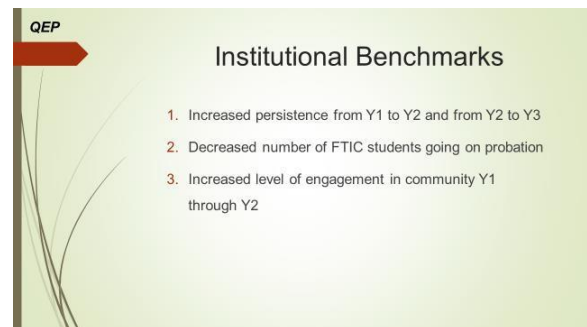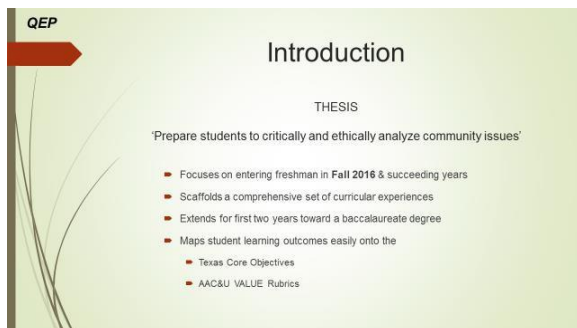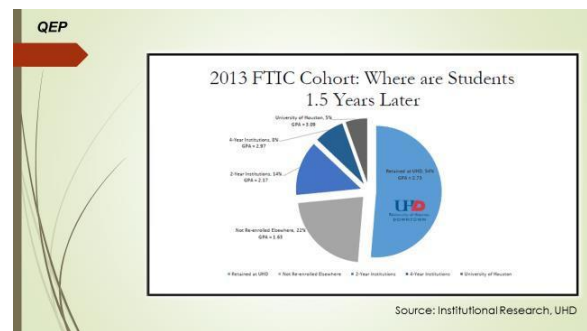
Levels of Community Engagement

- Awareness
  - Students are introduced to the concept of community engagement through coursework examining social and community issues.
- Integration
  - Students continue to study community engagement through coursework enhanced with speakers, panels, documentaries, public deliberations events, etc.
- Involvement
  - Students connect coursework with community experiences/projects that require direct engagement with the partners in the field. Does not involve Service Learning.

Community Engagement Course Designation

Two pathways are provided for acquiring the Community Engagement designation.*

- "Blanket" approval when supported by the department/discipline is given for all sections of specific core courses enrolling large numbers of FTICs and having learning outcomes related to those of the QEP.

  Examples: UHD 1300, English 1302, POLS 2306, COMM 1304/1306, etc.

- Individual faculty follow the identified process for submitting the required form for a course to be designated as Community Engagement.

*All service learning courses automatically receive this designation.

Presentation on the Spring 2015 GenEd Faculty Survey

1. Dr. Pepper presented some highlights of the Faculty Senate Spring 2015 survey of the faculty regarding GenEd.

Spring 2015 General Education "Beyond the Core" Survey

Colleges	%	N
CHSS	45.3	73
COB	23.6	38
CST	14.9	24
CPS	14.9	24
UC	1.2	2
Total		161

Participants were 317 full-time faculty members (T/TT Faculty and Lecturers).

Total Responses=163 (51.4% response rate)

Rank	%	N
Full	18	29
Associate	40	64
Assistant	25	40
Lecturer	17	27
Total		160

Report to Faculty Senate
Ryan Pepper, President
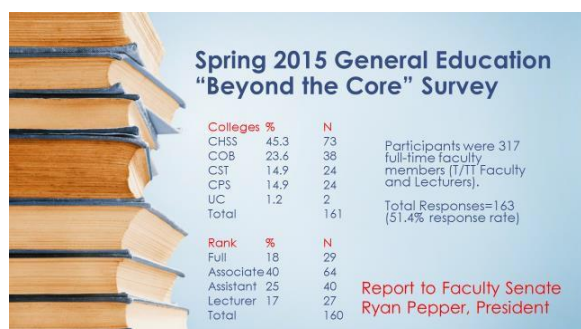
Three major themes emerged…

3) Ability to Communicate Effectively

– To be an informed, well-rounded person with at least general knowledge on a variety of subjects besides one's specific content area. It should definitely include one's ability to communicate effectively - both orally and in writing. Without the ability to communicate what someone knows to others, that knowledge is wasted.

– Ability and interest in critically analyzing the world; awareness and experience with major bodies of cultural (writ large) thought and knowledge; strong reading, writing and analytic (communication) skills; awareness of and capacity to consider different social and cultural perspectives

– The abilities to use critical analysis skills and to communicate clearly and concisely are essential to "being an educated person."

– An educated person is someone who has broad knowledge of many subjects, and can articulate that knowledge through written and oral communication. In addition to being knowledgeable about those subjects included in the common core, they are also well versed in current events.

How do we define an "educated person?"

• Original question:

"…general education refers to the competencies that all graduates of an institution should have. In other words, general education refers to the characteristics of every graduate - i.e., an "educated person." This can help us to determine the composition of our general education program beyond the core. In your opinion, what does it mean to be an educated person?"

Importance of Gen Ed Competency Areas

Five point Likert scale
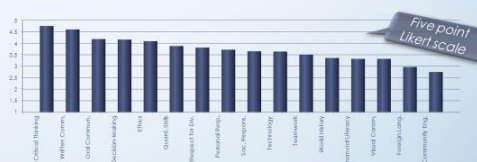
• Respondents chose *Critical Thinking and Written Communication* as the two most important competency areas (the only areas over 4.5).

• Respondents chose *Community Engagement and Foreign Language* as the two least important competency areas (the only areas under 3.0).

Three major themes emerged from the responses: attainment of knowledge, ability to think critically, and the ability to communicate effectively.

1) Attainment of Knowledge

– Possess the ability to determine which information is valid and to critically evaluate that information. An educated person should have well rounded knowledge outside of their discipline which could include arts, social sciences, and hard sciences.

– To be an educated person means having some knowledge about a broad array of topics as well as in-depth knowledge in a specific area.

– Appropriate knowledge in certain area with general understanding of the universe and humanity, of which one is able to think independently and to effectively communicate in various ways.

– A person who has learned enough to know what he/she does not know and who has acquired the skills to learn what he or she needs to know

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Ranking the Gen Ed competency areas

• Original Question:

"…if there is a general education program beyond the core, rank, in order of most important to least important, up to three goals from the list above that you want to see included in the general education program beyond the core at UHD (including any you added)."

Area #1 (most important):
1) Critical Thinking: 36.8%
2) Communication: 23.7%
3) Writing: 8.8%

Area #2 (2nd most important):
1) Critical Thinking: 27.4%
2) Communication: 23.6%
3) Quantitative Reasoning: 5.7%

Area #3 (3rd most important):
1) Communication: 25.5%
2) Ethics: 10.6%
3) Respect for Diversity: 8.5%

Three major themes emerged…

2) Ability to Think Critically

– An "educated person" is someone who has the ability to think critically, utilize evidence, and communicate ideas. They should also be able to analyze various perspectives in a global context.

– An educated person must think analytically and critically about issues important to the self, family, community, and world. They must be able to communicate the results of their thinking in clear and logical written work.

– To be able to engage oneself and one's world reflectively on the shared basis of the current state of knowledge and critical thinking skills

– An educated person should be versed in a general liberal arts base which is currently satisfied by the Common Core. This same person should be able to think critically, i.e. analyze an issue from different perspectives as well as take an informed position on the issue. The same person should be able to communicate her/ his ideas in good, well written form. The same person should be able to understand data and use it for informed decision making.

Support for Gen Ed requirements beyond the core

• Original Question:

"In general, do you support having any additional general education requirements beyond the 42-hour core?"

	%	N
Yes	43.2	60
No	56.8	79
Total	100	139

This response states that 4/7ths of the faculty do not support any GenEd requirements beyond the lower division elements.

Question: Senator Hill asked if GenEd beyond the common core could be left to the programs or departments.

Answer: Dr. Pepper replied in the affirmative.

Question: Senator Baker commented that critical thinking requires interdisciplinary exposure by its very nature.

Answer: Dr. Pepper noted that there are many definitions of critical thinking. (E.g., Paul and Elder, reflection). Dr. Hale further commented (and Provost Hugetz confirmed) that UHCL, UHV, and UH do not have any GenEd requirements beyond the common core that the 120 credit hour degree handcuffs some programs with little or no flexibility due to long prerequisite chains.

2. Motion: Senator Benavides makes a motion to send a recommendation to UCC, "Since the faculty have spoken on the need for GenEd requirements at the upper division, to consider deleting the current GenEd requirements beyond the common core."
   a. The motion was seconded by Senator London. Faculty Senate President Pepper asks for discussion. Hearing none, Senator Benavides calls the question. The vote ensues with 18 yeas, 2 nays, and 0 abstentions. Motion carries.

New Business:

1. Faculty Senate President Pepper noted that Staff Council and the SGA have asked that Friday's be designated Gator Blue Fridays.

Next meeting:

The next meeting of the Faculty Senate is October 6th.

Adjourn:

Adjournment (First: Henney/Second: Connell) at 3:53 PM.

UHD

Faculty Senate

Minutes recorded by: Trevor S. Hale

Date and Time: January 19, 2016 2:30 PM

Room Number: A300

Attendance: Ryan Pepper (President), Susan Henney (Past-President), Carolyn Ashe (President-elect), Trevor Hale (Secretary), Pat Williams, Anne Kane, Claude Rubinson, Steven Coy, Dvijesh Shastri, Azar Rejaie (3:07 PM), Robin Jose, Maria Benavides, Zhenyu Zhang, Katharine Jager (2:58 PM), Keith Wright, Kendra Mhoon, Susan Baker, Bernardo Pohl, Michael Connell, Hsiao-Ming Wang, Karen Kaser

 Guests: Ed Hugetz, Faiza Khoja, Lucy Bowen, Lisa Berry, Chris Birchak, Johanna Schmertz, Heather Goltz

Regrets: N/A

Absent: Pamela Hurley, Steve London, Charles Smith, Jane Creighton, Jillian Hill

Call to Order: 2:34 PM

Meeting Proceedings

Announcements:

1. Campus Safety Task Force Town Hall meeting is scheduled for February 3rd from 3:00 to 5:00. Details forthcoming.
2. Approval of meeting minutes from December 1 meeting tables until February 2 meeting.

