

## 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)
Developing engaged citizens through information, digital and media literacies
2) What is UWG currently doing in this area relative to student learning?
<p>Information literacy helps students to locate, evaluate and effectively use information. Media literacy teaches students to think critically about all media from music videos to online sources. Digital literacy aids in their understanding, usage and creation of information using digital technology. When students are fluent in all three of these areas, they are better navigators, users, and producers of information. (For more information about these literacies see: <a href="http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/publications/whitepapers/presidential.cfm">http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/publications/whitepapers/presidential.cfm</a>; <a href="http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/teachers/media_literacy/what_is_media_literacy.cfm">http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/teachers/media_literacy/what_is_media_literacy.cfm</a>; and <a href="http://digitalliteracy.cornell.edu/">http://digitalliteracy.cornell.edu/</a>).</p> <p>Just as each term only covers part of the total literacy package our students need, some of the UWG core courses touch on aspects of these literacies. Business 1900 (Surf the Internet for Success), Computer Science 1020 (Computers and Society), and Library 1101 (Research and the Academic Library) each address some of the skills necessary to gain these literacies. Some departments teach courses on writing for that discipline (English 3405, Professional and Technical Writing). Most faculty incorporate some aspects of these literacies into their courses through direct instruction, assignments, and/or direct feedback to their students. An overall coordinated plan to address these literacies would compound these individual efforts and would solidify these skills in all of our students. Our students need to be challenged and supported in becoming active intentional learners who are discerning consumers of the overt and subliminal information they are constantly consuming. Ideally, we want our students to seamlessly navigate information and its media, but a good place to start is for them to attain literacy in these areas so that they ultimately become fluent in them. The immediate goal would be for them to be literate in all three areas but the ultimate goal would be that these literacies are incorporated into their worldview so that they become second-nature. Strong systematic upper-administrative support is necessary to create and achieve an integrated understanding of these concepts and to make our students ready for the 21st century.</p>
3) How does this topic relate to the UWG strategic plan and/or assessment data?

Please submit all topic ideas (no later than Oct 1, 2010), to [gep@westga.edu](mailto:gep@westga.edu)

The UWG Strategic Plan states that a goal for our students is “individual transformation.” Often students come to college and merely parrot opinions they have heard from their parents or from news media. These students have been taught, through standardized testing and No Child Left Behind, to repeat the “right answer” but they often have not been taught to be responsible for their own thoughts. Information, media and digital literacies are competencies that allow students to seek out, evaluate and incorporate other perspectives into their own worldview. Literacy in these areas helps the students become intentional learners who actively engage with (as opposed to passively consuming) information, create new knowledge and understanding for themselves, and proficiently communicate this with others across formats and cultures.

Guiding Principle 1, Goal 1 of the UWG Strategic Plan encourages us to educate students to be ethically responsible and civically engaged. When students understand the social, political, and financial issues surrounding information they use in addition to where information comes from, how it is produced, formatted, and shared, they have the tools necessary to become civically engaged. They can look below the surface rather than simply accepting what they read or hear without question, and, as a result, reach their own conclusions.

Guiding Principle 2, Goal 4 of the UWG Strategic Plan expresses the university’s desire to create an atmosphere that is safe for expressing thoughts and ideas. When students become responsible for their thoughts and take ownership over their ideas, they can intellectually engage others in a respectful manner because they will understand why they have the ideas they do and therefore are more secure when listening to opposing viewpoints. This will, hopefully, allow them to listen to each other’s ideas without becoming defensive since they will know how to analyze and evaluate arguments. They will also then know how to differentiate facts from opinion, even their own.

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

Please submit all topic ideas (no later than Oct 1, 2010), to [qep@westga.edu](mailto:qep@westga.edu)