



INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF  
RICE UNDERGRADUATES  
IN URBAN HOUSTON

RICE UNIVERSITY

QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN (QEP)

PREPARED FOR THE  
SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

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RICE

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rice University has identified the “Intellectual Development of Rice Undergraduates in Urban Houston” as the theme of its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), part of the university’s reaccreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Rice views the QEP as an opportunity to develop and implement a carefully designed and focused course of action that will enhance student learning. This QEP represents a broad institutional commitment by the university to improve the undergraduate experience in a meaningful and measurable way.

Undergraduate education at Rice has long been distinguished by the rigor and intensity of its classroom work and a dedication to excellence in undergraduate research. While the value of undergraduate research is well-established and widely-understood,<sup>1</sup> there is a growing consensus in higher education that the benefits of research are enhanced when research intersects with real-world experience through service learning<sup>2</sup> and community-based research.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the complex challenges facing our world will be solved by students who have such real-world experience: students who understand the potential and limits of knowledge they are given in the classroom; students who are capable of applying standard theories in nonstandard settings in search of creative solutions; students who can tackle open-ended and ambiguous problems that require original thought and analysis; and students who can effectively communicate what they have learned in their research to academic, professional, and lay audiences alike.

Rice’s QEP will prepare students to meet these challenges through structured civic engagement<sup>4</sup> and community-based research and design focused on the city of Houston.<sup>5</sup> The QEP will enhance student learning in the following specific and measurable ways:

### Cognitive Learning Goals

- Goal #1: Undergraduate students will acquire rigorous, discipline-specific inquiry skills.
- Goal #2: Undergraduate students will be able to apply theories to, or construct models for, solving real-world problems.
- Goal #3: Undergraduate students will acquire enhanced ability to interact with, and present their work effectively to, audiences beyond the academic community.

### Experiential Learning Goals

- Goal #4: Upon graduation, undergraduates will consider a vital connection to urban Houston to be a distinctive feature of their Rice education.
- Goal #5: Undergraduates will better understand the roles that larger communities play in their education and life after graduation.

While enhancing student learning is the driving force and focus of Rice’s QEP, the Plan’s implementation will also advance the following institutional and community goals:

### Community and Institutional Goals

- Goal #6: Develop a culture of civic engagement across the Rice academic community.
- Goal #7: Leverage Rice University’s intellectual capital for the benefit of our city, our local economy, and our quality of life.

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1 “Reinventing Undergraduate Education: A Blueprint for America’s Research Universities,” The Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University, 1998 (hereafter, The Boyer Report).

2 Barbara Jacoby, ed. *Service-Learning in Higher Education: Concepts and Practices*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass (1996); Janet Eyler and Dwight E. Giles, Jr., *Where’s the Learning in Service-Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass (1999); Dan W. Butin, ed. *Service-Learning in Higher Education*. New York: Palgrave (2005); Karen K. Oates and Lynn H. Leavitt, *Service-Learning and Learning Communities: Tools for Integration and Assessment*. Washington, D.C.: AACU (2003); E. Pascarella and P.T. Terenzini, *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass (2005). Kerry Strand, Sam Marullo, Nick Cutforth, Randy Stoecker, and Patrick Donohue, *Community-Based Research and Higher Education: Principles and Practices*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass (2003).

3 Strand et al define community-based research (CBR) as “the systematic creation of knowledge for the purpose of addressing a community-identified need. Ideally, CBR is fully collaborative, with those in the community working with academics. . . .at every stage of the research process. . . .” Strand, et al. (2003), p. 8. For the purposes of the QEP, Rice endorses the foundation of this definition, and QEP Courses will be required to include community partners in the identification and definition of research problems, development of research instruments, collection of data, and implementation of initiatives. See also Barbara Jacoby and Associates, *Building Partnerships for Service-Learning*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons (2003).