Presentation by Faiza Khoja: QEP Update

1. Always looking at "Community Engagement" as focus of QEP. Only now the thesis has been enhanced a little bit into three concerns (see handout).
2. If faculty that teach in the core want their courses to be ACE designated, they need to demonstrate two of the SLOs. Faculty who don't teach in the core but would like their courses ACE designated only need to demonstrate one of the SLOs.
3. Save the date: March 3rd and 4th for the critical thinking workshops.

   a. First of many workshops associated with the QEP.

4. No requirements for students.
   a. If students would like the "Enhanced Scholar" designation on their transcripts, they must have taken 4 ACE courses with at most 1 C in those four and a 2.5 overall GPA.

Questions and discussion:

Faculty Senate President Pepper: What if the student has four ACE courses with grades of A, A, A, and D?
   Answer: Take another ACE course with a C or better.
Senator Coy: What is the carrot to get faculty to buy-in?

Answer: Some buy-in already exists for fall of 2016 (e.g., Freshman Seminar).
Senator Benavides: How do the student's benefit?
Answer: Designation on their transcript, use skills in their career, and in interview setting it will differentiate them.
Senator Jose: Suppose a student signs up for a specific section of a particular course that is ACE designated but the student wanted a non-ACE designated course…will the student's be able to opt out of the course's ACE assignment?
Answer: No.
Senator Kaser: Will it be in Banner?
Answer: Yes.
Senator Wang: Has there been any discussion as to how much weight the ACE assignment should carry in a particular course?
Answer: No, not yet.

Presentation by Senator Coy on Online Cheating:

1. There exists places on the Internet where students can go and pay someone to take their online course for them: www.noneedtostudy.com.
2. It is high tech cheating and we need to be out in front on this issue.

   "What do we want to do to mitigate this as a University?"

3. It will require updating the Academic Honesty Policy.

Action: A task force was assigned to investigate the issue and bring recommendations to the Senate. Members: Coy (chair), Mhoon, Pohl, Rubinson, Kaser, and Hugetz.

New Business:

PS 10.A.01:

1. Resolution for first reading to charge FAC with updates to the Rank and Tenure Policy.

UHD FACULTY SENATE RESOLUTION REGARDING PS 10.A.01

WHEREAS the very idea of associate professors voting on R&T decision regarding promotion to professor raises concerns of quid pro quo or even the perception of quid pro quo; and

WHEREAS the language regarding abstentions, absents, and recusals in the voting process is unclear; and

WHEREAS the language, "Fifty percent of all members of the department rank and tenure committee must vote "yes" to register a positive vote result." in section 2.3.4 of PS 10.A.01 could result in a negative outcome if more than 50% recuse themselves, are absent, or abstain from voting; and

WHEREAS the policy does not address the possibility voting electronically and/or in absentia; and

WHEREAS the section on confidentiality (2.2.6) is unclear; and

WHEREAS the policy does not allow for sub-committees of a department Rank and Tenure Committee to address particular candidates as opposed to the entire committee; and

WHEREAS the last phrase of 2.2.5.4, "…but a minimum of six years as an associate professor is strongly recommended." is being used as a de facto requirement, is in opposition with UH System Administrative Memorandum 06.A.09, and it discourages noteworthy achievements and biases promotions to full professor simply via seniority over actual merit.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Faculty Senate urges the UHD Faculty Affairs Committee, the President, and the Provost to:

1. Remove all references and language in PS 10.A.01 allowing associate professors to vote on promotions to full professor.

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   For _____   Against _____ Abstain

2. Clarify the language in the policy regarding abstentions, absents, and recusals.
   For _____   Against _____ Abstain _____

3. Clarify the language regarding fifty percent of the department rank and tenure committee must vote "yes" to yield a positive result accordingly.
   For _____   Against _____ Abstain _____

4. Add language to allow for voting electronically and in absentia.
   For _____   Against _____ Abstain _____

5. Clarify the section on process confidentiality.
   For _____   Against _____ Abstain _____

6. Add language to allow department rank and tenure committees to appoint sub-committees for candidates.
   For _____   Against _____ Abstain _____

7. Remove the last phrase of 2.2.5.4, "…but a minimum of six years as an associate professor is strongly recommended."
   For _____   Against _____ Abstain _____

Questions and discussion:

Executive session: Minutes suspended to allow free discussion and straw polls on resolutions.

Next meeting:

The next meeting of the Faculty Senate is February 2nd.

Adjourn:

Adjournment at 3:58 PM.

UHD

Faculty Senate

Minutes recorded by: Trevor S. Hale

Date and Time: February 2, 2016 2:30 PM

Room Number: A300

Attendance: Ryan Pepper (President), Susan Henney (Past-President), Carolyn Ashe (President-elect), Trevor Hale (Secretary), Pat Williams, Anne Kane, Claude Rubinson, Steven Coy, Dvijesh Shastri, Azar Rejaie, Robin Jose, Maria Benavides, Zhenyu Zhang, Katharine Jager, Keith Wright, Kendra Mhoon, Susan Baker, Michael Connell, Charles Smith, Jane Creighton, Hsiao-Ming Wang, Pamela Hurley, Karen Kaser

Guests: Ed Hugetz, Faiza Khoja, Lucy Bowen, Lisa Berry, Pat Ensor, Akif Uzman, Hossein Shahrokhi (3:05 PM)

Regrets: N/A

On leave: Steve London, Jillian Hill

Absent: Bernardo Pohl

Call to Order: 2:33 PM

Meeting Proceedings

Announcements:

1. Senators Ashe and Hale will be attending the Texas Council of Faculty Senates meeting in Austin on February 26th and 27th.
2. Campus Carry Information Sessions have been scheduled for February 3rd and 4th.

Approval of Minutes:

1. A draft of the December 1, 2015 and January 19, 2016 Faculty Senate meeting minutes was distributed. Motion to approve the minutes (Benavides/Smith) carried.

Presentation by Susan Henney: IDEA Faculty/Class Evaluation Software.

1. CHSS faculty gathered to talk about ideas for IDEA software.

2. General consensus of hard to use and utilize.
   a. The question of "Is there a minimum and/or standard set of data to provide from IDEA to Chairs for annual reports and/or Rank & Tenure committees for promotions?" arose.
   b. One idea is to present the landing, summative page only (class and

                instructor aggregate Likert-scale scores).
   c.   Another idea was to submit everything (dozens of pages per course).

Questions and discussion:

Senator Benavides: How do you know who you are being compared against?
     Answer: Faculty members in your discipline, e.g., chemistry.
Senator Benavides: I have small classes and can't access my reports. Is that a parameter of the IDEA system?
     Answer: Yes, to protect anonymity of the students, classes with 3 students or less are locked from professor access.
Senator Rubinson: Wasn't the original idea NOT to use IDEA to compare faculty to faculty?
     Answer: Yes.
Senator Coy: At an IDEA Conference in 2014, the question was raised as to whether the IDEA system had been validated for on-line classes and the answer was, essentially, no. Senator Jose: How much weight is given to student evaluations?
     Answer: It varies between (and even within) departments.
Senator Ashe: I have concerns about comparisons between disciplines. Even the IDEA folks were a little cryptic in their explanation on this.
Senator Rejaie: Are there plans at looking beyond student evaluations? Peer evaluations
for
example?
     Answer: No, not yet.
Faculty Senate President Pepper: Would it be useful to create a small task force to look at IDEA and other options?
     Answer: [General consensus was apparent].
Senator Hill: How many people are satisfied with IDEA?
     Answer: [1 Senator signified approval].

Action: Task force created to report back to Faculty Senate. Members: Henney (Chair), Jose, Ashe, and Williams

Old Business:

1. Faculty Senate Resolution on QEP.

   a.   A resolution was brought before the Senate for approval of the QEP.
   b.   A motion to suspend the rules to allow the Senate to vote on the resolution was made (Hale/Smith) was made and carried.

c. ==A motion was made to vote to approve the QEP as presented to Faculty Senate== ==(Benavides/Smith). Motion carried unanimously with no abstentions.==

2. Faculty Senate Resolution on Proposed Changes to PS 10.A.01 for second read and further discussion.

Senator Creighton: Item 13 should be in the Faculty Affairs section of the resolution.

Senator Wright: I asked the FAEIS Rank and Tenure Committee about having sub-committees and they were against it.

Senator Baker: There needs to be clarification as to who writes the 2nd and 4th year reports. Different departments do it differently and it needs to be uniform.

Faculty Senate President Pepper: I will add that to the list of items.

Senator Coy: Complemented FSEC for running a fine tooth comb through the policy and asked if we were going to vote on these items today and if it might make more sense to make 13 (now 14) separate resolutions.

Faculty Senate President Pepper: We will vote on these items at the next meeting.

Provost Hugetz: Noted that shared governance is not "obligated" to make these changes.

Faculty Senate President Pepper: Duly noted.

Senator Connell: Noted that feedback from his department was positive and that these changes needed to be made. He then asked what the motivation behind adding "Distinguished Professor" was?

Faculty Senate Secretary Hale: FSEC thought that it was time add another designation beyond full professor but envisioned only 6 or 8 distinguished designations be on campus at any given time.

Action: Faculty Senate President Pepper will send out an updated draft of the resolution that will be on the agenda for the February 16 Senate meeting for 3rd read and vote.

New Business:

N/A

Next meeting:

The next meeting of the Faculty Senate is February 16th.

Adjourn:

Adjournment at 3:36 PM.

APPENDIX L

⅃ NSSE national survey of student engagement
THE COLLEGE STUDENT REPORT

0% Complete

During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Asked questions or contributed to course discussions in other ways	○	○	○	○
Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	○	○	○	○
Come to class without completing readings or assignments	○	○	○	○
Attended an art exhibit, play, or other arts performance (dance, music, etc.)	○	○	○	○
Asked another student to help you understand course material	○	○	○	○
Explained course material to one or more students	○	○	○	○
Prepared for exams by discussing or working through course material with other students	○	○	○	○
Worked with other students on course projects or assignments	○	○	○	○
Given a course presentation	○	○	○	○

During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments	○	○	○	○
Connected your learning to societal problems or issues	○	○	○	○
Included diverse perspectives (political, religious, racial/ethnic, gender, etc.) in course discussions or assignments	○	○	○	○
Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views on a topic or issue	○	○	○	○
Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	○	○	○	○
Learned something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	○	○	○	○
Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge	○	○	○	○

Screen 1 of 5

During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Talked about career plans with a faculty member	○	○	○	○
Worked with a faculty member on activities other than coursework (committees, student groups, etc.)	○	○	○	○
Discussed course topics, ideas, or concepts with a faculty member outside of class	○	○	○	○
Discussed your academic performance with a faculty member	○	○	○	○

During the current school year, how much has your coursework emphasized the following?

