Overview of the Quality Initiative
Central Michigan University
Final Report
April 2016

Central Michigan University's Quality Initiative (QI)—*Promoting Academic Challenge: Taking Stock and Moving Forward*—aims to advance academic excellence by promoting a greater focus on academic challenge across undergraduate education. In the first year (2013-2014), we convened a QI Leadership Team representing all academic colleges, Academic Senate, Global Campus, the Office of Academic Effectiveness, the Faculty Center for Innovative Teaching (FaCIT, now the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning [CETL]), and undergraduate and graduate students. After reviewing earlier committee reports, we initiated a campus-wide conversation to identify promising targets for change and to solicit project ideas. In addition to collecting input through stakeholder meetings and a QI email address, we encouraged innovative thinking by launching two ideation websites where faculty, staff and students could post project suggestions and comment on posted ideas.

During this conversation, the faculty repeatedly expressed a need for resources and strategies to help them advance students' reading, writing, critical thinking, and independent learning skills. Prompted by an ideation post from the Director of General Education, and mirroring a possibility put forth in our QI proposal, the Leadership Team focused on meeting these needs in 100- and 200-level classes (especially University Program courses). A second decision refined the direction of our subsequent planning: Supported by the development of a Teaching and Learning Toolkit, QI projects would promote academic challenge by infusing information about learning and evidence-based teaching strategies throughout the University Program. In the spring of Year 1, two initiatives explored this concept: a demonstration project with faculty volunteers, and surveys of the on- and off-campus faculty, teaching graduate students, and undergraduate students to identify needed resources.

In Years 2 and 3, an expanded Leadership Team planned the infrastructure to produce resources for four initial projects:

- *The Teaching and Learning Toolkit*. We hired an editor for printed resources and funded a provisional multimedia position to provide the technical assistance needed to produce online learning modules.
- *Extended faculty orientation*. In cooperation with volunteer faculty members, we produced *Read This Before You Teach*, a manual on teaching and learning that could be rendered as an online learning module.
- *An online student orientation learning module on academic issues*. This in-progress module will discuss academic expectations at a university, how to budget time for studying, effective study and wellness strategies, and campus resources.
- *The Writing Intensive (WI) project*. Responding to the need for more WI sections in the General Education Program, QI staff members visited key academic departments to disseminate information about WI courses. Also, we partnered with CELTT for an initiative to produce online training for WI instructors and a team of WI peer mentors.

In sum, our QI is a collection of projects to disseminate evidence-based practices and foundational knowledge to instructors and students by promoting the development of on-demand resources and learning modules. Because project content represents well-researched interventions/principles, our assessment plan involves tracking the integration of content into CMU's academic culture, with the Collegiate Learning Assessment, NESSE survey, and program assessments monitoring student achievement trends and the rigor of their classroom experiences.

Scope and Impact of the Initiative

QI Purposes and Goals

The purpose of our QI is to build upon past efforts, utilize current research on best-practices, and engage in a campus conversation resulting in a plan to promote a challenging academic environment for our undergraduates. While most academic majors are of very high quality in their junior and senior years, there is greater variation in the abilities of entering freshmen and the rigor of their introductory courses. We selected academic challenge as our focus because this issue reinforces a key feature of our Vision and Mission statements, recognizes that student success is at the forefront of our strategic plan, is responsive to student feedback (e.g., as indexed by responses on the NSSE), and builds on prior efforts and the faculty's commitment to excellence.

A set of prior initiatives served as the springboard for the QI. Several faculty committee reports, including *Raising Academic Performance*, *Academic Standards*, and *Foundations of Excellence*, had outlined steps toward greater academic commitment. Although many recommendations from these efforts had already been implemented (e.g., improving the availability of high quality advising, instituting an early warning system for students experiencing academic difficulty), some had not (e.g., creating a development/training program for instructors and staff that is geared to the needs of first-year students). Following these efforts, the desire to better align students' experiences with CMU's liberal education goals prompted a revamping of our General Education Program. This initiative, which was implemented in the fall of 2014, restructured the University Program and added new quantitative reasoning and writing requirements to the existing competencies in mathematics, speech, and composition.

During these efforts, a grass-roots faculty initiative, the Teaching and Learning Collective (TLC), formed to address their interest in improving students' higher-order thinking skills. With financial support from the College of Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences and the Provost's office, beginning in 2011 the TLC held workshops, organized well-attended yearly teaching conferences, and sponsored a series of high-profile speakers (Richard Arum and Josipa Roksa, authors of *Academically Adrift*, Stanley Fish, author of *How to Write a Sentence: And How to Read One*, Anthony DelBanco, author of *College: What is Was, Is, and Should Be*, and Barbara Oakley, author of *A Mind for Numbers*). The TLC continues to attract faculty participation through a clear, two-pronged mission: (a) to promote academic rigor by (b) disseminating evidence-based course practices. Although the TLC is independent of other campus programs and the QI, one of the co-chairs, Merlyn Mowrey, served during the first two years of the QI as a Core Team member to promote dialog between the QI Leadership Team and the TLC.

Year 1 activities, findings, and responses. Because extensive discussions had already occurred at CMU on the topic of academic challenge, our goals for Year 1 were to review prior efforts, initiate a campus-wide conversation about academic challenge, solicit suggestions for how to restrict the scope of our QI, and plan one or more initial projects. In the summer of 2013, Dr. Claudia Douglass (Vice Provost for Academic Effectiveness) convened a Core Team consisting of three faculty members: Dr. Debra Poole (Psychology—cognitive development), Dr. Merlyn Mowery (Philosophy and Religion—co-chair of the TLC), and Dr. Debra Linton (Biology—science pedagogy). Drs. Poole and Douglass then assembled a Leadership Team that included representatives from each college, the chair of Academic Senate, Global Campus (our off-campus and online programs) and FaCIT, with three student representatives. (In the second year, the Director of General Education and the Executive Director of the Center for Inclusion and Diversity joined the Leadership Team).

The Leadership Team launched an outreach strategy that included a QI website and email address along with visits to academic departments and employee groups (the Faculty Association Executive Board, the Union of Teaching Faculty, the Professional and Administrative Council), the Academic Senate Executive Board and the Academic Senate, the Council of Chairs, the Academic Affairs Directors, the General Education Committee, and Enrollment and Student Services. Included in our outreach efforts were an early interview about the QI on CMU public radio and an article in *CMU Life* (the student newspaper).

To explore involvement strategies beyond CMU's usual approaches, we created the first ideation websites at CMU. Ideation sites are Web sites where individuals can post ideas, rank them, and comment on others' ideas. This method of citizen engagement is widely used by political parties, businesses (e.g., Dell's Ideastorm, Barnes & Noble idea contest), and is federally mandated for many government agencies. (For an example response to the Open Government Initiative, see NASA's citizen's engagement analysis at www.nasa.gov.) With staff support from the Office of Information Technology, we built our ideation sites in a platform that was familiar to our campus community because it is used for committee communications (SharePoint). We then posted links to the two sites on the QI website ("Ideation site public forum: faculty and staff"; "Ideation site public forum: students") and included the addresses in flyers distributed during visits with campus groups.

A recurring theme during these visits was the need for resources and strategies to help instructors advance students' reading, writing, critical thinking, and independent learning skills. Discussions of fundamental skills occurred across a range of programs, including the traditional liberal arts disciplines, business, STEM departments, and military science. A review of CMU websites revealed few resources on these issues for instructors and few materials designed to be imported directly into classes. The QI Leadership Team noted that that there was no manual for instructors on teaching and learning and no unit in student orientation that focused on academic challenges in college.

