

ISSUE

4

MAY
2020

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Already using EL activities in one of your classes? Please send a brief summary and a couple of pictures to

katia.maxwell@athens.edu to

have your experience highlighted in the next newsletter!

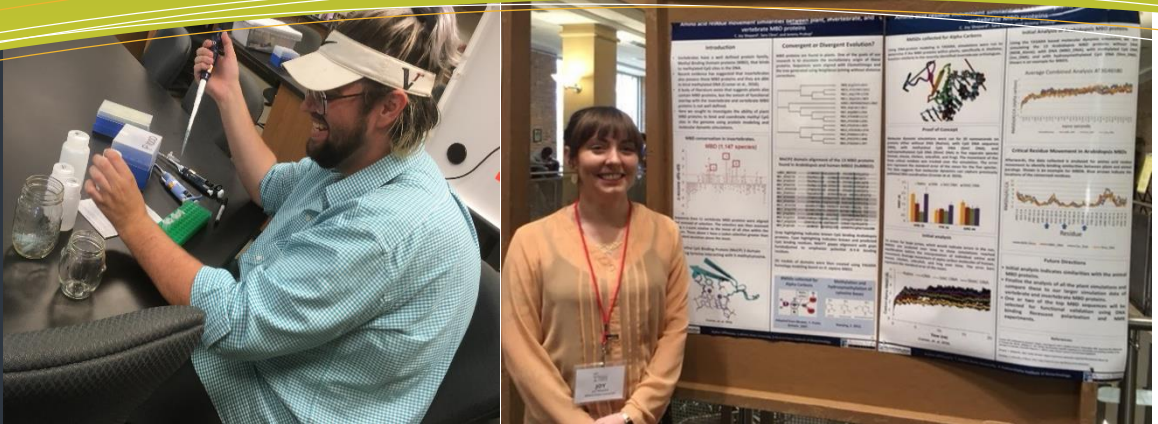
BLACKBOARD

Everyone has access to the QEP Blackboard organization. Please visit this site often to see what's developing at Athens State in the area of Experiential Learning.

DISCUSSION & COLLABORATION

To enhance our student's experiences at Athens State and have a successful QEP, your feedback is critical. Maybe you had a meaningful EL experience during your college journey. We would love to hear about it. You can easily participate from wherever you are through the "New QEP" organization in Bb.

Please join the focus group discussions. The number of participants continues to grow. Your voice is important and we want to hear from you!



Research-Based Learning projects in Molecular Biology

Students engage in a project for a full academic year, spanning two courses: *BI 301 Cell Structure and Function* and *BI 302 Genetics*. The research encompasses some Inquiry Based Learning (IBL), where the students are allowed to make and explore their own hypotheses, as well as some pre-planned experiments that contribute to the forward motion of the overall research.

In the Genetics Lab course, we look at the mutants' genotypes: making sure that they have the mutation and that there are two copies of the mutation. We want the mutants to be homozygous, meaning two of the same gene, because if they are heterozygous, the normal gene can sometimes mask, or cover up the phenotype of, the mutant gene. Then in the Cell Lab course, we look at the molecular phenotype (characteristics) of the homozygous mutants created by the Genetics course. We look at photosynthesis, general protein levels, and c-type cytochrome levels.

Thus far, while the students have successfully bred homozygotes of each of the three mutants, we have not yet uncovered a specific conditional phenotype for any of them. However, we have ruled out many conditions related to light, pH changes, and other variables that could have influenced the mutants to grow differently from the normal plants!

Students write up their results, informally in Genetics and formally in Cell, so they learn two types of job-related writing skills.

Through these experiences, the students are exposed to a breadth of real-world molecular techniques and a depth of knowledge on one specific topic. They are also exposed to the reality of research: just because you want a specific result, doesn't mean you'll get it! Sometimes you get no change, or something you weren't expecting, and both of these answers are good.

- Dr. Sara Cline

Thank You!

Welcome to those of you who have joined a QEP literature focus group!

Thanks for your time and feedback through the different Group Discussion Boards. Good conversations are beginning to form.

