



Speak UP: Unifying Presentation for an Inclusive, Connected World

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Guilford College is investing in faculty development, resources, and educational support services to ensure the success and sustainability of our new QEP: *Speak UP: Unifying Presentation for an Inclusive, Connected World*. *Speak UP* will benefit the College by furthering its academic principles, supporting its strategic priorities, and fulfilling its mission to provide students with a “transformative, practical, and excellent liberal arts education that produces critical thinkers in an inclusive, diverse environment.” *Speak UP* will engage students critically with intellectual content and deepen their learning experience as it challenges them to consider inclusiveness for accommodating the needs of diverse constituencies.

The goal of *Speak UP: Unifying Presentation for an Inclusive, Connected World* is to improve students’ performance and attitudes about public presentation as vital to effective public discourse.

The learning outcomes related to public presentation competency for *Speak UP* include: 1) Performance: Students will demonstrate “performance” competency, as evidenced by a public presentation, and 2) Attitudes: Students will demonstrate improved “attitudes” toward public presentations.

We plan to further these outcomes through: 1) expansion of curricular and co-curricular opportunities for students, 2) faculty development in teaching and evaluating public presentations using Universal Design for Learning techniques, and 3) providing strong, focused support for students and faculty through an internal collaborative support and development structure within Hege Library’s Academic Commons. The Academic Commons partners include librarians and learning technologists, Learning Commons tutors, Disability Resources professionals, and the Directors of Faculty Development, Research and Creative Endeavors, the Honors Program, and Institutional Research and Effectiveness. A QEP Coordinator will ensure sustainability of *Speak UP* in close partnership with this team.

The QEP developed as the result of nearly two years of study, reflection, and refinement of ideas among institutional constituencies—students, faculty, staff, trustees, alumni, and administrators. Initially, the development of the plan was shepherded by a QEP Topic Selection Committee, which focused the community on consideration and approval of a topic and overall structure for the QEP. Once this initial work had been accomplished, the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean assembled the QEP Plan Development Committee and charged its members with refining the focus of the plan, and bringing the details of the QEP proposal forward for community discussion and approval. Membership of the QEP Plan Development Committee represented many areas of the College, facilitating broad inclusion in the process and the distribution of the plan details across the community.

Guilford College sought to select a QEP topic that would help ensure students' success throughout their academic careers and post-graduation. As part of the discernment process we conducted an extensive review of the literature on best practices, followed by internal assessment of how Guilford measured up to these best practices. Guilford College's Assessment Committee is responsible for the administration and oversight of the assessment of student learning with respect to the curriculum, the core values, and goals of the College. Internal assessment data will provide a framework for the Assessment Committee to support the progress of Guilford College's new QEP.