

ISSUE

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ARE YOU ALREADY USING EL ACTIVITIES IN YOUR CLASS?

Please send a brief summary and a couple of pictures to katia.maxwell@athens.edu to have your experience highlighted in the newsletter!

INVITATION FROM THE TEAM

Please continue to participate in the multiple discussions that are found on the New QEP Blackboard organization. Students are also encouraged to share their thoughts, therefore if faculty can assist in making them aware of the organization and opportunity that will be greatly appreciated.

FOCUS GROUP UPDATE

Over the Summer semester, eleven (11) different Focus Groups comprised of faculty, staff and students conducted an extensive literature review related to Experiential Learning. Each group utilized the Bb Discussion Board tool in the QEP Organization to review concepts and share ideas. This input will be important in the development of the QEP Report due in March 2021.

GETTING THE WORD OUT...

The Leadership team would like to thank everyone who participated in the Logo Design competition. There were 5 entries. The winner will be announced soon! Marketing and Web Presence sub-committees have been formed...keep an eye out for future announcements!



Secondary Teacher Candidates Tutor At-Risk Students in Area Schools

Athens State University students who are preparing to be teachers have the opportunity to participate in a **hands-on learning experience** that allows them to authentically prepare for their culminating student teaching internship while also providing a much needed resource to at-risk students in area schools. This EL experience involves tutoring students in either middle school or high school that have been identified as needing extra help in a specific content area such as math, science, history, English, etc. The project begins with Athens State teacher candidates reviewing the Quad-A tutoring method (LaFountaine, 2007) which focuses on the four stages of Assess, Assist, Allow autonomy, and Approach again. They then work with area classroom teachers and/or administrators to identify the middle or high school students that need and are willing to participate in tutoring.

After the teacher candidates have identified their “tutees,” they must obtain written permission from the parents/guardians to work with the student(s). Teacher candidates initially meet with the student(s) to find out background and demographic information on both the student(s) and the school to develop the context of learning, which begins the first step of the Quad-A method, Assess. During these first sessions, teacher candidates also assess the student(s) area of need by having them complete a pre-test which the teacher candidates develop. The results allow the teacher candidates to determine what the student already knows about the specific learning focus as well as identify areas for subsequent tutoring sessions. The teacher candidate is responsible for determining the best strategies and approaches to use with the students as they progress through the tutoring sessions.

-Dr. Leigh Hester

Finally, when the teacher candidate feels their “tutee” has reached mastery of the learning segment, a post-test is administered. Teacher candidates compare the pre-test with the post-test scores to determine if student learning is sufficient or if more tutoring sessions are needed. The teacher candidates then write a reflective paper of their experience including a section that addresses what they learned, how they would modify the tutoring, and how useful assessment was for them throughout the tutoring session.

This hands-on learning experience is directly correlated to what teacher candidates must do during their student teaching internship as they complete the national edTPA portfolio assessment required for teacher certification in Alabama. Additionally, this experience is representative of what these teacher candidates will do daily once they become a classroom teacher.

This tutoring experience demonstrates the impact on learning that these teacher candidates have on at-risk students. It also improves the confidence of both the teacher candidates and secondary students simultaneously. Many of the papers discuss the nervousness and uncertainty initially felt by the teacher candidates upon their first interactions with students. The teacher candidates also express such delight when describing how excited the secondary students are once they have successfully mastered the content. This semester, teacher candidates are also getting to add the experience of conducting the tutoring sessions virtually due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic.