



Quality Enhancement Plan
UNIVERSITY of WEST FLORIDA

2025

UWF QEP
**Reflect to
Connect**

HIGH-IMPACT EXPERIENCES



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**UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA
QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN
ON-SITE REVIEW - FEBRUARY 25-27, 2025**

Developed by the University of West Florida (UWF) in preparation for its reaffirmation of accreditation review by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

2025 UWF QEP Reflect to Connect



TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Executive Summary	4		
II. Introduction	6		
<hr/>			
A. University Mission, Values, and Strategic Plan 2022-2027	6		
B. Institutional Profile	7		
C. UWF Culture of HIPs	9		
III. Selecting the QEP Topic	11		
<hr/>			
A. Strategic Plan Development	11		
B. QEP Topic Selection Process	13		
1. Results of <i>Communication for Professional Success</i>	14		
2. Results of the NSSE HIP Quality Module	19		
3. HIP Barriers Study	21		
4. Faculty Feedback on HIPs at UWF	23		
A. Strengths of HIPs at UWF	23		
B. Lasting Impacts of HIPs on UWF	23		
C. Opportunities for Maintaining and Enhancing HIPs at UWF	23		
5. QEP Topic Selection	25		
C. Alignment with Strategic Plan 2022-2027	26		
IV. Reflect to Connect	26		
<hr/>			
A. Definition of Critical Reflection	27		
B. HIP Infrastructure	27		
1. HIP Liaison Model	27		
2. QEP-HIP Oversight Committee	27		
3. QEP-HIP Grant Review Process	28		
4. HIP Toolkit	28		
5. HIP Type Subcommittees	28		
6. HIP Course Designation and Vetting	28		
7. HIP Faculty Showcase	29		
8. HIP Scholarships	30		
		C. Literature Review	30
		1. HIPs	30
		2. Critical Reflection	32
		3. Stakeholder Engagement	33
		4. Academic Benefits	34
		5. Personal and Social Development	34
		6. Career Preparation	35
		7. Practices Promoting Reflection	35
		8. Impact of Reflection on Learning Outcomes and Career Preparation	36
		D. <i>Reflect to Connect</i> Implementation Phases	37
		E. Professional Development	42
		V. Assessment Plan	43
		<hr/>	
		A. Assessment Measures for Goals and Outcomes	43
		B. Critical Reflection Rubric	47
		1. Developing a University-Wide Rubric to Assess Critical Reflection in HIPs	47
		2. Collaborative Process Across Colleges	47
		3. Testing the Rubric for Reliability	47
		4. The Four Key Elements of the Rubric	49
		5. Impact on Student Learning and Institutional Goals	50
		6. A Model for Future Initiatives	51
		C. Pre-Pilot Year Assessment	51
		1. Rubric Validation	51
		2. Assessment Results by Goal	52
		VI. Capacity and Budget	61
		<hr/>	
		VII. References	63
		<hr/>	
		VIII. Appendices	67
		<hr/>	
		A. Acronyms	67
		B. QEP-HIP Grant Proposal Evaluation Rubric	68

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of West Florida (UWF) is excited to launch its new Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) initiative, *Reflect to Connect*. This new QEP will allow UWF to continue its important and transformative work using high-impact practices (HIPs) within educational and co-curricular learning experiences with a new focus on critical reflection.

A thorough analysis of UWF's institutional mission, strategic plan, and priorities led to the selection of the integration of critical reflection into our HIPs. Strategic Direction 1.1 states that UWF will “provide high-impact educational and co-curricular learning experiences that inspire, engage, and prepare students to become knowledgeable citizens and successful in their careers and lives.”

Reflect to Connect has four major goals:

Goal 1: Enhance student learning through critical reflection in HIPs.

Goal 2: Enhance student engagement and success through HIPs that bridge classroom learning with relevant practical application in the field.

Goal 3: Provide faculty development and training on critical reflection integration within HIPs.

Goal 4: Enhance stakeholder/community perception of the value of HIP experiences through students' critical reflection.

UWF believes that this new institutional focus on critical reflection within HIPs will help students to make meaningful connections between the knowledge and skills they learn in the classroom and their future careers. To put it simply, we desire for our nursing students to think of themselves as future nurses and our engineering students to think of themselves as future engineers. UWF also believes this emphasis on critical reflection will help students to articulate what they have learned to future employers or graduate/professional schools.

Broad-based support for this QEP is evidenced through campus stakeholder participation on committees, town hall meetings, surveys, presentations and focus groups through the institutional planning and the topic selection processes. The University of West Florida is committed to this initiative and has the necessary infrastructure and resources in place to ensure successful implementation.



II. INTRODUCTION

A. UNIVERSITY MISSION, VALUES, AND STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2027

The University of West Florida (UWF) is located in the northwestern region of Florida and part of the State University System of Florida. Since its founding in 1963, UWF has awarded more than 121,000 degrees from more than 96 undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs.

UWF delivers a learner-focused university education that enables students from varied backgrounds to meet their career and life goals. UWF research and community partnerships advance the body of knowledge and enhance the prosperity of the region and the state.

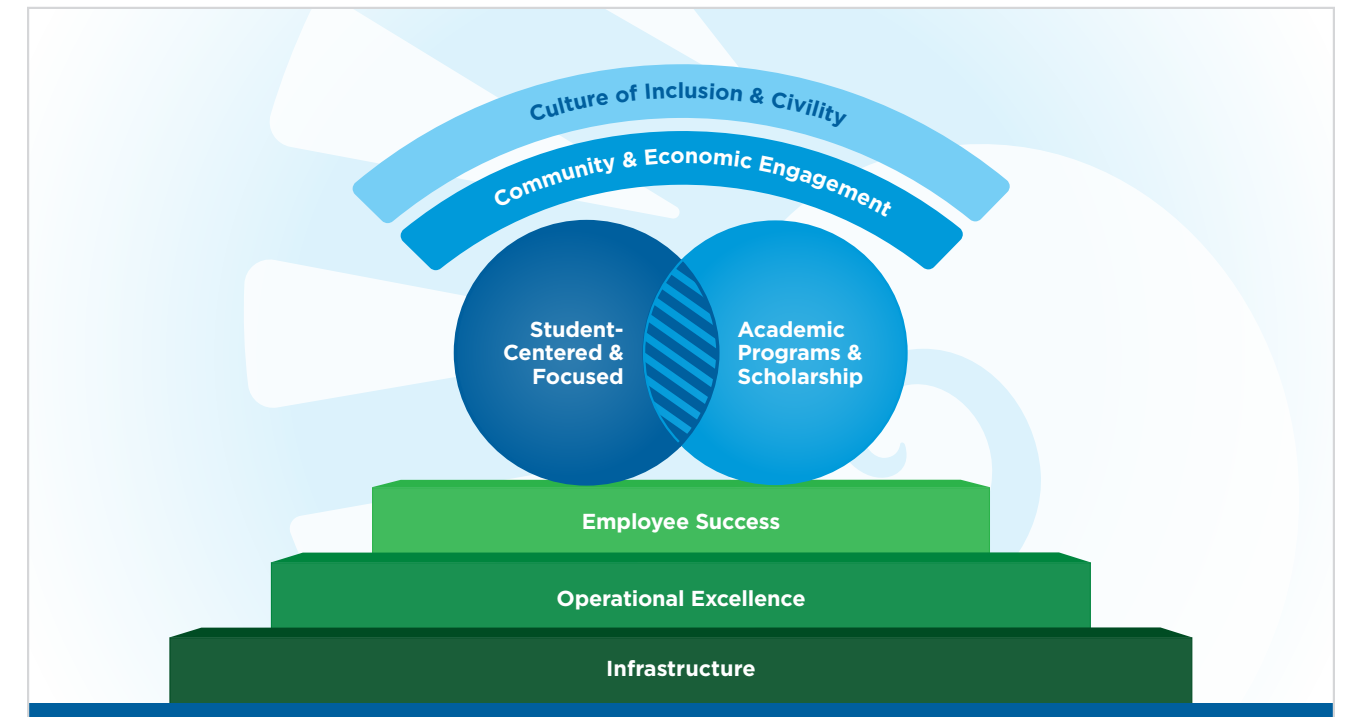
Guided by this mission statement, the President’s vision is “a fully engaged university recognized for the strength of our graduates, responsiveness to the needs of the state, and an unrelenting competitive spirit.”

The institutional values include integrity, innovation, caring, engaging, equity, and diversity. These values are affirmed through UWF’s commitment to operating with integrity in all matters. Our 2022-2027 Strategic Plan builds on the foundation of teaching, research, and service and includes seven strategic directions that highlight the priorities for continued growth and transformation. UWF prides itself on improving the quality of life of those in the region and the state by offering programs that respond to workforce needs.



The University Strategic Plan 2022-2027 has the support of effecting UWF’s mission and vision.

UWF 2022-2027 Strategic Plan



Each of these strategic directions supports mission success with particular strategic directions addressing student learning and success. The strategic directions of particular interest to UWF’s Quality Enhancement Plan, *Reflect to Connect*, are as follows:

- 1.1 Provide high-impact educational and co-curricular learning experiences that inspire, engage, and prepare students to become knowledgeable citizens and successful in their careers and lives.
- 1.3 Adequate physical and virtual learning support opportunities for earning degrees and related credentials, including post-graduation.
- 3.1 Ensure excellent academic programs in areas of strategic importance to the University, region, and state.
- 3.2 Enhanced student-faculty engagement.
- 4.1 Enhance the region’s educational opportunities, economic development, health, and environmental sustainability.

B. INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE

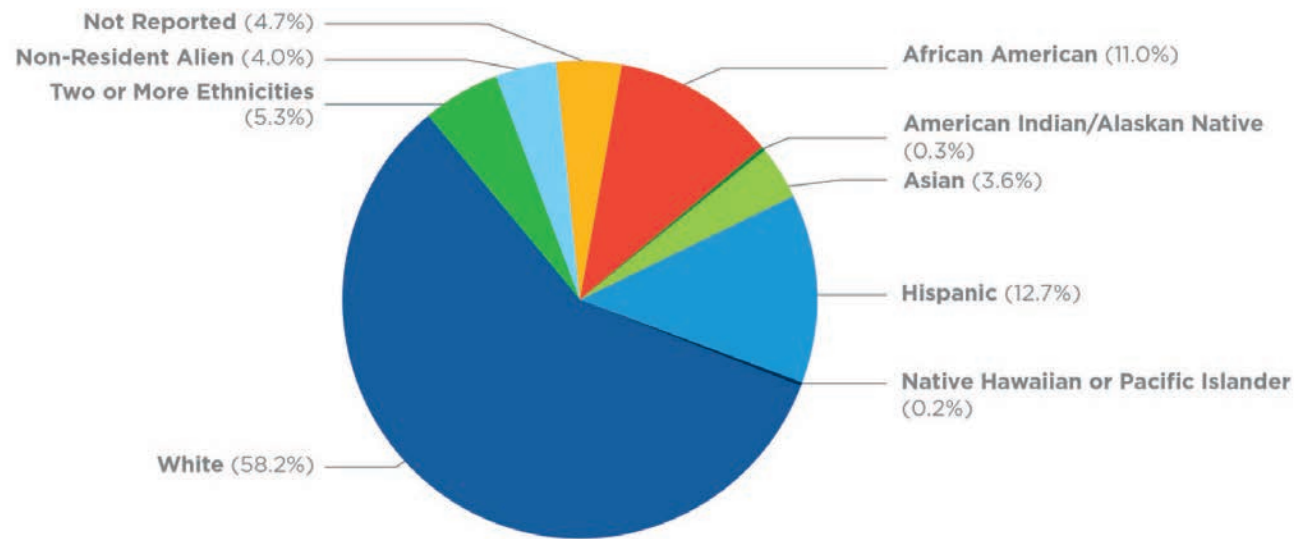
As of fall 2023, UWF has 14,343 students enrolled in its five academic colleges and schools: the College of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CASSH); the Lewis Bear Jr. College of Business (LBJCOB); the School of Education (SOE); the Usha Kundu, MD College of Health (UKCOH); and the Hal Marcus College of Science and Engineering (HMCSE). Within these academic colleges and schools are over 300 full-time faculty engaged in teaching students enrolled in 96 undergraduate and graduate degrees.

The University regularly examines the profile of its student body and is intentional in the development of academic support programs and services that address the identified needs of various subgroups. In the academic year 2023-2024, the University’s student body reflected a varied and diverse population. Of the 14,343 students enrolled in fall 2023, approximately 67% were undergraduate students and 33% were graduate students. Females comprised 60% of the student population. The average age of all students was 30 (undergraduate, 25; graduate, 34). The student body was composed of students from all 50 states and 79 countries. Sixty-eight percent (8,099 students) originated from the eight-county service area: Escambia (3,415), Santa Rosa (2,575), Okaloosa (1,481), Walton (254), Holmes (29), Washington(32), Bay (298), and Gulf (15).

UWF has a varied ethnic student population as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

Fall 2023 Enrollment Demographics by Race/Ethnicity



Additionally, UWF enrolled 141 international students with student visas (F-1 and J-1 classifications). The University’s International Affairs Office serves more than 537 international students from 79 countries in all immigration categories (immigrant and non-immigrant).

In fall 2023, 5.1% of the undergraduate student body of 9,646 were first in their families to attend college and 68% of all undergraduate students were enrolled full-time. The University enrolled 2,500 military-affiliated students at both the undergraduate level and graduate level, equating to 17.4% of the student body.

SAT scores (only critical reading and mathematics tests combined) for newly enrolled first-time-in-college (FTIC) students ranged from a 25th percentile of 1020 to a 75th percentile of 1230. Similarly, composite ACT scores for this cohort ranged from a 25th percentile of 20 to a 75th percentile of 27. The average high school GPA at the time of admission for newly enrolled FTICs was 3.7.



The University of West Florida is focused on student learning and student success. UWF demonstrates its commitment to these outcomes through initiatives that support progress on particular metrics used to measure student learning and student success.

C. UWF CULTURE OF HIPs

As UWF developed its previous QEP in 2014, *Communication for Professional Success*, the process was guided by research that demonstrated that students who participated in two or more HIPs showed improvement on important measures of student success. After the success of the previous QEP, HIPs were institutionalized at UWF and are considered part of the culture of the institution. This is evidenced by Strategic Direction 1.1 of the current Strategic Plan 2022-2027:

- 1.1 Provide high-impact educational and co-curricular learning experiences that inspire, engage, and prepare students to become knowledgeable citizens and successful in their careers and lives.

UWF is “all in” on HIPs and provides significant resources to support the development and implementation of HIPs with the belief that our graduates are enriched both personally and professionally with the experience and connections gained through HIPs. UWF encourages the implementation of the full-spectrum of HIPs as defined by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) in eleven categories: first-year seminars and experiences, common intellectual experiences, learning communities, research with faculty, writing-intensive courses, collaborative assignments & projects, diversity/global learning, ePortfolios, service- and community-based learning, internships, and capstone projects.

Based on the Strategic Plan 2022-2027, results of the 2015 QEP *Communication for Professional Success*, an evaluation of UWF’s strengths and weaknesses as well as data and input from faculty, staff, and students, UWF’s new QEP *Reflect to Connect* was developed. The goals and outcomes are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Institutional goals for *Reflect to Connect*

Goal Focus	Goal
Student Learning Outcomes Alignment	Goal 1: Enhance Student Learning through Critical Reflection in HIPs Outcome 1: Integrate critical reflection into HIPs to deepen student learning and development. SLO 1: Demonstrate recognition of their increased knowledge of the subject/discipline as a result of the high-impact practice. SLO 2: Demonstrate recognition of their increased skill in the subject/discipline as a result of the high-impact practice. SLO 3: Describe the personal impact of the high-impact practice. SLO 4: Describe the potential impact of the high-impact practice on their career success. Strategic Direction Alignment: 1.1, 1.3
Student Learning Outcomes Alignment	Goal 2: Enhance Student Engagement and Success through HIPs to bridge classroom learning with relevant practical application in the field. Outcome 2: Increase student participation in HIPs and assess their impact on learning outcomes, student success, and their understanding of how these activities relate to their future careers. Strategic Direction Alignment: 3.1, 3.2, 4.2
Faculty Development Outcomes Alignment	Goal 3: Provide Faculty Development and Training with Critical Reflection Integration within HIPs. Outcome 3: Equip faculty and staff with the knowledge and skills to design and facilitate HIPs while fostering the use of critical reflection as a teaching and assessment tool. Strategic Direction Alignment: 2.1, 3.2
Community Engagement Outcomes Alignment	Goal 4: Enhance Stakeholder/Community Perception of the value of HIP experiences through students’ critical reflection. Outcome 4: Stakeholders and community partners recognize the value of HIP experiences through student’s critical reflection activities. Stakeholders and community partners include UWF staff, local community members, college and program advisory committee members, parents and family of UWF students and graduates, and employers of UWF graduates. Strategic Direction Alignment: 3.1, 4.2

III. SELECTING THE QEP TOPIC

A. STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The University of West Florida (UWF) engages in ongoing, comprehensive, and integrated research-based planning and evaluation processes that focus on institutional quality and effectiveness and incorporates a systematic review of institutional goals and outcomes consistent with its mission. As part of this ongoing, comprehensive, and integrated research-based planning and evaluation process, the University regularly reviews the mission, vision, and values, and develops a five-year strategic plan. The strategic planning process involves constituents representing the breadth of the University community to review the results of the previous strategic plan and the University mission.

The mission statement serves as the foundation for all University activities and operations including but not limited to the strategic and master plan, policy development, budgeting and resource allocation, academic and student support programming and services, research activity, hiring and personnel evaluation, professional development activities, outreach and community engagement, fundraising, and University-wide institutional effectiveness and continuous improvement efforts.

As UWF began its strategic planning process in 2021, the institution reflected on our mission, vision, and values while reviewing where we have been and looking forward to the future with constituents across the University that included faculty, staff, students, alumni, and the broader campus community. UWF’s President appointed a Steering Committee to facilitate the systematic review and update of UWF’s Strategic Plan 2017-2022. The Steering Committee included representatives of each division of the University. The Steering Committee appointed additional UWF personnel to help with the organization of the process as well as to provide recommended text changes for the new plan. This group of appointed members was known as the Institutional Plan Feedback Group.

Table 2. Strategic Plan 2022-2027 Steering Committee

Name	Role/Unit
Robert Dugan	Special Assistant to the Provost - Academic Affairs
Cindy Gruwell	Assistant Librarian - University Libraries
Patti Spaniola	Director of Events - Academic Affairs
Allison Schwartz	Director of Undergraduate Research - Academic Affairs
Ed Ranelli	Director - College of Business
Alycia Greico	Coordinator - Intercollegiate Athletics
James Adams	Director of Business Services - Finance and Administration
Sherry Schneider	Faculty Senate President and Professor - Psychology Usha Kundu, MD College of Health
Sharon Jordan	Business Manager - Office of the President

Table 3. Strategic Plan 2022-2027 Institutional Plan Feedback Group

Name	Role/Unit
Mohamed Khabou	Professor - Hal Marcus College of Science and Engineering
Jason Crawford	Alum and Community member
Charlie Penrod	Professor - College of Education and Professional Studies
April Harvey	Human Resources
Sandra Thompson	Information Technology Services
Shayna Marcey	UWF Historic Trust
Dave Scott	Director of Athletics
Angela Bryan	Director of Institutional Effectiveness - Academic Affairs
Matt Schwartz	Professor and Assoc. Vice President of Research Administration and Engagement
Thomas Gilbar	Professor - Emerald Coast Campus

The Steering Committee provided updates to the University mission, vision, and values statements as well as related strategic priorities designed to align with and advance the articulated mission of the University. As part of the update and creation of the new Strategic Plan, the Steering Committee reviewed:

- literature regarding best and promising practices for mission statements in higher education;
- current and previous UWF mission statements;
- constitutional and statutory references regarding public higher education in Florida;
- the Board of Governors’ strategic plan for the State University System of Florida;
- related Board of Governors regulations;
- UWF annual Accountability Plans 2019, 2020, and 2021;
- Strategic Plan 2017-2022;
- Campus Master Plan 2021-2031;
- Strategic Enrollment Plan 2018-2022;
- guidance from the UWF Board of Trustees;
- results of surveys of UWF students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, board members, consultants, and community partners;
- feedback from stakeholder meetings conducted during September and October 2021; and
- feedback on the mission, vision, values, and strategic plan drafts from members of the Institutional Plan Feedback Group.

These efforts yielded Strategic Plan 2022-2027 which builds on UWF’s past success and outlines the University’s priorities moving forward. UWF’s commitment to HIPs for students is demonstrated through Strategic Direction 1.1: “Provide high-impact educational and co-curricular learning experiences that inspire, engage, and prepare students to become knowledgeable citizens and successful in their careers and lives.”

B. QEP TOPIC SELECTION PROCESS

When UWF began preparing for reaffirmation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) in 2022, the question again arose as to how we might build on past successes with HIPs with an eye toward the future. A core component of reaffirmation is the development of a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) which focuses institutional efforts on improving student learning and/or student success.

UWF’s previous QEP, *Communication for Professional Success*, focused our institution on the integration of HIPs throughout our educational and co-curricular learning experiences. The success of our last QEP is evidenced by the institutionalization of HIPs as part of our UWF culture. UWF’s commitment to HIPs for students is demonstrated through our selection of HIPs as UWF’s metric of choice for our Annual Accountability Plan and through Strategic Direction 1.1.



The QEP - HIP Oversight committee, comprised of faculty from each of the academic colleges and School of Education as well as staff representing various co-curricular units, met several times to discuss further ideas as to how UWF might continue the important impactful work of HIPs as part of a new Quality Enhancement Plan. Table 4 describes the membership of the QEP-HIP Oversight Committee.

Table 4. QEP-HIP Oversight Committee

Name	Role/Unit
Andi Nelson	Clinical Asst. Professor and HIP Liaison - Usha Kundu, MD College of Health
Kwame Owusu-Daaku	Assoc. Professor and HIP Liaison - Hal Marcus College of Science and Engineering
Bre Garrett	Assoc. Professor and HIP Liaison - College of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities
Holley Handley	Asst. Professor, QEP Director, and HIP Liaison - School of Education
Gerald Burch	Asst. Professor and HIP Liaison - Lewis Bear Jr. College of Business
Allison Schwartz	Director of Undergraduate Research
Rachel Hendrix	Director of International Affairs
Jenae Burkhart	Assoc. Director of Faculty Development - Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology
Jocelyn Evans	Professor and Director of Kugelman Honors Program
Angela Bryan	Director of Institutional Effectiveness, Ex-Officio
Carolyn Beamer	Assoc. Dir. of Institutional Effectiveness, Ex-Officio
Lindsey Walk	Director of Career Development and Community Engagement

The QEP-HIP Oversight Committee reviewed relevant data and information from various sources as part of the search for a new QEP topic. The information reviewed included the results of *Communication for Professional Success*, UWF’s National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) 2022 responses, and literature published by UWF faculty engaged in HIPs, and faculty feedback on HIPs at UWF. The following sections summarize data and information reviewed as part of the QEP topic selection process.

1 | Results of Communication for Professional Success

In 2015, UWF launched *Communication for Professional Success*, a Quality Enhancement Plan with a purpose of enhancing undergraduate students’ professional communication skills using HIPs. The University identified four objectives and four expected outcomes:

Objective 1: Students will improve their written and oral communication skills.

Expected outcome: At least 75% of students who participate in HIPs will meet or exceed each of the indicators of student learning on both standardized rubrics for written and oral communication.

Objective 2: Student perception of their communication skills will improve over time.

Expected outcome: Students’ perception of their communication skills will improve over time through participation in HIPs and other communication-focused activities.

Objective 3: Employer perception of UWF students’ communication skills will improve over time.

Expected outcome: Employers’ perception of the communication skills of UWF students will improve over time through employer-student interactions.

Objective 4: Students and departments will increase their engagement in HIPs.

Expected outcome: An increasing percentage of students will engage in HIPs. Relevant academic co-curricular, and student affairs departments will propose QEP projects that offer HIPs as part of the curriculum or experience.

UWF reported its success with these objectives and outcomes in the QEP Impact Report published in 2021.

For Objective 1, UWF used written and oral communication rubrics adapted from AAC&U to directly assess students’ written and oral communication skills. Table 5 reflects student performance on written communication and Table 6 reflects student performance on oral communication.



Table 5. Student Performance on Written Communication Rubric Indicators by Year

Short Name of Rubric Indicators	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Goal: >75%
W1. Sources	78.8	72.5	77.1	79	79.6	Met
W2. Spelling	40.5	76.7	78	87	89.9	Met
W3. Grammar	73.6	68.6	62	74	81.4	Met
W4. Audience	74.2	74.3	80.1	88	83.5	Met
W5. Language	78.5	76.9	76.6	78.2	89	Met
W6. Conclusion	68.4	67.1	82.6	89.1	77.7	Met
W7. Professional Polish	69.3	76.6	89	91	92.6	Met
Sample Size	N=310	N=859	N=598	N=758	N=766	

Table 6. Student Performance on Oral Communication Rubric Indicators by Year

Short Name of Rubric Indicators	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Goal: >75%
O1. Sources	100	84.8	87.8	88.9	95	Met
O2. Pronunciation	98.5	91.1	93	95.4	95.4	Met
O3. Grammar	98.4	83.6	85.5	94.8	96.5	Met
O4. Audience	97.8	91.9	92.5	95.9	94.6	Met
O5. Language	100	88	88.9	98.4	97	Met
O6. Conclusion	96.7	86.7	83.5	92.3	91.5	Met
O7. Professional Polish	99.1	84.6	78.9	89	84.2	Met
Sample Size	N=421	N=1039	N=812	N=764	N=846	

UWF measured improvement in students’ written communication and oral communication skills with students participating in HIPs meeting or exceeding each of the rubric indicators at greater than 75% by the end of the QEP.

For Objective 2, UWF used two NSSE indicators to measure improvement in student perception of their communication skills. UWF administered the NSSE at three points during the implementation of the

QEP in the Pilot Year, Mid-Point, and Final Year. Among seniors surveyed at these points, UWF saw gains in student perception of improvement of both written and oral communication skills. Table 7 describes the results of the NSSE indicators of student perception of communication skills during implementation of the previous QEP.

Table 7. NSSE indicators of student perception of communication skills

NSSE Indicator	Pilot Year Responses			Mid-Point Responses			Final Year Responses			Change Final Year over Baseline Year	Improvement Goal:
	Seniors Responding	N	%	Seniors Responding	N	%	Seniors Responding	N	%		
18. How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?											
a. Writing clearly and effectively	Often, very often	242	72.5	Often, very often	417	76.0	Often, very often	1193	76.0	3.5	Met
	Total	334		Total	549		Total	1570			
b. Speaking clearly and effectively	Often, very often	212	63.7	Often, very often	369	67.1	Often, very often	1101	70.1	6.5	Met
	Total	333		Total	550		Total	1501			

As depicted in Table 7, student perception of their improvement in communication skills increased for seniors surveyed between the pilot year and the final year of the QEP. Students’ perception of improvement in writing clearly and effectively increased by 3.5%. Also, students’ perception of improvement in speaking clearly and effectively increased by 6.5%.

For Objective 3, employer perception of UWF students’ communication skills will improve, the University experienced mixed results. For this objective, UWF surveyed employers participating in UWF Career Fairs and asked them to report their perceptions of students’ communication skills. Table 8 depicts the results of the employer survey for years 2-5.

Table 8. Average employer participant ratings of students’ communication skills years 2-5

UWF Career Fair Data	Year 2 2016-17	Year 3 2017-18	Year 4 2018-19	Year 5 2019-20	Met/ Not Met
Employer rating of students’ oral communication skills <i>(1=Unsatisfactory, 5=Extremely Proficient)</i>	--	2.71	3.47	2.27	Not Met
Employer rating of students’ self-confidence based on their oral communication skills <i>(1=Not at all, 5=Extremely confident)</i>	3.96	3.86	3.51	2.78	Not Met
Students’ self-confidence rating of their oral communication skills <i>(1=Not at all, 5=Extremely confident)</i>	3.76	4.05	4.08	4.23	Met
Gap: Employer – Student Rating	+0.20	-0.19	-1.65	-1.47	Not Met

As described in Table 8, UWF only saw gains with one of the three indicators of employer perception of students' education skills. While it should be noted that the final semester of the QEP (spring 2020) had some identifiable impacts due to the novel and innovative nature of the Career Fairs moving to a virtual platform from a face-to-face platform due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this does not explain the overall findings for this measure of Goal 3.

For Objective 4, students and departments will increase their engagement in HIPs, UWF measured student participation in HIPs through student enrollment data in courses with a HIP attribute. UWF used the AAC&U definition of HIPs which includes first-year seminars and experiences, common intellectual experiences, learning communities, research with faculty, writing-intensive courses, collaborative assignments & projects, diversity/global learning, ePortfolios, service- and community-based learning, internships, and capstone projects. Students were counted for each unique HIP that they were enrolled in. For example, a student may be enrolled in two different courses that implemented HIPs through an ePortfolio, however, the two ePortfolio classes would only count as one HIP type. For that same student to be counted as completing two or more HIPs, they would need to complete a course using one of the other HIP types in addition to the ePortfolio courses. Table 9 describes the percentage of baccalaureate graduates completing two or more unique HIPs.

Table 9. Percent of baccalaureate graduates completing two or more unique HIPs.

	Year 1 (2015-2016)	Year 2 (2016-2017)	Year 3 (2017-2018)	Year 4 (2018-2019)	Year 5 (2019-2020)
Percent of Baccalaureate Graduates Completing Two or more HIPs	22.1	31.2	34.8	38.2	43.0

As depicted in Table 9, the percentage of graduates completing two or more HIPs as part of their UWF educational experience increased annually from 22.1% in year one to 43.0% in year five. This is indicative of both an increase in student participation in offering as well as departments increasing the offering of HIPs within both the curricular and co-curricular experience at UWF.



2 | Results of the NSSE HIP Quality Module

Along with the results of Communication for Professional Success, the committee also reviewed additional data points to include NSSE results and research by UWF professors on student barriers to HIPs.

UWF currently administers the National Survey of Student Engagement on a two-year cycle, with the most recent administration in 2022. QEP-HIP Oversight Committee members looked at responses for seniors surveyed for their opinion of how their participation in HIPs contributed to their knowledge, skills, and personal development. Table 10 describes their responses by HIP type.

Table 10. NSSE 2022 Responses for Seniors to #15 in the HIP Quality module

To what extent has this experience contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?													
		Service Learning		Learning Community		Research w/faculty		Internship/Field Exp.		Study Abroad		Culminating Senior Exp.	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
a. Understanding concepts in your courses or major	Very little or some	28	19	5	23	6	11	39	20	2	29	22	15
	Quite a bit or very much	122	81	17	77	49	89	157	80	5	71	123	85
	Total	150		22		55		196		7		145	
c. Applying theory to practice	Very little or some	29	24	3	13	10	18	31	17	1	14	26	18
	Quite a bit or very much	91	76	20	87	45	82	152	83	6	86	119	82
	Total	120		23		55		183		7		145	
d. Solving complex, real-world problems	Very little or some	32	21	2	9	17	31	40	22	1	14	46	32
	Quite a bit or very much	117	79	21	91	38	69	144	78	6	86	98	68
	Total	149		23		55		184		7		144	
e. Acquiring job- or work- related skills	Very little or some	36	24	5	23	14	25	15	8	1	14	41	28
	Quite a bit or very much	114	76	17	77	41	75	168	92	6	86	104	72
	Total	150		22		55		183		7		145	
f. Preparing for your plans after graduation	Very little or some	43	29	6	27	15	27	26	14	1	14	49	34
	Quite a bit or very much	107	71	16	73	40	73	158	86	6	86	95	66
	Total	150		22		55		184		7		144	

90 and above - Achieving Goals
 80 to 89 - Making Progress
 below 80 - Opportunity for Growth

As shown in Table 10, UWF was at more than 90% for two indicators:

- 91% of seniors indicated that participation in a learning community helped them learn to solve complex, real-world problems; and
- 92% of seniors indicated that participation in an internship/ field experience helped them to acquire job- or work-related skills.

