

# **Middle Tennessee State University Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Committee Spring 2014**

## **Student Focus Group Results**

**Timothy R. Graeff**

**March 2, 2014**

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## Middle Tennessee State University

### Quality Enhancement Plan – Student Focus Group – Moderator’s Guide

#### Introduction (5 minutes)

Welcome. Thank you for coming to this group session today. We are here today to talk about your experiences while here at MTSU and to hopefully obtain some ideas and suggestions from you. We are hoping that you can help us with that today.

Please write your name on the table tent that you see in front of you. We have provided some food and drinks so that you can relax and enjoy yourselves while we are talking with each other today. Also, I want you to notice that we will be videotaping this session. You can see the video camera in the corner of the room. We are videotaping this session so that we can capture all of your comments. Your opinions are important to us and we do not want to miss anything that you might say.

First, let’s introduce ourselves. My name is Tim Graeff, and I am very fortunate to be able to be part of this group discussion today.

Before we begin, I want to go over a few ground rules that we will follow for this session:

- We want to hear what you have to say.
- All opinions are important and should be shared.
- There are no right answers or wrong answers.
- Please talk one at a time. Do not speak while someone else is speaking.
- Speak clearly and loud enough for all to hear.
- We will not criticize or critique anyone else’s opinion.
- Candid, yet cordial

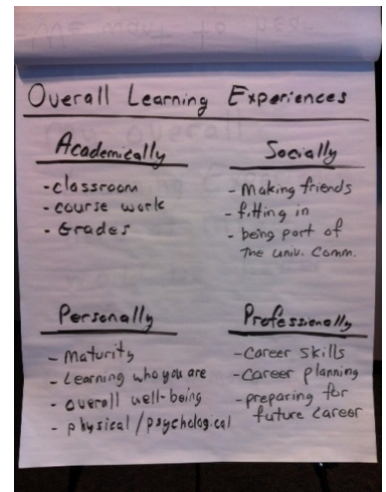
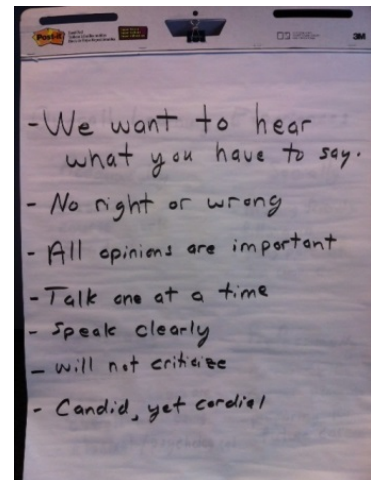
Now, let’s go around the table and let each of you introduce yourself.

- Name, Year in School, Major, How Long Attended MTSU

#### Overall Learning Experiences at MTSU (40 minutes)

First, let’s talk about your overall learning experiences while you have been here at MTSU.

- Academically – classroom, course work, grades
- Socially – fitting in, making friends, being a part of the university community
- Personally – maturity, learning who you are, overall well-being (physical / psychological)
- Professionally – career skills, career planning, preparing for your future career
  - Is it important for you to learn / grown in these areas? (rank order importance)
  - Have you learned / grown in these areas while at MTSU?
    - Why? What has helped / aided your learning experiences?
    - Why not? What has kept you from learning?
      - Have you experienced any barriers to student learning / growth in any of these areas?



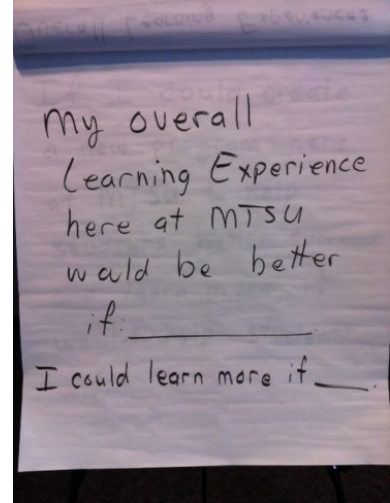
Do you feel that you are LEARNING a lot here at MTSU?

Are there any programs that have helped you as a student here at MTSU (academically, socially, personally, professionally)?

**Improving Academic Performance (Learning Experiences) (15 minutes)**

Can you think of any programs or type of help that you wish were offered here at MTSU?

- My overall learning experience here at MTSU would be better if \_\_\_\_\_:
  - There were \_\_\_\_\_.
  - MTSU had \_\_\_\_\_.
  - MTSU did \_\_\_\_\_.
  - There was not \_\_\_\_\_.
  - I could \_\_\_\_\_.
  
- I could learn more here at MTSU if \_\_\_\_\_:
  - There were \_\_\_\_\_.
  - MTSU had \_\_\_\_\_.
  - MTSU did \_\_\_\_\_.
  - There was not \_\_\_\_\_.
  - I could \_\_\_\_\_.