4 As part of the development of the QEP, the Steering Committee relied on this statement from the Pew Foundation Charitable Trust: [Civic] engagement is accomplished by applying faculty and student intellectual capital to address community problems; by fostering the skills and attitudes that will enable undergraduates to lead lives of civic responsibility; and by cultivating an action-oriented approach in which higher education institutions work to improve local conditions. . . . Pew Partnership for Civic Change, “New Directions in Civic Engagement: University Avenue Meets Main Street,” 4 (2004).

5 In this context, “research” is defined as an experience in which the student is asked to take on a challenge which is open-ended and ambiguous and requires original thought, critical analysis, and evaluating feedback on initial ideas. At Rice, where engineering and architecture are cornerstones of the university, problem-solving has long been connected to research through design experiences based on leading-edge knowledge.

These seven goals will be addressed, in varying degrees, through the QEP's three components: (i) the *Civic Experience Program*, (ii) the *Civic Inquiry Program*, and (iii) the Center for Civic Engagement.

### ***The Civic Experience Program***

The *Civic Experience Program* is intended to introduce Rice undergraduates to the city of Houston. Focusing primarily on volunteer, internship, and other experiential-learning opportunities, this program will provide students greater access to urban Houston and greater knowledge of its people, social issues, and community assets. These "exposure" opportunities will encourage civic engagement by allowing our students to see Houston as a vibrant, dynamic environment for learning.

The *Civic Experience Program* will offer a range of co-curricular opportunities for students, supplemented by newly created gateway courses for students who may be interested in pursuing the community-based research offered through the *Civic Inquiry Program*.

The *Civic Experience Program*'s co-curricular component integrates and enhances such existing programs as Passport to Houston, Urban Immersion, and those offered through the university's Community Involvement Center, as well as introduces new programs such as Community Site Visits and a Civic Engagement Mentors Program. All of these are described in the Plan section of this document.

The *Civic Experience Program* will supplement these co-curricular opportunities with newly established gateway courses that will better prepare students for successful participation in the more advanced community-based research courses that form the *Civic Inquiry Program*. Topics covered in these 1- or 2-credit courses, aimed primarily at first- and second-year students, will include ethics, communication and presentation skills, and research methods. Current course offerings by Leadership Rice<sup>6</sup>—in leadership theory and practice, entrepreneurship, ethics, and communication, along with a one-on-one mentorship experience—will be part of this program and integrate the role of leadership into student civic development.

### ***The Civic Inquiry Program***

The *Civic Inquiry Program* forms the core of the QEP. It offers course-based opportunities for rigorous research and design experiences. We believe the QEP will further stimulate the already high demand among undergraduates for research and design experience—by introducing students to Houston through the *Civic Experience Program*—and by offering course-based opportunities for rigorous research and design experiences under the guidance of a faculty member and alongside a community partner.

The *Civic Inquiry Program* will feature a range of curricular offerings. QEP *Civic Inquiry* courses will be upper-level undergraduate classes built around or including a significant community-based research or design project. The courses will be offered across academic disciplines in Rice's six Schools: the Wiess School of Natural Sciences, the George R. Brown School of Engineering, the School of Humanities, the School of Social Sciences, the School of Architecture, and the Shepherd School of Music.

QEP *Civic Inquiry* courses will expand the number and type of research and design experiences available to Rice undergraduates. The courses will also provide participating students with a structured process of critical reflection on the intellectual and civic aspects of their community experiences, and offer undergraduate students opportunities to work on community problems under the guidance of expert faculty and in collaboration with community partners. To encourage extended and individual research, the *Civic Inquiry Program* will offer students summer research opportunities and fellowships as well as enhanced collaboration with existing undergraduate research programs such as Century Scholars and the Rice Undergraduate Scholars Program.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Center for Civic Engagement**

To administer and support the *Civic Experience* and *Civic Inquiry Programs*, the Office of the Dean of Undergraduates will open a new center, the Center for Civic Engagement (the Center), in the fall of 2006. The Center will

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6 Leadership Rice, an existing program that will become part of a newly created Center for Civic Engagement, combines academic work and experiential learning to help undergraduates from all disciplines build their leadership capacities to create and manage change. The role of Leadership Rice in the QEP is explained in the Plan section of this document.