Also as described in Table 10, UWF was below 80% for fifteen indicators, with three indicators below 70%:

- 31% of seniors did not indicate that participation in research with faculty helped them to learn to solve complex, real-world problems;
- 32% of seniors did not indicate that participation in a culminating senior experience helped them to solve complex, real-world problems; and
- 34% of seniors did not indicate that participation in a culminating senior experience helped them to prepare their plans for after graduation.

Discussion of these results led to questions from the QEP-HIP Oversight Committee about the efficacy of HIPs for students—specifically, were students getting out of the high-impact experience all that they could? Many committee members surmised that while the institution had a focus on increasing HIP student engagement and providing a sufficient array of HIP opportunities for students, more could be done to maximize the experience for students.



3 | HIP Barriers Study

Two UWF faculty members initiated an investigation into the factors inhibiting student participation in High-Impact Practice (HIP) opportunities and the barriers students encounter in engaging with these experiences. The initial phase of the study was conducted by facilitating focus groups with students. Twelve focus groups were conducted over a 3 week period. A total of 46 students participated in these focus groups. The data gathered from these focus groups informed the development of a mixed-methods study and provided student perspectives to refine the selection of the QEP topic.

Schantz and Handley (in press) examined HIP engagement utilizing three approaches: comparing 2022 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data, analyzing engagement across institutional units, and gathering student perspectives on HIPs. Student participants were recruited from all college years (freshman through graduate level) to evaluate engagement with HIPs at all stages of the college experience. Students were invited to access an online survey and provided with an informed consent form/document that outlined the study's purpose. Data were collected from March 15 to June 30 from a total of 561 participants. Unlike the NSSE, which provides estimates of how undergraduates spend their time and what they gain from attending college, the HIPs engagement survey was designed to identify barriers to student participation at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Time emerged as the primary barrier to participation, with numerous students citing scheduling conflicts or time constraints. Financial concerns were also prevalent, as some students expressed apprehension regarding the costs associated with engaging in HIPs. Work commitments emerged as another significant obstacle, with job responsibilities impeding participation. Additionally, personal responsibilities, such as family commitments, were identified as barriers to involvement in HIP activities.

The study aimed to explore students' subjective experiences with HIPs and identify barriers that may be problematic for students. The open-response questions were designed to investigate students' perceptions and experiences with HIPs by inquiring about several key areas.

Upon examination of the open-ended responses from these focus groups and the barrier study data, several quotes demonstrated the value of reflecting on their experiences and how this reflection could benefit other students and facilitate connections to future careers. The ability to perceive the value and relationship to future careers would constitute one approach to addressing the time barrier identified as the primary impediment to participating in the activities. A few student quotes:

“Provide examples of prior interns' experiences and their testimony on how the course has assisted in improving their professional development.”

“Provide examples of intern application videos, have interns talk about their experiences once the internship is over, provide more knowledge about the internships as well as the Capstone course, advertise through social media and professor endorsement, and keep the bi-weekly meetup schedule to allow for students to build bonds with the other interns as well as sharing their experiences with one another.”

“HIPs are what made me fall in love with my major and allow me to see a future career a lot easier”

“I enjoy participating because I feel like I'm further gaining knowledge in my field.”

The information collected during these studies proved instrumental in obtaining student perspectives, ensuring their voices were meaningfully represented in the selection of the QEP topic. This approach provided student input for the decision-making process by incorporating diverse viewpoints and experiences, ultimately aligning the QEP topic with the needs and priorities of the student body.



4 | Faculty Feedback on HIPs at UWF

The QEP-HIP Committee also decided it would be useful to collect more input from faculty regarding their experience with HIPs. In 2022, UWF had approximately 346 full-time faculty among the five academic colleges. It was decided that each HIP Liaison would share a presentation with college faculty on HIPs and Communication for Professional Success and gather responses to the following questions:

1. What were the strengths of the last QEP?
2. What are some opportunities for student learning and student success that are related to HIPs?
3. What are some barriers to addressing these opportunities?

HIP Liaisons for each college used a variety of methods to obtain faculty feedback. Some liaisons met individually with the academic departments in their colleges and made a short presentation, asked the questions, and collected the responses. Other liaisons met first with chairs in their colleges, made the presentation, and asked each chair to make similar presentations to their departmental faculty and record their responses and return to the liaison. The liaisons then submitted the summary of their college's faculty feedback to the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and the Asst. Vice President for Strategic Initiatives and Assessment for the Division of Academic Engagement and Student Affairs. Faculty feedback from each of the five academic colleges was gathered and compiled for each of these questions and described in the following passages.

a) Strengths of HIPs at UWF

One of the most notable strengths was the reported improvement in students' written communication skills in some departments. The decentralized structure of the QEP allowed departments the flexibility to create writing-intensive courses or include writing requirements in their degree programs. The QEP bridged academic learning and workforce preparedness, increasing students' awareness of essential soft skills. Faculty development was also a key focus, as the QEP standardized the language for HIPs across UWF and provided faculty with the resources to implement HIPs in their courses. The liaison model was credited as being especially effective, providing faculty with an accessible point of contact for assistance and professional development.

b) Lasting Impacts of HIPs on UWF

Faculty identified more intentional integration of iterative writing assignments throughout the University and across disciplines. Due to integration of writing and capstone courses and projects in many programs, program faculty are better able to measure improvement in students' written communication skills from cornerstone to capstone. The liaison model for HIP support within colleges also gives faculty an identifiable “go-to” person that can assist them with resources and support for HIPs. Many faculty also expressed the sentiment that HIPs are integrated into the culture of UWF through support of continued HIP development beyond the conclusion of the last QEP and ongoing and continued professional development on HIPs.

c) Opportunities for Maintaining and Enhancing HIPs at UWF

Faculty identified several opportunities for maintaining and enhancing HIPs at UWF. They noted a need for improved assessment methods for existing HIPs, such as rubrics. Faculty support could be



strengthened by utilizing undergraduate and graduate teaching assistants, coordinating efforts between centers on campus, and disseminating best practices across colleges.

Faculty identified support for student travel to research conferences, professional meetings, and study abroad.

Faculty acknowledged that ePortfolios were an area of interest but that both faculty and students would need more technology support for this type of HIP focus. While faculty had support through the Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology, students needed support and it was suggested that UWF increase student-driven support for technology like video editing and Portfolium.

Faculty also proposed using student success stories to showcase the positive impact of HIPs to prospective students. However, they shared that there can be clearer and more consistent communication to faculty about the ease of incorporating HIPs into their courses and the resources that are available to do so.

Faculty also expressed the need for more guidance on how to engage students in the thinking and practice of the discipline described as reflective activities. Some faculty expressed concern that while students might be enthusiastic about a particular high-impact experience such as study abroad or e-portfolios,

students were not always able to articulate how the experience might help them toward their more long-term goals.

These results were further discussed by the HIP Committee. The HIP Oversight Committee concluded the following:

- HIPs were part of the culture of UWF and faculty believe strongly in the value of educating UWF students through HIPs.
- While faculty saw students develop a deeper understanding of their discipline and students were enthusiastic about the HIP experience, students were not always able to articulate a connection between the disciplinary knowledge applied in the HIP and/or further how the HIP experience was preparing them for their next step.

5 | QEP Topic Selection

Over a series of meetings in 2022 and 2023, the QEP-HIP Oversight Committee discussed the implications of the data analysis. The Oversight Committee was encouraged to hear that faculty were enthusiastic about continuing UWF's important work with HIPs. Recurring themes and topics from faculty feedback included several possibilities for a new focus for HIPs that included experiential learning, communication through technology, communication across disciplines, student research, ePortfolios, and critical reflection.

However, the QEP-HIP Oversight Committee found the broad faculty observations that students were not able to articulate a connection between the disciplinary knowledge applied in the HIP and/or further how the HIP experience was preparing them for their next step as generally concerning. Combined with other data discussed at previous meetings, the idea of integrating critical reflection into UWF's HIPs became a topic of conversation. It was noted when creating the UWF HIP type taxonomies, all HIP type subcommittees chose reflection as an essential HIP element without prompting.

At one of these meetings in fall 2023, various committee members shared their recent study of integration of critical reflection into HIPs. The literature seemed to indicate a direct correlation when reflective activities are integrated strategically within the high-impact practice and encourage students connecting the HIP with the application of disciplinary knowledge learned in the classroom or co-curricular experience with the HIP and how this would help them in the future, either personally or professionally.

It was also acknowledged that while the University had been intentional to ensure that students were getting opportunities for high-impact learning experiences within their educational experience at UWF, as an institution we had not been as intentional to ensure that students were making the necessary connections to get the most of their high-impact experience.

After the analysis of the data points, the committee decided to continue UWF's important work with HIPs with a focus on critical reflection. **Reflect to Connect**, UWF's new QEP, will continue to integrate HIPs into students' educational and co-curricular learning experiences with new focus on critical reflection. This institutional focus on critical reflection is designed to utilize HIPs to help students make meaningful connections between the knowledge and skills they learn in the classroom and their future careers. With critical reflection identified as a HIP meta-essential and incorporated into the taxonomy of each HIP, faculty and co-curricular leaders will have the flexibility to utilize the type of high-impact practice that best fits their curriculum goals while adding reflective activities to the pedagogy.

C. ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2027

UWF's new QEP, *Reflect to Connect*, directly aligns with Strategic Direction 1.1:

Provide high-impact educational and co-curricular learning experiences that inspire, engage, and prepare students to become knowledgeable citizens and successful in their careers and lives.

Reflect to Connect is focused on critical reflection across HIPs. UWF believes that a focus on critical reflection will empower students to make connections between varied learning experiences and real-world applications. Through reflective activities integrated into HIPs, students will develop essential skills in connecting classroom learning to real-world situations and applying their knowledge to practical contexts.

IV. REFLECT TO CONNECT

Reflect to Connect, UWF's new QEP, will continue to integrate HIPs into students' educational and co-curricular learning experiences with new focus on critical reflection. This institutional focus on critical reflection is designed to utilize HIPs to help students make meaningful connections between the knowledge and skills they learn in the classroom and their future careers. UWF also believes this emphasis on critical reflection will help students to articulate what they have learned to future employers or graduate/professional schools.



As students are receiving their education with UWF, they will begin to think of themselves as future nurses and future engineers rather than nursing students and engineering students. UWF is excited for this next phase of high-impact practice learning experiences for our students and is confident for the future of student learning and student success at our institution.

A. DEFINITION OF CRITICAL REFLECTION

UWF defines critical reflection as “a reasoning process to make meaning of an experience. Critical reflection is descriptive, analytical, iterative, and ongoing. Reflection can be articulated in a number of ways such as in written form, orally, or as an artistic expression. In short, this process adds depth and breadth to HIPs, and builds connections between course content, the experience, and the student's professional goals.” (adapted from the University of Tennessee Chattanooga)

B. HIP INFRASTRUCTURE

A key factor in the adoption of critical reflection as a next iteration of high-impact practice at UWF was not only the realization of HIPs as a part of UWF culture but also the recognition that UWF was well-positioned to continue to support the integration of critical reflection into HIPs through a fine-tuned HIP infrastructure. The HIP infrastructure includes a liaison model, the HIP Oversight Committee, a development grant proposal and award process, and HIP faculty resources.

1 | HIP Liaison Model

UWF has a HIP Liaison in each of the four academic colleges and School of Education as well as representation within each of the co-curricular units such the Offices of Undergraduate Research, International Affairs, and Career Development and Community Engagement. In the fall of 2019, the Dean of the Usha Kundu, MD College of Health (UKCOH) created a HIP Fellowship position to assist with the promotion and development of HIPs throughout the college. This HIP fellow also was to become engaged in any HIP-related activities on campus. The HIP fellow joined such groups as the university-wide HIP Steering Committee and several other HIP subcommittees. The title of HIP Fellow was changed to HIP Liaison and adopted by UWF to carry on these duties within each academic college and co-curricular unit.

The HIP Liaison shares with the HIP Oversight Committee the work being done at the college level such as creation of a HIP Toolkit, a HIP book club, and a monthly HIP newsletter. HIP Liaisons are responsible for promoting HIPs, mentoring and assisting faculty with preparing QEP/HIP Grant applications, reviewing QEP/HIP grants, assisting with faculty preparation and submission of HIP Course Designation applications, leading professional development activities for HIPs at the university, judging the HIP faculty showcase at our annual student scholar symposium and any other HIP related activity that needed college representation or assistance.

2 | HIP Oversight Committee

The HIP Oversight Committee (now referred to as the QEP-HIP Oversight Committee) is comprised of a liaison for each academic college, SOE, and co-curricular units such as Undergraduate Research and International Affairs. This committee oversees the HIP Development Grant Approval Process, the HIP Course Designation Vetting Process, the development and promotion of faculty development activities related to HIPs and now HIPS with critical reflection, management of the HIP Faculty Toolkit, and development of HIP taxonomies, and the HIP Faculty Showcase. The HIP Oversight Committee releases a call for proposals for HIP Development Grants in the fall semester. The Committee then reviews the proposals and makes decisions on funding in the spring. The Committee also oversees the HIP Course Vetting process.

3 | QEP-HIP Grant Review Process

One of the key roles of a HIP Liaison is mentorship of faculty. Faculty can reach out to the liaison throughout the semester regarding how to implement HIPs and what campus resources are available for them to implement HIPs in their courses/activities for their students. Sometimes a faculty member may want to brainstorm possible HIP project ideas with the HIP Liaison. Many of these meetings result in potential HIP projects for the annual QEP-HIP Grant application process that opens in late fall and ends in early spring. The faculty who receive the QEP-HIP Grants in the spring will receive their funds the following fall for implementation in that academic year. HIP Liaisons guide their faculty during the QEP-HIP grant application process from the initial idea to their finished grant application. This support has increased the number of faculty engaged in HIPs across campus, thus making the implementation of HIPs easier and more enjoyable for the faculty while meeting the needs of our university's metrics.

The University of West Florida has been offering yearly HIP development grants for faculty members of all colleges and HIP-related staff since the implementation of the previous QEP in 2015. After the previous QEP officially "concluded", the University continued to offer HIP development grants to faculty and co-curricular leaders to ensure this important work continued. The HIP Oversight Committee designed a comprehensive rubric that is used to evaluate HIP Grant Proposals.

4 | HIP Toolkit

The HIP Toolkit was initially developed in the UKCOH but was later merged with another similar toolkit on campus to form the UWF Faculty HIP Toolkit. This toolkit houses a large repository of general and specific HIP information. There are multiple modules containing information regarding all 11 HIP types. The HIP Toolkit also contains UWF resources for implementing HIPs such as various centers on campus that assist faculty such as the UWF Library and the Center for Teaching Learning and Technology. There are also pages under each HIP type that feature links to eBooks regarding HIPs. The HIP Toolkit also houses videos from online HIP conferences held during the pandemic and recorded faculty professional development sessions that have occurred at UWF. Several of the liaisons also hosted a HIP book club, and those recorded sessions are also held in the HIP Toolkit. The HIP Toolkit has become a widely used campus resource that has over 350 faculty and staff enrolled from almost every department.

5 | HIP Type Subcommittees

Within the HIP Toolkit, each HIP type has a designated page that includes the UWF definition of that HIP type, student learning outcomes (SLOs), and an associated taxonomy. These definitions, SLOs, and taxonomies were created by specially formed HIP type subcommittees made up of faculty and staff across campus over a four-year period. Faculty can use these HIP type pages when deciding if their project is a HIP or if they want to create a project that is that certain HIP type.

