Executive Summary

Resulting from a broad-based process involving faculty, staff and students, Georgia Perimeter College (GPC) has developed a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) based on using engaged learning practices in targeted courses to improve selected outcomes. The QEP is titled “EDGE: Engagement Drives GPC Education.” As part of the QEP, 11 courses have been chosen to receive EDGE interventions. Courses targeted for EDGE interventions were selected based on being taken by (or required for) large numbers of students, having undesirably high non-success (grades of D or F or course withdrawal) rates, and representing multiple disciplines and curricular areas.

Faculty teaching targeted courses will be trained in specific EDGE strategies starting the Spring semester before implementation in their courses. Four EDGE strategies were selected for implementation based on review of the literature and best practices: 1) two forms of active learning: a) collaborative learning and b) problem based learning, and 2) two forms of community-based learning: a) service learning and b) community-based research. The degree to which EDGE strategies are actually implemented in the targeted courses will be assessed using multiple measures.

This QEP aims to change behaviors, attitudes, and learning outcomes. **Behaviors:** Students will be more likely to persist in their courses; faculty will increase their focus and skills in making their courses engaging. **Attitudes:** Students will perceive their courses as more relevant and will report greater engagement as part of their overall college experience. **Learning outcomes:** Students will improve in their ability to think critically, to make connections between course content and real-world issues, and will perform better on assessments of course content.

Targeted outcomes will be assessed before and after implementation of EDGE strategies, with EDGE strategies being implemented in two to three courses per year over the five-year span of the QEP.
Quick Overview of the EDGE QEP

Topic: EDGE: Engagement Drives GPC Education. The focus is on using engaged learning practices to enhance student outcomes.

Outcomes: Instructors:
- Will increase their focus on and skills in making their courses engaging and relevant.

Students:
- Will be more likely to persist in and complete their courses.
- Will perceive their courses as more relevant to their lives and careers.
- Will report greater engagement as part of their overall college experience.
- Will improve in their ability to make connections between course content and issues of real-world significance.
- Will improve in their ability to think critically.
- Will perform better on course-specific common end-of-course assessments.

Intervention: Instructors will be trained to incorporate four engaged learning strategies into their teaching of targeted courses. These four engaged learning strategies were selected based on reviews of the literature and best practices.
- Two forms of active learning:
  - Collaborative learning
  - Problem-based learning
- Two forms of community-based learning:
  - Service learning
  - Community-based research

The 11 courses targeted for EDGE intervention were chosen based on having historically high non-success (grades of D or F or course withdrawal) rates, being taken by large numbers of students, and representation of diverse areas of the curriculum.

Assessment: Multiple forms of assessment have been selected to measure:
- The degree to which engaged (EDGE) practices have been implemented in targeted courses,
- Student withdrawal/persistence rates,
- Student perceptions of the relevance of EDGE-targeted courses,
- Overall student engagement with the college experience,
- Students’ demonstrated ability to relate course content to real-world issues,
- Critical thinking, and
- Course-specific learning outcomes.

Assessments will be conducted in targeted courses before and after the implementation of EDGE strategies and the results will be compared to evaluate the impact of engaged learning practices on student outcomes.