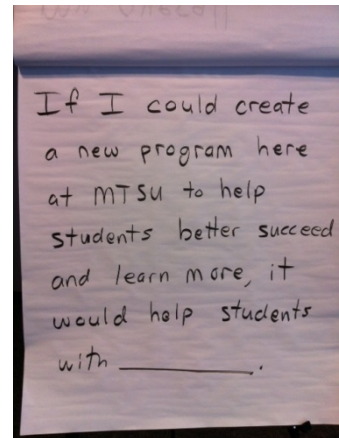


**Identifying topic areas for QEP (15 minutes)**

If you were able to create / develop a new program (plan, process, office, department) here at MTSU to help students \_\_\_\_\_, what would it be.

- Learn more
- Improve academically
- Improve socially
- Improve personally
- Improve professionally

If I could create a new program here at MTSU to help students better succeed and learn more, I would create a program that helped students with \_\_\_\_\_, or helped student improve skills related to \_\_\_\_\_.



- Identify student generated ideas first, and then review from list below.

- Academic advising / program of study planning
- Adaptability
- Adjusting to being a college student
- Building relationships
- Career / professional readiness
- Career advising
- Communication (oral – public speaking)
- Communication (oral – interpersonal)
- Communication (written)
- Community involvement
- Creativity
- Critical thinking
- Dealing with criticism
- Decision making
- Engaging with others
- Finding a job
- Fitting in / making friends / integrating socially
- Interpersonal relationships (people skills / “soft skills”)
- Interviewing skills
- Leadership
- Life skills
- Listening
- Math and analytics
- Maturity
- Motivation
- Networking / connecting
- Physical health / well being
- Problem solving
- Public service
- Reading
- Research / scholarship skills
- Resume writing
- Selecting a career / major
- Self-confidence
- Self-motivation
- Student mentoring / tutoring
- Study skills
- Time management
- Using technology
- Work ethic
- Working in groups
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## **Summary of Major Findings from All Four Group Sessions**

### **Overall Experience at MTSU**

When asked about their overall experiences here at MTSU, students reported very positive experiences here at MTSU.

### **Ranking the Importance of Learning Experiences**

While many students suggested that all four areas were important and that they all interconnect with and support each other, a consistent pattern emerged across the groups. Students consistently ranked professional learning experiences and academic learning experiences as being more important than either social or personal learning experiences.

### **Academic Learning Experiences**

Overall, students consistently reported positive academic learning experiences during their time here at MTSU.

Smaller, more personal classes often lead to better academic learning experiences (it is harder to learn in extremely large classes).

Many students suggested increased rigor in their courses. Some complained about “dumbing down” of classes to pander to the “lowest common denominator.” Students like to be challenged – if that challenge is not just “busy work.” Students often want to “go farther” than where the teacher wants to go (topics to be discussed in class).

Students would like to have a bit greater input into the new, interesting, unique topics that are discussed in a class. At times they feel that the education process is too structured – too “top down.” They worry about total anarchy if students are left in complete control of the classroom, but they would like more say in the topics about which they will be learning.

Students like professors (teachers) who help students prepare for their future.

More relevant courses – students want to see how the material that they are learning will be used in the real world.

Students had some negative comments about the gen-ed classes due their lack of relevance. One idea that was discussed was identifying certain sections of gen-ed classes to be targeted to students in specific degrees, e.g., ENG 1010 for mass comm majors, ENG 1010 for science majors. This way, the topics for some assignments (e.g., papers) could be targeted toward their future interests (e.g., mass comm majors write papers relevant to mass comm majors).

Students had very positive comments about the experiential learning (EXL) program.

More applied skills – students want to learn how the material in their classes can and will be applied in practice.

Students benefit greatly from seeing the real-world application of what they are learning in the classroom – integrating real-life situations into their classes helps learning.

Students like to learn from outside experts / practitioners who come to class to talk about the real-world experiences of someone working in their field.

Students mentioned that getting to know fellow students can help with academic learning experiences (e.g., forming support groups, teaching others helps to reinforce material). They would like to get to know their fellow students in and out of the classroom.

Student learning communities – students recommended more linked (paired) classes so that they can form more bonds with fellow students in the same major (e.g., students enrolled in course “A” would also be required to enroll in the related course “B”).

Course tie-ins – students would like to see linked courses that are related to each. They like learning how what they are learning in one class relates to what they are learning in other classes.

More interdisciplinary courses. Students like learning how a great variety of topics are related. They also would like greater flexibility in being able to minor in interdisciplinary fields. They feel that this would help broaden their understanding.

Students recognize that there are multiple learning styles and they appreciate professors who provide learning experiences that fit with different learning styles. Students mentioned that they like to find teachers who have teaching methods (and assignments) that match with the learning style of the student. They mentioned using [ratemyprofessor.com](http://ratemyprofessor.com), and also suggested creating a place on the MTSU website that posts all faculty members' syllabi. This would allow them to better select courses that fit with their personal learning style (e.g., some students prefer to write papers, whereas other students prefer to take tests).

