

Report Categories

Overview of the Quality Initiative

1. Provide a one-page executive summary that describes the Quality Initiative, summarizes what was accomplished and explains any changes made to the initiative over the time period.

Ferris' Quality Initiative (QI), developed using a decentralized model, focused on two major goals: the first, to improve deficits in the focus areas of learning, retention, and learning environment; the second, to enhance the assessment culture, providing a foundation for ongoing quality improvement, including emphasizing the effective use of data. Using the three focus areas, each college and academic unit defined improvement initiatives. As specific literacy needs are unique to each college's academic disciplines, the initiatives addressing learning, the learning environment, and retention are specific to that college.

During the QI's four-year timeline, results from the college-level projects have informed the ongoing development of the [Academic Literacies Center \(ALC\)](#), which serves as the locus of the University's work. The ALC shares these key goals and will serve to coordinate and monitor efforts moving forward. Long-term continuation of these projects and sustained focus on the ALC and QI goals are supported by the [University's Strategic Plan, 2019-24](#), which incorporates measures targeting these goals.

Goal #1: Environment focused on holistic student success

Ferris' QI project created an increasingly effective Ferris environment concentrated on holistic student development, innovative pedagogy, and commitment to students' success in all areas of literacy. The resulting innovations focus on increasing student learning, retention, and an effective learning environment. While many projects included significant improvements, three examples demonstrate the range of influence:

1. Learning: C4 Scholar Program, College of Arts & Sciences (CAS) with Retention and Student Success (RSS). A learning community for students needing remediation in English composition, mathematics, and reading.
2. Retention: Strengths Program, College of Business. The CliftonStrengths assessment tool used to identify students' strengths and use these to identify and build professional skills.
3. Learning Environment: Online Course Quality, Extended and International Operations (EIO). Approximately 100 faculty completed EIO's course design/redesign process and improved their "social presence" in online courses.

Goal #2: Foster a culture of continuous quality improvement

The initiative's secondary goal was to foster a university-wide culture of continuous quality improvement and an environment guided by effective use of data and data-driven decision making. The processes and reporting structures developed by the QI projects to capture results and monitor progress are providing a foundation for long-term change. Many colleges either developed committees and processes to oversee their projects or modified existing structures for these tasks. These have become part of the fabric of the University's continuous quality improvement activities and the more effective use of data to inform and drive change; examples include the following:

- Michigan College of Optometry (MCO)'s Assessment Committee: new committee developing an assessment plan based on learning outcomes.
- College of Health Profession (CHP)'s Completion Task Force: new committee studying time-to-degree factors.
- College of Pharmacy (COP)'s Early Alert Program, supported by the COP Office of Student Services: enhanced responsibilities of an existing office to improve retention.
- Kendall College (KCAD)'s use of Institutional Data: enhanced use of college data to make informed decisions.

Changes Made to Initiative

At the beginning of the project, the 33 QI projects seemed both ambitious and appropriate. While addressing the projects using a decentralized college-driven process was essential for local ownership, motivation, and completion, collaborative efforts were often more difficult and necessitated additional coordination. The decentralized structure of the QI, however, allowed the projects to continue when project leadership experienced expected turnover. Long-term goals now focus on making the cross-project connections and collaborations stronger, using the ALC as the connection. Early, often unexpected, collaborative efforts include the following:

- Pharmacy/Optomety Scholars in Training (POSIT), supporting career goals of pre-optometry and pre-pharmacy students. Colleges of Arts & Sciences, Pharmacy, and Optometry.
- C4 Scholar Program, providing cross-curricular learning experiences for at-risk students. College of Arts & Sciences and Retention and Student Success.
- Linked Courses Project, providing co-curricular experiences with Math and English courses. Colleges of Arts & Sciences, Business, and Education & Human Services.
- Project collaboration: The College of Business's Strengths Project and FLITE (library)'s Amazing Race Project collaborated to enhance the effectiveness of both initiatives.

Scope and Impact of the Initiative

2. Explain in more detail what was accomplished in the Quality Initiative in relation to its purposes and goals. (If applicable, explain the initiative's hypotheses and findings.)

