

**EDGE/QEP Steering Committee Meeting**  
**Volpe Library 117**  
**Feb. 27, 2017**  
**11:00 a.m.**

Present	Laura Cruz, Lenly Weathers, Steve Robinson, Kurt Eisen
Absent	Sharon Huo, Ed Lisic, Nicholas Russell
Recorder	Lenly Weathers
Approval of Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unanimously approved by the committee.</li> </ul>
Approval of Jan. 12, 2017 Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unanimously approved by the committee.</li> </ul>
EDGE curriculum grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Motion 1</u>: recruit FYE Connections instructors for EDGE curriculum grants for fall 2017 with a \$500 stipend for participating faculty in their first year and with a \$200 stipend in their second year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Motion was discussed. Changes to the memo that would be sent to the instructors were discussed (the memo is attached in final form). The memo that was sent to the University Curriculum Committee on Jan. 19, 2017, proposing changes to the FYE Connections class was discussed (the memo is attached). The results of the NSSE 2016 Experiences with Information Literacy for first year students was discussed (results are attached).</li> <li>○ Approval of the motion was unanimous.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Other Such Matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announcement of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ CISE grant proposals due Mar. 3</li> <li>○ Spring Break Mar. 6 to Mar. 10</li> <li>○ EDGE creative inquiry curriculum grant applications due Mar. 24</li> <li>○ <b><u>EDGE Faculty Fellow application deadline Mar. 31</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ QEP Steering Committee reviews applications Apr. 13</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ Research and Creative Inquiry Day Apr. 5 and Apr. 6</li> <li>○ Faculty Recognition Reception April 20 (5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.)</li> <li>○ Camp QEP to be held from May 15 to May 17, 2017.</li> <li>○ Camp QEP for 1020/FYE Connections instructors will be held on May 19.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The meeting adjourned at noon.</li> </ul>

## QEP EDGE Instructional Development Grant: First-Year Connections Classes

Recently, the student learning outcomes of all “First Year Connections” classes were updated by the University Curriculum Committee to include *creative inquiry* as a required component. These courses currently are AGR 1020, BIOL 1000, CHEM 1500, GEOL 1020, HIST 1066, UNPP 1020, MSCI 1020, UBUS 1020, FOED 1822, UNMU 1020, EXPW 1021, ENGR 1020, CHE 1010, CEE 1020, ECE 1020, ESS 1020, UNIV 1020, NURS 1020, UNIV 1030, and HON 1010.

### Updated First Year Connections Student Learning Outcomes

- Build meaningful connections
  - With other students (develop personal and professional networks)
  - With the faculty and staff in your department/program
  - With the life of the University
  - With available resources and support systems for both academics and student life
- Integrate students’ college experiences with their future plans and ambitions
- Demonstrate proficiency in the identification and evaluation of information sources to support academic inquiry
- Exercise written and oral communication skills to discover, develop, and articulate ideas and viewpoints

### What is creative inquiry?

Creative inquiry is the topic of Tech’s Quality Enhancement Plan, *EDGE: Enhanced Discovery through Guided Exploration*. It is **the process of exploring issues, objects or works through the collection and analysis of evidence including combining or synthesizing existing ideas, products, or expertise in original ways to answer an open-ended question or achieve a desired goal.**

### What is a QEP EDGE First-Year Connections Instructional Development Grant?

QEP EDGE First-Year Connections Instructional Development Grants serve to support your efforts to transform your First Year Connections course to integrate creative inquiry. Each successful grant applicant will receive two stipends spread over two years, the first for \$500 and the second for \$200, payable upon successful completion of the project requirements. These stipends are in addition to the standard First Year Connections stipends. As an EDGE grant recipient, you will be expected to participate in a number of activities designed to educate, enhance and assess your efforts. A complete list of these obligations follows below.