Students like discussion – not only in class, but also with other students outside of class. Smaller classes aid in this. Smaller classes also alleviate distractions from a large number of people in a classroom. Forming student groups to discuss course material outside of class also fosters learning.

Students appreciate good advising and hate bad advising. The best advisors are those who get to know their advisees, beyond simply telling them what classes are required for a major.

Students reported that they have benefited academically from:

- Professors who care about students' learning and who are flexible and able to work with students.

- Good, up-to-date technology in the classrooms.
- Information and material presented in the classroom that is up-to-date
- The tutoring center on campus
- The mid-term grades that are posted online. Students like to know where they stand in terms of their grades.

However, they also reported some barriers to their learning experiences while here at MTSU:

- Some teachers have personalities that do not match with students' personalities which limits academic learning.
- Some teachers are not flexible or accommodating when dealing with students.

### **Professional Learning Experiences**

Students are very interested in receiving information about seminars, events, job fairs, internship fairs, or any other information that is related to helping them develop career readiness skills.

The main complaint is that such information is not well promoted to students. They simply do not know when such events are taking place. Students are not fully informed of all that is offered to help with professional learning experiences (e.g., some did not know about the EXL program – they wish they had known about it when selecting classes). However, students from the computer science department reported being well informed about career opportunities and opportunities.

There is also little promotion of events that could aid in professional learning experiences to undecided students. It seems that once a student declares a major they are then privy to information about events related to that field (major). But, many students would like to attend a variety of events to help them select their career path / major – even those events that are not directly related to their major.

Students would like a centralized place on the MTSU website where they can opt in/out of receiving information about career related events. They would often like to know about events that are occurring in other fields, but they currently do not get this information because it is outside of their major. Students want an easy to use online menu of topics about which they can receive information on upcoming events.

When asked about the best way to communicate with them, students said that email is still the best and most direct method. However, using social media as well will not hurt.

In general, the more practical application in the classroom, the better the learning experience. Students like, and benefit from, classes that incorporate practical applications of what they are learning in the classroom.

Examples of programs that do a very good job of incorporating practical skills into the classroom are the RIM program and the MTeach program. The RIM program was commended for being extremely accurate and up-to-date in terms of what is being taught in their classes.

More guest speakers / practitioners are desired. Some even suggested requiring students to attend a minimum number of such events.

Students seek a greater number of internship opportunities and increased help with finding them (students do not like being required to get an internship but then being left on their own to find the internship). Some even suggested requiring internships – but other students seemed to balk at this suggestion – instead, suggesting that internships should be voluntary.

Students want to see what they will be doing in their chosen career – on a day-to-day basis. Some even suggested more field trips to help demonstrate the day-to-day activities in a career.

Student-to-student tutoring was also suggested as a way to help develop social skills and foster relationships and networks for finding jobs.

Students had positive comments about the Academic Maps. However, students did have negative comments about the lack of emphasis on career advising on campus.

## **Social / Personal Learning Experiences**

Students complained about the lack of communication / promotion regarding events on campus other than sporting events. They believe that the athletic department does a great job of informing them about upcoming games, but they do not know when other events that will enhance their social and personal learning experiences are taking place.

Students reported that there is an adequate number of clubs and organizations which students can join. However, there might be a need for more clubs and organizations that cater to non-traditional students – especially those who live off campus. And, some students report that information about these clubs is not well promoted – especially about clubs that are outside of their major.

Students like the opportunities to socialize and interact with other students, e.g., the game room in the student union (meeting new friends playing pool) and the recreation center (meeting new friends for a pick-up basketball game).

There is no public transportation to campus from nearby cities on the weekends. This can create problems for non-traditional students.

There was unanimous and strong support for the importance of forming friendships with other students on campus.

**More friends → less stress about course work → more comfort → increased learning → better grades**



Students like group work because they enjoy working with, and learning from, other students.

Students had positive comments regarding the student health services.

Being able to work on campus also aids in developing socially.

Some students recommended an increased emphasis on teaching personal responsibility – and the sooner the better.

There is a “commuter feel” to the campus. They wish that there were more events going on during the weekend to bring students to the campus on those days. This leads to the lack of a strong community feel on campus. Students also would like more resources (facilities) to be available (open) during the weekends.