6 | HIP Course Designation and Vetting

With the success of the HIP Grant process, the HIP Oversight Committee (formerly known as the HIP Steering Committee), decided to formalize a program to designate courses as officially having HIPs that meet the criteria determined for that HIP type based on the UWF HIP definition, SLOs, and taxonomy. The HIP Liaisons recommended faculty and staff who were considered knowledgeable of a HIP type to become three-year members of HIP Designation/Vetting Committees for that HIP type. Faculty and staff submit applications for Course Designation/Vetting in early fall each year. They are encouraged to use the HIP Toolkit and meet with their Liaison as needed to make sure they meet the criteria for submission. The HIP Designation/Vetting Committees meet mid-fall and render their decisions before the end of the fall semester. Those that receive the designation are given digital badges to add to their course material

based on their corresponding HIP type. These HIP designations are good for three years. After three years, those faculty/staff members are required to apply for a course HIP re-designation.

7 | HIP Faculty Showcase

Each spring, the Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) hosts the UWF Student Scholars Symposium. To showcase the wonderful HIP projects UWF faculty implement on campus, the HIP Oversight Committee partners with OUR to host a HIP Faculty Showcase. Faculty are encouraged to present their HIP projects in live or poster sessions. Students, faculty, staff, and community members have the chance to see the amazing HIP experiences UWF students are participating in during that academic year. An overall winner is selected along with winners for each HIP type. These sessions continue to inspire other faculty and staff to incorporate HIPs into their courses and activities.



8 | HIP Scholarships

As discovered during the topic development process, many UWF students identified barriers to engaging in particular HIPs. One of the barriers students consistently identified were financial concerns associated with the cost of engaging in HIPs such as unpaid internships, study abroad, undergraduate research, and capstone projects. UWF is offering two scholarships, the Argos Community Impact Scholarship and the HIPs Scholarship. Students may apply for scholarships for financial assistance related to their engagement in HIPs to help defray the expenses related to these activities ranging from project supplies to transportation costs. UWF believes that mitigating student barriers to HIPs will increase their engagement and lead to increased student success outcomes.

C. LITERATURE REVIEW

1 | HIPs

HIPs are evidence-based educational interventions designed to enhance student success. The QEP Development Team adopted George Kuh’s (2008) definition and related criteria for HIPs:

High-impact learning happens when students are actively engaged in the educational process; when their learning goes beyond the classroom to be applied in their personal and work lives. Students engaged in high-impact learning often see improvement in grade point averages, get their degrees more quickly, and are more engaged in their education.

A key distinction between HIPs and traditional college experiences is their increased emphasis on student engagement (Evans et al, 2024). The foundation of HIPs lies in the core principles of effective educational practices: consistent faculty-student interaction, productive peer collaborations, engagement with diverse perspectives, active participation in co-curricular activities, and overall student satisfaction (Kuh, Kinzie, et al., 2006). Key features that collectively ensure these practices lead to deep learning and personal development are central to their effectiveness. Specifically, Kuh (2008) contends that an effective high-impact practice embodies the following characteristics:

1. Is effortful and demands that students devote time and effort to purposeful tasks;
2. Facilitates an environment in which students form substantive relationships and interactions with faculty and peers about substantive matters;
3. Engages students across differences to foster new ways of thinking and responding to circumstances;
4. Provides students with rich and frequent feedback;
5. Challenges students to apply and test knowledge and skills in new situations and settings; and
6. Provides students opportunities to reflect on the person they are becoming and consider their perspective, values, and beliefs.

Kinzie et al. (2021) identified two additional qualities that define quality high-impact practice: “making a difference for others” and “agency and accomplishment.”

These qualities ensure that students are not only challenged academically but also supported in their

development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and metacognitive skills. The combination of these features—intensive interaction, personalized learning, and continuous support—makes HIPs highly effective in facilitating both academic and personal growth (Evans et al., 2024; Kuh, 2008).

HIPs emerged in the early 2000s when educators and researchers began to recognize the need for more engaged and experiential learning in higher education. Kuh first used the term “high-impact practices” in the 2006 NSSE annual report, which marked the beginning of a more focused effort to identify and promote educational practices that significantly enhance student learning and engagement. The term quickly gained traction, with the 2007 NSSE annual report further expanding on the evidence supporting HIPs and linking them to improved student learning and persistence. The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) also played a crucial role in promoting HIPs as part of its Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) initiative, which sought to improve educational outcomes across diverse student populations (Kuh, 2008). These efforts culminated in the formal recognition of 10 HIPs; at Kuh’s recommendation, an eleventh HIP type – ePortfolios – was introduced in 2017 (Table 11) (Kuh, O’Donnell, & Schneider, 2017). Subsequent research has continued to build on these findings, emphasizing the importance of equitable implementation of HIPs to ensure all students benefit (Cicchino et al., 2024; Museus & LePeau, 2023; Zilvinskis et al., 2023).

Table 11: Types of HIPs (Kuh, 2008; Kuh, O’Donnell, & Schneider, 2017)

Type	Description
Capstone Project Courses	These culminating experiences require students nearing the end of their college years to create a project that integrates, synthesizes, and applies knowledge and skills learned in the classroom. The project might be a research paper, a performance, a portfolio of “best work,” or an exhibit of artwork.
Collaborative Assignments and Projects	Collaborative learning combines two key goals: (1) learning to work and solve problems in the company of others and (2) sharpening one’s own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences. Approaches range from study groups within a course, to team-based assignments and writing, to cooperative projects and research.
Common Intellectual Experiences	Experiences shared by students, faculty, and staff with the intent to bring a measure of intellectual coherence to the undergraduate experience. This category includes required common courses or participation in a learning community. Programs often combine broad themes—e.g., technology and society, global interdependence—with curricular and co-curricular options.
Diversity and Global Learning	These courses and programs help students explore cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own. Intercultural studies are often augmented by experiential learning in the community and by study abroad.
ePortfolios	ePortfolios are portable, expandable, updatable vehicles for accumulating and presenting evidence of authentic student accomplishment. They require meaningful student reflection and deepen learning while making achievement visible - to students themselves, to their peers and faculty, and to external audiences.

First-Year Seminars and Experiences	These programs emphasize critical inquiry, writing, information and media literacy, collaborative learning, and other skills that develop students' intellectual and practical competencies
Internships and Field Experiences	Internships provide students with direct experiences in work settings— most often related to their career interests—and give them the benefit of supervision and coaching from professionals in the field. Reflective exercises that prompt the students to make deliberate connections between the theoretical framework of their curriculum and expectations of an actual work experience is one of the most prominent features of these approaches. This category also includes practicums, student teaching placements, and clinical placements.
Intensive Written and Oral Communication Experiences	These experiences emphasize writing at all levels and across the curriculum, including final projects. Students are encouraged to produce and revise various forms of writing for different purposes, audiences, and disciplines. These experiences are characterized by formative feedback.
Learning Communities	The key goals for learning communities are to encourage integration of learning across courses and to involve students with “big questions” that matter beyond the classroom. Students take two or more linked courses taken as a group and work closely with one another and with faculty.
Research with Faculty	Activities that involve students with energetically contested questions, empirical observation, cutting-edge technologies, and the sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions provide rich opportunities for students to develop their problem-solving abilities.
Service and Community-Based Learning	Field-based experiential learning with community partners is an instructional strategy whereby students gain direct experience with issues identified in the classroom and manifested in the community. Key elements are the opportunities students have to apply what they are learning in real-world settings as well as to reflect in a classroom setting on the importance and impact of the service experiences. These programs model two ideals: (1) that giving something back to the community is itself an important college outcome, and (2) that working with community partners is good preparation for citizenship, work, and life.

2 | Critical Reflection

The concept of critical reflection is rooted in the theories of John Dewey and Donald Schön. Dewey (1910/2011) described reflection as a logical progression of thoughts that build upon one another, ultimately leading to a comprehensive understanding of experiences. This sequential process ensures that each reflection informs the next, facilitating a deeper connection between ideas and actions. Schön (1983) further expanded on Dewey's ideas by distinguishing between two types of reflection: “reflection-on-action,” which occurs during an experience and allows individuals to adjust their behaviors in real time, and ‘reflection-in-action,’ which involves reviewing past experiences to gain insights for future applications. Both forms of reflection are integral to the continuous development of knowledge.

Mezirow (2003) further elaborated on the concept of critical reflection by emphasizing its role in challenging one's own presuppositions and habitual patterns of thinking. He contended that critical reflection involves reassessing how we perceive, know, and act in the world, which is essential for significant learning experiences in adulthood. This process is not just about solving problems based on

prior knowledge but involves questioning the very premises on which these problems are framed. Such reflection leads to a profound reassessment of one's orientation toward perceiving, knowing, and acting.

The experiential learning theory, as articulated by Kolb and Kolb (2009), also underscores the importance of reflection in the learning process. Learning is viewed as a dynamic cycle involving experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting, with reflection serving as a critical step in transforming concrete experiences into abstract concepts. This cyclical process facilitates personal growth and the application of learned knowledge in new contexts. Expanding on this theory, Gibbs (2013) introduced a reflective learning cycle that guides learners through a structured process of describing, feeling, evaluating, analyzing, concluding, and action planning, thereby linking reflection directly to learning outcomes and practical application.

3 | Stakeholder Engagement

Engaging students requires clear communication and a shared understanding between faculty and students of what constitutes critical reflection. The literature shows that, compared to students, faculty may use “formal academic language” to define critical reflection, whereas students may misidentify which activities are intended to support critical reflection (Arend et al., 2021, p. 327). When instructors provide explicit guidance on the purpose and relevance of reflective activities, it helps students engage more deeply in these practices (Arend, 2021). Faculty development plays a critical role in ensuring critical reflection and other high-impact learning experiences are implemented with fidelity. McNair and Albertine (2012) emphasize that building faculty competencies necessitates creating a culture of



collaboration, mentorship, and innovation and creativity in teaching. Providing structured tools, such as taxonomies, can guide faculty in designing and implementing HIPs consistently across departments. Offering these opportunities to both full-time and part-time faculty ensures that all students have equitable access to high-impact learning experiences (Evans et al., 2024; McNair & Albertine, 2012).

Moreover, strong partnerships with external stakeholders further enhance the effectiveness of HIPs. Higher education institutions provide employers with a workforce with key skills and contribute significantly to a community's economic and cultural life (Marshall, 2018). Community-based learning and internships provide mutual benefits: students gain valuable hands-on experience, while organizations benefit from the fresh perspectives and increased productivity students contribute (Marshall, 2018; Trager, 2020). Institutions can strengthen engagement by consistently demonstrating the value of these partnerships to the community.

4 | Academic Benefits

HIPs are strongly associated with significant improvements in academic outcomes, including higher retention rates, critical thinking, and cognitive skills (Pascarella & Blaich, 2013; Kilgo, Ezell Sheets, & Pascarella, 2015). Research indicates that students who participate in HIPs are more likely to complete their degrees than those who do not engage in these practices (McDaniel & Van Jura, 2022). High-impact learning contributes to a stronger sense of self-efficacy, which Bandura (1998/2010) described as a student's belief in their capabilities to master academic tasks. An increase in self-efficacy leads to higher academic aspirations and a greater interest in learning, ultimately contributing to overall academic success (Mangus et al., 2021; Conefrey, 2021).

HIPs enhance general cognitive skills, such as critical thinking, and encourage an orientation toward lifelong learning (Pascarella & Blaich, 2013). The literature suggests that the cumulative effect of engaging in multiple HIPs within a single learning experience further enhances these outcomes (Finley & Kuh, 2016; Conefrey, 2021). Moreover, students involved in HIPs report substantial gains in their ability to analyze complex information and apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations, improving their academic performance and readiness for advanced studies (Valentine, Prince, & Yang, 2021).

5 | Personal and Social Development

HIPs contribute significantly to students' personal and social development by fostering a stronger sense of belonging and engagement within their academic communities. These practices help students develop supportive relationships with faculty, peers, and mentors, which reinforce their commitment to their educational goals and increase their satisfaction with their institutions (Conefrey, 2021; Pascarella & Blaich, 2013). Participation in HIPs, such as service-learning and undergraduate research, challenges students to step out of their comfort zones, enhancing their critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and written and verbal communication skills (Goff et al., 2020).

HIPs are consistently associated with positive effects across a wide range of educational outcomes, including intercultural effectiveness and an inclination to pursue lifelong learning (Kilgo, Ezell Sheets, & Pascarella, 2015). These experiences contribute to personal growth by encouraging students to engage with diverse perspectives, develop confidence in their abilities, and cultivate a deeper understanding of their values and beliefs. The benefits of HIPs in encouraging personal development are particularly evident among first-generation students, who often experience heightened challenges in navigating their new academic environment (Finley & Kuh, 2016; Conefrey, 2021).

6 | Career Preparation

HIPs play a crucial role in preparing students for professional success by providing them with practical skills and experiences directly applicable to their future careers. Participation in HIPs significantly enhances students' job-related skills, leadership opportunities, and understanding of their career goals (Goff et al., 2020; Valentine, Price, & Yang, 2021). According to Finley (2023), most employers value knowledge gained from addressing real-life problems and are more likely to consider job candidates with high-impact learning experiences.

Participating in HIPs not only improves students' readiness for the workforce but also positively influences their plans to pursue further education at the graduate level (Tate et al., 2014; Miller, Rocconi, & Dumford, 2018). Students who participate in faculty-led research programs, for example, experience a significant increase in research self-efficacy, which directly impacts their decisions to continue their education. Additionally, students involved in HIPs are more likely to secure employment prior to or shortly after graduation, highlighting the long-term benefits of high-impact learning in supporting both academic and professional achievement (Miller, Rocconi, & Dumford, 2018).

7 | Practices Promoting Reflection

A wide range of techniques may be used to facilitate critical reflection in the classroom. Taylor (2017) noted that journaling - whether completed by hand, online, or with technological tools such as audio recorders or video - is a commonly cited approach in the critical reflection literature. However, reflective activities can also utilize such techniques as multimedia presentations, online discussions, concept maps, and interaction-based techniques such as peer discussions and problem-based learning (Ash & Clayton, 2009; Smith, 2011). Other pedagogical considerations include determining at which stage - before, during, or after an experience - reflection should occur and whether it will be an iterative process. The context in which reflection takes place is also crucial, as it may occur within the classroom or extend beyond it, involving instructors, peers, or community members (Ash & Clayton, 2009).





Incorporating critical reflection into HIPs can enhance the depth of these learning experiences. For example, Weber and Myrick (2021) described a summer undergraduate research program in which students created and maintained ePortfolios. Students documented weekly responses to reflective prompts about their research activities, the challenges they encountered, and their perspectives on their progress. Students used their ePortfolios to document their acquired skills and learning gains, problem-solve, and, over time, think critically about their research. Similarly, Harring and Luo (2016) reported an ePortfolio initiative where students in first-year seminars, service-learning courses, and learning communities used ePortfolios to develop their analytical writing skills, reflect on community-based learning issues, and practice interdisciplinary learning. The authors noted the need to clearly articulate the connection between ePortfolio projects and student learning outcomes so that students understand the value of these activities. Additionally, using focused prompts was identified as a key strategy in encouraging students to engage in deeper reflection.

8 | Impact of Reflection on Learning Outcomes and Career Preparation

Critical reflection enhances students’ understanding of course content by providing opportunities to connect classroom theories to real-world challenges (Slade et al., 2019). As students engage in reflective practices, they can develop a greater capacity to synthesize their learning and engage in deeper introspection about their perspectives, while identifying the skills necessary for academic and professional success (Harring & Luo, 2016; Slade et al., 2019). Moreover, the process of reflection contributes to the development of problem-solving and critical thinking abilities (Akpur, 2020; Gogus et al., 2019).

Reflective practices enable students to critically evaluate decision-making processes in complex professional environments, helping them to identify the factors that influence these decisions (Lean et al., 2014). Such reflection not only builds confidence in addressing real-world challenges but also cultivates deeper self-awareness and helps students shape their professional identities (Slade et al., 2019; Delany & Watkin, 2009). Additionally, assessments that incorporate critical reflection, such as eportfolios, can motivate students to develop their professional skills and create artifacts that effectively showcase and communicate their abilities to future employers (Harring & Luo, 2016; Weber & Myrick, 2018).