### How do I apply?

1. The deadline to apply is March 31, 2017.
2. Fill out the online [First-Year Connections Instructional Development Grant form](#),
3. Ask your Chair or Supervisor to complete the online [First-Year Connections Instructional Development Grant Support form](#), and
4. Email the following to [lweathers@tntech.edu](mailto:lweathers@tntech.edu). Submit all materials in pdf format. Use this prefix as the first part of any document name: "2017FirstYearConnections\_Lastname....pdf." Your grant application should include:
  - a. A copy of your current First Year Connections course syllabus.
  - b. A brief statement of interest explaining your motivation for integrating creative inquiry and your initial thoughts on how inquiry might enhance the learning in your class. (250 words maximum)

### What are some examples of creative inquiry projects for my class?

1. Instructor-guided inquiry: the instructor provides a question or problem for students to investigate and, possibly, methods and analytical procedures; students collect and analyze data to make conclusions, putting their work into the broader context of the field. Students present their results in writing or in a discussion, e.g., a debate.

2. Creative exploration: students engage in a creative project to address a question or problem of their own choosing or one provided by their instructor, situating their work in the broader context of the field. Students present their work in a discipline-appropriate manner.
3. Literature-based inquiry: students conduct a review of the literature pertaining to a given topic and present their results in writing or in a discussion.
4. “Case-based” or “problem-based” inquiry; similar to instructor-guided inquiry, but the data or scenario to be analyzed is simulated.
5. Enactment of practice: inquiry learning is grounded in practice or fieldwork; students typically provide service to real or simulated clients.

#### How will grant proposals be evaluated?

Proposals will be evaluated by the following criteria:

- **Potential to change your course;** how you express your willingness to implement new methods and how these changes seek to improve student learning.

#### If I receive a QEP Instructional Development grant, what am I committing myself to do?

QEP EDGE First-Year Connections Instructional Development Grant recipients will agree to the following:

1. Attend “Camp QEP: First Year Connections” on May 19, 2017 for support in developing your creative inquiry assignment(s) or project.
2. Design a creative inquiry component for your course and implement it. Possibilities include activities such as projects that include information literacy components (e.g. outlines, annotated bibliographies, rough drafts); directed library-based research; and academic integrity (including plagiarism and citations).
3. Conduct the following activities for an annual report (due each summer) to be sent to the Director of University Assessment, Dr. Theresa Ennis, for two consecutive offerings of the course, including the initial year of funding:
  - a. Summarize the goals of the original project and progress made in reaching them
  - b. Explain how you plan to improve your course based on your assessment of the course
  - c. Include student results from Tech’s information literacy modules quiz
  - d. Upload a copy of the assignment(s)/project related to creative inquiry
4. Participate in a fall focus group discussion.
5. Have your First Year Connections students complete a creative inquiry course survey.
6. Be willing to share your experience and expertise with other First Year Connections course instructors.

MEMORANDUM

TO: The University Curriculum Committee

FROM: The Committee to Revise the FYE Course  
Pedro Arce  
Rita Barnes  
Laura Cruz  
Edith Duvier  
Sharon Huo  
Allen Mullis  
Linda Null, Chair  
Steve Robinson  
Amy Lee Rogers  
Lenly Weathers

DATE: January 19, 2017

SUBJECT: Change of course description for UNIV 1020 and program goals and student learning outcomes for the FYE courses, effective Fall 2017

I. Course Change

A. Change the course description for UNIV 1020 First-Year Connections

From:

UNIV 1020. First-Year Connections. Rec. 2. Credit 1. Prerequisite: Freshman standing. Engages the student in meaningful academic and non-academic, out-of-classroom activities. Emphasizes critical thinking in the formation of academic and social goals and support groups, and in self-management and study skills.

To:

First-Year Connections. Rec. 2 Credit 1. Prerequisite: Freshman standing. Engages students in meaningful academic and nonacademic, in-class and out-of-class activities. Emphasizes ethical behavior and the use of critical thinking in the formation of academic and social goals and support groups, and in self-management and study skills. Includes a creative inquiry project/activity which students should share.

B. Change the student learning outcomes and program goals for all FYE courses

The student learning outcomes and program goals described in this memo will be used in all courses that serve as the first-year connections courses. These courses, currently, are AGR 1020, BIOL 1000, CHEM 1500, GEOL 1020, HIST 1066, UNPP 1020, MSCI 1020, UBUS 1020, FOED 1822, UNMU 1020, EXPW 1021, ENGR 1020, CHE 1010, CEE 1020, ECE 1020, ESS 1020, UNIV 1020, NURS 1020, UNIV 1030, and HON 1010.