To support the first QI goal, holistic development of academic literacies across the institution, the Academic Literacies Center (ALC) was formally established in August 2018. As noted, the ALC's key goals are to address academic literacy barriers holistically and to positively impact students' learning, retention, and learning environment. The ALC is housed centrally and conveniently within the Ferris library (FLITE), providing easy student access and immediate connections among needed support services.

The ALC includes tutoring and writing assistance; an adaptive technology lab; access to the Structured Learning Assistance (SLA) supports; a communication lab; and study skills assistance, including memory training, note-taking, textbook reading, time management, and test taking. The ALC also includes vision screening services.

The ALC provides the central hub for these student support services and embodies the holistic nature of the entire QI Project. The Project's first phase empowered each academic college and unit to work independently to identify needs and develop projects related to the three QI goals. All

initiatives within the ALC focus on the overarching goals of the center, with activity data, reported annually and mid-year, captures student utilization of the various services of the center.

The second QI goal, fostering a culture of continuous quality improvement, was supported by two early evaluation efforts coordinated by the Office of Academic Affairs and the Academic Senate. Evaluating existing assessment structures resulted in a revitalized Academic Affairs Assessment Committee (AAAC) and a task force, coordinated by the Academic Senate, which studied available processes, databases, and resources used for continuous improvement of academic programs and student learning. This later led to development of a new committee, described in section three.

The QI's first phase engaged college and academic units to positively impact academic literacy. Each college and academic unit developed and implemented projects addressing specific focus areas: (1) learning, (2) retention, and (3) the learning environment.

For each focus area, the following list summarizes goals from six key projects and current project status; the QI website provides descriptions of all 33 projects' [progress and results](#).

Focus #1: Improve Student Learning

The projects positively impact student learning by addressing both institutional structures and student-facing support systems. The projects' decentralized nature provided the starting point, while implementation often resulted in cross-college collaboration and shared outcomes.

A. Pharmacy Optometry Scholars in Training (POSIT). College of Arts and Sciences (CAS).

Goal: A living/learning community designed to recruit, retain, educate, and graduate a diverse cohort of prospective pharmacy and optometry students using intense intrusive advising, faculty mentorship, and living community activities. *Project Status: Achieved and Ongoing*

B. Learning Success Reading Group. College of Business (COB).

Goal: Faculty-led weekly reading group focused on the science of learning and personal success, empowering students to discover their strengths and build strategies to improve their academic success. *Project Status: Initiated*

C. Pre-profession student organization and faculty involvement with group advising. College of Health Professions (CHP).

Goal: Create a pre-professional organization to provide a formal structure for peer mentoring, faculty mentoring, peer- or faculty-led tutoring, and other academic supports, promoting closer relationships among students. *Project Status: Achieved and Ongoing*

D. Assessment for interprofessional education. College of Pharmacy (COP).

Goal: Develop an interprofessional education (IPE) assessment tool to longitudinally measure students' level of competency and proficiency for the curriculum's IPE component. *Project Status: Achieved and Ongoing*

E. The Amazing Library Race. FLITE.

Goal: Determine if students who complete the FLITE-visit portion of the FSUS Freshman Seminar know how and where to ask for help using FLITE services. *Project Status: Achieved and Ongoing*

F. C4 Scholar Program. Retention and Student Success (RSS) with College of Arts and Sciences (CAS).

Goal: The Cross-Curricular Career Community (C4) Scholar Program, a learning community for students needing remediation in writing, mathematics, and reading, was inspired by the

Learning Communities Demonstration (LCD), an MDRC / NCPR project. *Project Status: Achieved and Ongoing*

Focus #2: Improve Retention

The projects focused on improving retention included program-based initiatives as well as development of new data-driven assessments and markers to measure retention rates.

