Year Five of Your QEP: Are We There Yet?

Kelly Whealan George
*Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, georged8@erau.edu*

Aaron D. Clevenger
*Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, cleve515@erau.edu*

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Year Five of Your QEP: Are We There Yet?

Case Studies on Constant Change in the QEP

Dr. Kelly Whealan George and Dr. Aaron D. Clevenger
Embry Riddle Aeronautical University
Context Regarding Our University &
the QEP
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

3 campuses:
- Daytona Beach (~ 4500 UG & 500 grad)
- Prescott (~ 1500 students)
- World Wide (>150 locations, ~ 40 states, S. America, Europe, Asia and Middle East; ~26,000 FTE students)

Emphasis is aviation & aerospace
BS, MS and PhD programs
~ $17M in research
Our Quality Enhancement Plan

The University is focusing on the research agenda through three strategies:

• championing student participation in research and scholarly activities

• promoting the University’s research agenda

• incentivizing faculty research and scholarship, and development of instructional tools
The Only Thing Constant is Change
~ Heraclitus
Life is what happens to you while you’re busy making other plans.

- Enhance Curriculum
- Provide Faculty Development Opportunities
- Enhance Co-Curricular Research Opportunities
- Establish a Collaborative (UG) Research Center
The Case of the Never Ending Website Design
Life is what happens to you while you’re busy making other plans.

The undergraduate research centers will be the focal point for undergraduate research services. Below are a number of the varied responsibilities that will be undertaken by leadership of one or all of the campus URCs:

1. Maintain a project database of funded and unfunded projects
2. Match faculty research mentors and student researchers
3. Provide opportunities for faculty development in research skills
4. Promote co-curricular opportunities that meet the 6 SLOs
5. Encourage students to apply for research co-ops, internships and other activities, including those with external faculty
6. Provide a venue for solving government, business and academic problems and develop opportunities through interdisciplinary approaches
7. Facilitate submission of articles to the university’s research publication and also external journals to publicize research highlights from student and faculty research activities
Lessons learned from our never ending website design

- There will be road blocks out of your control
- Timelines will not always workout just because you put them in your plan
- Desperation can sometimes lead to creative solutions i.e. we have a robust Facebook group now since it took so long to create the website
- Just because something isn’t going according to plan doesn’t mean you should abandon it, because although it was well beyond schedule it did eventually come about
It took awhile but it happened...
The Case of the thesaurus and the Humanities Professors
A person’s name is the sweetest sound

The faculty will conduct assessments using hallmark assignments evaluating how students are performing with respect to the Ignite SLOs:

- **Introductory**
- **Practicing**
- **Mastery Levels**

Took a summer to write and nearly that long to agree upon the final version

Faculty were invited to participate in its construction and editing.
A person’s name is the sweetest sound

After being published and in use for nearly a year, I sat down to my emails to find...

Several of the Humanities professors did not think it was well written and had issue with several of the elements including an entire SLO.

I explained that their department chair, and others in their department were invited to edit the rubric the year prior…they still didn’t like it.

What would you do?
A person’s name is the sweetest sound

A person’s name is the sweetest sound

Previous Consensus

Someone Edits

Seek a compromise

Do you agree with the change?

No

Yes

New Consensus
Lessons learned from our lack of consensus

• What you think is consensus could just be someone standing aside from their concerns
• Ensure that you have/had representation in the areas that are linchpins to your plan
• When you find out that consensus wasn’t achieved consider compromise instead of stalemate
• Don’t jeopardize the integrity of the QEP by giving in to everything, but don’t continue with a bad portion of the plan
• Seek a compromise and ask questions while doing so
The Case of the Revolving Door
There are many ways of going forward, but only one way of standing still
There are many ways of going forward, but only one way of standing still

- A director was hired that wasn’t one of the authors
- One director left after first year
- Second director promoted after third year
- Same second director has been replaced twice since then
- Vice President of Research (major champion) retired after fourth year
- President retired
There are many ways of going forward, but only one way of standing still

Ignite directors on ERAU campuses developed strong collaboration and support
• Bi-weekly teleconferences
• Joint selection of Foliotek, Bepress, Taskstream software specifications
• University-wide Discovery Day - Including speakers from all 3 campuses, Research abroad etc...
• Developed a 5-Year Ignite assessment plan (2012-13 is the baseline)
• A university-wide rubric
Lessons learned from change in positions and leadership

• Before you need it, develop a culture of knowledge transfer
  • Create a culture of support
  • Create documents and checklists
  • Give time for new leaders time to learn and transition
  • Don’t hoard your knowledge and experience
  • Allow assumptions and processes to be tested
  • …the alternative is a brain drain to your organization
Other Cases

• The case of the waning of faculty interest and motivation
• The case of the incredibly shrinking budget
• The case of the fickle computer software and the lack of authority to require its use
So there has been change...

So is it even the same QEP?

- Overall, the planned topic and intent of the proposal is mostly on track and on budget
- Some subprojects have been moved up on the timeline
- Many projects have been added
- Uneven engagement by faculty and staff
- Students have engaged in thousands of hours of research and experiential opportunities
Bottom Line

• Don’t be scared of change
• Fight for continuity
• Prepare yearly report ala 5th year QEP summary
• Incentivize key people
## Resources

Explaining Development and Change in Organizations
Andrew H. van de Ven and Marshall Scott Poole
The Academy of Management Review
Vol. 20, No. 3 (Jul., 1995), pp. 510-540

### TABLE 1
Families of Ideal-Type Theories of Social Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Life Cycle</th>
<th>Evolution</th>
<th>Dialectic</th>
<th>Teleology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Members</td>
<td>Developmentalism</td>
<td>Darwinian evolution</td>
<td>Conflict theory</td>
<td>Goal setting, planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ontogenesis</td>
<td>Mendelian genetics</td>
<td>Dialectical materialism</td>
<td>Functionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Metamorphosis</td>
<td>Saltationism</td>
<td>Pluralism</td>
<td>Social construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stage &amp; cyclical models</td>
<td>Punctuated equilibrium</td>
<td>Collective action</td>
<td>Symbolic interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Metaphor</td>
<td>Organic growth</td>
<td>Competitive survival</td>
<td>Opposition, conflict</td>
<td>Purposeful cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logic</td>
<td>Imminent program</td>
<td>Natural selection among competitors in a population</td>
<td>Contradictory forces</td>
<td>Envisioned end state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prefigured sequence</td>
<td></td>
<td>Thesis, antithesis, synthesis</td>
<td>Social construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compliant adaptation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Equifinality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Progress</td>
<td>Linear &amp; irreversible sequence of prescribed stages in unfolding of immanent potentials present at the beginning</td>
<td>Recurrent, cumulative, &amp; probabilistic sequence of variation, selection, &amp; retention events</td>
<td>Recurrent, discontinuous sequence of confrontation, conflict, and synthesis between contradictory values or events</td>
<td>Recurrent, discontinuous sequence of goal setting, implementation, and adaptation of means to reach desired end state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generating Force</td>
<td>Prefigured program/rule regulated by nature, logic, or institutions</td>
<td>Population scarcity</td>
<td>Conflict &amp; confrontation between opposing forces, interests, or classes</td>
<td>Goal enactment consensus on means cooperation/symbiosis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>