Closing the Gap
Quality Enhancement Plan

Lead Champion: Saskia Campbell, Executive Director
University Career Services
96% of University administrators believe graduates are ready for the workforce\(^1\)

33% of business leaders believe students graduate with needed skills\(^3\)

35% of students feel their education effectively prepared them for a job\(^2\)

Only 1/3 of students believe they will graduate with skills/knowledge to succeed in the job market\(^3\)

94% of seniors indicated participation in experiential learning; however, only 35% of seniors had experiential learning on their resume

45% of students study harder when they perceive connection between courses & career\(^4\)

55% of students believe knowing ideal career path will improve academic performance\(^4\)

Over 83% of graduate students say support of career readiness skills is important

Undergraduates ranked major/career events #1 area of interest

Over 10,400 students did not engage with University Career Services last year

Scheduling conflicts with academics and work rated top reasons
Career Readiness Skills

- Critical thinking/Problem-solving
- Oral/Written Communication
- Teamwork/Collaboration
- Digital Technology
- Leadership
- Professionalism/Work-Ethic
- Career Management
- Global/Intercultural Fluency

Required credit bearing course are students’ preferred way to participate in professional development and career support services (Source: Professional Development and Support Activities Graduate Student Survey, 2020)
CLOSING THE GAP

PHASE 1

- Define career readiness skills
- Cross-train coaches and advisors on major fit and career exploration as part of Student Experience Redesign initiative
- Research how top Mason employers are assessing for skills
- Secure Faculty Fellows for curriculum-skills mapping
- Train faculty to connect career readiness skills to learning outcomes in targeted courses (e.g., ENGH 302, COMM 101, Mason Impact, capstone/thesis courses)
- Host Skills Showcase for employers to share with faculty how they assess for skills
PHASE 2

- Map learning outcomes to skills at college/school level with support from Stearns Center
- Create course development grants to transition appropriate courses to competency-based grading
- Integrate skills into curriculum maps for tracking in TK20
- Review trained faculty syllabi and grant Career Readiness “CR” designation accordingly
- Expand student support services and faculty development opportunities offered at the LAB to elevate career readiness skills
THE LAB

Individual consultations with students on writing and communication assignments

Support for faculty teaching CR designated courses (one-on-one consultation and semester-long coordination)

Workshops for students and faculty (e.g., Research Papers as Career Builders)
# CLOSING THE GAP

## PHASE 3

- Display skill maps to students/advisors/coaches for goal setting and academic planning
- Students register for Career Readiness/"CR" courses
- Acknowledge certified faculty on departmental websites
- **Grant winners participate in Course Redesign Academy**
- Ongoing development and faculty to faculty support
- Deploy faculty career readiness toolkit to more courses

## PHASE 4

- Evaluate student experience to identify skill gaps in curriculum overall
- Offer targeted support to departments based on gap analysis
- Grant winners offer redesigned courses
- Train additional faculty to connect career readiness skills to learning outcomes
- Propose addition or redesign of courses to address persistent gaps
- Maintain curriculum skills map (e.g., add new courses)
People Resources

- QEP Project Manager based in Career Services to liaise with OIEP, Stearns Center, the Lab, Undergrad/Graduate Ed, etc.
- Stearns Center Senior Faculty Fellow to develop training for and provide oversight of curriculum mapping; support Course Redesign Academy
- One Faculty Fellow per school/college to do curriculum mapping (SLOs to skills)
- Administrative position to supervise career-specific programming and activities in the Lab, and 10 peer tutors

Financial Incentives/Compensation

- Stipend for faculty who participate in on-site faculty development on Career Guidance and Career Readiness
- Mini-grants for individual faculty to do competency-based grading course redesign
- Curriculum development grants for departments and programs to enhance 3+ courses

Programmatic

- On-site, day-long faculty development on connecting career readiness to learning outcomes
- Course Redesign Academy
- Space in the Lab for tutoring, workshops

Time

- Faculty course release to enhance/redesign courses
- University Career Services staff to cross-train coaches/advisors
- Stearns Center staff to promote faculty development opportunities
- 10-15% of one OIEP staff member’s time to do planning, develop surveys/rubrics, link students to CR courses and perform analysis

RESOURCES NEEDED

Programmatic

- On-site, day-long faculty development on connecting career readiness to learning outcomes
- Course Redesign Academy
- Space in the Lab for tutoring, workshops
Year 1
PHASE 1
- # students having major fit/career exploration conversations with coaches/advisors
- # faculty who complete professional development/get certified
- Add skill articulation/confidence item into course evaluations

Year 2
PHASE 2
- # students accessing support services at the LAB
- # CR designated courses
- Completion of curriculum skill mapping

Year 3
PHASE 3
- # students enrolled in CR designated courses
- Feedback/best practices from faculty teaching CR course

Year 4
PHASE 4
- Employer perceptions of Mason students/graduates
- Review career connection in Mason Impact Project reflections
- Grant recipients present outcomes of redesigned courses at ITL Conference
- % students listing academic work on resume in Handshake
- Course evaluations of CR courses vs. non CR courses

Year 5
PHASE 4
- Increase in student satisfaction on Graduating Student/Exit Surveys
- Increase in grads with positive career outcome within 6 months based on Career Plans Survey
- Increase in grads in position related to career goals based on Career Plans Survey

ONGOING
**INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING**

81% undergraduate positive career outcome rate (employment, graduate study, military, etc.)

82% attain position related to career goals

26% graduate students dissatisfied with career planning in program

25% undergraduate students dissatisfied with career support from faculty and staff

Source: Class of 2018 Career Plans survey; 2017-18 Grad Student Exit Survey; and 2018-19 Graduating Senior Survey
Closing the Gap

Quality Enhancement Plan