- G. Engagement with CliftonStrengths. College of Business (COB).**
Goal: Increase student engagement and well-being by identifying and building on student strengths, using the CliftonStrengths assessment tool in the COB freshman orientation course. *Project Status: Achieved and Ongoing*
- H. Undergraduate student time-to-degree. College of Health Professions (CHP).**
Goal: Use undergraduate program baseline data (credit hours, attrition rates, graduation rates, and employment outlook) to determine how guided pathways, program review, and improved transfer-student transition might improve time-to-degree. *Project Status: Achieved and Ongoing*
- I. Factors that impact on-time graduation. College of Pharmacy (COP).**
Goal: Develop a comprehensive Early Alert program for identifying, monitoring, and addressing factors that impact on-time graduation, including stress, social/emotional support, learning styles, participation in peer-mentorship program, and student engagement. *Project Status: Achieved and Ongoing*
- J. Developing a unified advising protocol. Kendall College of Art and Design (KCAD).**
Goal: Respond to an identified undergraduate retention challenge (retention falls from 84% to 70% from year two to the final year) by developing a unified advising protocol. *Project Status: Achieved and Ongoing*
- K. Retention and Remediation. Michigan College of Optometry (MCO).**
Goal: Develop a remediation program for third-year clinical rotations in order to improve the quality of matriculants across the cohort. *Project Status: Achieved and Ongoing*
- L. Student academic advising for General Studies, CARE and Directed Studies students. Retention and Student Success (RSS).**
Goal: Provide intentional and intrusive advising to students in General Studies, CARE, and Directed Studies programs to facilitate retention and degree completion. *Project Status: Achieved and Ongoing*

Focus # 3: Improve the Learning Environment

The projects that emphasized providing a vision for student-focused learning focused on structures, support systems, and activities.

- M. The Linked Course Project. College of Arts and Sciences (CAS).**
Goal: Evaluate the impact of integrated academic experiences in writing and mathematics on student success. Collaborative efforts among CAS, COB, and COEHS pair Math and English courses to reinforce connections between the disciplines and develop student learning. *Project Status: Achieved and Ongoing*
- N. Learning environment for women in technology. College of Engineering Technology (CET).**
Goal: Address the underrepresentation of women in technology with an inclusive learning environment that focuses on increasing student awareness of campus resources, offering networking opportunities, and creating a mentorship program. *Project Status: Partially Achieved*

- O. **Enhancing the CHP learning environment. *College of Health Professions (CHP)*.**
Goal: Develop and implement community service-learning activities for faculty and students in response to NSSE data indicating CHP students desire for additional opportunities to engage with faculty. *Project Status: Achieved and Ongoing*
- P. **A culture of excellence in online course development. *Extended and International Operations (EIO)*.**
Goal: Using two Ruffalo Noel Levitz (RNL) surveys, evaluate activities of the eLearning team and implement strategies supporting faculty in developing high-quality online courses. *Project Status: Partially Achieved*
- Q. **Diversity and inclusion. *Kendall College of Art and Design (KCAD)*.**
Goal: Establish “an active commitment to diversity and inclusion” as a Strategic Priority, with these goals: (1) recruit and retain a diverse student body, (2) recruit and retain diverse faculty and staff, and (3) enhance programs and curriculum to engage discourse and learning around the topics of diversity and inclusion. *Project Status: Partially Achieved*
- R. **Enhanced accommodations and accessibility. *Retention and Student Success (RSS)*.**
Goal: A multi-phase, multi-year plan to ensure that students, faculty, staff, and visitors have equal access to all Ferris websites through enhanced accommodations and accessibility. *Project Status: Achieved and Ongoing*

3. Evaluate the impact of the initiative, including any changes in processes, policies, technology, curricula, programs, student learning and success that are now in place in consequence of the initiative.

Overall Impact of the Academic Literacies Center

When the ALC was opened in fall 2018, the new central location brought several existing academic support services together, while expanding and enhancing these services with new opportunities to impact student success. One measure of the impact of the ALC, then, requires comparison of student use before and after the launch. Highlights from the summary data reflect the impact:

- Tutoring visits increased by 10% from fall 2017 to fall 2019.
- Tutoring hours increased by 45% from fall 2017 to fall 2019.
- Flexible schedule and workshop tutoring increased by 47% students served following ALC launch, with students spending 16% more time using these services.
- Writing Center consultation appointments scheduled in the first three weeks of the semester increased by 118% following the ALC launch.
- [Structured Learning Assistance](#) (SLA) classes increased by 14% from serving 616 students in the fall 2018 to 695 in fall 2019.

Overall Impact of Goal #1: Environment focused on holistic student success. The QI Initiatives.