D. REFLECT TO CONNECT IMPLEMENTATION PHASES

The proposed QEP has an ambitious goal focused on enhancing students’ engagement through HIPs and fostering critical reflection. Achieving this objective will require both curricular and co-curricular involvement. UWF will implement an invitational model, annually encouraging faculty and staff across academic colleges and co-curricular programs to design and implement plans that integrate HIPs with reflective practices through a request for proposals (RFP) process.

These proposals will outline the development, enhancement, or expansion of HIPs to meet the QEP’s goals. The projects will progress through three primary phases: Development, Pilot, and Implementation. The final phase, Implementation, will encompass years 1-5 of the QEP and focus on evaluating and maintaining the long-term impact of these initiatives on the University’s mission and broader quality enhancement efforts.

Table 12. Development, Pilot, and Implementation

Phase	Date or Timeframe	Activity
Development	Fall 2022	QEP development as a part of the reaffirmation process and a review of the last QEP.
	Fall 2022	Focus groups with students to gain insights into barriers they face when participating in HIPs
	Jan 25, 2023	Discussion of QEP ideas topics at HIP meeting
	March 31, 2023	Discussion of themes from feedback sessions
	Spring 2023	HIP faculty survey-theme data
	Spring 2023	QEP-HIP Oversight Committee begins discussion topic ideas for new QEP
	Spring 2023	College Faculty Focus Groups conducted by HIP Liaisons
	April 21, 2023	Faculty Professional development: HIP progress; discussion of digital studio/resources
	Spring 2023	Barriers to HIPs research
	Spring 2023 – Summer 2023	QEP-HIP Oversight Committee reviews HIP Liaison reports of faculty focus group conversations
	Summer 2023	Provost appoints QEP Director
	Summer 2023	Develop goals and outcomes
	Fall 2023	HIP steering committee, finalize topic, review goals and outcomes
	Fall 2023	QEP-HIP Oversight Committee finalizes QEP topic selection and begins development of goals and outcomes

	Fall 2023	QEP-HIP Oversight Committee revises HIP Grant Call for Proposals to incorporate Critical Reflection
	Spring 2024	QEP-HIP Oversight Committee reviews HIP Grant Proposals and makes awards to faculty for HIPs that incorporate critical reflection
	Early Spring 2024	QEP Director assembles a faculty committee to develop critical reflection rubric
	April 2024	UWF offers faculty development on critical reflection
	Summer 2024	Rubric pre-pilot testing
	Summer 2024	Collect pre-pilot preliminary rubric data
Pilot	Fall 2024	Begin Pilot year
	Fall 2024	Discipline specific workshops focused on strategies for integration of critical reflection with new and existing HIPs.
	Nov 2024 – Feb. 2025	Faculty and Co-curricular HIP grant application. All HIP funded projects include critical reflection as part of the HIP course or activity
	January 2025	Campus-wide marketing campaign for <i>Reflect for Connect</i>
	Feb 2025	SACSCOC Committee affirms UWF QEP <i>Reflect to Connect</i>
Implementation	Fall 2026 - 2030	Over the first three cohort years’ fund and execute incorporation of critical reflection into 100% of new HIP courses and activities and 70% of HIP designated courses.
		The QEP Director will conduct a gap analysis during Year 3 to inform the development of a continuous improvement plan to address outstanding needs and capitalize on emerging opportunities.
		Assess the extent to which HIP critical reflection projects are continuously maintained post-QEP and the impact on student learning and faculty development.
		QEP-HIP Oversight Committee will review and analyze assessment of progress of each of the four institutional goals on an annual basis and make adjustment to process and activities as appropriate.



A successful Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) relies on active engagement from the entire University community. In collaboration with University Marketing and Communications, the QEP Communication Plan was launched in summer 2024. Since 2023, UWF has worked to familiarize the University and surrounding communities with the QEP. As the topic evolved into its current focus, targeted efforts were made to brand *Reflect to Connect* and help the campus and local communities understand UWF’s QEP. During the transition from a draft to the final plan, the UWF community was informed of its details and given opportunities to provide feedback.

The next phase of the Communication Plan begins during the Pilot Phase and focuses on raising awareness about the proposed QEP in its most developed state. The QEP Director will continue to engage with stakeholders to communicate the goals and outcomes of the proposed QEP. Key elements of this communication and marketing strategy are outlined below in Table 13 and include:

- Implementing various outreach efforts such as physical signage, mass emails, a social media campaign, and distributing promotional materials and giveaways.
- Hosting face-to-face meetings where members of the QEP Implementation Team connect with academic departments and campus offices.
- Conducting workshops for faculty and staff professional development to incorporate critical reflection in HIPs.

Through these efforts, the QEP, *Reflect to Connect*, was effectively introduced, fostering widespread awareness and engagement.

Table 13. Communication Plan

	Type of Communication
Pre-Pilot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meetings with broad-based stakeholders (refer to Tables 2, 3, and 4 for further detail) Website launched and updated periodically (http://uwf.edu/QEP) Critical Reflection rubric developed Critical reflection rubric tested in selected summer courses and undergraduate research students
Pilot Phase - Ongoing (Fall, Spring, and Summer)	<p>Electronic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain website to include a digital version of the proposed QEP, and update site as needed University press releases regarding Pilot and Dissemination Year 1 projects Social media campaign using the hashtag, #UWFQEP25 QEP update email sent by Provost to faculty/staff (quarterly) <p>Face-to-Face:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentations to College Deans and Chairs College level workshops on HIPs and incorporating critical reflection Presentations at departmental faculty meetings Presentations at local service organization meetings and other community partner gatherings
January 2025	<p>Electronic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> QEP plan distributed to campus for comment via the QEP website Bi-weekly information disseminated through @UWF (faculty/staff newsletter) HIP newsletter Voyager student newsletter QEP messaging on closed circuit TVs across campus <p>Print/Giveaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect to Connect posters displayed in dining areas and across campus QEP light pole banners displayed QEP indoor retractable banners displayed at Commons, University Libraries, Recreation Center, and rotated among academic buildings Reflect to Connect button campaign QEP information handouts QEP yard signs <p>Face-to-Face:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> QEP/ HIP Liaisons present QEP at faculty department meetings

February 2025	<p>Electronic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> QEP plan distributed to campus for comment via the QEP website Bi-weekly information disseminated through @UWF (faculty/staff newsletter) HIP newsletter Voyager student newsletter QEP messaging on closed circuit TVs across campus QEP update email sent by Provost to faculty/staff <p>Print/Giveaways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect to Connect button campaign QEP information handouts Reflect to Connect yard signs <p>Face-to-Face:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation to UWF Board of Trustees – QEP Reflect to Connect Faculty professional development – QEP/ HIPs and the Critical Reflection Rubric- introduction and advanced training session
April 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue Electronic and Print/Giveaways campaign <p>Face-to-Face:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> QEP led training for summer orientation leaders Faculty professional development on using the rubric for assessing critical reflection
Summer 2025	<p>Face-to-Face:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> QEP information messaging to students led by summer orientation leaders
August 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect to Connect reflection journal distributed during orientation QEP- Reflect to Connect promotional video shown during student orientations and welcome to campus events Reflect to Connect key chains for all on-campus housing keys – Housing and Residence Life Reflect to Connect drawstring bags – orientation and other student facing events Annual report covering Pilot Phase accomplishments disseminated via website

E. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

UWF offers professional development designed for faculty focused on enhancing HIPs while integrating critical reflection into new and existing courses and activities. These efforts seek to create an enriched learning environment that emphasizes engagement, reflection, and continuous improvement. A range of formats and activities were implemented to serve the diverse needs of faculty across various disciplines, ensuring widespread participation and engagement.

- 1. General Workshops:** A series of comprehensive general workshops were conducted to familiarize faculty with the core principles of HIPs and the significance of critical reflection in educational settings. These workshops included interactive sessions where participants explored effective methodologies for implementing HIPs, such as collaborative learning and experiential learning. Faculty were guided in identifying the ways these practices can enhance student learning, engagement, and reflection. Additionally, strategies for assessing the effectiveness of these practices were discussed, equipping faculty with tools to measure the impact of their teaching on student outcomes.
- 2. College-Specific Workshops:** Recognizing that each college may have unique curricular demands and challenges, tailored workshops were developed to address these specific needs. These workshops provided faculty with discipline-centric strategies for incorporating critical reflection into their existing courses and activities. For example, faculty in STEM disciplines focused on reflective practices relevant to science and engineering careers, while those in the humanities explored narrative techniques to foster self-reflection. This targeted approach allowed faculty to share best practices relevant to their fields, thus enhancing the relevance and applicability of the professional development experience.
- 3. Open Zoom Sessions:** To facilitate ongoing dialogue and collaboration, regular open Zoom sessions were organized. These informal gatherings provided a platform for faculty to engage in discussions about their experiences with HIPs, critical reflection, and application of the University critical reflection rubric. Participants were encouraged to share successes, challenges, and innovative ideas related to their teaching practices. These sessions were conducted immediately preceding the commencement of the fall semester to ensure faculty members were adequately prepared to integrate the rubric into their courses prior to the initiation of classes.
- 4. Canvas Modules:** To accommodate varying schedules and learning preferences, a series of self-paced online modules were created on the Canvas learning management system for the HIP Toolkit. These modules offered faculty the flexibility to engage with the material at their own pace, featuring a combination of instructional videos, readings, and reflective assignments. Topics covered included the foundational concepts of HIPs, techniques for fostering critical reflection among students, and methods for integrating these elements into course design. This online resource allowed faculty to revisit content as needed and encouraged ongoing professional growth.
- 5. Workshops for New Faculty:** Special attention was given to new faculty members through targeted workshops designed to equip them with the tools necessary for success. These sessions focused on the integration of HIPs and critical reflection from the outset of their academic careers. New faculty were provided with mentorship opportunities, guidance on course design, and strategies for cultivating a reflective teaching mindset.

This supportive environment aimed to foster confidence in their teaching abilities and encourage the development of their pedagogical identities.

- 6. Feedback Surveys:** Surveys were administered after the workshops to gather feedback on the sessions. This feedback was invaluable in assessing the effectiveness of the professional development initiatives, allowing facilitators to identify strengths and areas for improvement. By incorporating participant insights, the workshops were continually refined to enhance relevance and impact, ensuring that faculty received the most beneficial support for their teaching practices.
- 7. Follow-Up and Continuous Improvement:** To ensure that the professional development initiatives had a lasting impact, follow-up sessions were scheduled to evaluate the implementation of HIPs and critical reflection in faculty courses. These sessions provided opportunities for faculty to share their experiences post-implementation, discuss outcomes, and identify areas for further enhancement. Continuous improvement efforts included collecting feedback from faculty and students to refine the professional development offerings and better align them with the evolving needs of the academic community.

Overall, these professional development activities not only equipped faculty with essential tools for implementing and refining HIPs but also emphasized the transformative role of critical reflection in cultivating a culture of continuous improvement in teaching and learning. By fostering a collaborative and supportive environment, these initiatives aimed to enhance the overall educational experience for both faculty and students, ultimately contributing to the institution's mission of promoting excellence in education.

V. ASSESSMENT PLAN

UWF has developed a comprehensive Assessment Plan for *Reflect to Connect* to inform the institution as to our progress with each of the institutional goals. The QEP Director will coordinate collection and analysis of this data with the Associate Director of Institutional Effectiveness and the Director of Institutional Research to prepare an annual report to the QEP-HIP Oversight Committee and University leadership. This annual review of progress will allow the QEP-HIP Oversight Committee to make adjustments to the annual call for proposals, request or shift resources as needed, and to determine the best topics for further faculty development to support the success of *Reflect to Connect*.

A. ASSESSMENT MEASURES FOR GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Goal 1: Enhance Student Learning through Critical Reflection in HIPs

Institutional Outcome 1: Integrate critical reflection into HIPs to deepen student learning and development.

Student Learning Outcome 1: Demonstrate recognition of their increased knowledge of the subject/discipline as a result of the high-impact practice.

Student Learning Outcome 2: Demonstrate recognition of their increased skill in the subject/discipline as a result of the high-impact practice.

Student Learning Outcome 3: Describe the personal impact of the high-impact practice.

Student Learning Outcome 4: Describe the potential impact of the high-impact practice on their career success.

Benchmark for Success: 75% of the students will meet or exceed expectations on each of the 4 rubric elements.

Tasks designed to achieve the first goal of assessing student learning for success were completed prior to the launch of the pilot year. The completed tasks necessary for measuring institutional and student learning outcomes included:

Task 1: Develop and implement a standardized framework for incorporating critical reflection into high-impact practice experiences across the curriculum. Target date for completion is fall 2024.

Task 2: Create a rubric specifically designed to measure the quality and depth of critical reflection in high-impact practice assignments. Target date for completion is spring 2024 for faculty development and training with implementation date of fall 2024.

Task 3: Create a structure to monitor and evaluate the integration of critical reflection in HIPs, ensuring alignment with intended learning outcomes. Target date for implementation is fall 2024.

Assessment 1.1: Analyze rubric data to measure student learning and development through critical reflection.

Assessment 1.2: Analyze integration data submitted by faculty through assessment reporting to evaluate the alignment of critical reflection results with intended learning outcomes.

By implementing these goals and outcomes and incorporating critical reflection and a rubric into HIPs, the University aims to deepen student learning, improve the quality of these experiences, and ensure students can effectively reflect on the relevance of HIPs to their personal and professional growth.

UWF Strategic Direction Alignment: 1.1, 1.3

Goal 2: Enhance Student Engagement and Success through HIPs to bridge classroom learning with relevant practical application in the field.

Institutional Outcome 2: Increase student participation in HIPs and assess their impact on learning outcomes, student success, and their understanding of how these activities relate to their future careers.

Assessment 2.1: Analyze university data to measure student participation in HIPs and their academic performance. (Metric 10 data - UWF's metric of choice)

Benchmark for success: UWF will see an increase in the percentage of baccalaureate graduates completing 2 or more types of HIPs. The annual goal for this measurement is

included in UWF's Annual Accountability Plan as reported to and approved by the UWF Board of Trustees and the State University System of Florida Board of Governors.

Assessment 2.2: Analyze university data to measure percent of bachelor's graduates enrolled or employed. (Metric 1 data)

Benchmark for success: UWF will see an increase in the percentage of baccalaureate graduates enrolled or employed. The annual goal for this measurement is included in UWF's Annual Accountability Plan as reported to and approved by the UWF Board of Trustees and the State University System of Florida Board of Governors.

Assessment 2.3: Analyze university data to measure student participation in HIPs and their academic performance. (Metric 2 data)

Benchmark for success: UWF will see an increase in the median wages of bachelor's graduates employed full-time. The annual goal for this measurement is included in UWF's Annual Accountability Plan as reported to and approved by the UWF Board of Trustees and the State University System of Florida Board of Governors.

Assessment 2.4: Analyze student perception of HIPs as a bridge between classroom learning and relevant practical application in the field. UWF will participate in the NSSE as a measure of student perception of their high-impact experience, with a specific focus on the perceived learning outcomes and their understanding of how HIPs relate to their future careers. The NSSE HIP Quality Module will be utilized with responses by seniors to #15 in the HIP Quality module identified as an indirect measure.

By emphasizing the connection between HIPs and future career opportunities, the university aims to provide students with a holistic understanding of how these practices can not only enhance their learning but also prepare them for their professional lives.

Benchmark for Success: The percentage of Seniors responding "very little or some" or "quite a bit or very much" on #15 in the HIP Quality module will improve to 90% or higher.

UWF Strategic Direction Alignment: 3.1, 3.2, 4.2

Goal 3: Provide Faculty Development and Training with Critical Reflection Integration

Institutional Outcome 3: Equip faculty and staff with the knowledge and skills to design and facilitate HIPs while fostering the use of critical reflection as a teaching and assessment tool.