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
Memorizing course material	○	○	○	○
Applying facts, theories, or methods to practical problems or new situations	○	○	○	○
Analyzing an idea, experience, or line of reasoning in depth by examining its parts	○	○	○	○
Evaluating a point of view, decision, or information source	○	○	○	○
Forming a new idea or understanding from various pieces of information	○	○	○	○

During the current school year, to what extent have your instructors done the following?

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
Clearly explained course goals and requirements	○	○	○	○
Taught course sessions in an organized way	○	○	○	○
Used examples or illustrations to explain difficult points	○	○	○	○
Provided feedback on a draft or work in progress	○	○	○	○
Provided prompt and detailed feedback on tests or completed assignments	○	○	○	○

During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Reached conclusions based on your own analysis of numerical information (numbers, graphs, statistics, etc.)	○	○	○	○
Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue (unemployment, climate change, public health, etc.)	○	○	○	○
Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information	○	○	○	○

Continue

Contact Us   Frequently Asked Questions

Screen 1 of 5 (continued)

During the current school year, about how many papers, reports, or other writing tasks of the following lengths have you been assigned? (Include those not yet completed.)

	None	1-2	3-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	More than 20 papers
Up to 5 pages	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Between 6 and 10 pages	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
11 pages or more	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

During the current school year, about how often have you had discussions with people from the following groups?

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
People of a race or ethnicity other than your own	○	○	○	○
People from an economic background other than your own	○	○	○	○
People with religious beliefs other than your own	○	○	○	○
People with political views other than your own	○	○	○	○

During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?

	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Identified key information from reading assignments	○	○	○	○
Reviewed your notes after class	○	○	○	○
Summarized what you learned in class or from course materials	○	○	○	○

During the current school year, to what extent have your courses challenged you to do your best work?

Not at all _____ Very much

○	○	○	○	○	○	○
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Which of the following have you done or do you plan to do before you graduate?

	Done or in progress	Plan to do	Do not plan to do	Have not decided
Participate in an internship, co-op, field experience, student teaching, or clinical placement	○	○	○	○
Hold a formal leadership role in a student organization or group	○	○	○	○
Participate in a learning community or some other formal program where groups of students take two or more classes together	○	○	○	○
Participate in a study abroad program	○	○	○	○
Work with a faculty member on a research project	○	○	○	○
Complete a culminating senior experience (capstone course, senior project or thesis, comprehensive exam, portfolio, etc.)	○	○	○	○

About how many of your courses at this institution have included a community-based project (service-learning)?

○ All

○ Most

○ Some

○ None

Indicate the quality of your interactions with the following people at your institution.

	Poor 1	2	3	4	5	6	Excellent 7	Not applicable
Students	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Academic advisors	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Faculty	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Student services staff (career services, student activities, housing, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other administrative staff and offices (registrar, financial aid, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

[Continue]

Contact Us   Frequently Asked Questions

How much does your institution emphasize the following?

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
Spending significant amounts of time studying and on academic work	○	○	○	○
Providing support to help students succeed academically	○	○	○	○
Using learning support services (tutoring services, writing center, etc.)	○	○	○	○
Encouraging contact among students from different backgrounds (social, racial/ethnic, religious, etc.)	○	○	○	○
Providing opportunities to be involved socially	○	○	○	○
Providing support for your overall well-being (recreation, health care, counseling, etc.)	○	○	○	○
Helping you manage your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	○	○	○	○
Attending campus activities and events (performing arts, athletic events, etc.)	○	○	○	○
Attending events that address important social, economic, or political issues	○	○	○	○

About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing the following?

	Hours per week							
	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	More than 30
Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, doing homework or lab work, analyzing data, rehearsing, and other academic activities)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Participating in co-curricular activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, fraternity or sorority, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Working for pay **on campus**	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Working for pay **off campus**	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Doing community service or volunteer work	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Relaxing and socializing (time with friends, video games, TV or videos, keeping up with friends online, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Providing care for dependents (children, parents, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Commuting to campus (driving, walking, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Of the time you spend preparing for class in a typical 7-day week, about how much is on *assigned reading*?

○ Very little
○ Some
○ About half
○ Most
○ Almost all

How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
Writing clearly and effectively	○	○	○	○
Speaking clearly and effectively	○	○	○	○
Thinking critically and analytically	○	○	○	○
Analyzing numerical and statistical information	○	○	○	○
Acquiring job- or work-related knowledge and skills	○	○	○	○
Working effectively with others	○	○	○	○
Developing or clarifying a personal code of values and ethics	○	○	○	○
Understanding people of other backgrounds (economic, racial/ethnic, political, religious, nationality, etc.)	○	○	○	○
Solving complex real-world problems	○	○	○	○
Being an informed and active citizen	○	○	○	○

How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?

○ Excellent
○ Good
○ Fair
○ Poor

If you could start over again, would you go to the *same institution* you are now attending?

○ Definitely yes
○ Probably yes
○ Probably no
○ Definitely no

How many majors do you plan to complete? (Do not count minors.)

○ One
○ More than one

[Continue]

Contact Us   Frequently Asked Questions

Screen 3 of 5 (continued)

70% Complete

[Why do we ask about your personal background?](#)

What is your class level?

- ○ Freshman/first-year
- ○ Sophomore
- ○ Junior
- ○ Senior
- ○ Unclassified

Thinking about this current academic term, are you a full-time student?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

How many courses are you taking for credit this current academic term?

- ○ 0
- ○ 1
- ○ 2
- ○ 3
- ○ 4
- ○ 5
- ○ 6
- ○ 7 or more

Of these, how many are *entirely online*?

- ○ 0
- ○ 1
- ○ 2
- ○ 3
- ○ 4
- ○ 5
- ○ 6
- ○ 7 or more

Screen 4 of 5

What have most of your grades been up to now at this institution?

○ A

○ A-

○ B+

○ B

○ B-

○ C+

○ C

○ C- or lower

Did you begin college at this institution or elsewhere?

○ Started here

○ Started elsewhere

Since graduating from high school, which of the following types of schools have you attended *other than* the one you are now attending? (Select all that apply.)

☐ Vocational or technical school

☐ Community or junior college

☐ 4-year college or university other than this one

☐ None

☐ Other

What is the highest level of education you ever expect to complete?

○ Some college but less than a bachelor's degree

○ Bachelor's degree (B.A., B.S., etc.)

○ Master's degree (M.A., M.S., etc.)

○ Doctoral or professional degree (Ph.D., J.D., M.D., etc.)

What is the highest level of education you ever expect to complete?

○ Some college but less than a bachelor's degree

○ Bachelor's degree (B.A., B.S., etc.)

○ Master's degree (M.A., M.S., etc.)

○ Doctoral or professional degree (Ph.D., J.D., M.D., etc.)

What is the highest level of education completed by either of your parents (or those who raised you)?

○ Did not finish high school

○ High school diploma/G.E.D.

○ Attended college but did not complete degree

○ Associate's degree (A.A., A.S., etc.)

○ Bachelor's degree (B.A., B.S., etc.)

○ Master's degree (M.A., M.S., etc.)

○ Doctoral or professional degree (Ph.D., J.D., M.D., etc.)

What is your gender identity?

- ○ Man
- ○ Woman
- ○ Another gender identity, please specify: [   ]
- ○ I prefer not to respond

Enter your year of birth (e.g., 1994):

[   ]

Are you an international student?

- ● Yes
- ○ No

What is your country of citizenship? [--- ▾]

What is your racial or ethnic identification? (Select all that apply.)

- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Other
- ☐ I prefer not to respond

Are you a member of a social fraternity or sorority?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Which of the following best describes where you are living while attending college?

- ○ Dormitory or other campus housing (not fraternity or sorority house)
- ○ Fraternity or sorority house
- ○ Residence (house, apartment, etc.) *within walking distance* to the institution
- ○ Residence (house, apartment, etc.) *farther than walking distance* to the institution
- ○ None of the above

Are you a student-athlete on a team sponsored by your institution's athletics department?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Are you a current or former member of the U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves, or National Guard?

○ Yes

○ No

Have you been diagnosed with any disability or impairment?

○ Yes

○ No

○ I prefer not to respond

Which of the following has been diagnosed? (Select all that apply.)

☐ A sensory impairment (vision or hearing)

☐ A mobility impairment

☐ A learning disability (e.g., ADHD, dyslexia)

☐ A mental health disorder

☐ A disability or impairment not listed above

Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?   [Question administered per institution request.]

○ Heterosexual

○ Gay

○ Lesbian

○ Bisexual

○ Another sexual orientation, please specify: [   ]

○ Questioning or unsure

○ I prefer not to respond

[**Continue**]

Contact Us   Frequently Asked Questions

Screen 4 of 5 (continued)

If you have any additional comments or feedback that you'd like to share on the quality of your educational experience, please type them below. (5,000 character limit)

[text input area]

Continue

IDEA Diagnostic Feedback 2016 Instrument
Sample Student Survey

The Instructor:

Your thoughtful answers to these questions will provide helpful information to your instructor.

Please answer the following for Sample Instructor:

Describe the frequency of your instructor's teaching procedures.