### **Pre-Identified Skills**

After students offered their thoughts on these four main areas of learning experiences, they were presented with the following question:

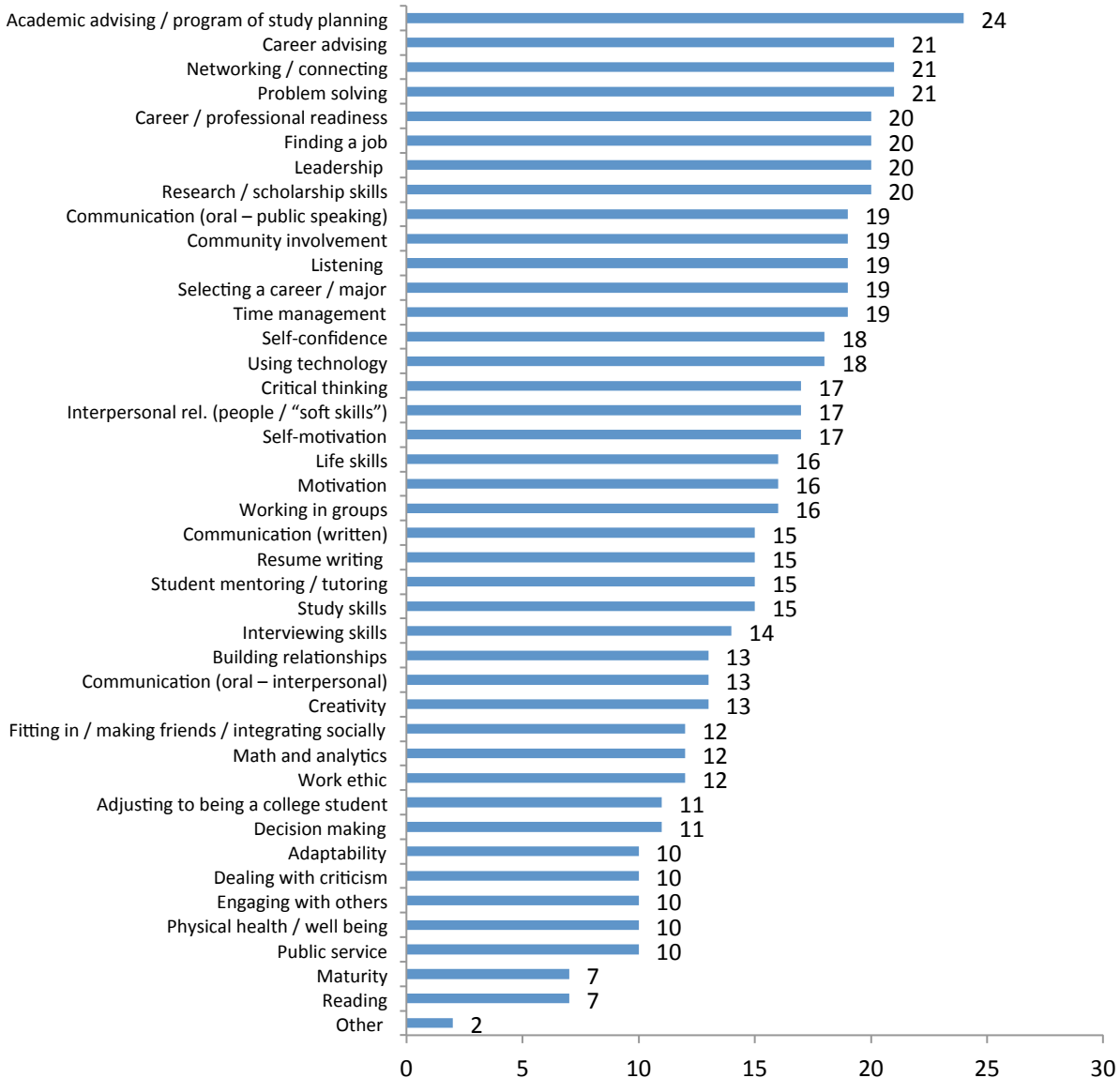
*If I could create a program here at MTSU to help students better succeed and learn more, it would help students with \_\_\_\_\_.*

After giving students time to answer this question and discuss it, they were then given a sheet of paper on which was listed 42 specific skills. Students were asked to place a check mark by those skills that best completed this sentence.

The chart on the following page shows the number of students who checked each of these skills – thus, indicating the degree to which each skill is perceived as being important by students.

**If I could create a program here at MTSU to help students better succeed and learn more, it would help students with \_\_\_\_.**

**[ Number of students selecting each option from the list of pre-identified skills - out of 31 total student participants. ]**



**“Other” Comments:**

- Implement GPS (the current grad. goal doesn’t work). More honors. More interdisciplinary. More peer mentoring.
- Digital literacy. Beyond basic computer skills like typing and posting selfies.

## **Foundations for the Future**

A common theme across all four groups is that of the future.

The academic, personal, social, and professional learning experiences that are most important and valuable are those that allow students to see how their experiences here at MTSU will benefit them in the future.

Students seek educational experiences from MTSU (or, any other university) that help to form a foundation upon which they can build their future.

In sum, it's all about relevance. Students want to see the relevance of their educational experiences to their futures.