Assessment 3.1: Implement faculty and staff workshops and training sessions on pedagogical strategies that incorporate HIPs into the curriculum, including the integration of critical reflection assignments. (Rosters and schedule of training)

Benchmark for Success: UWF will implement faculty and staff workshop and training sessions on the implementation of critical reflection within HIPs to train 10% or more faculty and staff annually. Baseline data will be collected from Pilot Year trainings offered.

Assessment 3.2: Evaluate the success of faculty and staff training through post-workshop surveys measuring knowledge and confidence levels in both HIPs and their ability to guide



students in critical reflection activities.

Benchmark for Success: Faculty and staff attending critical reflection faculty development training workshops will indicate confidence in their ability to implement HIPs and to also lead students in critical reflection activities. Baseline data will be collected from Pilot Year participant training surveys.

By incorporating critical reflection into faculty development and training, the University can ensure that instructors are not only well-versed in HIPs but are also equipped to guide students in the process of critically reflecting on their experiences, fostering deeper learning and personal growth.

UWF Strategic Direction Alignment: 2.1, 3.2

Goal 4: Enhance Stakeholder/Community Perception of the value of HIP experiences through students' critical reflection

Institutional Outcome 4: Stakeholders and community partners recognize the value of HIP experiences through students' critical reflection activities. Stakeholders and community partners include UWF staff, local community members, college and program advisory committee members, parents and family of UWF students and graduates, and employers of UWF graduates.

Assessment 4: Analyze stakeholder and community partner survey data to gather impressions of the value of a students' critical reflection of a HIP experience. The students' critical reflections may include videos of student critical reflection, observations of the OUR Spring Scholars Symposium, and observations of the SURP Summer Program.

Benchmark for Success: Stakeholder and community partner respondents will indicate a favorable impression of the value of a students' critical reflection of a HIP experience. Baseline data to be collected during Pilot Year.

Note: These stakeholder and community partner "surveys" will be short 1-4 questions and ideally incorporated with any type of survey already used for this stakeholder group.

By enhancing stakeholder and community perception of the value of HIP experiences through students' critical reflection fosters a culture of engagement and collaboration between the university and its stakeholders, including local businesses, community organizations, and alumni. By demonstrating the tangible benefits of HIP experiences—such as internships, service learning, and undergraduate research—students can effectively articulate the positive impact these opportunities have on their academic and professional growth. Improved community perception can lead to increased collaboration on projects that benefit both students and the community, resulting in a mutually beneficial relationship. Enhancing stakeholder and community perception through students' critical reflection on HIP experiences not only elevates the university's standing but also creates a more vibrant and interconnected educational environment.

UWF Strategic Direction Alignment: 4.1

B. CRITICAL REFLECTION RUBRIC

1 | Developing a University-Wide Rubric to Assess Critical Reflection in HIPs

The creation of a rubric to evaluate the incorporation of critical reflection in HIPs represents a significant, collaborative achievement involving faculty and stakeholders from multiple colleges within the university. This interdisciplinary effort was designed to enhance student learning outcomes by creating a standardized framework that aligns reflective practices with both academic and professional goals. The initiative underscores the institution's commitment to fostering meaningful student experiences and improving the quality of teaching, learning, and assessment across programs.

2 | Collaborative Process Across Colleges

The process began with representatives from different colleges coming together to identify common learning goals and challenges in implementing reflective practices across various programs. This collaboration ensured that the rubric would be versatile enough to meet the diverse needs of disciplines such as business, education, health sciences, arts, and engineering. The shared objective was to create a tool that promotes coherence in evaluating reflective activities embedded within HIPs, such as internships, service learning, collaborative projects, undergraduate research, and capstone courses.

Faculty members contributed their expertise to ensure that the rubric captured both disciplinary differences and common learning objectives. The cross-disciplinary dialogue allowed the group to identify overlapping competencies that all students should develop, such as critical thinking, personal growth, and the ability to apply knowledge to real-world challenges. This collaborative approach also helped in creating a rubric that reflects a balance between academic rigor and personal relevance, ensuring its meaningfulness to students and instructors. Table 14 lists the members of the rubric development committee.

3 | Testing the Rubric for Reliability

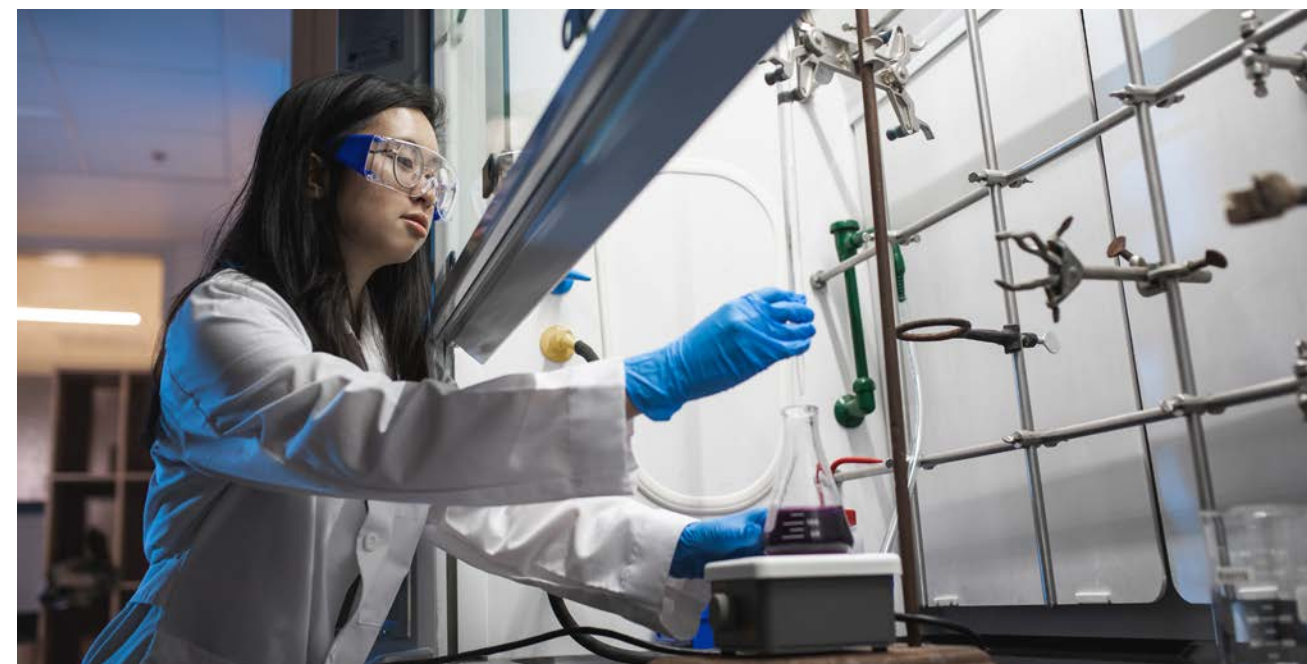
To ensure the reliability and effectiveness of the rubric, a testing process will be conducted using a small training sample of critical reflections. Faculty participants will apply the rubric independently to evaluate

the sample, focusing on its alignment with the rubric’s criteria and scoring levels. Each critical reflection will be reviewed by two independent evaluators to assess consistency in scoring.

The scores assigned by the two reviewers will be compared to calculate inter-rater agreement. This analysis will provide insights into the rubric’s reliability, identifying any inconsistencies or ambiguities in the criteria that may need refinement. The process will also allow reviewers to provide feedback on the clarity and applicability of the rubric, adopting a collaborative approach to fine-tuning the evaluation tool.

Table 14. Rubric Development Committee

Name	Area
Holly Handley, QEP Director	School of Education, Instructional Design and Technology
Karen Valaitis	Usha Kundu MD College of Health, Health Sciences and Administration
Jane Halonen	Usha Kundu MD College of Health, Psychology
Vanessa Rainey	Usha Kundu MD College of Health, Psychology
Athena DuPre	College of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities
John Jensen	College of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities
Bre Garrett	College of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities
Jeff Phillips	School of Education, Instructional Design and Technology
Julie Gray	School of Education, Educational Leadership
Shusen Pu	Hal Marcus College of Science and Engineering, Mathematics
Chasidy Hobbs	Hal Marcus College of Science and Engineering, Earth and Environmental Science
Jason Ortegren	Hal Marcus College of Science and Engineering, Earth and Environmental Science
Jerry Burch	Lewis Bear Jr. College of Business, Business Administration



4 | The Four Key Elements of the Rubric

The resulting rubric assesses student reflection across four key elements:

- 1. Knowledge** – This element evaluates how students connect academic concepts to their practical experiences. Students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of theoretical frameworks and articulate how these frameworks inform their real-world actions. The rubric ensures that reflective practices help students synthesize what they have learned in the classroom with their experiences outside of it, providing evidence of deep learning.
- 2. Skills** – This element focuses on the development of transferable skills through reflective activities. It evaluates competencies such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and adaptability, which are essential for success in both academic and professional settings. The rubric encourages students to critically assess how they have grown through their experiences and to identify areas for further development.
- 3. Personal Impact** – This element assesses the degree to which students engage in introspection and emotional awareness. It encourages students to explore how their experiences have shaped their personal values, beliefs, and behaviors. The rubric emphasizes the importance of reflection in fostering personal growth, self-awareness, and emotional intelligence, recognizing these as essential components of lifelong learning.
- 4. Connection with Future Career** – The final element measures how well students can relate their learning experiences to their future career goals. It prompts students to articulate how the knowledge, skills, and personal insights gained through reflection align with their professional aspirations. This connection helps students build a narrative about their learning journey, preparing them to showcase their experiences to future employers or in graduate school applications.

Table 15. UWF Critical Reflection Rubric

	UNDEVELOPED (0)	NEEDS DEVELOPMENT (1)	MEETS EXPECTATION (2)	EXCEEDS EXPECTATION (3)
KNOWLEDGE	Exhibits no connection between the HIP experience and knowledge gained.	Provides minimal connection between the HIP experience and knowledge gained.	Discusses one meaningful way that the HIP experience has increased knowledge relevant to the course content.	Elaborates on multiple ways that the HIP experience has increased their knowledge relevant to the course content.
SKILLS	Does not discuss any skills that improved during HIP experience.	Implies but does not detail skill improvement during the HIP experience.	Identifies one skill that improved during the HIP experience.	Provides an explanation of more than one skill that improved during the HIP experience.
PERSONAL IMPACT	Omits discussing the personal impact or value from participation in the HIP experience.	Provides general, but shallow, appraisal of the HIP experience (e.g., "it was awesome").	Offers at least one specific example of personal impact from the HIP experience.	Describes more than one specific example of personal impact from the HIP experience.
Connection Professional/ Career Connection-	Provides no feedback on how the HIP experience might impact career success.	Provides a generalized statement on how the HIP experience might impact their career success but offers no specific examples.	Provides specific statements on how the HIP experience might impact their career success, but with few details.	Provides thorough and insightful commentary on how the HIP experience might impact the student's career success.

Below is an example of an assignment. These questions may be used in contact as written or blended into an existing reflection assignment. This example is provided to generate ideas for questions to ask as part of a critical reflection assignment.

The rubric must be used to collect the data. The rubric may be incorporated as part of an existing rubric or used separately. The rubric may be part of the grading scheme for the assignment or merely used to score the assignment to report the data.

ASSIGNMENT:

Mode: Written or video

Now that you have completed this HIGH IMPACT PRACTICE in __discipline__, please reflect on your experience. Your reflection not only helps you evaluate the impact of your experience but also provides feedback to your instructor about the value of the assignment. To complete your reflection, address the following four questions:

1. Has your knowledge base expanded in relation to the course content? What examples support your conclusion?
2. Has your skill set improved? What specific skills have been refined from this experience?
3. How would you describe the impacts the assignment has had on you personally (for example, on your personal values and/or self-confidence)?
4. Describe several ways that this experience might impact your success as a career professional.

5 | Impact on Student Learning and Institutional Goals

This rubric aims to measure the enhancement of student learning accomplished by encouraging deeper engagement with the integration of critical reflection into HIPs. The activities, assignments, and rubric guide students to move beyond surface-level descriptions of their experiences toward more thoughtful analysis, helping them make meaningful connections between their learning and life goals. By fostering these reflective habits, the rubric measures the development of metacognitive skills, preparing students to become reflective practitioners who can navigate complex, real-world challenges with confidence.

The collaborative development of the rubric also reflects the university’s strategic commitment to continuous improvement in teaching and learning. Integrating critical reflection into HIPs helps students develop a deeper understanding of themselves as learners and as future professionals, aligning with institutional goals of producing graduates who are well-prepared for careers and lifelong learning.

6 | A Model for Future Initiatives

This rubric serves not only as an assessment tool but also as a model for future collaborative efforts across the university. It demonstrates the value of cross-college partnerships in enhancing academic programs and underscores the importance of developing shared frameworks to assess complex learning outcomes. Faculty and administrators have expressed that this collaboration strengthened relationships across departments, fostering a culture of shared responsibility for student success.

Overall, the process of creating the rubric highlights the university’s commitment to innovative and integrative approaches to education. Through collaboration and intentional design, the institution has developed a tool that ensures reflective practices are consistently and meaningfully integrated into high-impact educational experiences. This initiative will support students in becoming lifelong learners, reflective professionals, and engaged citizens, prepared to make meaningful contributions in their personal and professional lives.

C. PRE-PILOT YEAR ASSESSMENT

As part of assessment planning for *Reflect to Connect*, the QEP Director and Institutional Effectiveness in consultation with the QEP-HIP Oversight Committee decided to collect Pre-Pilot Year Assessment data. The goal for pre-pilot year data collection was two fold: allow the Committee to validate the rubric and to also ensure that the Committee was satisfied with the assessment measures identified for each institutional goal.

A preliminary analysis found that the rubric will measure critical reflection within HIPs across the four key elements of knowledge, skills, personal impact, and connection to profession/career. As for the adequacy of other assessment measures identified for each goal, the Committee has decided to use these measures into the Pilot Year which began in August 2024 and will hold further analysis and benchmarking until spring 2025.

1 | Rubric Validation

To validate the rubric, a research study was conducted in the psychology department. Data were collected from 55 participants in a psychology capstone course. The participants were instructed to reflect on their capstone experience in terms of the four rubric elements: knowledge, skills, personal impacts, and professional development. Two independent raters applied the QEP reflection rubric to determine student achievement and calculated inter-rater reliability. The results, discussion, and recommendations are presented below in Figure 3


Figure 2.

ASSESSMENT OF CAPSTONE COURSES AS HIGH IMPACT PRACTICES

Elizabeth R. Black, Landon Nelson, & Jane S. Halonen
Department of Psychology, Usha Kundu, MD College of Health, University of West Florida

INTRODUCTION

Between 2021 and 2022, 129,600 psychology majors earned baccalaureate degrees (National Center for Education and Statistics, 2024). According to Norcross et al. (2016), 79% of undergraduate psychology programs include a high impact capstone experience, suggesting educators are becoming more interested in evaluating the skills students learn within the discipline rather than only their mastery of course content (Zivinskis, 2019). Course grades alone may not effectively capture what students retain from their course experiences (Dunn et al., 2020). The goal of this project was to validate a rubric used as a summative assessment for their capstone experiences.



"Things break down without the capstone."

