



Quality Enhancement Plan 2018

Learning through Dialogue and Discussion

The purpose of the QEP is to enhance student learning through dialogue and discussion-based learning in undergraduate courses. Research suggests that student-to-student dialogue and discussion stimulates active learning, socialization, and knowledge construction. This kind of learning is a relatively small part of undergraduate education at the University of Miami, and the QEP will help address this gap in students' learning experience. The QEP will provide discussion-based learning opportunities using the following teaching methods:

- **Harkness Method:** In the Harkness method, 12-15 students sit at an oval table, which promotes discussion and collaboration. Students initiate and lead a discussion about the assigned material, exchanging views and learning with and from one another. Faculty serve primarily as facilitators who help to ensure that all students speak and that the learning does not veer off track. Intergroup Dialogue employs a version of the Harkness method to help students explore and understand their own and others' social identities.
- **Problem-Based Method:** In problem-based learning students are presented with a challenging problem or question. Through a series of steps students work together to define what they know and what they need to learn, seek out new information, formulate a response, and present that response. This approach typically involves technology to conduct background research, analyze and synthesize new information, and prepare a presentation or product.
- **Flipped Classroom Method:** In a flipped learning course, students access course content such as readings, recorded videos, and podcasts before coming to class. Then class time is used for activities such as discussing case studies, working on problem sets, debating issues, and other forms of active learning.

Learning through dialogue and discussion strengthens students' retention of course material, helps them develop social skills and values, and promotes higher-order thinking skills. The QEP will assess student learning on the following cognitive and behavioral outcomes:

1. Students will summarize key points from course material.
2. Students will apply course knowledge to topics or problems.
3. Students will integrate divergent perspectives on a topic or problem.
4. Students will justify positions in debating a topic or problem.
5. Students will demonstrate respect for different viewpoints.
6. Students will reflect on the importance or relevance of a topic or problem.
7. Students will demonstrate self-reflection of their learning in the course.

The QEP will begin as a pilot in spring 2019.

For information on the QEP, contact:

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