The 33 QI projects led to numerous changes at the project level. Details of results by project can be found on the [QI website](#). Additionally, institutional measures from the NSSE surveys were identified for each of the focus areas and results are summarized as follows:

A. Learning

In the 2016 NSSE administration, the following four areas received the lowest progress ratings from students and, thus, were identified as important institutional targets for improving learning. The 2016 survey results provided baseline data and were compared with 2020 administration results. Until the NSSE 2020 data are available, the 2018 results provide preliminary indications of incremental change. The data indicate that, while the University is making significant strides in how students perceive the University's emphasis on diversity and is moving in the right direction in "values" and "wellness," there is much work to do regarding "citizenship" and "analyzing numerical and statistical information."

1. **Informed Citizenry.** Target improvement (for 2020): 5 percentage points in students reporting "quite a bit" or "very much" in how their education contributed to their "being an informed and active citizen." To be on track to achieve this target, we needed a 2.5% increase in 2018. The percentage of students reporting "quite a bit" or "very much" decreased a negligible -0.4 from 2016 to 2018. First Years show an increase of 10.7 while seniors are -2.7.
2. **Understanding Diversity.** Target improvement (for 2020): 5 percentage points in students reporting "quite a bit" or "very much" in how their education contributed to their "understanding of people from other backgrounds." The percentage of students reporting "quite a bit" or "very much" increased 6 points from 2016 to 2018. First Years show an increase of 14.8 while seniors are 3.9.
3. **Values and Ethical Codes.** Target improvement (for 2020): 5 percentage points in students reporting "quite a bit" or "very much" in how their education contributed to "developing or clarifying a personal code of values and ethics." The percentage of students reporting "quite a bit" or "very much" increased 2.2 points from 2016 to 2018. First Years show an increase of 6.5 while seniors are 3.8.
4. **Analyzing Data.** Target improvement (for 2020): 5 percentage points in students reporting "quite a bit" or "very much" in how their education contributed to "analyzing numerical and statistical information." The percentage of students reporting "quite a bit" or "very much" decreased -1.6 points from 2016 to 2018. First Years show an increase of 1.2 while seniors increased 0.5.

B. Retention

As part of strategic planning efforts, the University identified the need for a coordinated, university-wide retention plan. The QI approach to identify targets, develop initiatives, and measure impact will be reflected in the framework for development of the university-wide plan.

Retention. Target improvement (for 2020): Total University (2 & 4 yr. programs) retention rate goal of 74% (increase of 3 percentage points from 71% in 2015-16). The [2019-20 FactBook](#) (p. 94) reports the total University fall-to-fall FTIAC retention rates for 2018-19 as 71%, with 69% for 2-year-program students, and 76% for 4-year-program students. Retention remains an area of focus and commitment for the University, as illustrated in the adoption of the 2019-24 Strategic Plan, which includes increasing overall first year retention to 75% by 2024.

Graduation. Target improvement (for 2020): 6-year graduation rate goal of 52% (increase of 3 percentage points from 49% for the 2010 cohort). The [2019-20 FactBook](#) (p. 95) reports this goal was met with total University 6-year graduation rate at 50% for entering class of Fall 2011; 53% for Fall 2012; and 52% for Fall 2013.

C. Learning Environment

Well-Being. Target improvement (for 2020): 5 percentage points in students' reporting "quite a bit" or "very much" in institutional support for overall well-being. Target improvement for 2020, when compared to Great Lakes peer institutions: to improve to (no more than) 8 points below peer institutions. Results from 2016 NSSE data indicate this as our lowest category, with Ferris 13 points below peer institutions. The percentage of students reporting "quite a bit" or "very much" increased a negligible 2.2 from 2016 to 2018. First Years show a decrease of -4.4 while seniors show a decrease of -1.5.

Overall Impact of Goal #2: Fostering a culture of continuous quality improvement

The QI Initiative resulted in improved focus on institutional use of data and measures, including effective use of project and institutional level data.

QI participants offered these retrospective comments: "Identifying something as a Quality Initiative...helped us set priorities, especially in a time when funding is difficult. [This process] was extremely helpful... in ensuring that something you put your effort into is going to continue, because it [will be funded]. ...Keeping the Quality Initiatives... can ensure that we're going to [keep the projects] moving forward."