Though our community's goals quickly became obvious, the solutions were not. Underlying problems were beyond our reach. For example, a QI was unlikely to solve the economic issues that led students to juggle school with employment, and we could not impact their prior learning experiences. In addition, we failed to identify promising fixes through easy policy changes, partly because we could not envision changes that would not have a negative influence on some students. For instance, capping the number of credits a student could take in a term would increase the time available to devote to each course but slow progress toward graduation and be costly for some students. However, focusing on academic behaviors to improve learning outcomes was more promising. Because the skills we are seeking to advance develop gradually through repeated experiences, students' course activities—the information they receive and the activities they do—will ultimately play a large role in their academic development. We soon adopted a "bright spots" philosophy: Rather than focusing on the underlying reasons for gaps in students' skills, in the first years of the QI we would look for ways to infuse small-scale, evidence-based practices throughout students' undergraduate experiences.

As we grappled with these issues, an ideation post from the director of General Education encouraged the QI to target this program because doing so was "consistent with the overall philosophy of the QI (sustained focus on improving student learning), as well as the general tenor of the Quality Initiative at CMU (focus on early student experiences)" (George Ronan, October 14, 2014). This post affirmed suggestions from Team members that the General Education Program (and especially the University Program) defined a set of courses that impacted all students and a community of instructors who had shared problems and interests. Our challenge was to infuse evidence-based information about teaching

and learning throughout this program in a way that wove discussions about the learning process into the fabric of students' lives during their early years at CMU.

To respond, the QI Leadership Team pursued the concept of a Teaching and Learning Toolkit. The Toolkit was envisioned as a collection of resources designed to create a shared dialog among instructors, students, and staff members at CMU about learning and academic challenge. Toolkit resources would be short, consistently formatted, action-oriented, evidence-based, and often packaged with prepared materials (e.g., templates, permission slips for using student work as examples, test item pools) to facilitate the integration of new strategies into courses. Early materials would illustrate ways to engage students in discussions about learning and would encourage instructors to construct sequenced learning experiences that better prepare students to apply newly-acquired knowledge and skills. The idea was that if CMU coordinated the resources needed to produce Toolkit materials, our community could begin to produce the materials needed to sustain ongoing training of instructors in the General Education Program and academic orientation for students. Long term, individual academic programs could construct resources to address gaps in learning identified through ongoing assessment activities.

To pilot test reactions to the Toolkit concept, in the spring of 2014 the QI advertised an opportunity for instructors of University Program courses. Thirty-three instructors enrolled to attend two 3-hour workshops and meet with a peer mentor to discuss integrating a new strategy into class. Whereas existing instructor training opportunities focused primarily on single-topic workshops and time-intensive course redesigns, the University Program Teaching and Learning Academy Pilot Project covered a set of topics selected to address the course features that students rate as most important to them, the instructional practices that most impact student success, and strategies for advancing students' writing skills. At the same time, we surveyed the on-campus faculty, Global Campus faculty, teaching graduate students, and undergraduates to determine which topics should be given highest priority for Toolkit production. Confirming results from visits to campus groups and mirroring topics in the Pilot Project curriculum, instructors gave high priority to resources for improving reading, writing, critical thinking, and independent learning skills. These responses solidified our focus and, over the summer, the QI Core Team commissioned new Toolkit resources.

While the pilot project was under way, members of the QI Leadership Team joined workgroups for continued discussion of five topics: (1) review of the Student Opinion Survey, (2) the curriculum for new student orientation and Leadership Safari, (3) "exit" examinations, (4) active learning in large lecture classes, and (5) techniques for computing grade point averages adjusted by course grade distribution. After presentations by the workgroups and subsequent discussion, we excluded revision of the Student Opinion Survey and adjusted grades as possible QI projects due to the time-frames needed to thoughtfully address these issues. Because the committee was impressed positively by the materials CMU distributes to parents and students between matriculation and the start of students' first semester, we agreed that efforts to address academic challenge should begin after the orientation process (for example, shortly before students begin classes and into the early weeks of their first term). Discussions of the CLA+ and active learning were also tabled pending findings from class sections that began using new active-learning classrooms in the fall of 2014. At the end of Year 1, the Leadership Team decided to continue focusing on ways to disseminate information about learning and teaching into CMU's culture.

