

Make an Impact @ SFA!

The focus of the QEP is to improve students' higher order thinking skills and student success by incorporating high-impact practices into targeted undergraduate curricula.

The Stephen F. Austin State University Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), ***Make an Impact @ SFA!***, describes an initiative in which students can improve their higher order thinking skills and academic success. The QEP is designed to achieve a sustainable effect on higher order thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation) through selected freshman and junior-level gateway courses. The faculty for the selected courses will be trained to incorporate high-impact practices (HIP), as described by George Kuh (2008), into the delivery of the content to primarily improve the higher order thinking skills of students. In addition, the high-impact practices used in the course instruction are expected to have a favorable impact on the institutional strategies relating to overall academic success, student persistence, and student engagement.

This initiative for improving students' higher order thinking skills and college success at SFA is separated into two quantifiable goals.

Goal 1: Student Learning

Improve higher order thinking skills by incorporating high-impact practices into targeted undergraduate curricula.

Goal 2: Student Success

Improve institutional outcomes related to student academic success, student persistence and student engagement.

To accomplish these goals, faculty and staff with teaching responsibilities engage in a yearlong professional development program divided into two semesters. During the first semester, participants study the elements of high-impact educational practices and higher-order thinking, resulting in the development of plan to execute the following semester. During the implementation semester, participants incorporate the plan into a specific course. The Office of High-Impact Practices provides pedagogical and financial support to enable successful implementation.

Assessment of student learning consists of both course-embedded and global assessments. Course-embedded assessments are evaluated with locally-generated rubrics. The Critical thinking Assessment Test (CAT) and ETS Proficiency Profile (ETSPP) will be administered as a global assessment instruments.

Transforming the SFA Experience

Make an Impact @ SFA! creates opportunities for students to improve their higher-order thinking skills and achieve greater academic success. The project promotes the creation of engaging experiences into the classroom and introduces students to the excitement of meaningful learning activities.

For more information, contact:

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