MTSU (and, all other universities) are educating students who will become the foundation upon which our nation, society, and culture will be based in the future.

**QEP Focus Group Notes**  
Friday, February 21, 2014  
11:30-1:00 pm in SunTrust Room  
Led by Tim Graeff, Notes Taken by Ronda Henderson  
Juniors, Seniors & Grad Students

Number of students present: 10

**Guidelines provided to students:**

We want to hear what you have to say

No right or wrong

All opinions are important

Talk one at a time

Speak clearly

Will not criticize

Candid, yet courteous

We want to hear about your overall learning experiences: academically, professionally, personally, and socially.

**Rank the four categories...**

Most important—professional, academic (top two)

6 chose professional and 4 chose academics

**Comments:**

Academics can be learned outside of school

If you don't have the professionalism, you won't land the job

The piece of paper (degree) is validation.

It depends on your major which you consider more important

Least important—personal, social

**Comments:**

Personal and social are similar, should be grouped together

Networking, social acceptance

It won't help you mature

Joining professional org can help you to mature.

**In terms of professional skills learned, has there been a positive experience at MTSU?**

**Comments:**

Connections with professional organizations

Sharing information about outside engagements and activities is very important

There is a lack of communication between the departments and college  
There is a lack of knowledge about what's happening on campus.  
Students are often out of the loop-Many student don't take advantage of the resources available, for instance career development center and the writing center.  
Students should be taught and learn more about professionalism prior to their senior year.  
As soon as people declare a major these skills should be taught.

### **Are there adequate support services offered at MTSU?**

#### **Comments:**

Yes

But the majority of students don't know about it  
Some schools used buses to bring their students to the recent career fair in Nashville  
MTDining and Athletics are doing very well in efforts to inform students of events and activities.  
Academic departments should be exploring similar efforts.  
Consider a mass email listserv that is specific to majors

### **What mode of communication is most effective? Email, Campus Signs, Twitter?**

Students feel that email communication is a good form of communication Email and Social media (both will help, but email is most useful.)  
Perhaps students should be provided with a menu of topic items in which they can choose to opt in or opt out of receiving information using Pipeline.

### **In terms of academic skills learned, has there been a positive experience at MTSU?**

#### **Comments:**

Yes

The EXL program has been a great place to offer more emphasis on real world application.  
More emphasis should be placed on developing these types of experiences because...  
We can apply what we've learned in life.  
We can learn more on your own.  
We are able to convey and present info to others  
We can integrate more sharing in the field

More emphasis should be placed on providing internship opportunities.  
Perhaps internships should be mandatory? At least optional.  
There should be greater access to them and we should be better informed of the availability.  
Develop a program coordinator or have a centralized location specific to each major.

### **Any barriers faced in the classroom?**

#### **Comments:**

More rigor is needed

Smaller class sizes

Knowing your fellow students (in and out of class), more group learning

More group work outside of class? No!

Perhaps offer a lab that is tied to courses similar to the science courses.

Student learning community? Cohort? Possibly

More shared class offerings for students to foster learning communities

What are your thoughts on learning living communities? No, diversity is better.

Living learning communities are offered to freshmen currently. The freshman dorms seem to be working for the freshmen.

More Honors courses are needed.

Suggestion for faculty to teach at graduate level, test at the undergrad level

Interdisciplinary courses needed.

Interdisciplinary minors are helpful.

Customized degree options should be offered.

We must consider the changing dynamics of our individual industries. The curriculum should be modified to adapt to those changes.

Irrelevant courses are being taught.

### **Are there social/personal barriers?**

#### **Comments:**

Lack of communication across campus.

Being a commuter campus makes it hard to make connections.

Gender studies course should be mandated.

Diversity issues are not addressed enough in the curriculum.

Students must take initiative to be more informed also.

Non-traditional students make up (20%)

Perhaps offer more evening and weekend engagement opportunities?

Communication is a concern. A system that allows students to opt in or out of email subscription may be helpful.

The problem with using social media to inform is the clutter. The message may be buried.

### **My overall learning experience here at MTSU would be better if:**

Faculty collaborated more

Student organizations work together more

More collaboration

### **I could learn more if:**

**If I could create a new program here at MTSU to help students better succeed and learn more, it would help students with:**