Years 2 and 3 activities, findings, and responses. Our goals in Years 2 and 3 were to develop an infrastructure to produce Toolkit resources and continue materials production for four initial projects.

Three projects resulted from discussions during Year 1, whereas the fourth responded to needs created by a new Writing Intensive requirement in the revised General Education Program.

The Teaching and Learning Toolkit. The University Program Teaching and Learning Pilot Project helped us identify limitations of our materials and revise our vision for the Toolkit. Initially we had planned materials in formats users could easily customize, which restricted us to WORD documents, PowerPoint slides, and Blackboard test pools. In some cases, the use of advanced features proved difficult for users to navigate, requiring us to simplify material. A greater challenge was the perception that draft materials did not look professional enough and did not present information in an engaging manner. To respond, we decided to format printed materials with design software and to explore producing video-based, sequenced course material for our training initiatives.

In order to assemble the infrastructure needed to move forward, we reviewed CMU's production facilities and equipment, hired an editor for printed resources, and funded a provisional part-time multimedia position to provide the technical assistance needed to produce online learning modules. CELT volunteered time from their graphic designer to develop our document templates, and the QI Leadership Team created a set of specifications that defined features of printed Toolkit material.

Throughout this process, our overarching goal was not to produce a specific set of materials but to identify the collaborations, procedures, and infrastructure needed for academic programs to quickly respond to training/program needs by developing structured learning experiences. As described later in this report, this goal of promoting on-demand resources to reinforce foundational knowledge and skills ran counter to an on-campus culture that places high value on the creativity of individual faculty and staff members as they deliver in-person instruction and advice. Testing the value of shared resources, along with measuring the acceptance and use of shared resources by our community, is an important component of the long-term assessment plan for the following initial projects:

Extended faculty orientation. In cooperation with volunteer faculty members, we produced *Read This Before You Teach*, a manual on teaching and learning that is available in print and could be rendered as an online learning module. By addressing fundamental principles of learning and skill development, student motivation, strategies for maintaining academic challenge, terminology in higher-education, course design principles, and policies/procedures, this document defines a curriculum for onboarding instructors. We hope the document will create a shared foundation for dialog about teaching and learning at CMU and serve as a useful resource to prepare instructors for the more advanced training and consultation available through CETL.

An online student orientation module on academic issues. The Leadership Team consulted with Michelle Howard, Executive Director of Academic Advising and Assistance, and then visited an Enrollment and Student Services staff meeting for preliminary discussion of an online student orientation module on academic issues. There is widespread support for this project, and continued efforts are refining the content and feel of this module. Draft content discusses academic expectations at a university, how to budget time for studying, effective study and wellness strategies, and campus resources.

Assistance for instructors of Writing Intensive (WI) courses. Responding to the General Education Program's need for more WI sections and to disseminate information about writing pedagogy to WI instructors, we partnered with CELT to produce an online training workshop for WI instructors and a summer initiative that will train a team of WI peer mentors. Troy Hicks, Department of English

Language and Literature, served as the creative director for the online workshop, coordinated three face-to-face workshops for WI instructors in spring 2015, and is hosting a summer institute in 2016 to produce a cohort of WI peer mentors.

Evaluation Plan

Our initial projects aimed to increase awareness of evidence-based teaching and learning practices while providing resources to assist instructors who are interested in integrating new strategies into classes. Because the strategies we are disseminating are numerous and well researched, it is neither feasible nor necessary to document the effectiveness of the specific content in our project materials. Instead, our evaluation plan posed four questions: (1) Is our vision of the Toolkit consistent with faculty and students' needs? (2) Can we successfully produce Toolkit resources, including MOOC-like learning modules? (3) Does the Toolkit impact course practices? (4) Do our students have sufficient access to experiences that build reading, writing, critical thinking, and independent learning skills?

Is our vision of the Toolkit consistent with faculty and students' needs? In spring of 2014, surveys of the on-campus and off-campus faculty and graduate students confirmed that instructors would appreciate resources to help them improve students' reading skills, prevent plagiarism and review writing fundamentals, discuss the science of learning, build information literacy and critical thinking skills, and deal with other frequent course challenges (e.g., motivating students). Among on-campus faculty respondents (n = 227), one or more questionnaire items in each of these categories received a mean rating between medium and high priority and were rated by at least one-third of respondents as high priority. Moreover, low endorsements of some items suggested that respondents had responded thoughtfully and did not simply request everything we suggested. Undergraduate respondents (n = 463) did not perceive a strong need for information about reading strategies or information literacy but did support materials on career exploration, planning, and opportunities for involvement at CMU; time-management and effective study strategies; writing challenges; and higher-order thinking**.**

Can we successfully produce Toolkit resources, including MOOC-like learning modules? Prior to the QI, CMU's on-campus program had no coordinated effort to produce learning materials designed for widespread sharing and integration into courses and training initiatives. In the summer of 2014, our initial effort to produce draft material faltered when potential contributors found it difficult to fit this writing into their schedules or were uncomfortable drafting material outside their areas of expertise. Some progress was made (for example, a draft handbook on teaching and learning) but less than we expected. We learned that Toolkit production would likely involve one of two approaches: drafting by content specialists with backgrounds in textbook or technical writing, or a multi-stage process in which content specialists provided initial material for passing onto subsequent steps in the production process (e.g., editing and multimedia design). Production realities led us to recommend that CMU expand its media production unit and build adequate space into pending library renovations for a facility that could support student interns in curriculum design, technical writing, and film.

Does the Toolkit impact course practices? Through a Faculty Association-approved survey, in spring 2015 we assessed the impact of the pilot project on course changes by comparing project participants with a comparison group of nonparticipants who had attended a 1-day teaching conference. Despite the fact that our comparison group was a highly motivated group of instructors who also made numerous course changes in the target academic year, our multi-topic pilot project produced significantly more infiltration of transformative content into courses. Also, pilot participants were more

likely to use practices associated with retention (earlier assessment, Pilot = 68%, Comparison = 44%; began using Early Alert system, Pilot = 56%, Comparison = 12%). Finally, pilot project participants were more likely than comparison instructors to have made changes they rated as working well in several key categories (including syllabus revisions, changes to how they provide feedback on written assignments, and providing students with models of high-quality work), and 80% said that participation increased their expectations for what students could accomplish in courses. In subsequent years, we plan to survey the faculty to measure the infiltration of content and materials into courses, identify course changes motivated by Toolkit resources, and assess the impact of those changes on academic challenge.

Do our students have sufficient access to experiences that build reading, writing, critical thinking, and independent learning skills? Two of CMU's assessment activities provide information about academic challenge throughout the curriculum. Responses from freshmen and seniors on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) are an indirect measure of academic life, with the 2006, 2009, 2012, and 2015 surveys providing a baseline for future comparisons. Of special relevance to the QI are items measuring "level of academic challenge," which includes such items as "hours spent preparing for class"; "number of written papers" (of various specified lengths); and the extent to which coursework emphasizes "analysis," "synthesis," "making judgments about the value of information, arguments or methods," and "applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations."

The Make-an-Argument Task of the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) is a direct measure of student competency in undergraduate level writing. For this subscale, students write a persuasive essay in response to a position statement. The Make-An-Argument component involves the use of detailed scoring rubrics to reliably evaluate written responses. Student performance is compared to that of other students at comparable institutions. CMU administers the CLA triennially.

Because NESSE and CLA findings will be influenced by changing characteristics of the student body and other campus initiatives (e.g., the revision of our General Education Program), trends associated with these factors cannot be disentangled from those associated with the QI. Nonetheless, in conjunction with findings from surveys of course practices, these data will provide an overall picture of academic challenge at CMU that can direct subsequent planning and policy initiatives.