7 The Century Scholars program matches select incoming freshmen with faculty mentors for a two-year period. During that time, the student and mentor collaborate on one of the mentor's research projects. Participating students receive a two-year merit scholarship and a research stipend. The Rice Undergraduate Scholars Program is designed for undergraduates who may be considering graduate school and careers in research or scholarship. Participating students (approximately 15 per year) work with individual faculty mentors, attend weekly class meetings on topics related to research methods and scholarship, and present required progress reports and final presentations.

be charged with providing community-based research opportunities for faculty and students to work alongside Houston-based community partners to address the array of challenges facing our city. In its initial phase, the Center will be staffed by a half-time director of faculty rank, a full-time executive director, a half-time faculty coordinator, and an AmeriCorps\*VISTA volunteer.

In addition to identifying, cultivating, and sustaining opportunities for community-based research and design projects appropriate for Rice undergraduates, the Center will also serve as an active liaison among Rice faculty, community organizations, and students to ensure fruitful matches for research and design projects in QEP *Civic Inquiry* courses. The Center will also help faculty develop and design QEP courses, as well as host conferences and provide other support related to community-based research and “teaching-learning” for faculty engaged or interested in community-based research or design. In addition, the Center will: 1) fund stipends and grants for summer undergraduate research fellowships for QEP-related projects, 2) integrate existing co-curricular efforts aimed at providing enhanced civic opportunities in Houston, 3) organize forums for oral presentation of student research and design projects to campus and community audiences, and 4) conduct and coordinate ongoing assessment of the QEP.

Located in the heart of a dynamic city, the Center for Civic Engagement at Rice University will be ideally situated to help students begin grappling with the complex challenges facing Houston.

## Conclusion

Rice University’s QEP integrates Houston into the undergraduate experience and is a crucial part of a broad institutional commitment to bring the city more fully into a newly conceived undergraduate experience, one with a focus on research and civic engagement. In addition to being a focal point of the world’s energy economy, Houston boasts the world’s largest medical complex (across the street from the Rice campus); a world-renowned cultural district adjacent to the campus; a vibrant international business community; an extraordinarily diverse population; and, notably, daunting social and environmental problems. Houston is ready-made for academic and personal exploration, and by its very nature offers a host of opportunities and experiences that can complement and extend formal undergraduate education.

## II. RATIONALE FOR QEP

*“As a leading research university with a distinctive commitment to undergraduate education, Rice University aspires to pathbreaking research, unsurpassed teaching, and contributions to the betterment of our world. It seeks to fulfill this mission by cultivating a diverse community of learning and discovery that produces leaders across the spectrum of human endeavor.”*

(Rice University Mission Statement)

Nearly a century ago, a young professor named Edgar Odell Lovett came to Houston for the first time. He was 36 years old; Houston was not even twice his age. It was during this visit that Lovett, the first president of Rice University, initially set eyes on the parcel of land—part swamp, part dusty prairie—on which the university now stands. In 1912, Lovett stood on that same land at the university’s opening matriculation, challenging its faculty and first class of students to build a university with “no upper limit,” one that would forge a union among the “pleasures of teaching” undergraduates, the “privileges of research,” and service for the “welfare of humankind.”<sup>8</sup>

No longer on the edge of a town of 80,000, Rice University now sits in the middle of a dynamic city of two million that is a focal point of the world’s energy economy and home to the world’s largest medical complex, a world-renowned arts community, a vibrant international business community, and an extraordinarily diverse population. As with any big city, Houston is also home to a number of daunting social and environmental problems. In short, Houston offers a host of learning experiences that can play a crucial role in the merging of undergraduate education, research, and public service to which Lovett first committed the University.

