

SEEING THE IMPACT...

In the **Fall 2020** semester we were able to gather information from 102 students about their experience through EL activities that were conducted in 7 different classes!

BIG shout out to Dr. Roberts, Dr. Gale, Dr. Song, and Prof. Maxwell!

This semester Dr. Roberts, Dr. Gale, Dr. Hammon, Dr. Hester, Dr. Cline, Dr. Miller, Prof. Agrawal and Prof. Maxwell will be collecting data from our students.

BLACKBOARD

Everyone has access to the QEP Blackboard organization. Please take a look at this account as we will utilize it as one of the means to communicate with the campus community.

KEEP AN EYE OUT...

There are a lot of exciting things taking place during this process of rolling out the QEP! Please keep an eye on your email for some additional information and a short little video for you to see what our students and project sponsors have to say about the partnerships taking place.

DO YOU WANT TO LEARN MORE?

The leadership team is looking for ways to bring more information and training to you. If you are interested please email katia.maxwell@athens.edu.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Experiential Learning:

From a Student Organization Perspective

By Derrek Smith, Senior Director, Student Success; Compliance, Student Activities; CO-Director, Title III Grant

As a campus we have been through much discussion to select experiential learning as the “QEP.” In one of the QEP topic identification committee meetings, we performed an exercise to think about our own past student experiences to identify those that would today be classified as experiential learning. When I did the exercise, I realized it was experiential learning moments that made a positive impact on my education. Also, when I think back, these moments stand out among the most fun and pivotal student experiences.

I would encourage you to take a minute to perform this exercise to reflect on your own education. When you were a student, what did you do then that today could be classified as experiential learning? How did these experiences impact you and maybe the direction of your career?

For many of you, your student experiential learning moments may have happened with your involvement through a campus student organization. Today at Athens State, this is the case for a number of our students who get involved.

There are three types of Registered Student Organizations on campus. There are **homegrown organizations** such as the Athenian Players for the drama and theatre arts (also open to any student), the Math and Computer Science Club, “MACS,” or the Criminal Justice Student Association, to name a few. There are **nationally chartered honor societies** such as Delta Mu Delta, business honors; Kappa Delta Pi, education honors; or Psi Chi, psychology honors. The third category is a **nationally chartered student organization** such as the American Production and Inventory Control Society, “APICS,” or the Institute of Management Accountants Student Chapter, “Accounting Club.” In addition, there are other student initiatives for the Student Government Association and the Athenian Ambassadors.

The more I learn about Student Organizations and their activities, the more experiential learning is being revealed, many that are complementary experiences to majors and/or a profession.

For example, did you know Athens State’s **Accounting Club** has been recognized nationally as an outstanding chapter? To receive this national award, the club engages in a full calendar of events such as frequent monthly meetings, professional development with industry professionals, participation at the national annual conference and service projects.

In Fall 2020 when COVID threw us all a curveball, the **MACS Club** got creative by offering rapid-fire Zoom presentations. These “Zooms” provided industry insights and were presented by alumni working within different fields. Additionally, the **Art Club** provided frequent Zoom demonstrations of different art techniques.

Additional opportunities to expand Student Organizations continue. One group will leverage the **Student Alabama Education Association**, the student wing of the professional teachers’ organization, the **Alabama Education Association**, to expand student professional development opportunities. Another group plans to support the **Alabama Literacy Act** which focuses on reading skills by the third grade.

Ms. Tanya Griffin with the United Way of Athens-Limestone County recently worked with our Athenian Ambassadors who supported a few of United Way’s projects. She notes,

“It was an honor to work with these [ambassadors.] What a wonderful future we have with these students stepping into leadership roles for our community.

—Ms. Griffin

As the QEP continues to develop, so will the university’s ability to measure the impact of experiential learning on student learning outcomes.