

GIST: Getting Information Skills Today **The Quality Enhancement Plan for North Carolina Wesleyan College**

North Carolina Wesleyan College's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) focuses on strengthening student information literacy competence by creating a fuller upper-level student research experience. The goal of the QEP is achieved through integrating advanced research practices in all academic divisions with the purpose of preparing graduates for academic, corporate, and civic cultures that are information-centered. In preparation for the QEP's implementation, the College's four academic divisions have worked with their respective disciplines to select courses in each major with course assignments or learning objectives suitable for information literacy supplementation. With the cooperation of the Student Government Association, this program has been named Getting Information Skills Today (GIST). GIST courses build on basic library skills that students learn in the general education curriculum. Each GIST course uses college-wide information literacy standards to improve students' abilities to define and refine topics, and to evaluate, analyze, and ethically use information in discipline-specific contexts.

The outcomes of this Plan are interrelated and seek to enhance existing academic programs with a focus on student learning through GIST coursework. These outcomes seek to:

- **Enhance student learning** by creating coursework opportunities that change information-seeking and use behaviors while taking GIST courses in the major sequence.
- **Change student perceptions** of information tasks as linear constructs and replacing this perception with training that teaches them to approach research as recursive processes that require topic definition, critical evaluation, analysis, organization, and ethical decision making in the use of information.
- **Promote student information competence** by providing faculty and staff with training opportunities that support GIST program design, GIST course design, research assignment design, and related educational best practices that reach students through lecture, homework, in-class activities, coursework, peer tutoring, and academic support.

The College will pursue several goals to achieve the QEP outcomes. GIST learning opportunities will improve students' advanced information literacy skills and abilities. Specifically, students will become more adept at critically evaluating (analyzing, organizing, and ethically appraising) information before using it; The College will provide professional development opportunities for faculty, staff, and students; Establishment of institutional, program, and course-level assessments of Information Competencies and student learning outcomes will help to gauge QEP efficacy; Student Information Literacy skills will be assessed on Institutional Assessment Day through regular course-level embedded assessments, and assessment results are used to continuously enhance program effectiveness.

Student learning effectiveness, GIST program effectiveness, and overall QEP success will be gauged through the use of 1) institutional data from the Research Readiness Self Assessment standardized instrument 2) descriptive rubric assessments of authentic student coursework, and 3) materials that are produced from student, staff, and faculty professional development initiatives.

For additional information, please contact QEP Director James Parrigin, Reference and Instruction Librarian at jparrigin@ncwc.edu or (252) 985-5233.