It is precisely these Houston-based learning experiences that Rice’s current president, David W. Leebron, emphasized during his own recent inauguration as fundamental to his vision of an enhanced partnership between Rice and Houston:

*From its inception, Rice has been engaged with Houston, and it is time to fully recommit ourselves to that engagement. We are doing much, but we can do more—we must do more—for the future of Rice is inextricably wound up with this great city. . . .*

*[Houston] must form an integral part of the educational opportunity we offer to our students. A portion of our*

<sup>8</sup> Edgar Odell Lovett, “The Meaning of the New Institution,” in Edgar Odell Lovett and the Creation of Rice University, Houston: The Rice Historical Society (2000): 64, 66, 79.



*research endeavors must focus on the problems of Houston, from its educational challenges to its environmental problems, and we must play a part in solving those problems.<sup>9</sup>*

While President Leebron, true to Rice's mission and institutional ethos, aspires for academic research in the public interest to be an essential part of Rice's engagement with Houston, he also envisions such research as taking place against a backdrop of increased student engagement with the city on multiple levels:

*Houston has a great deal more to offer our undergraduates than what they might learn in the classroom or laboratory. Indeed, we want our students to see Houston as perhaps one of the most important learning environments available to them while they are at Rice. Whether it is attending an exhibition in the world-class Museum District that neighbors our campus, participating in a public service internship with a government or nonprofit organization, or hopping on the light rail to enjoy any number of Houston's diverse cultural, culinary, and athletic offerings, Rice students must view this dynamic city as an integral part of their experience on an urban campus.<sup>10</sup>*

Rice's QEP, which promotes community-based research in the context of broader student civic engagement, thus realizes both the founding vision and current aspirations of the university's top administration. Just as importantly, the QEP builds on two deeply-rooted institutional values shared at all levels of the university: excellence in undergraduate education and research, and commitment to community involvement. Furthermore, it builds on these in a way that responds to evolving pedagogical research and changing social conditions.

The university's dedication to combining excellence in research with excellence in undergraduate education leads Rice to hire, retain, and reward faculty members

who match their scholarly achievements with pedagogical ones. Ninety-six percent of full-time faculty members hold PhDs or terminal degrees in their field, and maintenance of a low faculty-to-student ratio enables Rice to foster close interaction between these research-er-teachers and undergraduates.

Rice faculty members' dual commitment to research and undergraduate education leads many to invite and encourage undergraduates to take part in their research and design efforts. In addition to substantial individual efforts, a number of well-established research programs for Rice undergraduates support this essential aspect of the university's mission. Prominent among these are the Century Scholars Program, Rice Building Workshop,<sup>11</sup> the Rice University School Mathematics Project (RUSMP),<sup>12</sup> and the Consortium in Conservation Biology Zoo Project.<sup>13</sup>

The educational benefits of undergraduate research have recently been the subject of significant scholarly attention and are attested to by Rice students' own experiences. Over the course of the past decade, educators have increasingly agreed that participation in research is a uniquely effective way of teaching undergraduates to think critically, to apply knowledge, and to develop the skills necessary to learn on their own. Most notable was the 1998 report of the Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates in the Research University (hereafter *The Boyer Report*). First among the Boyer Commission's 10 recommendations for improving undergraduate education was that research-based learning become the standard for undergraduates at research universities.<sup>14</sup> More recently (2003), Joyce Kinkead explained the essential foundation of Boyer's recommendation: "[The] undergraduate research experience gets at the heart of [the] skills [of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and problem solving] by providing

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9 "The Inauguration Address of David W. Leebron," David W. Leebron, October 2, 2004, available at <http://www.professor.rice.edu/professor/041002.asp>.

10 "Houston and the World," David W. Leebron, October 2, 2004, available at <http://www.professor.rice.edu/professor/041001.asp>.

11 Students design and build low-cost homes in Houston's 3rd Ward for Project Row Houses. Since the program's establishment by the School of Architecture in 1997, 200 students have participated.