"This [process] has been really good for me, and [for the others on campus] who are interested in innovation...I'm getting excited listening to all [of the initiatives] and thinking... there's a way that I could be involved in this.... We can start to make our efforts work together...."

• **Project-level Data Use**

All of the QI projects identified appropriate measures and target improvements. Examples of projects that illustrate the effective use of data to effect change include:

- A. POSIT program. Developed by the Office of Institutional Research to track cohort data by semester. The report is available as a model for projects requiring similar student data. Longitudinal data include qualitative interview data measuring levels of "professionalism," combined with GPA, course completion percentage, fall-to-fall retention rates, and program participation data.
- B. The CET/RSS Retention Project. RSS advisors collaborated with Developmental Curriculum faculty to enroll probationary students into a study methods course instead of the traditional Directed Studies seminar. Early results indicate that a slightly higher percentage of students regained Good Academic Standing at the end of their second semester. RSS will continue to monitor these students to determine if progress is sustained and students retain their academic status throughout the second year.
- C. The CHP Group Advising Project. The project links the pre-profession's student organization with faculty involvement in group advising. The project continues to see an increase in involvement and student support. Early results from the group tutoring efforts have also been encouraging, resulting in once-struggling students successfully passing their classes.

• **Institution-wide Data Use**

The QI drew attention to the need for greater coordination and oversight of assessment efforts across the institution. Responding to these needs and the growing demand for accurate data in decision making efforts, the QI prompted significant changes, including:

Academic Affairs Assessment Committee (AAAC) Charter Revisions. The AAAC, a joint faculty-administrative committee, promotes division-wide collaboration and facilitates

implementation of initiatives supporting institutional assessment. Early efforts included developing a NSSE data use plan which is guiding the 2020 administration.

- A. University Assessment Committee (UAC). As noted, the Academic Senate responded by establishing the Data-Driven Decision-Making Task Force to identify available processes, databases, and resources for continuous improvement of academic programs and student learning. The Task Force developed the UAC, comprised of faculty and administrators from Academic Affairs and Student Affairs, whose purpose is to establish and facilitate a University-wide assessment and data use process.
- B. General Education Assessment Closing the Loop Conversations. Series of faculty forums to discuss assessment results and make recommendations for actions.

4. Explain any tools, data or other information that resulted from the work of the initiative.

The QI also resulted in several projects developing new tools and data measures that have become a part of the institutional assessment culture.

- A. **POSIT report.** Institutional Research supported the program by developing a tool for capturing longitudinal data.
- B. **Interprofessional Education (IPE) rubric.** The project's rubric measures students' level of interprofessional competency (reported in the American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education: www.ajpe.org/content/early/2020/01/30/ajpe7668).
- C. **eLearning course development agreements and process.** The project developed a rubric for assessing effective online courses, which now serves as the foundation for course development and revision and a "contract" with faculty.

5. Describe the biggest challenges and opportunities encountered in implementing the initiative.

Ferris' QI resulted in challenges but also provided opportunities to address these and move forward successfully.

Challenges: Perhaps the largest challenge to the QI was the large number of diverse projects and finding effective ways to provide opportunities for participants to learn from the work of others. The root cause of many of the challenges faced at the project-level included turnover and staff changes, project timeline and plan glitches, and data collection issues that included statistical knowledge, completeness of data, or the ability to perform appropriate data analytics.

Opportunities: Throughout the QI process, the University community was presented with new opportunities to (1) address issues not previously measured, (2) hold conversations about student learning and our ability to enhance, support, and measure, and (3) develop new collaborations across colleges and units to reduce siloes and encourage unified approaches.

The following examples demonstrate some actions taken in the QI process to overcome obstacles and move forward successfully:

- A. **Challenge: Sharing results. Opportunity: Inspiring innovation.** Recognizing that continuous improvement should inspire innovation, Ferris' first [HatchEd Innovation Fair and Idea Incubator](#) was held Fall 2019. This now-annual event provides opportunities for QI teams and other campus innovators to share their work. The Fair provides an important mechanism for faculty and staff to celebrate best practices and share data.
- B. **Challenge: Effective Data Collection. Opportunity: Enhanced use of Nuventive™ Improve.** To ensure consistent data measurement, projects were encouraged to use the

Improve database to record expected outcomes, measures, and results. Prior to the QI, the campus' use of Improve was inconsistent. A newly developed catalog of web-focus reports also improved awareness of available data and encouraged institutional use of existing reports as templates or models.