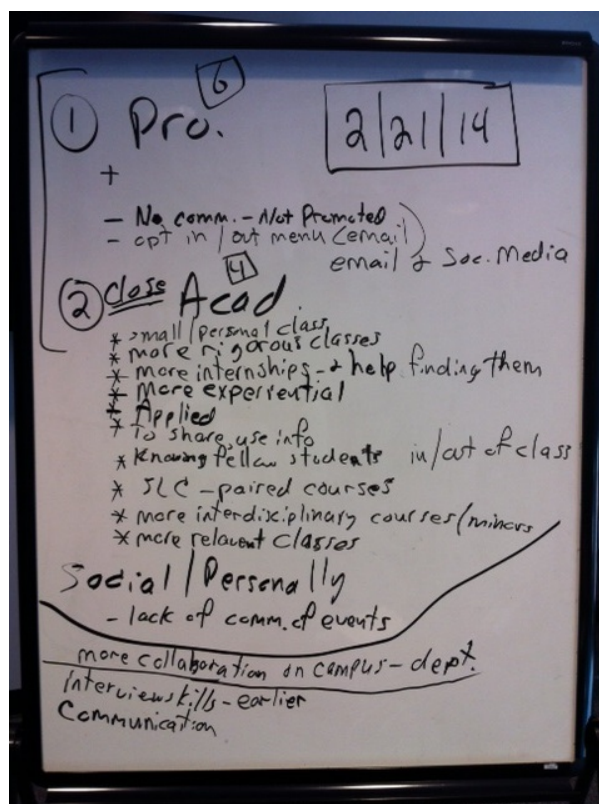
Interview skills earlier  
Career readiness skills  
Communication skills-written  
Professionalism-skills that are tailored to your specific field (area)

**There should be more emphasis placed on:**

Academic advising. Yes  
Adaptability. Flexibility. Yes  
Community involvement. Yes  
See blue handouts...

**Other:**

Academic advising is an issue  
More student-led independent study  
Offer peer-advising



## QEP Focus Group Notes

Monday, February 24, 2014

11:30-1:00 pm in Suntrust Room

Led by Tim Graeff; Notes Taken by Dianna Rust

Freshmen and Sophomores

Number of students present: 4

### **Guidelines provided to students:**

We want to hear what you have to say

No right or wrong

All opinions are important

Talk one at a time

Speak clearly

Will not criticize

Candid, yet courteous

**Moderator:** Have you had a good learning experience?

**Participants:** Unanimously Yes

Set own schedule; several class times available

Like computer science classrooms, technology is helpful, multiple projectors

Extra credit opportunities

Faculty are flexible dealing with student life situations

**We want to hear about your overall learning experiences: academically, professionally, personally, and socially.**

### **Rank the four categories...**

Most important—professional, academic (top two)

2 chose academics; 2 chose professional

1. Academic, professional, personal, social
2. Professional, academic, social, personal
3. Academic, professional, social, personal
4. Professional, social, personal, academic

### **Comments**

Professional: I want more than just an academic background

Social: Because easier to study when I am with people

Social: Fitting in



**Why have you had a good learning experience?**

Good teachers, willing to help, availability, flexibility, interactive

Flexibility important

Content ties together; I like when you see the same content across two different courses

Faculty are well rounded

Information presented is up to date

Tutoring centers that help students

Financial aid and other student services that you can do online are very convenient

Connection between student and faculty is important; impacts ability to learn

**What are some barriers you experienced that impede academics?**

Teacher style of presenting is difficult to follow

Teachers with opinionated personality

Some faculty not willing to be flexible when life circumstances happen

A course where if you do everything required you will get a C, very difficult to get a B or A

Difficult to figure out what the faculty want to get a better grade

**In terms of professional development has there been a positive experience at MTSU?**

Every class professor relates to real life and practical application

Like practical application of theory in class

Department emails about part-time job opportunity

Looking for practice in the field

Career fairs are good. One was just for our major

More practical application better

**Professional skill development barriers?**

Not enough emphasis on career advising. Academic advisor did not do this.

English class could have had an assignment related to career

**In terms of social skills development has there been a positive experience at MTSU?**

Atmosphere makes it easy to network

There are enough clubs that everyone can be involved

Easy to create a new club

Take 4 classes with same group of students, able to study together (Learning Communities)

Taking classes with students from a prior class

University makes a good effort to get students involved especially during fall

**Social development barriers?**

Don't live in area, not on campus very much

More emphasis on non- traditional student to help fit in

No Regional Transportation Authority on weekends for students in Nashville

Level of involvement impacts academics

More comfortable then less stress

Could do a better job to encourage more group work, problems in classes, etc. but grade should not be a group grade

**In terms of personal skill development has there been a positive experience at MTSU?**

This university does this very well

Promotes services well

Health services

Recreation center

**Learning experience would be better if...**

**I could learn more if...**

Focus on everybody understanding the content and that no one falls behind. Stop to gain understanding then proceed. Faculty who care.

Faculty provided more variety of assessments (written assignments, take home final, less tests more writing and discussion)

Less high stakes assignments. Learn more with less stress

Teacher has flexibility built into grading (drops two lowest quiz and homework grades, optional final to substitute for another exam etc.)

