



East Tennessee State University's Quality Enhancement Plan INtopFORM: Insightful Questions, Informed Answers Executive Summary

INtopFORM, East Tennessee State University's Quality Enhancement Plan, will enable and encourage ETSU students to excel in seeking, using and communicating diverse and often complex information. The plan defines six abilities essential for students' professional success, personal fulfillment and active citizenship. Students who are INtopFORM ask insightful questions and are persistent and resourceful when seeking information. They thoughtfully evaluate the credibility and implications of information. They use information skillfully to accomplish their purposes and communicate information effectively to aid others' understanding. They recognize their ethical obligations when seeking, using and communicating information.

ETSU pursued a deliberate, inclusive process for selecting the theme of its QEP. Spanning approximately 12 months, the process engaged all of the university's key stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community leaders. The theme selection process reviewed data on students' oral communication, writing, critical thinking, and information technology skills. These data revealed a compelling need and a timely opportunity to enhance students' information fluency.

The implementation plan for INtopFORM has five components. The first two elements of the plan focus exclusively on undergraduate education. To introduce INtopFORM skills in the first year of college, faculty will redesign CSCI 1100: Using Information Technology, a course taken by nearly all incoming ETSU students. In the second part of the plan, each year 12 programs of study will volunteer to design and implement multi-year plans to enhance their students' mastery of INtopFORM learning outcomes. INtopFORM faculty fellowships, the third aspect of the plan, are open to faculty in undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. Creating a university-wide culture of excellence in seeking, using and communicating information is the fourth element of the plan. This part of the plan includes creating an INtopFORM resource center, awarding student support and engagement project grants, and celebrating excellence in information fluency through an INtopFORM showcase. Faculty development is the final element of the implementation plan. INtopFORM faculty development begins in an annual three-day summer workshop and continues throughout the year in faculty learning communities. Faculty learning communities are cross-disciplinary groups of participating INtopFORM faculty that meet every three weeks during the academic year to discuss ideas for teaching students to ask insightful questions and propose informed answers.

The comprehensive assessment plan for INtopFORM uses multiple measures of student learning, including the California Critical Thinking Skills Test, evaluations of students' use of information in speaking and writing assignments in designated general education courses, the CSCI 1100 final exam, and discipline-appropriate assessments created by participating undergraduate programs of study. The assessment plan also includes outcome assessments of projects conducted by INtopFORM faculty fellows and units receiving student support and engagement grants. QEP staff will lead the university community in analyzing assessment data, collating findings across multiple measures, and developing improvement plans based on the results.

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