From: To connect students with other students, encouraging both academic and personal networks

To connect students with the University and the Department

To connect students' college experiences with their future plans and ambitions

To improve retention, especially between the freshman and sophomore years

To: First-Year Connections Student Learning Outcomes:

- Build meaningful connections
  - With other students (develop personal and professional networks)
  - With the faculty and staff in your department/program
  - With the student life of the University
  - With available resources and support systems for both academics and student life
- Integrate students' college experiences with their future plans and career ambitions
- Demonstrate proficiency in the identification and evaluation of information sources to support academic inquiry and introduce students to elements of creative inquiry/research.
- Exercise written and oral communication skills to discover, develop, and articulate ideas and viewpoints.

First-Year Connections Program Goals

- Foster student success, as measured through first-semester to second-semester retention rates.
- Utilize and promote support networks for a diverse student body, including at-risk and high-achieving populations
- Support students in building personal, curricular, and co-curricular connections across the campus as part of their continued transition to the University
- Provide pathways to address academic challenges of college transition, including the development of foundational skills in critical thinking, information literacy, and ethical reasoning
- Cultivate a growth mindset for TTU students, including attention to articulating and achieving both short- and long-term personal, academic, and career goals
- Promote service learning and civic engagement

JUSTIFICATION: As the recent SACSCOC report revealed, the first-year connections courses, overall, did not have program goals, only student outcomes, and those outcomes had not been revised since the beginning of the first-year connections course program in 2004. The course, like almost every other course TTU offers, has taken on new responsibilities, roles, and goals over the years. These new learning outcomes reflect the changes in the course.

The addition of a research creative inquiry project/activity will introduce students to basic research their first year at the University. Undergraduate research has been identified as a High Impact Practice that contributes to student retention. With increasing numbers of freshmen coming to TTU with prior credit for freshman English, the University must assure that new students are introduced to college-level research. Further, the addition of a research component in the FYE course will help to address two areas where the 2016 NSSE response by seniors indicated that TTU was significantly lower than its peers:

How much has your coursework emphasized evaluating a point of view, decision, or information science? (TTU mean: 2.7; Carnegie Class: 3.1)

Identified key information from reading assignments (TTU mean: 2.9; Carnegie Class 3.3)

(Information provided by the Office of Assessment based on the 2016 NSSE results)

In addition, the revision in the course content of the first-year connections course will provide the first tier in students' preparation for participating in creative inquiry and thereby enhance performance in future QEP projects. With the inclusion of an entry level research project/activity, each of the 20 different first-year connections courses will be able to incorporate and align this component to meet the program's learning outcomes. Students in the program will share their research by creating posters, giving speeches/presentations, writing papers, creating models, performing and documenting observations, or through various other methods that support the particular project or course.