New Tools and Data

A major impediment to innovation at CMU is the underutilization of existing tools rather than a lack of tools. For example, our community uses SharePoint and Blackboard primarily as electronic file cabinets and often ignores advanced capabilities that could support instructional goals. Advising Workbench is another powerful and highly popular platform with tremendous potential to support new initiatives. Therefore, the QI Leadership Team focused on ways to more fully exploit existing resources rather than recommending new purchases.

The ideation websites we developed in partnership with Information Technology raised awareness of the potential to encourage community engagement through crowd-sourcing and is a promising strategy for future shared-governance activities. In a similar way, we hope our training projects will raise awareness of the benefits of on-demand learning materials and produce interest in exploiting the potential of locally-produced learning modules to meet the needs of individual courses and programs.

Through our pilot project and surveys, we assembled a large body of evidence on student and instructor needs that confirmed conclusions from our engagement meetings. As we move forward, this

information will help us respond to expressed needs as well as needs we discovered by analyzing how the course goals and challenges of our pilot project participants were reflected in the structure of their syllabi, assignments, and tests. As we move forward, new data generated from evaluations of our initial projects will inform us about the best ways to construct and disseminate high-impact, on-demand materials.

Challenges and Opportunities

An early impediment to problem-solving was the abstractness of academic challenge as a topic. It was difficult to communicate the purpose of our QI, and community outreach discussions often became conversations about course struggles that did not result in suggested solutions. There is a possible reason for this feeling of paralysis: When a community does not have a shared foundation for discussing learning and skill acquisition, it is difficult to agree on a course of action.

To respond, we set two sweeping goals for our QI: First, to establish a shared foundation for dialog through two of our projects (instructor and student orientation) and, second, to test approaches for infusing experiences that build fundamental skills throughout students' early years of college (through the WI and Toolkit projects). Launching these projects required us to coordinate input from multiple offices and to set long-range rather than short-range goals. Currently, it is too soon to know whether our efforts to promote expanded production of on-demand instructional material will help close the loop between assessment findings and program improvement.

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Commitment to and Engagement in the Quality Initiative

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Individuals and Groups Involved: Perceptions of Worth and Impact

Perhaps because our QI proposal was an extension of longstanding conversations at CMU about academic challenge, the campus community has been eager to share ideas, volunteer resources and time for consultations, and help with project development. In addition to contributions from the Leadership Team and ideas from individuals who contacted us through email and the ideation sites, contributors included the following:

- o The Faculty Association, CMU's bargaining unit for the regular faculty, was consulted early in the QI to provide feedback about our developing vision for the project. Later, this group authorized surveys of the faculty.

- o The QI and CETL partnered to coordinate and share costs for the WI initiative. CETL also volunteered staff time throughout the QI to provide materials review; template, questionnaire, and website development; and presentations during the pilot project workshops.

- o Global Campus staff members processed the survey of Global Campus instructors and reviewed draft Toolkit materials to alert us to language that was specific to on-campus programs.

- o The Manager of Learning Management Systems for Global Campus consulted with us about platforms for delivering sequenced learning modules.

- o The media production unit of the Office of Information Technology filmed demonstration material and arranged our part-time multimedia producer.

o The Office of Information Technology donated staff time to program the ideation websites.

o The Academic Affairs Committee of the Student Government Association provided feedback on draft materials.

o Staff from Enrollment and Student Services met with the QI to discuss the academic issues of the student orientation unit, and the director of the Student Success Center shared their draft resources.

o Writing Center staff reviewed, edited, and wrote contributions for a draft document, *Introduction to Writing Assignments and Feedback*, provided rubric reviews for pilot project volunteers, and partnered with the QI and CETL to offer workshops for WI instructors.

o The Assessment Coordinator for the College of Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences reviewed survey drafts and offered advice on our assessment strategy.

o Thirteen teaching award winners penned contributions for *Read This Before You Teach: A Handbook With Reflections on Learning and Teaching at CMU*.

o General Council responded promptly to numerous requests for materials reviews, including the policy sections in *Read This Before You Teach* and permission slips in *Using Models in Instruction*.

o The past and present directors of the General Education Program met frequently with the QI coordinator to provide information and discuss projects.

o The Student Disability Services staff reviewed draft Toolkit content and suggested additions to address the needs of students with disabilities.