- C. **Challenge: Implementing Long-Term Improvements. Opportunity: Enhanced Vision for Strategic Planning.** Many projects identified external, unexpected issues that affected their success but also led to new opportunities. For example, one participant noted “many of the classrooms on the Big Rapids campus provide limited opportunities for engagement” and recommended “classroom renovations to create spaces conducive to community building and community learning.”

Commitment to and Engagement in the Quality Initiative

6. Describe the individuals and groups involved at stages throughout the initiative and their perceptions of its worth and impact.

Ferris' QI relied on effective team structure and broad, comprehensive involvement from faculty and staff across the University. [Team membership](#) across the 33 projects was estimated over 430 (65% faculty/adjunct faculty). While the projects involved teams that shifted and adjusted over the project timeline, project coordinators facilitated many opportunities to bring the teams together for sharing and reflection.

- A. **Collaborative Efforts.** Across the 33 projects, the lengthy list of participants demonstrates collaboration across units and among faculty and staff. Project leads reported that engaging faculty and staff in the QI projects was typically strong: “The engagement from the faculty is... they're excited. They're interested. It's just a matter of time.” In several cases, a College-sponsored project included planned collaboration activity, or a collaboration emerged as the project developed.
- B. **Sharing Results.** In addition to submitting progress reports twice a year, QI project teams participated in several project discussions:
- Open forums in January 2018 shared updates and discussed lessons learned.
 - An August 2019 Town Hall focused on insights about project impact. Insights included that (a) people are working together in professionally meaningful ways, (b) QI work led to increased awareness of how processes should be organized and how to provide better support for students, and (c) the projects challenged people to step out of their comfort zones and take risks.
 - In October 2019, focus groups discussed the accomplishments of QI projects, with a dominant theme emphasizing the unexpected collaboration where relationships may not have previously existed. One participant's comment “Our focus... was creating some really intentional opportunities for tutoring, which resulted in us working closely with the new Academic Literacies Center. They were able to help me track some of that tutoring as well, so that was great for my data.”
- C. **The Power of Numbers.** Projects reported that they had greater success when their group was large and inclusive. Overall, projects that included a type of advisory committee oversight were often more successful in maintaining momentum compared with projects led by a solitary project champion.

7. Describe the most important points learned by those involved in the initiative.

Project participants reported 5 important “take-aways” from working on the QI. The first two are related to the first goal, developing an environment focused on holistic student success. The remaining three are foundational to maintaining an institutional culture of assessment.

1. **Project and Goal Overlap.** Participants noted: “we found in all three of our initiatives that there was so much overlap.... As the projects continue, several are merging into a single effort.”

Connections between projects between the colleges and academic units were also significant. For example, the COB Strengths-based project was incorporated in FLITE’s Amazing Library Race using a module specifically designed to support the COB project: “...their students [were] already built into teams, so the students learn how Strength-based teamwork works within the activity.”

2. **Added Benefit: Student Engagement.** Most projects identified student engagement as an unexpected outcome, both because students were eager to be engaged and because project teams sought to find effective ways to engage students and improve their academic literacy. Project teams recognized the importance of maintaining and developing these engagement efforts. The Amazing Library Race demonstrated the value of engagement: students were put into teams and began the project working quietly. At the end of the project, they returned talking and collaborating. Other participants noted that this is common: “They ... do that. And in... especially in developmental classes ... bonds form from that [experience].”

Participants in the C4 project noted that students “can control their own destiny [in terms of] their attitudes, use of services, taking responsibility for their own behavior, pushing forward with greater effort... taking advantage of services... through the Academic Literacies Center ... learning how to go to office hours (which for many students is a challenge) ... stopping an attitude of pointing fingers (like I don't do well because the teacher's not very good... or I'm falling behind because I don't have the family support or whatever), and begin to look inside about what can I do, what do I have control over?”