Recognize different learning styles matter

Would like to see syllabus in advance, get fit between teacher and learning style

Study groups with students to explain content differently than the faculty

Peer support is better than tutor support

**If I could create a new program it would help students with**

Finding careers after college

Finding scholarships

Meeting other students with similar interests in the freshman year (example: 1 credit hour class in interest area so you meet students with a like interest)

① Academically (2)

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- + Good Teachers / Flex / into or to date
- + Good Classroom Tech.
- + Course Tie-ins
- + Tutoring centers
- Teaching styles / personalities
- teacher - Not being flexible / accommodating

② Professional

- + practical exper Application in classes
- + well informed about career opportunities (Cap. dept)
- + more Application the better
- Lack of emphasis on career advising

③ Socially

- + large # of clubs - well promoted
- need more emphasis on non-Trad.
- Transp. to campus - weekends
- Friends → ↑ comfort, ↓ stress → ↑ grade (learning)
- more group work

④ Personality

- + Health stris.

To id fit with teacher  
\* syllabus from last semester

## QEP Focus Group Notes

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

11:30-1:00 pm in Suntrust Room

Led by Tim Graeff; Notes Taken by Ronda Henderson; Recorded by Alexis Denton  
Juniors, Seniors & Grad Students

Number of students present: 10

### **Guidelines provided to students:**

We want to hear what you have to say

No right or wrong

All opinions are important

Talk one at a time

Speak clearly

Will not criticize

Candid, yet courteous

No phone zone

We want to hear about your overall learning experiences: academically, professionally, personally, and socially.

### **Rank the four categories...**

Academic, Professional, Personal, and Social (in that order)

Most important—academic, professional

### Academic

#### **Comments:**

Positive experiences because...

MTSU have professors who care

They incorporate multiple learning styles.

Professors should focus on class preparation. There should be more discussions during class time.

Professors should be available outside of class.

There should be a combination of theory and real world experiences brought into the classroom.

Academic barriers?

Need more practitioners in classroom

Guest speakers

Education should not be a top down process. Structure can inhibit the learning the process.

There should be more academic rigor. Teachers who are easier and cover less material aren't helpful.

There should be a sense of accountability from students.

Many students become invested in what interests them.

A need for a sense of belonging

There should be multiple assessment tools provided in class, not just multiple-choice tests straight from the textbook.

There should be smaller classes; the large auditorium seating is distracting.

### Professional

#### **Comments:**

Experiential learning is a great opportunity, but it's not publicized well enough.

Interdisciplinary courses are needed.

Guest speakers should be encouraged. For example, Physics colloquiums are required for freshmen.

Should these be a requirement to attend? If so, make them 1 hour class-not too rigorous.

More internships/field experiences needed.

When is a good time? Sophomore/Junior

More hands-on experiences

MTSU seems to focus more on immersion into discipline area. But until you pick a major, there is not much to help the undeclared majors.

Not enough information for undecided. Pipeline information should be filtered. Perhaps a menu to customize how to opt in/opt out of information is needed.

Emails or social media? Better form of communication is email.

What about MyMT? Customize to filter and have it pushed to your phone. It makes use of things we already have established.

Least important—personal, social

#### **Comments:**

Campus is still a commuter campus.

Community as a whole is fragmented.

Lack of awareness-communication barriers

More weekend events needed

Centralized location for finding out information on campus (other than MyMT)

Students need to take advantage of activities that are available!

We are humans, not robots. The human element should not be ignored.

#### **My overall learning experience here at MTSU would be better if:**

Science building was built 10 years ago

More rigor

Better Advising—a connection with advisors and focus of career planning.

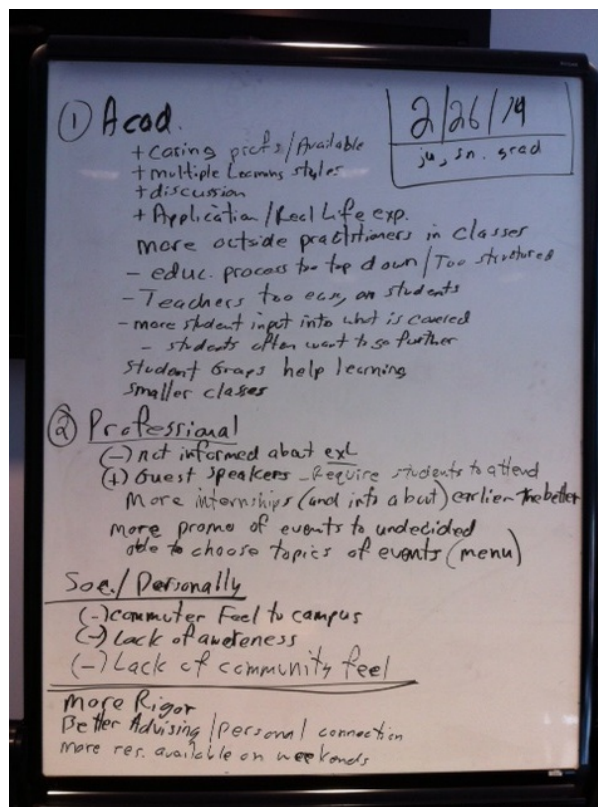
Weekend availability of library and other resources

If I could create a new program here at MTSU to help students better succeed and learn more, it would help students with:

- Communicate, personal interactions
- Real-world experiences
- College Mentors
- Helping students find there place-similar to UNIV 1010

There should be more emphasis placed on:

See blue handouts...