	Undeveloped (0)	Needs Development (1)	Meets Expectation (2)	Exceeds Expectation (3)
Knowledge	Exhibits no connection between course content and knowledge gained.	Provides minimal connection between course content and knowledge gained.	Discusses one meaningful way that the course has increased knowledge relevant to the course content.	Elaborates on multiple ways that the HIP experience has increased their knowledge relevant to the course content.
Skills	Does not discuss any skills that improved during HIP experience.	Implies but does not detail skill improvement.	Identifies one skill that improved during the HIP experience.	Provides an explanation of more than one skill that improved during the HIP experience.
Personal Impact	Omits discussing the personal impact or value from participation.	Provides general, but shallow appraisal of the HIP experience (e.g., "It was awesome").	Offers at least one specific example of personal impact from the experience.	Describes more than one specific example of personal impact from the experience.
Professional Impact	Provides no feedback on how the HIP experience might impact career success.	Provides generalized statement on how the HIP experience might impact their career success, but offers no specific examples.	Provides specific statement on how the HIP experience might impact their career success, but with few details.	Provides thorough and insightful commentary on how the HIP experience might impact the student's career success.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

- Intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) describes the similarity between scores given by two independent raters to determine inter-rater reliability.
- ICC values at <.001 significance per category were .94, .92, .92 and .96, respectively, which describes a high degree of agreement between the scores of the two raters and establishes a high degree of inter-rater reliability.
- Students and raters may have different ideas related to the difference between knowledge and skills, prompting us to propose a clarification of the first question.
- We recommended changing some language in the rubric for future use to reduce any confusion, to encourage more elaborate responses, and to avoid unintentional cueing about how to respond to the probes.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION

- Reflection can be an important tool for capstone courses to aid in the goal of summarizing skills learned over the course of the major so it can be added to program-level assessment strategies.
- An effective rubric can allow instructors to measure student learning outcomes objectively that are not easily measured in the traditional way.
- Students directly benefit by taking time to recall the skills that they have refined over their undergraduate degree. The reflection can facilitate articulate descriptions of what they have learned and what they have learned to do to support positive outcomes in graduate school or job interviews.


Reflection Probes:

- 1) Has your knowledge base expanded in relation to the course content? What examples support your conclusion?
- 2) Has your skill set improved? What specific skills have been refined from this experience?
- 3) How would you describe the impacts the assignment has had on you personally (for example, on your personal values and/or self-confidence)?
- 4) Describe several ways that this experience might impact your success as a career professional.

Suggested Improvements:

- 1) How has your knowledge base (i.e., specific information such as theories important to your course topic) expanded in relation to the course? Describe examples that support your conclusion.
- 2) How has your skill set improved (i.e., specific skills that can be applied in other contexts)? Identify and describe specific skills that have been refined from this experience?
- 3) How would you describe the impacts the course has had on you personally (for example, on your personal values)?
- 4) Describe several ways that this experience might impact your success as a career professional.

REFERENCES



Acknowledgements: Thank you to QEP Critical Reflection Rubric Development Committee for developing and providing us with the rubric.

uwf.edu/psychology

Table 16. Critical Reflection Rubric Data Disaggregated by Classification and College

By Classification	Number of Students	Knowledge		Skills		Personal Impact		Connection	
		Number of students meets or exceeds 75%	Percentage of students	Number of students meets or exceeds 75%	Percentage of students	Number of students meets or exceeds 75%	Percentage of students	Number of students meets or exceeds 75%	Percentage of students
Undergraduate	119	106	89%	109	92%	98	82%	101	85%
Graduate	280	271	97%	265	93%	262	94%	270	96%
Total Number of Students	399	377	94%	374	94%	360	90%	371	93%
By College	Pre-Pilot	Number of students meets or exceeds 75%	Percentage of students	Number of students meets or exceeds 75%	Percentage of students	Number of students meets or exceeds 75%	Percentage of students	Number of students meets or exceeds 75%	Percentage of students
CASSH	53	47	89%	51	96%	39	74%	45	85%
SOE	280	274	98%	269	96%	267	95%	273	98%
COB	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
UKCOH	66	64	97%	64	97%	65	98%	63	95%
HMCSE	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DAESA	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Number of Students	399	385	96%	384	96%	371	93%	381	95%

Assessment 1.2: Analyze integration data submitted by faculty through assessment reporting to evaluate the alignment of critical reflection results with intended learning outcomes.



2 | Assessment Results by Goal

Goal 1: Enhance Student Learning through Critical Reflection in HIPs

The testing phase of the university-wide rubric for assessing critical reflection in HIPs was conducted in the summer of 2024 and involved a deliberate and collaborative effort across multiple programs. Faculty from various colleges piloted the rubric in selected courses and activities, as well as both undergraduate and graduate programs, ensuring its applicability across diverse disciplines. During this phase, instructors integrated the rubric into their reflective assignments, evaluating its effectiveness in assessing student learning outcomes related to critical thinking, personal growth, and career readiness. The results of the Pre-Pilot of the Critical Reflection Rubric are described in Table 14. Feedback from faculty, students, and staff was collected to identify areas where the rubric succeeded and where adjustments were needed to improve clarity, relevance, and usability.

Assessment 1.1: Analyze rubric data to measure student learning and development through critical reflection.

Table 17. Average Score on Critical Reflection Rubric Disaggregated by Classification, College, and HIP Type

By Classification	Pre-Pilot # of students	Knowledge	Skills	Personal Impact	Connection
Undergraduate	119	2.52	2.53	2.48	2.54
Graduate	280	2.60	2.55	2.54	2.60
Total Number of Students	399	2.52	2.53	2.48	2.54
By College	Pre-Pilot # of students	Knowledge	Skills	Personal Impact	Connection
CASSH	53	2.60	2.57	2.25	2.37
SOE	280	2.44	2.57	2.27	2.38
COB	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
UKCOH	66	2.35	2.46	2.42	2.44
HMCSE	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
DAESA	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Number of Students	399	2.52	2.52	2.48	2.54
By Type	Pre-Pilot # of students	Knowledge	Skills	Personal Impact	Connection
Research (R)	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Global Learning (SA)	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Common Intell Exp (CIE)	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Internships (I)	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Collab Project (COL)	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
eportfolios (EP)	53	2.44	2.57	2.25	2.37
Capstone (CAP)	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Service Learning (SL)	22	2.50	2.77	2.68	2.77
Intensive Writing (IW)	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Number of Students	75	2.52	2.53	2.48	2.54

Additionally, the process involved close collaboration with the Information Technology (IT) department to develop a system for tracking and pulling outcomes data using the university’s existing Learning Management System (LMS). This integration ensured that data related to reflective practices and student learning outcomes could be efficiently collected, analyzed, and reported. The ability to streamline data retrieval from the LMS not only enhanced the assessment process but also provided actionable insights for continuous improvement. This iterative process fostered ongoing dialogue between academic programs, co-curricular units, and IT, ensuring the rubric remained adaptable while maintaining its core focus on fostering deep learning and reflective habits. Ultimately, the testing phase reinforced the rubric’s alignment with institutional goals by promoting meaningful student engagement and refining a tool that supports the consistent integration of reflective practices into high-impact educational experiences.

Qualitative feedback

The UWF Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP) is an opportunity for eligible undergraduate research students to get paid for doing their research over the summer semester. The two faculty leading the program incorporated an ePortfolio project into the SURP research project. They evaluated the ePortfolio and the research SURP projects and assignments for the critical reflection.

Below are quotes from these faculty about the project.

“We worked for a full year to align critical reflection and HIP Research - through a new ePortfolio project. We created six reflection check-points that were synchronized to SURP core assignments/activities - and we used the ePortfolios to curate students’ reflections and archive their reflections alongside the already existing core projects. The pre-SURP work that we completed was essential is successfully delivering period reflection throughout the 13-week SURP experience.”

“The Portfolium platform was challenging to use as a reflective ePortfolio and may have taken away from the reflection experience for some students. We are evaluating how to revise the ePortfolio part of the SURP experience for next summer. Also, we will incorporate the terms from the Critical Reflection rubric in our activities and check-points to make sure students are understanding how reflection supports their growth in these distinct areas: knowledge, skills, personal impact, and career/professional communication.”

Goal 2: Enhance Student Engagement and Success through HIPs to bridge classroom learning with relevant practical application in the field.

UWF selected four measures to assess progress on Goal 2. The first measure is the percentage of baccalaureate graduates participating in two or more HIPs. This measure is also used in the Annual Accountability Plan as Metric 10. The results of UWF’s progress toward the annual goal is shown in Table 18.

Assessment 2.1: Analyze university data to measure student participation in HIPs and their academic performance.

Table 18. Percentage of Baccalaureate Graduates participating in two or more HIPs.

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Actual	38.2	44.2	47.5	58.6	60.6	•	•	•	•	•
APPROVED GOALS	39.0	43.0	47.0	50.0	59.0	61.0	63.0	65.0	67.0	•
PROPOSED GOALS	•	•	•	•	•	61.0	63.0	65.0	67.0	69.0

Assessment 2.2: Analyze university data to measure percent of bachelor’s graduates enrolled or employed.

UWF believes that enhancing student success through the integration of critical reflection into HIPs leads to better opportunities after graduation from a baccalaureate program whether that be employment or enrollment in a graduate program. UWF will use Metric 1: percent of bachelor’s graduates enrolled or employed from the Annual Accountability Plan as an additional measure for Goal 1. The results of UWF’s progress toward the annual goal for Metric 1 are shown in Table 19.

Table 19. Percent of Bachelor’s Graduates Enrolled or Employed (\$40,000+)

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Actual	•	•	72.5	74.1	79.8	•	•	•	•	•
APPROVED GOALS	•	•	•	•	75.0	76.0	77.0	78.0	79.0	•
PROPOSED GOALS	•	•	•	•	•	78.0	78.0	79.0	80.0	80.0

Assessment 2.3: Analyze university data to measure student participation in HIPs and their academic performance.

UWF also asserts that enhancing student success through the integration of critical reflection into HIPs leads to better employment opportunities after graduation from a baccalaureate program. UWF will use Metric 2: median wages of bachelor’s graduates employed full-time as an additional measure for Goal 1. The results of UWF’s progress toward the annual goal for Metric 2 are shown in Table 20.

Table 20. Median Wages of Bachelor’s Graduates Employed Full-Time

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
Actual	40,900	45,200	45,500	48,800	53,000	•	•	•	•	•
APPROVED GOALS	37,000	40,900	41,000	46,000	49,000	49,500	50,000	50,500	51,000	•
PROPOSED GOALS	•	•	•	•	•	50,000	50,500	51,000	51,500	52,000

Assessment 2.4: Analyze student perception of HIPs as a bridge between classroom learning and relevant practical application in the field. UWF participated in the NSSE 2024 HIP Quality Module. The responses of seniors to #15 of the HIP Quality Module are aggregated in Table 21.

Table 21. NSSE 2024 Senior Responses to #15 HIP Quality Module

15. To what extent has this experience contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?													
		Service Learning		Learning Community		Research w/ faculty		Internship/ Field Exp.		Study Abroad		Culminating Senior Exp.	
		Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
a. Understanding concepts in your courses or major	Very little or some	23	16	7	29	4	9	25	13	9	53	18	13
	Quite a bit or very much	122	84	17	71	40	91	175	88	8	47	124	87
	Total	145		24		44		200		17		142	
c. Applying theory to practice	Very little or some	17	12	8	33	5	11	39	20	7	41	19	13
	Quite a bit or very much	127	88	16	67	39	89	159	80	10	59	122	87
	Total	144		24		44		198		17		141	
d. Solving complex, real-world problems	Very little or some	16	11	8	33	6	14	28	14	5	29	26	18
	Quite a bit or very much	127	89	16	67	37	86	171	86	12	71	116	82
	Total	143		24		43		199		17		142	
e. Acquiring job- or work- related skills	Very little or some	30	21	8	33	5	11	20	10	11	65	27	19
	Quite a bit or very much	112	79	16	67	39	89	179	90	6	35	114	81
	Total	142		24		44		199		17		141	
f. Preparing for your plans after graduation	Very little or some	37	26	7	30	10	23	26	13	11	65	41	29
	Quite a bit or very much	105	74	16	70	34	77	173	87	6	35	101	71
	Total	142		23		44		199		17		142	



Goal 3: Provide Faculty Development and Training with Critical Reflection Integration

In the spring of 2024, UWF began offering faculty development sessions that were designed to offer faculty strategies for incorporating critical reflection activities into HIPs. The sessions were offered both in-person and virtually over a series of several months.

Assessment 3.1: Implement faculty and staff workshop and training sessions on pedagogical strategies that incorporate HIPs into the curriculum, including the integration of critical reflection assignments. Table 22 describes the number of sessions offered by UWF and the number of faculty participating.

Table 22. Faculty development and training on HIPs with the integration of critical reflection.

UWF Workshops on Faculty Development on HIP Critical Reflection	
Number of sessions offered in 2024	8
Number of faculty attending in 2024	157

Assessment 3.2: Evaluate the success of faculty and staff training through post-workshop surveys measuring knowledge and confidence levels in both HIPs and their ability to guide students in critical reflection activities.

After each session, faculty were surveyed as to their satisfaction with the session and to gather feedback on ways to improve these sessions for the future. The results of this survey are described in Table 23.

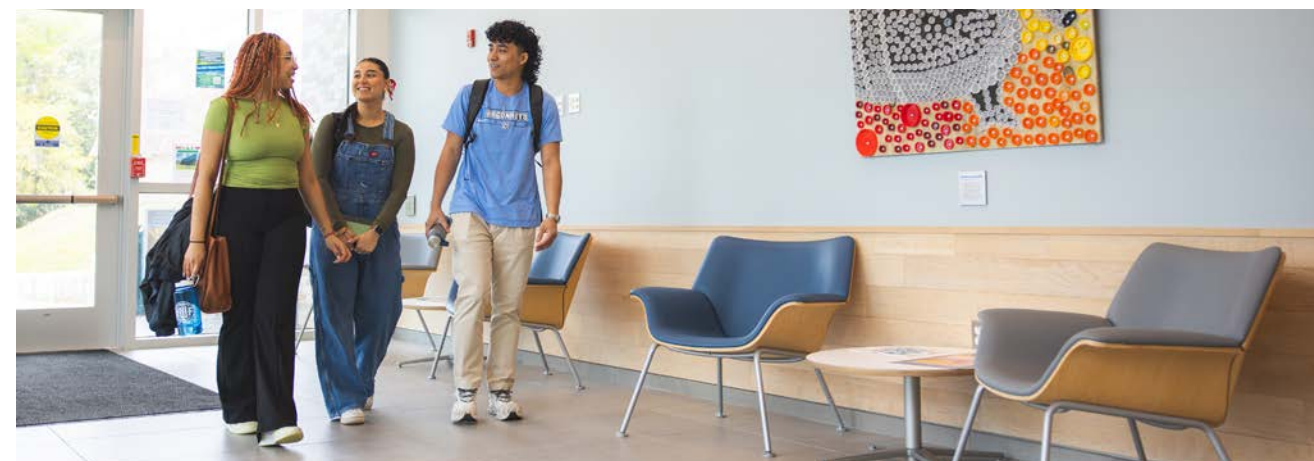
Table 23. Faculty Satisfaction with HIP/Critical Reflection Survey Results 2024

Question	Number of respondents	Number of strongly agree/agree	Percentage
The session and activities taught me about critical reflection within the implementation of HIPs.	28	25	89%
I learned practical tools and gained resources for integrating critical reflection into the HIP experience within my course/ or co-curricular experience.	28	24	86%
I am confident that I am able to use the rubric to assess my students' ability to critically reflect on their HIP experience.	28	24	86%

Goal 4: Enhance Stakeholder/Community Perception of the value of HIP experiences through students' critical reflection

Assessment 4: Analyze stakeholder and community partner survey data to gather impressions of the value of students' critical reflection of a HIP experience.

UWF collected pre-pilot data for Goal 4 from surveys of stakeholders attending various events. The survey results for each of these events are described below.