If you have not already done so, please set aside a little bit of your time to select a focus group that you are interested in joining. There are resources provided for your review and comment. You can provide your thoughts through the individual Group Discussion Board and see what your colleagues are sharing.

COMING SOON

To the New QEP Blackboard Account Near YOU!

In addition to the Focus Group discussions, there are additional discussions and activities that we need your feedback on. Keep an eye out on the following:

1. **Experiential Learning Categories at Athens State** – these have been identified and are listed to the right.
2. **Defining Experiential Learning at Athens State** – The QEP Leadership Team is focusing on four drafted definitions of Experiential Learning at Athens State. You can provide your input into each of these drafted definitions. Please go to the “New QEP” Bb organization Discussion Board and provide your constructive criticism of these four drafted definitions.
3. **How will we market ourselves?** – this is a fun and creative way to get your students involved in the process. Please share your thoughts on:
 - a. Logo
 - b. Acronym
 - c. Catch Phrase? We don't have anything here yet, but if you have something in mind please share it with us.
4. **We need volunteers for Fall 2020!** If you are teaching a class with an experiential learning activity associated to it we want you! We are looking for professors who are willing to use a rubric to assess their students' experiential learning experience. There will be two rubrics; (1) is a general assessment of the experiential learning activity, and (2) will be specific to an experiential learning activity. Lastly, we would ask that you provide your students with a short survey for them to take at the end of the activity. All of these items will be provided to you. You just volunteer to integrate them into your class and provide feedback afterwards. If you're willing to volunteer please email katia.maxwell@athens.edu.

Our QEP Leadership Team

Ms. Laura Allen, Career Development Center
Ms. Mary Aquila, Library Faculty
Ms. Kim Bell, COB Faculty
Ms. Lauren Blackledge, Public Relations
Dr. Chet Breaux, Writing Center
Ms. Carolyn Carthen, Veteran's Affairs
Dr. Bridgette Walker, COE Faculty
Ms. Juliana Hunt, Accessibility Services
Ms. Dakota Cotton, Library Faculty
Mr. Tim Crafton, IT
Ms. Helen Crider, Wallace Center
Ms. Barbara Ferguson, Financial Affairs
Dr. Mark Gale, COE Faculty
Mr. Jeffrey Guenther, Institutional Research
Dr. Diann Hammon, COB Faculty
Ms. Laura Lynn Kerner, COB Faculty

Ms. Katia Maxwell, COAS Faculty
Ms. Elizabeth Mead, Student
Mr. Aron Moss, Student
Ms. Savannah Pearson, Testing Center
Dr. Shannon Pittman, COAS Faculty
Dr. Michael Radden, Career Development Center
Dr. Kim Roberts, COB Faculty
Mr. Derrek Smith, Student Success Center
Dr. Jackie Smith, Accreditation Liaison
Ms. Brittany Stanley, Student
Dr. Quanda Stevenson, COAS Faculty
Dr. Bruce Thomas, COAS Faculty
Dr. Darlene Turner-White, COE Faculty
Ms. Debbie Wilson, COE Certification Office
Mr. Nick Agrawal, COAS Faculty
Ms. Chelsea Love, Advancement Office

Four Experiential Learning Categories Identified @ Athens State

1. **Workplace Learning** – this includes students participating in internships or having the opportunity to job shadow someone in a position that they have interest in making their own career. Or, when a student is partnered with a community sponsor to work closely with them on a specified project and deliver the required results as if they had been hired to perform the tasks at hand.

2. **Learning through Research** – this includes students partnering with faculty members to conduct research in topics that are relevant to the community and/or discipline. These opportunities allow for the learner to attain similar skills as those in workplace learning environment. However, more focused in theoretical aspects of a discipline along with hypothesis and proofs.

3. **Hands-On Learning** – the classes that incorporate hands-on projects come in many different forms. These opportunities are completed in a controlled environment, such as a classroom, where faculty are on hand to be facilitators within the student's learning experience.

4. **Learning through Expeditions** – this includes students getting out of the classroom and being able to apply their skills and knowledge through activities that may occur during trips, whether local, national, or international.