

## UWG QEP Topic Submission

*QEP topics should be submitted using this form and address each question below:*

1) What QEP topic are you submitting? (5-10 words)
Learn about the world today; change it tomorrow. Globalizing UWG through Interdisciplinary Studies.
2) What is UWG currently doing in this area relative to student learning?
The Center for Interdisciplinary Studies supports and coordinates three major degree [Environmental Studies, Environmental Sciences and Global Studies] and six minor degree [Africana, American, Canadian, Film, Latin American and Film studies] programs. Each of these programs is comprised of interdisciplinary approaches to content and topics that provide students with diverse and global perspectives that prepare them for living and working as successful global citizens. The programs provide students with a flexible approach to course options. These allow students to have greater choice in mapping out their degrees and to select courses that are more in line with their personal interests while still maintaining an integrated degree with academic rigor. A key proposal for the future of IDS is a plan to create a single BS/BA in IDS based on the extant degrees. This IDS degree would allow students to follow one of the three major tracks, or combine three minors/certificates to satisfy a full degree. This would enable a synergy with all the programs and bring them under one administrative home. Some of these degrees include study abroad opportunities to provide students with language immersion and international experiences; others can work with internships and service learning opportunities for co-curricular learning. The Center for IDS has, moreover, proposed a range of ways to extend and support these offerings to provide for broader international perspectives including: additions to the first year experience, plans for ‘internationalizing the campus’ which include integrating international students into residence and cohort learning communities; and developing portfolio assessment plans that allow students to have a tangible asset of papers, personal reflections and materials that can support personal growth, as well as applications for jobs and graduate schools. See: <a href="http://www.westga.edu/~asfacts/Committees/Taskforce/IDSTaskForceReportJan2010.pdf">http://www.westga.edu/~asfacts/Committees/Taskforce/IDSTaskForceReportJan2010.pdf</a>
How does this topic relate to the UWG strategic plan and/or assessment data?
This IDS plan connects directly with the UWG strategic plan’s emphasis on preparing students for the global economy. It does so through planned co-curricular programming that emphasizes experiential learning alongside our traditional Liberal Arts content programs. Of particular note are plans for a single BS/BA degree in IDS, IDS-based learning communities that would work with residential experiences, and study abroad experiences. One example of these plans would be to create a shared residential living and learning community experience that brings international students together with local students. The center for IDS also envisions ways to connect with RPG needs through the development of a portfolio-based assessment experience. The ‘global citizen’ passport would build on the FYRST year program by tracking the preparation of students to be ethically and civically engaged over their entire time at UWG. IDS programs, moreover, provide opportunities for internships for course credit, such as the Global Studies Internships. The Center for IDS could also provide ideal opportunities for student civic engagement. Part of the ‘global citizen’ passport portfolios would entail a requirement for students to participate in a community based service-learning opportunity such as volunteering for environmental or local community-based service activities. Finally, this IDS plan connects with the UWG emphasis on ensuring the global literacy of our students since global perspectives and awareness of environmental and diversity issues are at the core of all the IDS programs. Providing students with greater access to and flexibility with their academic degrees through IDS will ensure we attract, retain and provide for the progression of greater numbers of outstanding students. Submitted by: Dr. Aran MacKinnon, Center for IDS

Topic submissions will be posted to [www.westga.edu](http://www.westga.edu)