The Instructor:

	Hardly Ever	Occasionally	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always
Found ways to help students answer their own questions	○	○	○	○	○
Helped students to interpret subject matter from diverse perspectives (e.g., different cultures, religions, genders, political views)	○	○	○	○	○
Encouraged students to reflect on and evaluate what they have learned	○	○	○	○	○
Demonstrated the importance and significance of the subject matter	○	○	○	○	○
Formed teams or groups to facilitate learning	○	○	○	○	○
Made it clear how each topic fit into the course	○	○	○	○	○
Provided meaningful feedback on students' academic performance	○	○	○	○	○
Stimulated students to intellectual effort beyond that required by most courses	○	○	○	○	○
Encouraged students to use multiple resources (e.g. Internet, library holdings, outside experts) to improve understanding	○	○	○	○	○
Explained course material clearly and concisely	○	○	○	○	○
Related course material to real life situations	○	○	○	○	○
Created opportunities for students to apply course content outside the classroom	○	○	○	○	○
Introduced stimulating ideas about the subject	○	○	○	○	○
Involved students in hands-on projects such as research, case studies, or real life activities	○	○	○	○	○
Inspired students to set and achieve goals which really challenged them	○	○	○	○	○

The Instructor *(continued)*:

Asked students to share ideas and experiences with others whose backgrounds and viewpoints differ from their own	○	○	○	○	○
Asked students to help each other understand ideas or concepts	○	○	○	○	○
Gave projects, tests, or assignments that required original or creative thinking	○	○	○	○	○
Encouraged student-faculty interaction outside of class (e.g., office visits, phone calls, email)	○	○	○	○	○

Progress On:

Thirteen possible learning objectives are listed, not all of which will be relevant in this class. Describe the amount of progress you made on each (even those not emphasized in this class) by using the following scale:

- No Apparent Progress
- Slight Progress; I made small gains on this objective
- Moderate Progress; I made some gains on this objective
- Substantial Progress; I made large gains on this objective
- Exceptional Progress; I made outstanding gains on this objective

Please answer the following for Sample Instructor:

Describe your progress on:

	No Apparent Progress	Slight Progress	Moderate Progress	Substantial Progress	Exceptional Progress
Gaining a basic understanding of the subject (e.g., factual knowledge, methods, principles, generalizations, theories)	○	○	○	○	○
Developing knowledge and understanding of diverse perspectives, global awareness, or other cultures	○	○	○	○	○
Learning to *apply* course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)	○	○	○	○	○
Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course	○	○	○	○	○
Acquiring skills in working with others as a member of a team	○	○	○	○	○

Progress On *(continued)*:

Developing creative capacities (inventing; designing; writing; performing in art, music, drama, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○
Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity (music, science, literature, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○
Developing skill in expressing myself orally or in writing	○	○	○	○	○
Learning how to find, evaluate, and use resources to explore a topic in depth	○	○	○	○	○
Developing ethical reasoning and/or ethical decision making	○	○	○	○	○
Learning to *analyze* and *critically evaluate* ideas, arguments, and points of view.	○	○	○	○	○
Learning to apply knowledge and skills to benefit others or serve the public good.	○	○	○	○	○
Learning appropriate methods for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting numerical information	○	○	○	○	○

Please answer the following for Sample Instructor:
On the next two items, compare this course with others you have taken at this institution.

The Course:

	Much Less than Most Courses	Less than Most Courses	About Average	More than Most Courses	Much More than Most Courses
Amount of coursework	○	○	○	○	○
Difficulty of subject matter	○	○	○	○	○

IDEA Diagnostic Feedback Instrument
Sample Student Survey 2016

Please answer the following for Sample Instructor:

For the following items, choose the option that best corresponds to your judgement.

	Definitely False	More False than True	In Between	More True than False	Definitely True
As a rule, I put forth more effort than other students on academic work.	○	○	○	○	○
I really wanted to take this course regardless of who taught it.	○	○	○	○	○
When this course began I believed I could master its content.	○	○	○	○	○
My background prepared me well for this course's requirements.	○	○	○	○	○
Overall, I rate this instructor an excellent teacher.	○	○	○	○	○
Overall, I rate this course as excellent.	○	○	○	○	○

Please answer the following for Sample Instructor:

Comments

- End of Survey -

Note: A custom question feature is also available and may be used to apply additional questions to individual surveys, across courses, program areas or institution-wide.

cla+

College Sample Assessment

OVERVIEW

CLA+ comprises a Performance Task (PT) and a Selected-Response Question (SRQ) section. There are three types of questions in the SRQ section: Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning (SQR), Critical Reading and Evaluation (CRE), and Critique-an-Argument (CA). CLA+ is administered online. The PT contains an open-ended prompt that requires written responses. The SRQs ask the student to choose the best response based on the Document Library provided.

CLA+ tasks are designed to assess students' general critical-thinking and written-communication skills, regardless of their academic concentrations. These skills include scientific and quantitative reasoning, analytic reasoning and evaluation of information, problem solving, writing effectiveness, and writing mechanics. These skills are necessary, not only for success in high school and college; they are important for success in the workplace and other aspects of life outside the classroom. No prior knowledge of any particular field is necessary in order to perform well.

What is presented in the practice example is an abbreviated version of a PT and of SRQs. Nevertheless, please familiarize yourself with how the assessment includes real-world scenarios and a series of documents that reflect an authentic situation.

This example is also intended to demonstrate what is expected in a high-quality response. The sample response demonstrates the student's critical-thinking and written-communication skills.

Table of Contents

Additional Information

The CLA+ is an online assessment. For more information about the CLA+, please visit cae.org/cla.

You may also email the CLA+ Team at clateam@cae.org.

PERFORMANCE TASK: SKATING ACCIDENT

INSTRUCTIONS

This is an example of a CLA+ Performance Task. In the course of this practice Performance Task, you will prepare a written response to a hypothetical but realistic situation. The Performance Task is made up of an introductory scenario, a question, and seven documents/information sources. You will use information from the Document Library in carrying out the task.

While your personal values and experiences are important, you should base your response solely on the evidence provided in the documents.

SCENARIO

You are the chief marketing officer of SportsCo, an athletic equipment company. The most profitable sector of the company is its new line of inline skates called HotSkates. Given the success of the current HotSkates advertising campaign, the company plans to continue with it for the next three months. However, after a recent skating accident in which a teenager was seriously injured, SportsCo is now receiving negative press relating to possible safety hazards associated with its products. Critics are saying that the HotSkates advertisements do not adequately convey the advanced skill level necessary to safely perform tricks on the skates. If SportsCo continues with the current campaign, it risks facing lawsuits as well as increasing negative public opinion of the company's ethical standards. However, instating a new advertising campaign will require a great deal of time and money, and the new campaign may not be as successful as the present one. **It is your job to decide whether to continue with the present ad campaign.** You have 60 minutes to complete this task.

PROMPT

Your task is to write a report for your marketing team that explains your decision on whether to continue the present campaign. You should support your position with ideas and evidence found in the documents and address potential counterarguments in your recommendation. If you choose not to continue with the current campaign, you should include recommendations for an alternative campaign. There is no "correct" answer. Your report should clearly describe all the details necessary to support your position. Your answers will be judged not only on the accuracy of the information you provide but also on how clearly the ideas are presented, how thoroughly the information is covered, how effectively the ideas are organized, and how well your writing reflects the conventions of standard written English.

While your personal values and experiences are important, please answer the question in the this task solely on the basis of the information provided above and in the Document Library.

DOCUMENT LIBRARY

Document 1 - SportsCo Profile
Document 2 - Daily News Story
Document 3 - Incident Report
Document 4 - Interview Transcript
Document 5 - NCSA Bulletin
Document 6 - Advertising Storyboard
**Document 7** - Blog Post

GLOBAL
FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS

Company Profile-2014

SportsCo Manufacturing

Description: SportsCo is a diversified sporting equipment and leisure company that has grown significantly over the past decade. Founded in 1999 to produce wheels and wheel parts for the secondary bicycle market, SportsCo experienced rapid growth when the wheeled vehicle market grew in the 2000s. It broadened its product line significantly in 2007, with the acquisition of Fantam Sports. It has had its greatest success in the area of inline skating, where it holds a dominant share of the domestic market. Recent expansion into the apparel and leisure markets has netted solid returns. Investors have bid up the SportsCo share price by almost 80% during the past year.

SportsCo Share Price
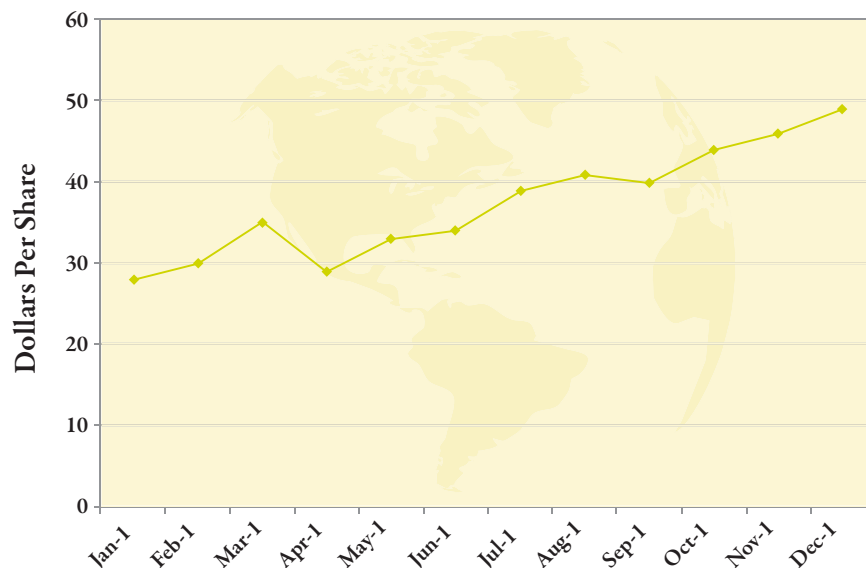
Share price increase of almost 80% during the past year

Leadership: SportsCo was founded by two brothers, Kyle and David Foster, who shared executive responsibility for the firm during its first few years. The Foster brothers were equally concerned about both community development and business success, and they devoted considerable effort to building a positive local environment by contributing to community projects. With the acquisition of Fantam Sports, the Foster brothers sought more experienced leadership and brought in Mitch Hennessey as chief executive officer (CEO). Hennessey has guided SportsCo to its current

success through conservative management coupled with aggressive, creative marketing. The Foster brothers' commitment to community continues in SportsCo's active involvement in community organizations. SportsCo is a major sponsor of the Junior Special Olympics for children with disabilities, and the company donates sporting goods equipment to inner-city schools throughout the country. CEO Hennessey serves on the board of "All Children Matter," an organization concerned with children from abusive homes.

Business Units: SportsCo has three major divisions: apparel, sporting equipment, and playground equipment. Each of the three divisions has a substantial share of the domestic market, but the sporting equipment unit remains the company's largest in terms of market share and total revenue.