3. **Recognizing the Importance of Closing the Loop.** Project participants identified the value of the ongoing reporting structure: “A distinctive part of this process ... is the requirement that we write reports twice a year ... that encouraged me to think more about assessment data on a project.... [C]losing the loop was the piece we were missing. So... that actually is helpful.... Every time when I go to write my next report, I open up my old report.... [Y]ou're forced twice a year to think about it.”
4. **Operationalizing the QI Process for Long-Term Results.** Because the QI focused on projects that met a real, identified need, the participants saw the value of continuing the work and maintaining the momentum: “Every single person here is talking about something that involves some sort of contact, either a staff contact, a faculty contact, some sort of collaboration that's going on with students; they all share that. [H]ow do you operationalize that in a way that pulls people where they... recognize... that the efforts I'm putting in this area... actually mean something at the institution. [Things] may start to change. And... it's basically, it's WWWD, what would Woodbridge [Ferris, the University's founder] do? Because it really comes back to that.”
5. **Integrating the Spirit of Innovation and Engagement into the University's Culture.** For QI efforts to be valuable, they need to have long-term outcomes and result in long-term change. The long-term connections between the initial QI projects and the supporting efforts of the ALC will be key to supporting the cultural change. Many of the project participants discussed the importance of changing the institutional culture: “...we're just looking for people

who desire and are willing to work. That spirit has to infiltrate the rest of the institution that we really grab a hold of that.... And I think all the quality initiatives share that spirit of innovation.”

Another said, “one thing I have a lot of respect for with the faculty at Ferris is they’re good at thinking outside the box when they need to. And all of our quality initiative projects were based on a problem and we recognized there was a problem and we went, ‘How do we fix it?’... It’s [the same in] all of these quality initiatives; we want to fix the problems for the students that nobody else wants to fix....”

One participant summarized the value of the QI: “We got to pick things that mattered to us. So, we took that barrier down.... [T]he university and people didn’t do things just to do them. They chose stuff that they’re like: ‘If I’m going to do this, I’m going to do something that matters.’”

Resource Provision

8. Explain the human, financial, physical and technological resources that supported the initiative.

Academic Literacies Center

Resourcing for the ALC was made possible through one-time renovation funding from the division of Academic Affairs and operational funds through RSS. The fiscal investment in the Center also includes ongoing operational expenditures, which are expected to increase during the 2020-21 academic year when online tutoring services begin through a partnership with NetTutor®.

QI Projects

A majority of the QI projects relied on existing resources at the college and unit level to provide the human, physical, and technical components. This integration into existing structures and processes not only ensures project sustainability but also the commitment and motivation to continue the efforts.

- A. Human Resources.** As noted previously, the number of individuals involved in the 33 projects demonstrates [collaboration across units and among faculty and staff](#).
- B. Financial Resources.** All of the projects involved some costs, both in time and resources. While most of the financial support for the 33 projects used existing budgets and were embedded into existing structures, University and division resources supported the collaborative, institution-wide activities (such as HatchEd); these have resulted in plans for an ongoing Innovation Fund to support continuous quality improvement efforts.
- C. Physical Resources.** While most of the QI projects used existing space and physical resources, the hub of the project, the Academic Literacies Center, restructured space in FLITE, allowing separate student services to be combined into one, centralized location.
- D. Technological Resources.** All of the QI projects relied on the institution’s data and IT resources for their assessment efforts. In addition, several projects included investment in new technology or changes in current technological resources to ensure success. For example,
 - ExamSoft software supported two projects: Pharmacy and Optometry.
 - Connected to EIO’s project to support a culture of excellence in online course development, following an intensive cross-college review process, the University decided to adopt a new learning management system, not only to support QI efforts, but also to provide a more reliable foundation for delivering high-quality education.

- EIO's retention project was supported with a new online orientation solution, created in collaboration with the Office of Enrollment Services.
- Nuventive™ Improve. Prior to the start of the QI projects, Ferris used the Improve database to record and monitor some assessment projects and store assessment data. During the projects, however, this use was expanded, and the system used more effectively for assessment purposes.
- Kurzweil assistive learning technologies and literacy software expanded online, freely available and accessible academic accommodation support.