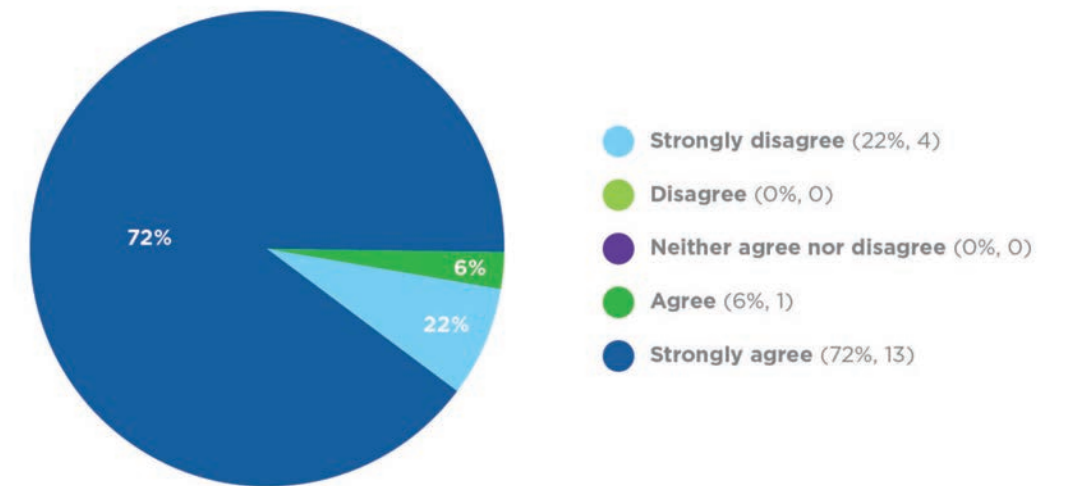


Employer Brunch and Learn

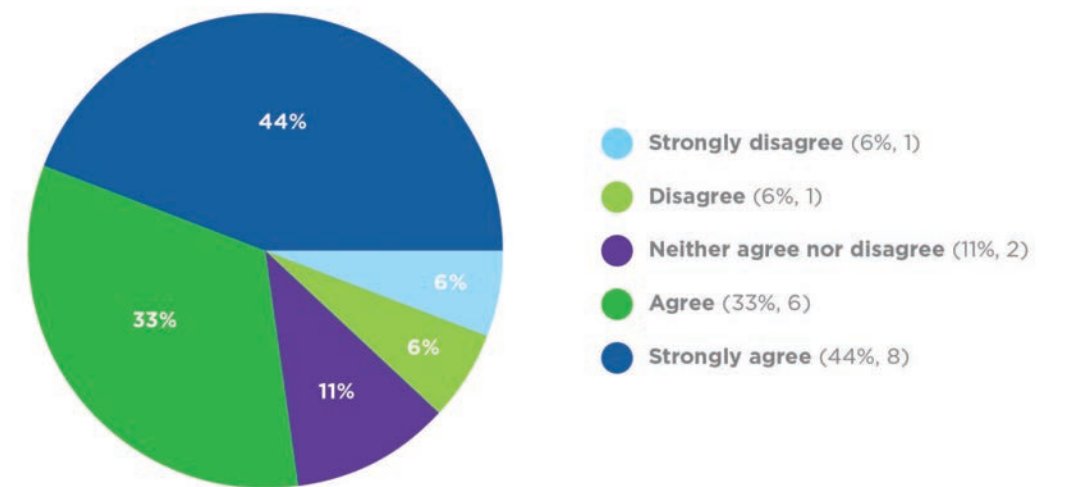
The Employer Brunch & Learn was held on July 10th, 2024 in Downtown Pensacola. The event featured presentations on industry trends and internships, a student panel sharing their perspectives on what makes an internship opportunity attractive, roundtable discussions for employers to exchange ideas about their recruiting programs, and time for networking. The purpose of this event was to provide a platform for employers to exchange recruiting and hiring ideas with one another while also learning about recruiting UWF students and alumni.

Figure 3.

Q1 - As a UWF Community member, I believe that high-impact educational experiences are valuable to UWF students/graduates and the community



Q2 - Based on my interactions, UWF students and/or graduates are able to make connections between these high-impact educational experiences and their future career.



Mock Cocktail party- Summer 2024

The Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) offers an OUR Explorers program designed to provide undergraduate students with no prior research experience the opportunity to explore research and creative activities. The program encourages interaction between undergraduate students and community partners, allowing students to showcase their research while engaging with local stakeholders. After the event, community participants are invited to provide feedback through a survey to help us enhance the program. The results of the summer 2024 survey are provided below.

Figure 4.

As a UWF community member, I believe that high-impact educational experiences are valuable to UWF students/graduates and the community.

20 responses

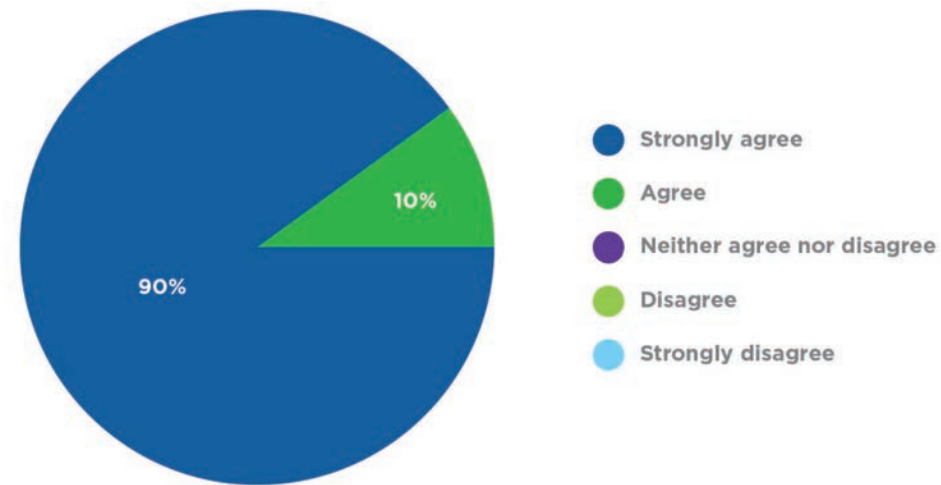
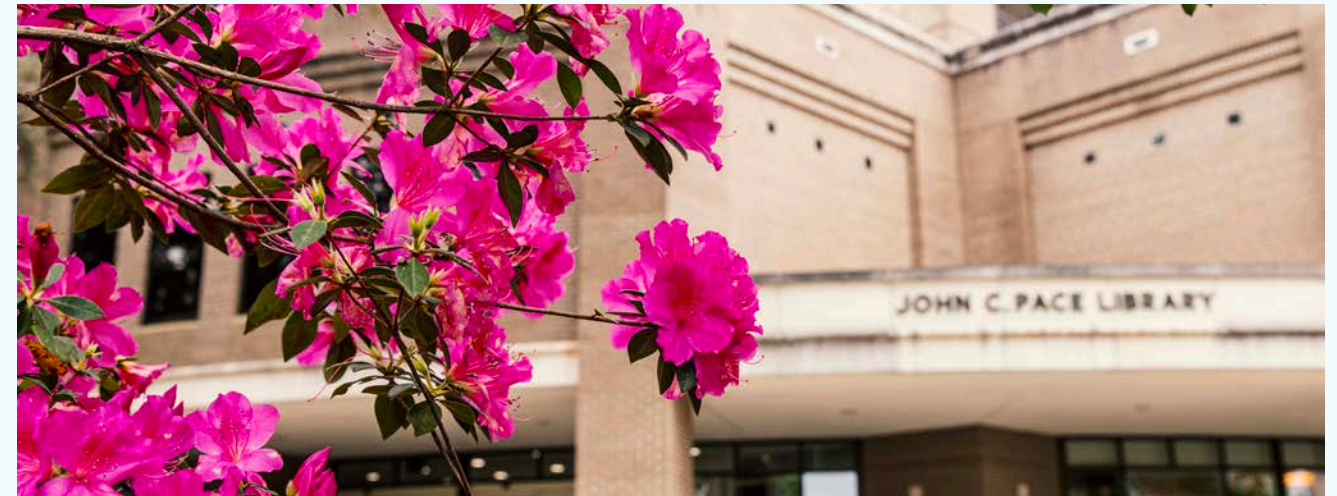
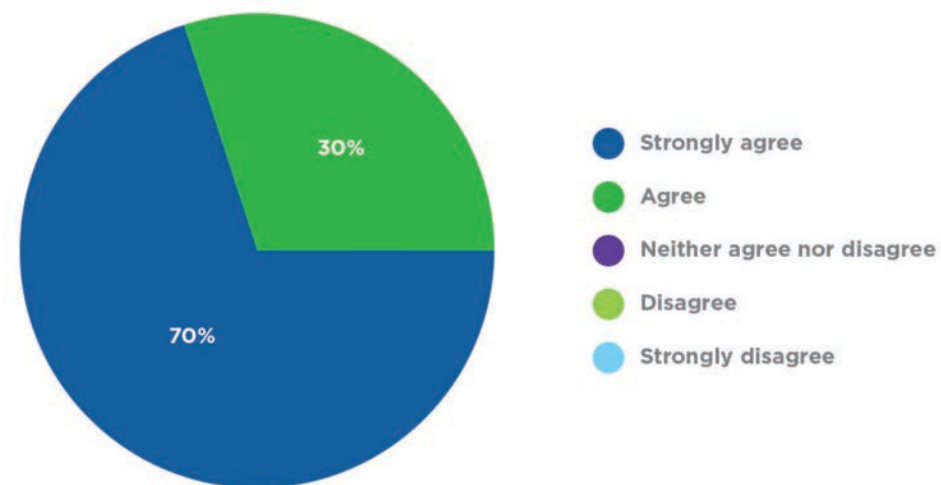


Figure 5.

Based on my interactions, UWF students and/or graduates are able to make connections between these high-impact educational experiences and their future career.

20 responses



VI. CAPACITY AND BUDGET

UWF has committed over \$180,000 annually to support *Reflect to Connect*. The budget addresses HIP Grants to Faculty and students, faculty development, stipends for key personnel, assessment, and communication activities. Table 24 describes key personnel for QEP Implementation and Table 25 describes the QEP Budget by Year.

Table 24. Key Personnel and Duties

Area	Duties
QEP Director	Oversees the implementation of the plan; chair the QEP Implementation Team; and work collaboratively with the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, the Director of Career Development and Community Engagement, and the QEP/HIP Oversight Committee to advance the plan.
HIP Liaisons (5)- 1 per college/school	Lead the development and implementation of quality high-impact practice (HIP) learning experiences across the academic colleges, HIP Grant Review Committee to evaluate and select proposals for funding, and coach, mentor, and recruit faculty and staff with HIP activities.
Director of Institutional Effectiveness	Oversees strategic planning and assessment to design, implement, and evaluate the QEP, aligning it with accreditation and assessment standards.
Assoc. Dir. of Institutional Effectiveness	Facilitates data collection and analysis of all QEP assessment measures. Assists QEP director in compiling the QEP report.
Director of Career Development and Community Engagement	Manages logistics of QEP budget to include stipends for key personnel and dissemination of grant funds.

Table 25. QEP Budget Allocation by Implementation Year

	Pilot Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	
HIP Grants							
HIP Development Faculty/CC Grants	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$480,000
HIP Scholarships for Students	\$10,000	\$12,000	\$14,000	\$16,000	\$18,000	\$20,000	\$90,000
Faculty Development and Student Support							
Professional Development & Travel	\$10,000	\$8,000	\$6,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$36,000
Personnel							
QEP Director (12 month contract)	\$15,000	\$15,750	\$16,538	\$17,364	\$18,233	\$19,144	\$102,029
HIP Liaisons (5) - UKCOH, HMCSE, CASSH, LBCOB, SOE)	\$50,000	\$52,500	\$55,125	\$57,881	\$60,775	\$63,814	\$340,096
QEP Proposal Development	\$8,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,000
Assessment costs							
Assessment costs							
(NSSE, Faculty Evaluators of Reflections)	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$13,000	\$78,000
Communication and Promotion							
QEP document printing	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500
Recognition	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$3,000
Marketing materials & promotional items	\$2,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$10,000
FY Totals	\$189,500	\$183,250	\$186,663	\$190,245	\$196,008	\$201,958	\$1,147,625

QEP Proposal Writing Committee: Angela Bryan, Holley Handley, Andrea Nelson, and Katherine Greene.



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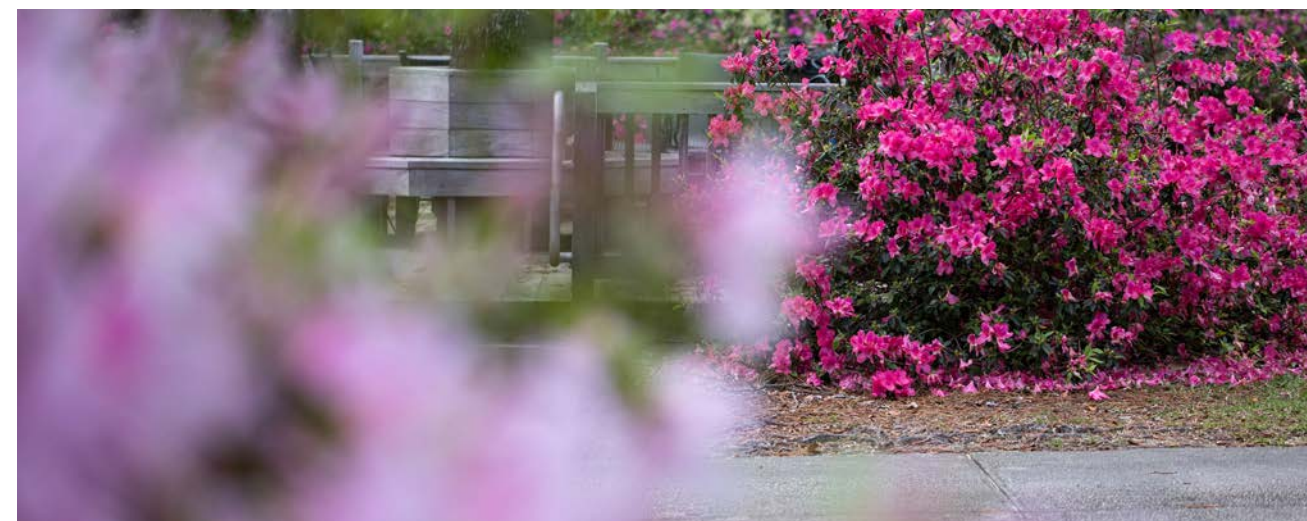
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IX. APPENDICES

A. ACRONYMS

Acronym	Meaning
AAC&U	American Association of Colleges and Universities
CASSH	College of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities
FTIC	First Time in College (student status)
HIP	High-Impact Practice (or high-impact learning experience)
HMCSE	Hal Marcus College of Science and Engineering
LBJCOB	Lewis Bear Jr. College of Business
LEAP	Liberal Education and America's Promise (AAC&U initiative)
LMS	Learning Management System
NSSE	National Survey of Student Engagement (an external survey of first-year students and seniors)
OUR	Office of Undergraduate Research
QEP	Quality Enhancement Plan (<i>Reflect to Connect</i>)
RFP	Request for Proposal
SACSCOC	Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
SLOs	Student Learning Outcomes
SOE	School of Education
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (disciplines)
SURP	Summer Undergraduate Research Program (OUR program)
UKCOH	Usha Kundu, MD College of Health
UWF	University of West Florida ("the University")



B. QEP-HIP GRANT PROPOSAL EVALUATION RUBRIC

HIP Vetting:	no 0	yes 1				
Align to a defined HIP type						
Reflection is one of the selected essential elements						
Faculty/staff member agrees to participate in Critical Reflection professional development/training						
HIP Grants	0 No/ Weak Evidence	1 Acceptable Evidence	2 Moderate Evidence	3 Strong Evidence	4 Exceptional Evidence	Total
Include essential elements. At least 2 essential elements are clearly identified, one of which must be reflection.						
HIP activity is integrated into course, program, or experience.						
HIP Grant Outcomes:	0 No/ Weak Evidence	1 Acceptable Evidence	2 Moderate Evidence	3 Strong Evidence	4 Exceptional Evidence	Total
Increases access to HIP participation for students						
Enhances and promotes HIPs at UWF.						
Special Consideration:	0 No/ Weak Evidence	1 Acceptable Evidence	2 Moderate Evidence	3 Strong Evidence	4 Exceptional Evidence	Total
Collaboration with other faculty/staff/departments or external community.						
Sustainable beyond this grant.						
Impact on a range of student populations (e.g., those from different disciplines, special attributes, such as athletes and TRiO participants, etc.)						
GRAND TOTAL						





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