APPAREL — 31% SportsCo / 69% Others

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT — 44% SportsCo / 56% Others

SPORTING EQUIPMENT — 58% SportsCo / 42% Others
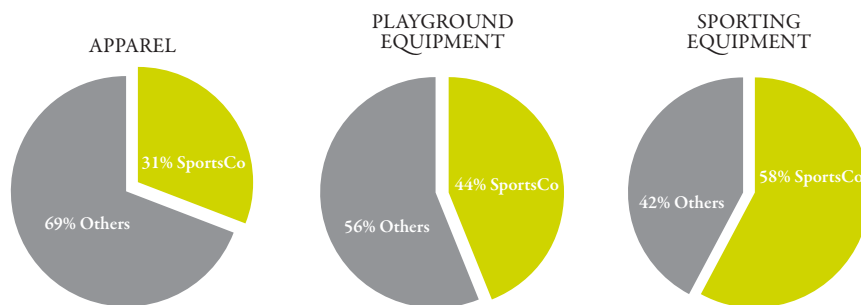
Sporting equipment generated more than half of the company's revenue in 2013. The division has six operating units that focus on specific sectors of the U.S. market. SportsCo is the dominant manufacturer of skating equipment in the US, and they are among the largest firms in the market for fishing and boating and competitive team sports equipment. Their newer units have been solid performers but are still focused on niche markets.

Sporting Equipment Sector

Team Sports	27%
Fishing and Boating	37%
Skating	52%
Bicycling	16%
Exercise Fitness	9%
Skiing	17%

Overall Growth: SportsCo is well managed, well positioned, and analysts predict continued growth.

Recent Developments: In 2013, SportsCo began manufacturing a new line of high-performance skates called HotSkates to market alongside its more traditional inline skates, StreetSkates. After releasing a new advertising campaign in March 2014, SportsCo saw a significant increase in the sales of HotSkates. This successful new campaign features exciting commercials targeted at children and young teenagers. Given the increase in sales following the launch of this campaign, the company plans to continue producing similar commercials with the same marketing platform going forward.

HotSkates Sales 2013-2014
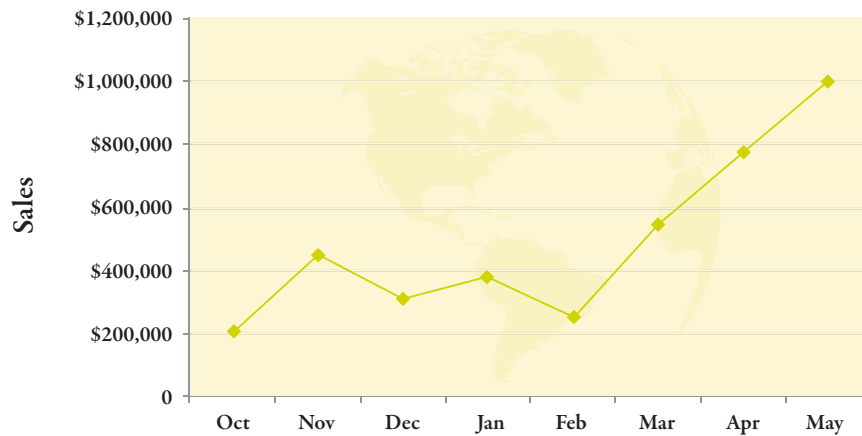
{ NEW PRODUCT

Local High School Student Paralyzed in Skating Accident

Fourteen-year-old Kyle Clester was paralyzed on Tuesday in a skating accident at Burroughs High School. Clester was found lying on the ground at about 4:00 p.m. by a school custodian. He had apparently been skating on school grounds when the accident occurred. Custodian Brad Steffens, who has worked at the school for five years, said he found Clester at the bottom of a flight of stairs leading to the football field. His helmet was lying next to him on the ground. According to Steffens, the boy was wearing HotSkates, which are the latest craze in inline skating. The custodian said he thought the boy must have fallen while trying to jump the stairs.

Clester was taken to Memorial Hospital where his condition is listed as serious. Hospital sources said the boy appears to be paralyzed, but it is too soon to tell whether the condition is permanent. Clester's parents said they continually warned Kyle to be careful when using the skates. They bought him elbow and wrist guards and required him to wear his helmet whenever he skated. His mother said, "I've heard about so many kids who have had accidents while wearing HotSkates that I didn't want to buy him a pair. But

source: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Roxa_Xtreme.jpg

he kept saying that HotSkates were what he wanted for his birthday, so eventually caved. Even so, I was scared every time he used them." Kyle turned 14 last month.

A nurse in the emergency room told reporters that the number of skating accidents has increased over the past few months, and more often the injuries involve HotSkates. "I'd say that half of the skating accidents we've seen involved these new HotSkates," the

nurse told reporters.

Shelly Banks, spokesperson for SportsCo, which manufactures HotSkates, refused to comment on this incident. "We stand behind the safety of our products," she said. "Our safety precautions exceed all industry standards."

One of Clester's friends said the boy had been practicing extra hard to perfect a trick he saw in a commercial for HotSkates. ✍

BURROUGHS
SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Fighting Falcons

INCIDENT REPORT

NAME: Brad Steffens

DATE OF INCIDENT: May 14, 2014

DATE OF REPORT: May 15, 2014

TIME OF INCIDENT: 4:30 pm

LOCATION: Steps to football field

DESCRIBE THE INCIDENT:

I saw a kid lying at the bottom of the steps to the field. I ran outside and asked him what was wrong. He said he couldn't move or feel anything from the neck down. Nobody else was around. I ran back inside and called 911. The paramedics came right away. I gave them the helmet that was on the grass near the steps. After a while, they took the kid away.

IF ANYONE WAS INJURED, DESCRIBE WHO IT WAS AND WHAT THEY WERE DOING:

I don't know the kid who got hurt. He had one of those crazy haircuts and was wearing skates and a T-shirt with somebody's face on it. I don't know how he got hurt. Probably from skating.

DESCRIBE WHAT WERE YOU DOING PRIOR TO THE INCIDENT:

Checking that all the doors and windows in the main building were closed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Around 3 o'clock, I saw some kids skating on the handrails and benches, so I told them to leave like I always do. I usually let kids skate on the cement patio if they want to because it's wide open, but they have to wear a helmet. I never let them on the handrails or benches. I think the kid who got hurt was one of the ones I saw earlier in the afternoon. Not sure.

Transcript of Interview with Heather McKinley, May 24

Institute for Consumer Protection

TN: We are talking today with Heather McKinley, research director of the Institute for Consumer Protection, about roller skates. Welcome to the show, Heather.

HM: Thank you. It is a pleasure to be here.

TN: When I was growing up, skates had side-by-side wheels; now the wheels are one behind the other. Is this better?

HM: It depends on what you mean by better. Once you learn to use them, the new inline skates are faster and more maneuverable than the side-by-side, four-wheel roller skates you grew up with. But they are harder to learn.

TN: Does that mean more accidents?

HM: We are certainly seeing more skating injuries every year, but we are also seeing much more skating.

TN: Are these inline skates dangerous?

HM: Definitely. One of the advantages of side-by-side four-wheel skates is that they give you stable contact with the ground. There is less lateral pressure on your feet and ankles.

TN: In simpler terms, please.

HM: Inline skates tip from side to side. Roller skates don't. The only thing that keeps inline skates upright is your balance and the strength of your ankles.

TN: Are there more ankle injuries with inline skates?

HM: Definitely. Doctors call them "the orthopedic surgeon's friend" because they are associated with so many broken ankles, wrists, and arms.

TN: Why wrists and arms?

HM: Because people skate so fast that they can't keep their balance. And when they fall, they reach out to protect themselves and end up breaking an arm or wrist.

TN: So speed is part of the problem.

HM: Absolutely. Speed and stability.

TN: What about the new generation of inline skates, such as HotSkates?

HM: These skates are faster and narrower than earlier versions, and they are more dangerous as a result.

TN: How do they do that? Do they use only one wheel?

HM: No, they employ new space-age bearings that have less friction, allowing the wheels to turn faster. Also, they use new synthetic materials that permit narrower wheels for more maneuverability but less stability.

TN: So, are they safe?

HM: Not for beginners. You go faster, so if you do fall, you are likely to have a more serious injury. I inline skate myself, but I know my limits. HotSkates are too fast for me, and, I suspect, for most children.

NCSA
National Consumer
Safety Association

BULLETIN

Accurate Information for the Informed Consumer

June 2014

Skaters Beware: Serious Injury Rates with Inline Skates

Sporting King, the nation's leading retailer of inline skates, provided the National Consumer Safety Association (NCSA) with sales figures and customer lists for all the inline skates it sold between October 31, 2013 and April 30, 2014. These data indicate that 60% of the skates Sporting King sold during this period were manufactured by SportsCo, and the remaining 40% were manufactured by AXM.

Both SportsCo and AXM make traditional inline skates as well as newer high-performance inline skates that are faster and more expensive. SportsCo and AXM are currently the only two manufacturers of these new high-performance skates.

We surveyed a stratified random sample of 8,200 Sporting King customers who purchased SportsCo and AXM inline skates during the October 31, 2013 and April 30, 2014 period. The survey included questions about the skaters' experience and skill level, the frequency of skate use, and the frequency of accidents and injuries. Skate purchasers who returned completed surveys to NCSA by May 15, 2014 received a store gift certificate worth $15.

This report is based on the 3,884 completed surveys (47.4%) that NCSA received by May 15, 2014. SportsCo and AXM inline skate purchasers had nearly identical response rates (47.3% and 47.4% respectively).

Table 1 shows the number of Sporting King customers that were surveyed compared to the total customers who purchased SportsCo and AXM inline skates.

Table 1. Number of Sporting King customers completing the survey who purchased SportsCo and AXM skates.

Company	SportsCo		AXM	
Model Name	StreetSkates	HotSkates	Inlyne	Inlyne Pro
Model Type	Regular	High Performance	Regular	High Performance
Responding	1613	716	1083	472

Many survey respondents reported that the person using the skates suffered one or more skating related injuries during the preceding three-month period. Injuries included abrasions and cuts, muscle strains and tears, and broken bones. This report does not include less severe injuries and, instead, focuses on the strains, tears, and breaks that required medical treatment by a physician. The numbers below are based on skaters who suffered one or more of these more serious injuries.[1]

[1] No questions were asked about what caused the injury. There were too few fatalities to report reliable results by manufacturer, skate type, or experience levet.

