

# The Quality Equity (QE) Imperative: What Educational Institutions Should Do

Often, equity and quality initiatives are viewed as separate, and led from different campus locations. The Quality Equity Imperative is designed to help an institution bring equity and quality goals together by investing systematically in practices that increase access/persistence/completion and ensure students' achievement of Quality Learning "Essentials" (QLEs)—the learning outcomes needed for career success and lifelong learning.

## 1. Build QE Capacity

### Know Who Your Students Are and Will Be

- Use data to identify quality equity shortfalls; discern *systemic* barriers and set potential priorities
- Shape frank, hard dialogues about the human stories and experiences behind the quality equity shortfalls
- Set *initial* goals for creating supportive environment and increasing participation, persistence, and equity in high quality learning

### Build Campus-Wide Leadership

- Provide evidence-based and culturally competent professional development for board, senior staff, faculty, and all staff
- Engage stakeholders and make case for change
- Enlist employers and civil rights leaders as partners

### Develop a Comprehensive Quality Equity Plan with Clear Accountabilities and Roles

- Set progress goals and milestones
- Ensure broad participation, including students
- Create a baseline for performance indicators

### Include Quality Learning Pathways as a Critical Part of the Quality Equity Plan

- Identify key institutional learning outcomes (Quality Learning Essentials) that all students need for success (See QE Pathways for details)
- Ensure ALL students' participation in multiple High Impact Practices (HIPs) to improve engagement, persistence, and quality learning (See QE Pathways for details)

### Invest in Evidence-Based Practices for Increased Student Success

- Include just-in-time financial assistance, credit for work-based or vocational learning, co-requisite remediation, and intrusive advising
- Make data analytics central to the QE Plan

## 2. Map QE Pathways for Students

### Develop a Shared Vision for Equitable Quality Learning

- Identify Quality Learning Essentials (QLEs) that graduates need for success in work, life and democracy. *QLEs include critical and evidence-based thinking, communication, quantitative reasoning, digital fluency, engaging diverse perspectives, problem-solving with diverse partners, ethical reasoning, and applied, integrative learning*
- Set equity goals for High Impact Practices (HIPs), e.g., a first-year experience; field-based learning; writing and research; diversity/global learning; and integrative capstone projects
- Ensure student learning about developments in science, technology, global and cultural interdependence, and the histories of democratic movements for liberty, justice, opportunity, and inclusion

### Develop Guided Learning Pathways (Keyed to the Vision) for General Education, Meta-Majors, Majors, and Certificates

- Clarify course sequences, requirements, and milestones for progress in all programs
- Align program pathways both with the QLEs and with program-relevant HIPs
- Ensure that All sequences involve students in relevant and rigorous questions and problems

### Help Students Choose and Persist in Pathways Clearly Tied to Their Career, Civic and Life Goals

- Guide undecided students to thematic "meta-majors" such as Health and Society, Culture and Community, Business and Entrepreneurship, etc.
- Provide targeted and culturally competent support systems to help students connect life and career goals with program pathways and requirements
  - Invest in intrusive guidance to identify students at risk, provide relevant supports and adjust plans as needed
  - Teach students the arts of reflection and redirection

## 3. Track Student Success:

### Access and Persistence\*

- College credits for first term, first year, by student groups (race/ethnicity, first generation, etc.)
- Persistence to second year
- Transfer and/or Graduation; Employment

### Quality Learning\*

- Timely progress with program requirements, and participation in multiple High Impact Practices (HIPs)
- Equitable achievement of proficiency on Quality Learning Essentials (QLEs, or institutional-wide learning outcomes)
- External validation of assessment evidence

## 4. Ensure Progress

- Engage leaders at all levels with Quality Equity goals, values, evidence, and progress
- Routinize Quality Equity training for ALL faculty and staff
- Engage students early and often in planning for their own success
- Involve critical partners (all programs, departments, and schools) to create a culture of inclusive excellence
- Make Quality Equity competence an ongoing part of faculty roles and rewards
- Monitor progress and adjust as needed

**\*Use Disaggregated Data to Support QE Progress**