### First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values <sup>c</sup>	Response options	Frequency Distributions <sup>a</sup>				Statistical Comparisons <sup>b</sup>		
				Tennessee Tech		Information Literacy		Tennessee Tech	Information Literacy	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
<b>1. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?</b>										
a. Completed an assignment that used an information source (book, article, website, etc.) other than required course readings	INL01a	1	Never	10	3	512	2	<b>2.9</b>	3.2 ***	-0.30
		2	Sometimes	79	31	4,460	19			
		3	Often	91	35	8,240	36			
		4	Very often	82	31	9,494	43			
		Total		262	100	22,706	100			
b. Worked on a paper or project that had multiple smaller assignments such as an outline, annotated bibliography, rough draft, etc.	INL01b	1	Never	34	12	1,155	5	<b>2.6</b>	3.0 ***	-0.39
		2	Sometimes	92	35	5,690	26			
		3	Often	82	32	8,602	38			
		4	Very often	55	20	7,178	31			
		Total		263	100	22,625	100			
c. Received feedback from an instructor that improved your use of information resources (source selection, proper citation, etc.)	INL01c	1	Never	33	11	1,165	5	<b>2.6</b>	2.9 ***	-0.33
		2	Sometimes	85	34	6,135	27			
		3	Often	95	38	8,887	39			
		4	Very often	49	18	6,398	29			
		Total		262	100	22,585	100			
d. Completed an assignment that used the library's electronic collection of articles, books, and journals (JSTOR, EBSCO, LexisNexis, ProQuest, etc.)	INL01d	1	Never	74	28	4,238	18	<b>2.2</b>	2.5 ***	-0.33
		2	Sometimes	87	33	7,592	32			
		3	Often	74	29	6,158	27			
		4	Very often	26	10	4,611	22			
		Total		261	100	22,599	100			
e. Decided not to use an information source in a course assignment due to its questionable quality	INL01e	1	Never	79	28	5,704	26	<b>2.1</b>	2.2 *	-0.12
		2	Sometimes	106	42	8,945	39			
		3	Often	55	23	5,309	23			
		4	Very often	21	7	2,628	12			
		Total		261	100	22,586	100			
f. Changed the focus of a paper or project based on information you found while researching the topic	INL01f	1	Never	62	22	3,690	17	<b>2.2</b>	2.3 *	-0.14
		2	Sometimes	113	44	9,760	44			
		3	Often	59	24	6,178	26			
		4	Very often	28	10	2,932	13			
		Total		262	100	22,560	100			
g. Looked for a reference that was cited in something you read	INL01g	1	Never	60	21	3,716	15	<b>2.3</b>	2.5 ***	-0.24
		2	Sometimes	103	40	8,211	36			
		3	Often	71	29	6,996	31			
		4	Very often	26	10	3,619	17			
		Total		260	100	22,542	100			
h. Identified how a book, article, or creative work has contributed to a field of study	INL01h	1	Never	70	26	4,457	19	<b>2.2</b>	2.4 ***	-0.23
		2	Sometimes	106	40	8,448	37			
		3	Often	62	25	6,317	28			
		4	Very often	25	9	3,273	15			
		Total		263	100	22,495	100			

### First-Year Students

Item wording or description	Variable name	Values <sup>c</sup>	Response options	Frequency Distributions <sup>a</sup>				Statistical Comparisons <sup>b</sup>		
				Tennessee Tech		Information Literacy		Tennessee Tech	Information Literacy	Effect size <sup>d</sup>
				Count	%	Count	%	Mean	Mean	
<b>2. During the current school year, how much have your instructors emphasized the following?</b>										
a. Not plagiarizing another author's work	INL02a	1	Very little	5	2	393	2	<b>3.5</b>	3.6	-.09
		2	Some	21	8	1,418	6			
		3	Quite a bit	53	23	4,711	20			
		4	Very much	182	67	16,082	71			
		Total		261	100	22,604	100			
b. Appropriately citing the sources used in a paper or project	INL02b	1	Very little	9	3	406	2	<b>3.2</b>	3.5 ***	-.38
		2	Some	48	20	2,015	9			
		3	Quite a bit	75	29	6,116	26			
		4	Very much	131	48	14,028	63			
		Total		263	100	22,565	100			
c. Using scholarly or peer-reviewed sources in your course assignments	INL02c	1	Very little	24	8	924	4	<b>3.0</b>	3.3 ***	-.31
		2	Some	59	24	3,423	16			
		3	Quite a bit	72	28	6,868	30			
		4	Very much	108	40	11,319	50			
		Total		263	100	22,534	100			
d. Questioning the quality of information sources	INL02d	1	Very little	28	11	1,351	7	<b>2.9</b>	3.1 ***	-.25
		2	Some	69	27	4,501	20			
		3	Quite a bit	70	26	7,029	30			
		4	Very much	95	36	9,620	43			
		Total		262	100	22,501	100			
e. Using practices (terminology, methods, writing style, etc.) of a specific major or field of study	INL02e	1	Very little	32	12	1,862	9	<b>2.8</b>	3.0 ***	-.21
		2	Some	69	26	5,180	23			
		3	Quite a bit	76	30	6,660	29			
		4	Very much	84	31	8,693	40			
		Total		261	100	22,395	100			
<b>3. How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in using information effectively?</b>										
	INL03	1	Very little	5	2	624	3	<b>2.9</b>	3.1 *	-.16
		2	Some	67	26	4,355	19			
		3	Quite a bit	127	48	10,286	44			
		4	Very much	64	24	7,281	33			
		Total		263	100	22,546	100			

\*p<.05, \*\*p<.01, \*\*\*p<.001 (2-tailed); Refer to the endnotes page for the key to triangle symbols.