The breakdown of skaters by self-reported level of experience is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Number of skaters at each level of experience using each type of skate.

Experience Level	SportsCo		AXM		All Skates
	Regular (StreetSkates)	High Performance (HotSkates)	Regular	High Performance	
Beginner	600	198	412	132	1342
Intermediate	527	238	350	157	1272
Advanced	486	280	321	183	1270
All Levels	1613	716	1083	472	3884

Table 3 shows the number of skaters, among the 3,884 questionnaires returned, who suffered one or more serious injuries (as defined above).

Table 3. Number of skaters with serious injuries by type of skate, experience of user, and manufacturer.

Experience Level	SportsCo		AXM		All Skates
	Regular (StreetSkates)	High Performance (HotSkates)	Regular	High Performance	
Beginner	81	38	52	26	197
Intermediate	52	24	36	16	128
Advanced	25	13	13	6	57
All Levels	158	75	101	48	382

Table 4 shows the percentage of skaters in each combination of skate type and experience level that suffered at least one "serious" injury (as defined above) during the preceding three months. For example, of the 600 beginning skaters who used StreetSkates (i.e. SportsCo's regular inline skate), 81 (13.5%) had at least one serious injury.

Table 4. Percentage of skaters with serious injuries by type of skate, experience of user, and manufacturer.

| Experience Level	SportsCo		AXM		Overall
	Regular (StreetSkates)	High Performance (HotSkates)	Regular	High Performance	
Beginner	13.5%	19.2%	12.6%	19.7%	14.7%
Intermediate	9.9%	10.1%	10.3%	10.2%	10.1%
Advanced	5.1%	4.6%	4.0%	3.3%	4.5%
All Levels	9.8%	10.5%	9.3%	10.2%	9.8%

Opening scene: Quiet residential street. Camera pans right to reveal more houses.
Early morning sounds: a bird chirping, wind in trees, a door opening, etc.
Voice-over: It's Saturday. No school. Time to sleep in. Relax. Enjoy the weekend.
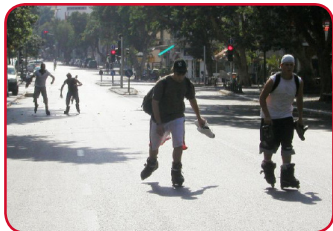
Scene 2: Camera pans back left to reveal four kids in the distance, rolling forward fast on HotSkates, weaving between obstacles on a street.
Voice-over: Or then again....

Scene 3: Cut to close up of skaters rushing past.
Sound of their laughter and excitement. Sound of HotSkates on pavement.
Music: "Wild and Wild" by DelRay33

Scene 4: Camera pans back right to follow the four kids rolling away in the distance.
Music recedes. Early morning sounds come back.
Voice-over: The choice is yours.
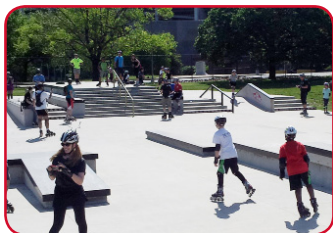
Scene 5: Montage of kids doing tricks.
1. Spin flip   2. Grab
3. Huge air   4. Grind
Voice-over: Hotskates are something new. They are fast, slick, hot. Simply the best skates ever. They turn skating into a whole new sport.

Scene 6: Cut to scenes of open skating in a skate park with grind rails, half pipe, bowl, etc.
Sounds of skates and kids having fun.
Voice-over: HotSkates from SportsCo. If you haven't hot-skated, you haven't skated.

Text over screen: The athletes doing these tricks are experts. New skaters should not attempt these tricks.

Keeping In Line: A Skating Blog

Welcome to my blog about all things skating. My name is Cam, and I am an inline skating fanatic. I also consider myself to be a skating expert, having over 10 years of experience working for AXM Skates.

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HotSkates: Fast, Slick, Hot…Misleading?

By: Cameron Brooks

31 May 2014

Hi, everyone! I just want to share my thoughts on the HotSkates controversy that's been going on since Kyle Clester seriously injured himself in a skating accident.

If you know any kids between the ages of 9 and 15, chances are you are familiar with the latest HotSkates craze. Thanks to the wild and exciting HotSkates commercial that is playing on all the major TV networks and targeted at young people, kids all over the country are now begging their parents for these new high-performance inline skates, which allow for more speed and maneuverability than traditional inline skates. But should these kids really be using HotSkates?

The commercial shows children zooming around on HotSkates in their local neighborhood and performing complicated (and dangerous) stunts. Although the commercial warns that only skilled athletes should attempt the tricks shown in the advertisement, it does not warn against the dangers of fast skating for beginners. Furthermore, the advertisement implies that it is safe to attempt dangerous skating maneuvers in uncontrolled and possibly hazardous areas, such as open roads and unattended public buildings. The fact is that going at the high speeds made possible by HotSkates is only safe for experienced and skilled skaters, even when no stunts are being performed. And skating in zones not intended for skating is dangerous for everyone, regardless of experience or skill level. Most of the children targeted by the HotSkates commercial are not advanced enough to use the product safely. What's more, even young skaters who are advanced enough to try the stunts shown in the commercial may be misled into believing that they can skate anywhere safely.

So, what can we take away from this? For starters, HotSkates, though often targeted at kids and teenagers, may actually be more suitable for adults who are both skilled enough and mature enough to use the product safely. Additionally, if you were planning to purchase a pair of HotSkates for your daughter, son, niece, or nephew, you may want to think twice about whether or not your well-meaning gift may become a safety hazard.

ANSWER SHEET

Please use the space below to answer the question from the previous page. If necessary, additional paper can be used.

SAMPLE RESPONSE 1

As you all are well aware, HotSkates, our highest-grossing product, has come under public attack in recent months. The high incidence of accidents and injuries in young HotSkates users has attracted this negative media attention. Because this negative publicity could very likely damage our reputation as a company and hurt sales, I have made the decision to instate a new advertising campaign to protect the reputation of our company and our products.

This decision was made based on a thorough analysis of media coverage and financial reports that reveal the need to reassess and redesign our advertising approach to marketing HotSkates. HotSkates sales have jumped nearly 1 million dollars from February to May of 2014, providing us with the revenue necessary to make the marketing changes I propose. While these changes may lead to an immediate decrease in HotSkates sales, it will allow SportsCo to maintain our reputation—which we have worked for the past 15 years to build—as a reliable and high-quality sports equipment company.

An examination of recent media discussions of HotSkates will explain the necessity of a campaign adjustment. The incident of a fourteen-year old boy paralyzed in a skating accident involving HotSkates has received considerable press, even though it's unclear whether the boy was an experienced skater, given that—according to the Daily News article—Kyle Clester had only recently received his HotSkates. He may simply not have been skating appropriately for his skill level; a beginner should not have been attempting advanced skating tricks, as was suggested by the school custodian. In the new story, however, his mother is quoted describing HotSkates as the cause of the accident. The article even cites our popular HotSkates commercial as an influence in the boy's risky skating behavior. If this were an isolated incident, it might not be cause for alarm, but this sentiment has become part of the national attitude towards our product. In a recent television interview, Heather McKinley, the research director for Consumer Protection, called our skates "dangerous" and even announced that she would not use them or recommend them for children.

The National Consumer Safety Association has released a study showing that our high-performance skates do not have a significantly higher rate of serious injury than our major competitor's skates at any experience level (a 10.5% overall serious injury rate for HotSkates, compared to 10.2% for AXM's high-performance skates). Though this report was published later than some of the other documents I have compiled on the subject, we do not know whether these statistics will affect broader public opinion. People may instead focus on the fact that our advertisement targets younger skaters, when we know from the NCSA report inexperienced skaters have much higher risk of serious injury than experienced skaters when using high-performance skates; 19% of all beginner skaters who use HotSkates experience serious injuries.

Despite the fact that we provide a disclaimer at the end of our commercial, all the negative attention portrays SportsCo as an untrustworthy or even a dishonest company. In order to keep our sales steady and rising for decades to come, it is important that we maintain the trust of our customers. To continue with our campaign might save us money in the short-term but it will not be good for the long-term public opinion of SportsCo. With the recent spike in sales, we can afford to alter our HotSkates marketing campaign. Skating equipment is the largest unit within our Sports Equipment sector and HotSkates sales have been astromonical since the launch of the ad campaign, but the negative press could seriously impact our long-term success. I propose we work on marketing HotSkates to an older, semi-professional demographic and work with the development team to produce a new skating product that is safe for beginners who want to try low-level skating tricks. It is our responsibility to our consumers and to the future of our company.

Analysis and Problem Solving
Subscore: 6
- States an explicit decision/conclusion/position
- Provides comprehensive support, including nearly all of the relevant and credible information, in a manner that demonstrates outstanding analysis and comprehension of the documents
- Thoroughly refutes contradictory evidence or alternative decisions/conclusions/positions (if applicable)

Writing Effectiveness
Subscore: 6
- Organizes response in a logically cohesive way that makes it very easy to follow the writer's arguments
- Provides valid and comprehensive elaboration on facts or ideas related to each argument and clearly cites sources of information

Writing Mechanics
Subscore: 6
- Demonstrates outstanding control of grammatical conventions
- Consistently writes well-constructed complex sentences with varied structure and length
- Displays adept use of vocabulary that is precise, advanced, and varied

Dear Marketing Team,

Our product, HotSkates has brought in 1 million dollars in recent months. It is an essential product to our company and it is selling so well because kids love the fancy tricks we portray in the commercial. It is enough to protect us that we put a disclaimer at the end saying that this product is for professional experts. I have decided we should not change our campaign just because some people complain. The issue is that they dont understand safety precautions or proper training. They should learn that and read our disclaimer.

SportsCo is not the only company making High Performance inline skates that lead to injury. AXM also does. In fact we have almost the same amount of injuries. Even they have more beginners with a percentage of injuries.

Even the experts who say that this is not for kids understand that you need special skills, and protection to safely use HotSkates. In the incident report it is clear, that the boy who became paralyzed was acting unsafely. This is not the fault of our company. We have other kinds of equipment for sale for beginners. Kids could also use our regular skates called StreetSkates. The most important point of course is that HotSkates make an enormous amount of money for our company. Skating is 52% of all the equipment we sell. We can't afford to drop this campaign. It's what the kids want.

Analysis and Problem Solving
Subscore: 4
- States an explicit decision/conclusion/ position
- Provides valid support that addresses multiple pieces of relevant and credible information in a manner that demonstrates adequate analysis and comprehension of the documents; some information is omitted
- May attempt to address contradictory information or alternative decisions/ conclusions/positions (if applicable)

Writing Effectiveness
Subscore: 3
- Provides limited or somewhat unclear arguments. Presents relevant information in each response, but that information is not woven into arguments
- Provides elaboration on facts or ideas a few times, some of which is valid; sources of information are sometimes unclear

Writing Mechanics
Subscore: 3
- Demonstrates fair control of grammatical conventions with frequent minor errors
- Writes sentences that read naturally but tend to have similar structure and length
- Uses vocabulary that communicates ideas adequately but lacks variety

I have decided to stop the campaign ads for HotSkates. We owe it to, the kids and the mother of the kid who was paralyzed to advertise in a diffrent way and even the experts agree that inline skating leads to serious injury like it says in the report about SportsCo and AXM. We have worse numbers than they do.

The way the incident report describes the boy is really sad, and the mother's words in the newspaper. It's important that we change the ad. If you look at the ad, it makes the skating look like alot of fun not dangerous enough. One way we could change the ad is to make it look dangerous like in reality.

SportsCo make a lot of money from skating but its not the only place we make money from. We also make money from Team Sports, Fishing and Boating, Bicycling, Excersice Fitness, and Skiiing. I think we should use more monies to sale products for one of these things. It could help cover whatever it costs to change the ads and we will still probably sale skates but hopefully no kids will become paralyzed or injured like before.

Analysis and Problem Solving
Subscore: 2

- May state or imply a decision/conclusion/position
- Provides minimal analysis as support (e.g., briefly addresses only one idea from one document) or analysis is entirely inaccurate, illogical, unreliable, or unconnected to the decision/conclusion/position

Writing Effectiveness
Subscore: 2

- Does not develop convincing arguments; writing may be disorganized and confusing
- Does not provide elaboration on facts or ideas

Writing Mechanics
Subscore: 2

- Demonstrates minimal control of grammatical conventions with many errors that make the response difficult to read or provides insufficient evidence to judge
- Writes sentences that are repetitive or incomplete, and some are difficult to understand
- Uses simple vocabulary, and some vocabulary is used inaccurately or in a way that makes meaning unclear

CLA+ Scoring Rubric

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Analysis and Problem Solving — Making a logical decision or conclusion (or taking a position) and supporting it by utilizing appropriate information (facts, ideas, computed values, or salient features) from the Document Library	May state or imply a decision/conclusion/position Provides minimal analysis as support (e.g., briefly addresses only one idea from one document) or analysis is entirely inaccurate, illogical, unreliable, or unconnected to the decision/conclusion/position	States or implies a decision/conclusion/position Provides analysis that addresses a few ideas as support, some of which is inaccurate, illogical, unreliable, or unconnected to the decision/conclusion/position	States or implies a decision/conclusion/position Provides some valid support, but omits or misrepresents critical information, suggesting only superficial analysis and partial comprehension of the documents May not account for contradictory information (if applicable)	States an explicit decision/conclusion/position Provides valid support that addresses multiple pieces of relevant and credible information in a manner that demonstrates adequate analysis and comprehension of the documents; some information is omitted May attempt to address contradictory information or alternative decisions/conclusions/positions (if applicable)	States an explicit decision/conclusion/position Provides strong support that addresses much of the relevant and credible information, in a manner that demonstrates very good analysis and comprehension of the documents Refutes contradictory information or alternative decisions/conclusions/positions (if applicable)	States an explicit decision/conclusion/position Provides comprehensive support, including nearly all of the relevant and credible information, in a manner that demonstrates outstanding analysis and comprehension of the documents Thoroughly refutes contradictory evidence or alternative decisions/conclusions/positions (if applicable)
Writing Effectiveness — Constructing organized and logically cohesive arguments. Strengthening the writer's position by providing elaboration on facts or ideas (e.g., explaining how evidence bears on the problem, providing examples, and emphasizing especially convincing evidence)	Does not develop convincing arguments; writing may be disorganized and confusing Does not provide elaboration on facts or ideas	Provides limited, invalid, over-stated, or very unclear arguments; may present information in a disorganized fashion or undermine own points Any elaboration on facts or ideas tends to be vague, irrelevant, inaccurate, or unreliable (e.g., based entirely on writer's opinion); sources of information are often unclear	Provides limited or somewhat unclear arguments. Presents relevant information in each response, but that information is not woven into arguments Provides elaboration on facts or ideas a few times, some of which is valid; sources of information are sometimes unclear	Organizes response in a way that makes the writer's arguments and logic of those arguments apparent but not obvious Provides valid elaboration on facts or ideas several times and cites sources of information	Organizes response in a logically cohesive way that makes it fairly easy to follow the writer's arguments Provides valid elaboration on facts or ideas related to each argument and cites sources of information	Organizes response in a logically cohesive way that makes it very easy to follow the writer's arguments Provides valid and comprehensive elaboration on facts or ideas related to each argument and clearly cites sources of information
Writing Mechanics — Demonstrating facility with the conventions of standard written English (agreement, tense, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling) and control of the English language, including syntax (sentence structure) and diction (word choice and usage)	Demonstrates minimal control of grammatical conventions with many errors that make the response difficult to read or provides insufficient evidence to judge Writes sentences that are repetitive or incomplete, and some are difficult to understand Uses simple vocabulary, and some vocabulary is used inaccurately or in a way that makes meaning unclear	Demonstrates poor control of grammatical conventions with frequent minor errors and some severe errors Consistently writes sentences with similar structure and length, and some may be difficult to understand Uses simple vocabulary, and some vocabulary may be used inaccurately or in a way that makes meaning unclear	Demonstrates fair control of grammatical conventions with frequent minor errors Writes sentences that read naturally but tend to have similar structure and length Uses vocabulary that communicates ideas adequately but lacks variety	Demonstrates good control of grammatical conventions with few errors Writes well-constructed sentences with some varied structure and length Uses vocabulary that clearly communicates ideas but lacks variety	Demonstrates very good control of grammatical conventions Consistently writes well-constructed sentences with varied structure and length Uses varied and sometimes advanced vocabulary that effectively communicates ideas	Demonstrates outstanding control of grammatical conventions Consistently writes well-constructed complex sentences with varied structure and length Displays adept use of vocabulary that is precise, advanced, and varied

Fueling the Future

In a quest to solve the energy problems of the twenty-first century—that is, to find sustainable and renewable sources of energy that are less destructive to the environment yet economical enough to have mass appeal—scientists throughout the world are experimenting with innovative forms of fuel production. While oil is still the most common source of fuel, there is a finite amount of it, and new alternatives will become necessary to sustain the supply of energy that we are accustomed to.

Corn-based ethanol, the most common alternative to traditional fossil fuels (primarily coal, petroleum, and natural gas), is mixed into gasoline in small quantities, and it now accounts for about 10% of the fuel supply from sources within the United States. Because corn is grown on farmland, it is subject to price fluctuations based on supply and demand of the crop, as well as disruptions resulting from naturally occurring events, such as droughts and floods. At present, nearly 40% of the corn grown in the United States is used for fuel, and the demand for corn-based ethanol is rising. To meet this demand, wetlands, grasslands, and forests are all being converted into farmland with the sole intention of growing corn for more ethanol production. Corn grown for ethanol has become a more valuable commodity for farmers than crops grown for food, and this has negatively affected consumers worldwide, as shown by the increasing price of food over time.
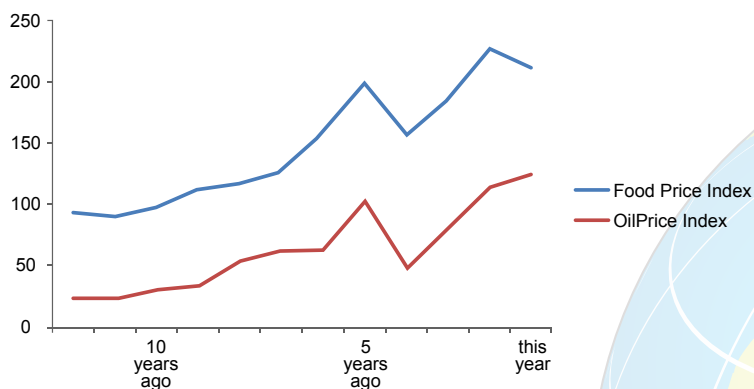
carbon dioxide when they are burned, algae have the ability to recapture and use that carbon dioxide during photosynthesis while they are growing. In this regard, the advantage is enormous. The process of growing algae actually absorbs more carbon dioxide than is released into the atmosphere when it is burned for fuel. Most manufacturing processes strive for "carbon neutrality"—or the balance between carbon emissions and depletion corresponding to a net carbon output of zero. Even better, algae-based biofuel can be described as "carbon negative." Other forms of biofuel can make similar claims. For example, ethanol from corn also eliminates carbon dioxide in the atmosphere through photosynthesis. Unlike corn, however, algae grow in water, usually in man-made ponds built on land not used for crops. Additionally, algae do not require fresh water. Instead algae can be grown in salt water, and, in some cases, even sewage water and other waste material.

The most promising aspect of algae biofuel stems from its yield. When compared to other biofuel producers, algae's fuel yield per harvested acre is over 500 times greater than that of corn.

The following chart compares commonly used biofuel crops on several important factors.

Table 1: Comparison of biofuel crops (based on information found at: algaefuel.org and c1gas2org.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com)

Figure 1: Food and oil price indices (based on information found at www.fao.org and www.indexmundi.com)

Product	Oil Yield Gallons/ Acre	Harmful Gas Emissions	Use of Water to Grow Crop	Fertilizer Needed to Grow Crop	Energy Used to Extract Fuel from Crop
Ethanol from Corn	18	high	high	high	high
Biodiesel from Soybeans	48	high	high	low-medium	medium-low
Biodiesel from Canola	127	medium	high	medium	medium-low
Biodiesel from Algae	10,000	negative	medium	low	high

Another alternative that has gained attention in recent years is the harvesting of biofuel from algae. Biodiesel, a type of biofuel, is produced by extracting oil from algae, much like the process involved in creating vegetable oils from corn or soybeans. Ethanol can also be created by fermenting algae.
Algae biofuel has some unique benefits that separate it from other fossil fuel alternatives. To begin with, while all fuels create

QUESTIONS: SCIENTIFIC AND QUANTITATIVE REASONING

1. Which of the following negatively affects algae biofuel's ability to be a "carbon-negative" energy source?

    A. It takes 3000 liters of water to create one liter of biofuel from algae, which is highly inefficient and wasteful of resources.
    B. The process of extracting biofuel from algae requires more energy than is generated by burning the biofuel itself.
    C. The construction of facilities needed to extract algae biofuel would initially require the use of fossil fuels for energy.
    D. Algae biofuel is about 25 years away from being commercially viable, by which point there will be more efficient alternative energy sources.