## QEP Focus Group Notes

Friday, February 28, 2014

11:30-1:00 pm in Suntrust Room

Led by Tim Graeff; Notes Taken by Dianna Rust; Recorded by Alexis Denton  
Freshmen & Sophomore Students

Number of students present: 7

### **Have you had a positive experience at MTSU?**

Yes very pleasant professors. Equal attention to students. Not biased, Good teachers

Involved, make great grades met interesting people

Volunteer outside campus, have had great professors, hear in gen eds that professors are just there or don't like teaching gen ed less motivation to teach them, she hasn't personally experienced

Like when professors are excited about their teaching

This semester having unpleasant experience when prof are too excited about research

Want to learn something useful or relevant in gen ed

Lots of class discussion helps us connect to talk to other students and the professor in class.  
Many times don't get to talk in class

Develop social skills for real world

Study groups outside class helps

Honors classes are more relaxed, less lecture, study group in class, found effective, more personalized approach, teacher more accessible

### **Overall learning experience:**

How do you rank academic, social, personal, profession?

All important but #1 academics

-socially for freshman year -- learning community really helped, don't live on campus -think all equally important -professionally - MTeach helps prepare to be teacher -academically and then professionally -personally and socially most important for future --more than being a scholar but need all of them -all interconnected but academic most important -all interconnected but academic most important

## Academically

Things that helped you academically or barriers -techniques for real world settings helpful; oral comm; work more efficiently -expected to have reading done-more fun to be trusted; instead of checking up on readings being done thru an assignment or quiz; more of the teacher lecturing is a barrier; allow student to reflect on content -learning to manage time is important; dealing with stress -work required in class should be profitable not busy work; ok if it is training me for the future in profession/career -ENGL 1009 class lots of guidance but ability to move up quickly to 1010; classes that help me be a good student -dislike busy work because it makes the student taper off; too repetitive is not good; relevant is important -built in extra credit; journals helped with final paper -grades not kept up to date; grades posted somewhere so you can see where you are in the class; mid-term grade helped before that no clue where he stood - standard time to have grade posted -in two weeder classes but the mid-term was helpful to change student behavior but it is stressful too -when you start bad hard to make it up -test prof to see how much effort he has to put into it

## Things that helped or barriers Socially?

-game room helpful to meet new people  
-rec center pick-up basketball games  
-joining student organizations-SGA; build leadership skills -could do a better job promoting student organizations -would like to know about other student orgs -typically only know about those in your field; challenging to find out about others -organizations are not as important to me-already connected in community -school web site can help -student lack motivation to do much research on this -don't live on campus and difficult to participate at 7 p.m. at night but difficult to come back or hand around -difficult to get involved if commuting student

## Things that help or barriers for you personally?

-environment makes you learn to take responsibility -take advice from advisors but know yourself; advisor told student if you can't do this maybe you are not ready for this major - worked on campus for academic scholarship in the college of ed as office aid helped a lot; advice from people at work; close adult friends; support at work

## Things that help or barriers for you Professionally Helpful :

-RIM program is great at that; stay in tune with the industry -graphic design skills can use every day in freelance work -doing a great job preparing me for the real world--communication skills - MTeach program is great; already teaching in an elementary school as a freshman; then go to middle school; build skills -writing lesson plan then go do it; confirms career path -Also MTeach builds community; have a space to work on academic with other students that are more knowledgeable--have gone through the class already -Honors College experience is great, about career paths, give tips like scholarship information and Collage, make a personal connection - Professors have helped me across disciplines to help me succeed -Academic Maps are easy to understand



## Overall learning experience would be better if? I could learn more if?

-my gen ed classes were just pass or fail; don't enjoy these; but they have helped me communicate better -there are too many gen eds required -want to focus on discipline because I am not undecided -some gen ed are more beneficial than others to my major; if they were slanted more towards my major it would be better--write papers on a topic in the field -want all the AP credit to count at MTSU (ie all English) -ENGL linked to the college (ie related to Mass Comm, Business) -gen ed should be general not specific -gen ed should be relevant -gen ed is important to a well-rounded education

If I could create a new program to help students better succeed and learn more it would help students with...

-appreciation for the professors--too many instances students disrespect the faculty - opportunity to get practical experience early on; see what career would be like; day to day insight to career; courses that focus on this or incorporate this -more MTeach programs -need more field trips -would like more choice in gen ed for it to be more major specific

## General comments

advisor allows texting to connect which is great professor has social gathering with students is great