In addition to these contributors, numerous individuals and units met with QI representatives to express their willingness to contribute, including library and diversity staff members.

Lessons Learned

It seems self-evident that universities should have programs and materials that orient all students and instructors to fundamental concepts in learning and teaching, and that basic information should be available for consultation when needs arise. In reality, we encountered obstacles to pursing these goals. One obstacle, which is well known among product design experts, is that people do not always know what they need. For example, instructors who responded to our surveys did not perceive a strong need for advice on syllabus preparation, yet syllabus revision was widespread among those who received draft Toolkit materials. Another obstacle was the perception that the information we were packaging was readily available through the Internet when, in fact, that information is too diffuse and extensive to successfully direct individuals to a core set of evidenced-based solutions to shared challenges. Finally, CMU's organizational structure in 2013 did not encourage the collaborations needed to coordinate material for faculty training with material for student instruction. An in-progress reorganization will house faculty training and multimedia production within a single service unit, which will hopefully promote a more integrated approach to curriculum development.

As the QI continues, we hope to gain skill at communicating the benefits of a Toolkit that combines carefully-selected information with materials needed to make use of that information, such as permission slips, templates, item banks, and practice activities. Because it is time-intensive and costly to produce, test, and revise training materials, we believe the Toolkit model will be most successfully applied to address learning gaps identified through assessment activities. Responding to the needs of individual programs will link the infrastructure that produces learning modules with the motivated content specialists needed to produce draft material.

Resource Provision

CMU committed $106,850 per year to the QI, for a total start-up budget of $320,550. Costs included course release and summer support for Core Team members; contributions to TLC activities; travel to the Higher Learning Commission conference; copy charges, meeting expenses, supplies, and other workshop-related costs for University Program Teaching and Learning Academy Pilot Project, WI workshops in Year 2, and the summer institute for WI faculty fellows (mentors) in Year 3; part-time document editing; and multimedia production services and equipment. In addition to these financial resources, CETL donated time to review materials, format surveys, attend planning meetings, produce templates, and guest lecture for the pilot project workshops. Numerous other units, including the Student Success Center, the Writing Center, and Global Campus, also donated time.

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Plans for the Future

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Ongoing Work and Goals

Our final demonstration modules (a brief academic orientation film for students and a faculty orientation module about teaching and learning) is in production, and we have a roll-out plan for the Toolkit. In subsequent years, we will assess the impact of the Toolkit and use these data to make decisions about expanding the Toolkit (for example, by soliciting projects from individual programs facing training challenges) or abandoning the concept.

Sharable Practices and Artifacts

Two approaches we explored for the QI—ideation sites for community input and multiple-topic workshops for instructors—are concepts that other institutions may be interested in trying. The utility of multiple-topic workshops was supported by data showing that topics instructors did not identify as strong interests often attracted the most attention, resulting in course changes that would not have occurred had instructors self-selected into single topic presentations. This finding suggests that teaching development centers should distribute a core set of material on practices that impact student success and retention during all consultations and workshops, regardless of the stated reason for those meetings.

CMU will retain rights to all documents and media produced for QI projects while making these resources available to the public for nonprofit educational purposes. Material will be available in final forms and file formats that are easier for adopters to customize for their own purposes. Find our online workshop for instructors of Writing Intensive courses at https://www.cmich.edu/office_provost/facit/Pages/Writing%20Intensive%20Initiative/Writing-Intensive-Initiative-Intro.aspx

; initial Toolkit demonstration materials are housed at
https://www.cmich.edu/office_provost/facit/Pages/Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Toolkit/Teaching-and-Learning-Toolkit.aspx.