2. The graph shows that food and oil prices increase and decrease together. Which of the following is the most plausible explanation for this phenomenon?

    A. As the price of food increases due to supply and demand, the cost of oil also rises because less land is available for planting corn.
    B. Food and oil suppliers dictate the prices of their goods. Therefore, the prices of food and oil rise as consumers can afford to pay more for commodities.
    C. The prices of oil and food are simultaneously affected by global conditions, such as natural disasters, weather, famine, and political unrest.
    D. Farmers plant more corn for ethanol when the price of oil increases. The price of food then rises because less food-yielding crops are being produced.

3. What additional information could be added to the table for evaluating the efficiency and viability of algae biofuel compared to other sources of biofuel?

    A. The average amount of money farmers earn per acre for each biofuel source.
    B. The costs associated with the extraction of energy from each biofuel source.
    C. The taxes collected by the government on the sale of each biofuel crop.
    D. The level of financial support each type of biofuel has received from investors.

4. Which of the following could plausibly occur if algae become a highly efficient and cost-effective source of biofuel?

    A. The price of food would fall because more farmland could be used to produce food rather than corn harvested for ethanol.
    B. The supply of fresh water would be reduced because of the demands of harvesting algae for biofuel.
    C. The cost of fuel would rise as the world's markets become flooded with alternative sources of energy.
    D. The amount of carbon in the air would increase because more fuel will be burned due to lower costs.

Dear Nord County School Board,

We urge you to consider a ban on serving coffee in the Nord High School cafeteria. This is important for protecting and promoting good health practices in our teenagers. Caffeine is a harmful drug for growing brains and bodies. Many adults struggle to break their own addiction to coffee so allowing the teenagers at Nord High School to begin drinking coffee on a regular basis is a dangerous idea. Teenagers have less self-control and common sense about their own health than their adult counterparts.

There may be parents and researchers who claim that a daily cup or two of coffee for a teenager is not dangerous, but this is a misconception that is easily erased by simply looking at the facts. Teenagers need more sleep than most adults because their minds and bodies are still developing. Caffeine consumption disrupts their sleep cycles and leads to sleepiness during the school day. One study found that teenagers who fell asleep during class consumed 76% more caffeine than those who did not sleep during the school day. Additionally, caffeine consumption can lead to mood swings, impulsiveness, and loss of control. These are issues that many parents deal with. Serving coffee in the Nord High School cafeteria only worsens these problems and threatens the healthy functioning of our high school students.

Ban coffee from Nord High School and help Nord teenagers lead healthier lives.

Sincerely,

Garret Ricci

Garret Ricci
Parent of Nord High School students

PETITION TO KEEP COFFEE IN OUR SCHOOL CAFETERIA

To all Nord High School students:

Due to complaints from some parents, the Nord School Board is now considering a ban on coffee in our high school cafeteria. This would be an injustice to our school community! We have a right to make our own choices about our bodies and our consumption habits. Coffee is a healthy drink in moderation and is an important part of the school day for students who lead busy lives, balancing homework, friends, work, and extra-curricular activities. Just one cup of coffee during the day can help busy students stay alert and focused.

It's time that the Nord School Board treats high school students like the young adults that we are. They must give us the responsibility of making smart choices, and we will rise to the occasion. We must demand respect for our choices and our needs.

Oppose the ban on coffee in the Nord High School cafeteria by signing the petition below. Protect our rights!

Sincerely yours,
Lisa Browning
Nord High School Senior Class President

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

1. Which of the following statements, if true, would most seriously weaken Garret Ricci's claim?

    A. Teenagers who are prone to mood swings and impulsiveness consume caffeine at the same rate as their peers.
    B. Adults who consume a small amount of caffeine daily are able to multitask more efficiently.
    C. Adults who consume caffeine regularly were not necessarily coffee drinkers as teenagers.
    D. Eighty percent of caffeine consumed by teenagers is consumed in the form of soda and other caffeinated non-coffee beverages.

2. Which of the following is a significant flaw in the Garret Ricci's argument?

    A. The author assumes that teenagers have less self-control than adults, without any evidence.
    B. The author claims that sleeping during class is caused by caffeine consumption, while it may be that caffeine consumption is a result of sleepiness.
    C. The author associates sleep and mood with health, without explaining the connection.
    D. The author uses anecdotal evidence from parents and teenagers, rather than a substantial body of research.

3. On which point do Garret Ricci and Lisa Browning most clearly disagree?

    A. the ability of teenagers to make reasonable judgments about their own health
    B. the usefulness of coffee as a replacement for sleep
    C. the effects of coffee on the human brain and body
    D. the prevalence of coffee in a variety of cultural and commercial settings

4. It can be inferred that Lisa Browning would **most likely** agree with which of the following statements?

    A. The School Board should not be allowed to make decisions about anything that affects the daily life of students.
    B. The job of a class president is to protect the rights of students and represent their voices.
    C. Parents who complain about coffee in the cafeteria have a negative view of teenagers.
    D. Every high school student should enjoy the physical and mental benefits of coffee by drinking it daily.

5. Which of the following statements could be used as a counterargument to Garret Ricci's claim?

    A. Coffee needs to be available in high school cafeterias for the teachers and staff members who rely on it.
    B. Because of its bitter taste, most teenagers are unlikely to consume coffee, whether or not it is served in their high school cafeterias.
    C. Teenagers will be exposed to coffee elsewhere, so it is important that they learn to consume it in school, with self-control and moderation.
    D. It is the parents' job, not the school's, to determine whether their teenagers should consume caffeine.

DOCUMENT : CRITIQUE-AN-ARGUMENT

ARGUMENT

Law-enforcement agencies depend heavily on eyewitnesses to identify suspected criminals. Indeed, it is estimated that 77,000 people nationwide are put on trial each year because of eyewitness identification. Traditionally, eyewitnesses are asked to identify suspects in a police "lineup" where suspected criminals are presented along with known innocents, called fillers, in a simultaneous (all at once) lineup. However, nowadays the lineups typically involve photos, not actual people. New research conducted in a well-controlled laboratory setting suggests that presenting photographs in a sequential (one at a time) lineup significantly reduces eyewitnesses' identification of fillers from 18% in simultaneous lineups to 12% in sequential ones. It is clear that the sequential lineup is far superior to the simultaneous one, and it is imperative that law-enforcement agencies change the way in which eyewitnesses identify criminal suspects. This will greatly reduce the number of innocent people put on trial.

QUESTIONS: CRITIQUE-AND-ARGUMENT

1. Which of the following is the strongest argument against the speaker's position that law-enforcement agencies need to change eyewitness identifications from simultaneous to sequential lineups?

    A. Simultaneous lineups have traditionally been used and have always worked well, so it does not make sense to change things.
    B. Eyewitnesses using a sequential lineup may not be better at ruling out fillers because the rate of misidentification between the two groups is not that large.
    C. It is easier for eyewitnesses to rule out fillers in a simultaneous lineup because they are seeing everyone at the same time.
    D. People should have faith in the legal system because there are many steps in the judicial process to prevent an innocent person from going on trial.

2. The speaker states that the study was conducted in a well-controlled laboratory setting. The speaker probably intended this statement to

    A. establish that a laboratory study is better than a study that was conducted in the field because it is free of competing explanations for the difference between the two lineups.
    B. illustrate that a laboratory setting is one in which a placebo must be in place in order for researchers to draw an accurate conclusion about the two lineups.
    C. demonstrate that both real-world and scientific experiments can be conducted in laboratory settings because laboratory settings are neutral environments.
    D. reveal that the results of the study are not accurate because studies conducted in a laboratory setting are contrived and not a reflection of what happens in the real world.

3. Which of the following research results would best strengthen the case for law-enforcement agencies using sequential lineups instead of simultaneous ones?

    A. The same percentage of suspects was found guilty by juries regardless of whether a sequential or simultaneous lineup was used.
    B. Eyewitnesses presented with a sequential lineup made fewer overall selections than those presented with a simultaneous lineup.
    C. Eyewitnesses presented with a sequential lineup feel more confident about their choices than those presented with a simultaneous lineup.
    D. Fewer fillers were identified as criminals by eyewitnesses presented with a sequential lineup than those presented with a simultaneous one in real-life cases.

4. What assumption does the speaker make when stating that law-enforcement agencies can reduce the number of innocent people sent to prison if they use sequential lineups?

    A. Eyewitnesses could identify fillers as criminal suspects who then could be incorrectly put on trial and ultimately sent to prison.
    B. If the simultaneous lineup is less accurate at identifying suspects, then more fillers are misidentified and incorrectly tried than if law-enforcement agencies only use sequential lineups.
    C. If the sequential lineup is better at increasing the number of correctly identified suspects, then the fillers will no longer be needed, leading to fewer people being incorrectly put on trial.
    D. People who act as fillers in multiple lineups could be incorrectly identified as suspects in one lineup but not in another.

5. Eyewitnesses from multiple cases were recruited to participate in a follow-up study where they were randomly assigned to one of two groups. Which one of the following research designs could be used to test the hypothesis that an officer's body language influences eyewitnesses' ability to correctly identify a suspect in a lineup?

    A. Have officers with knowledge of the cases present images in a sequential lineup to one group of eyewitnesses and in a simultaneous lineup to the other group.
    B. Have officers with no knowledge of the cases present images in a sequential lineup to one group of eyewitnesses and in a simultaneous lineup to the other group.
    C. Have officers with knowledge of the cases present images to one group of eyewitnesses and officers with no knowledge of the cases present images to the other group.
    D. Two officers, one with and one without knowledge of the cases, present images to one group of eyewitnesses and another officer with knowledge of the cases presents images to the other group.