Plans for the Future (or Future Milestones of a Continuing Initiative)

9. Describe plans for ongoing work related to or as a result of the initiative.

The two over-arching goals of the QI project will come together in the next phases of the University's work.

Goal #1: Environment focused on holistic student success. The QI Initiatives and the ALC.

First, the next phase will build additional collaboration among the project teams, identify needs that extend across projects, and find ways to use the Academic Literacies Center (ALC) to provide institutional supports. Plans for the QI projects involve identifying the institutional supports needed for the ongoing projects and centering these in the ALC. The ALC will provide the central hub for these key student support services, coordinate the efforts of the individual projects, and support the results and findings of the projects and their continued development.

The ALC's services will also continue to expand as new opportunities are identified; for example, the University Eye Center (MCO) has incorporated a [Vision Symptom Survey](#) that will help students identify potential vision issues that may affect their academic work. The ALC will support these students by offering free vision screenings and support onsite.

In addition to identifying needs and using the ALC to support these, the next phase will build additional collaboration among the project teams through a representative Advisory Council. The ALC Advisory Council is planned to coordinate and oversee these QI efforts moving forward and make recommendations that will support student success across multiple academic units.

As projects face challenges, the Council will explore solutions and consider ways to operationalize these across academic units, efforts that, prior to the QI, had no formal structure or process within the institution. Similarly, projects with demonstrated success in a specific area may be scaled for wider implementation. For example, the C4 project could be scaled to reach a larger audience: "This ... could potentially be extended across RSS so that all general studies students are in a cohort where you have this [same] focus."

Goal #2: Fostering a culture of continuous quality improvement

Stimulated by the QI efforts, the University plans to continue to support and encourage innovation and awareness of the ways that assessment efforts and data move us forward as an institution. From HatchEd's Innovation Fair and Idea Incubator, events such as the Authors' Celebration, and the Excellence in Assessment Award, Ferris will continue to recognize and identify future challenges and use the assessment, innovation, and professional activities and structures to address them.

10. Describe any practices or artifacts from the initiative that other institutions might find meaningful or useful and please indicate if you would be willing to share this information.

Many aspects of Ferris' QI provide examples of meaningful projects, structure, and leadership that could be valuable to other institutions. The following list highlights a few of these:

- A. Academic Literacies Center: Data and Structure. The centralized structure of the ALC can serve as a model for institutions interested in enhancing their current student supports. The ALC has been featured in the Michigan Association of State Universities (MASU) Student Success Innovations Exchange as a case study for student academic improvement (See MASU: https://www.masu.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/1-fsu-academic-literacies-center-11-2019_1.pdf).
- B. The Early Alert Program (COP) can serve as a model for other disciplines for identifying academically at-risk students and providing them with appropriate interventions. The collaborative nature of the program, engaging all faculty and staff, is also successful and worth replicating.
- C. The IPE assessment rubric developed for the COP's Pharm.D. program has been successful in measuring growth in students' preparedness for interprofessional team-readiness (See AJPE: www.ajpe.org/content/early/2020/01/30/ajpe7668).
- D. The C4 Scholar Program's success in changing students' mindset for personal and professional success, as well as providing the academic supports needed to improve their academic skills, provides a valuable model.
- E. The Linked Course project demonstrated that pairing introductory Mathematics and English Composition courses can help students understand the connections to their professional careers and increase student learning.
- F. HatchEd Innovation Fair and Idea Incubator. The institution's work, as part of the QI projects and other innovative activities, were celebrated in the fall 2019 HatchEd Innovation Fair and Idea Incubator. The event focused on nurturing innovation and empowering innovators in the higher education and was a collaborative effort of departments across the University, the Ferris Academic Senate, KCAD Senate, and the Office of Academic Affairs. The conference was also featured (see "A," above) as a MASU case study (See MASU: https://www.masu.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/4-fsu-hatched-11-11-2019_1.pdf).
- G. Accessible Content for Everyone. The institution's work as part of the #33 projects highlighted the opportunity to further advance resources in support of greater universally designed courses, course materials, and academic resources including degree checksheets, web content, text-to-speech and translation software, tutoring and writing assistance services, library holdings, open educational resources, and captioning capabilities.