12 Established in 1987 with a grant from the NSF, this program provides a bridge between the Rice mathematics research community and Houston-area math teachers. The chief goal of the Rice University School Mathematics Project is to enhance the mathematical and pedagogical knowledge of Houston K-12 teachers and support them in implementing more effective math programs. Rice students from the Math, Psychology, and Statistics departments work directly with teachers and students as part of a variety of research projects (<http://rusmp.rice.edu>).

13 This program provides undergraduates with opportunities to conduct research, in collaboration with a zoo-keeper mentor, on endangered species.

14 Boyer Report.

careful guidance by a mentor faculty member into the inquiry methods of a discipline.”<sup>15</sup>

Traditionally, “research” has meant any experience in which the student tries to answer an open-ended and ambiguous question, and that requires original thought, critical analysis, and the evaluation of feedback on initial ideas. Accordingly, undergraduate research can take many forms and produce not only lab results or scholarly papers but also musical compositions, works of art, field experiments, or analyses of historical records.<sup>16</sup> At Rice, where engineering and architecture are cornerstones of the university, problem solving has long been connected to research through design experiences based on leading-edge knowledge, and the output of student research and design efforts has been particularly diverse.

Despite this wide range of possibilities, most research and design by undergraduates has been confined to laboratories, libraries, and the Worldwide Web. However, both classic learning theory and recent studies suggest that the benefits of research are enhanced when research and design activities intersect with real-world experience.<sup>17</sup>

For example, learning theorist Jean Piaget posited, including words of Citron and Kline, that learning and cognitive development occur through the “mutual interaction of the process of accommodation of concepts or schemas to experience in the world and the process of assimilation of events and experiences from the world into existing concepts and schemas.”<sup>18</sup> In other words, Piaget theorized that learning occurs when people test concepts and theories through their lived experiences and develop new concepts and theories based upon those experiences.

John Dewey, one of the fathers of experiential education, called attention in the 1930s to the “importance of linking knowledge with social inquiry rather than leav-

ing it disconnected from action and isolated and mired in academic culture.”<sup>19</sup> If knowledge is to be accessible to solve a new problem, Dewey believed, in the words of Eyler and Giles, “it is best learned in a context where it is used as a problem solving tool.”<sup>20</sup>

David Kolb’s model of the learning cycle (1984) has been particularly influential among recent practitioners of experiential education. In Kolb’s cycle, student learners move from *concrete experience* to *reflective observation*, and then on to *abstract conceptualization*—“in which attempts are made to derive meaning from experience and integrate observations with other sources of knowledge” such as classroom theory and traditional research. Finally, learners “form hypotheses or action strategies that may again be tested” in the real world via *active experimentation*.<sup>21</sup>

Drawing on the theories of Piaget, Dewey, and Kolb, among others, the promising pedagogy of community-based learning suggests the educational benefits of research multiply when research requires students to collaborate with community partners and knowledge be applied to solve the messy, real-world problems the partners face.<sup>22</sup>

According to the leading study of community-based research (CBR), students taking part in CBR

*experience an applied research process—the results of which matter—and they typically participate in most aspects of the study. . . . And because the students see how the results will be used, they are all the more interested in the work and take care to ensure that their study is done properly and their findings are appropriately tied back to the original research questions.*

*The educational enrichment that students acquire goes far beyond those [sic] that are related to designing and conducting research to include a wide range of skills and experiences that broaden the students in often unpredictable*

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15 Joyce Kinkead, “Learning Through Inquiry: An Overview of Undergraduate Research,” and Wendy Katkin, “The Boyer Commission Report and Its Impact on Undergraduate Research,” in Joyce Kinkead, ed., *Valuing and Supporting Undergraduate Research*, 93 (Spring 2003), 5-38. See also [http://www.sunysb.edu/reinventioncenter/Conference\\_04/proceedings.htm](http://www.sunysb.edu/reinventioncenter/Conference_04/proceedings.htm) for Conference Proceedings from “Integrating Research into Undergraduate Education: The Value Added,” November 18-19, 2004, Washington, D.C.; and, <http://www.sunysb.edu/Reinventioncenter/conference/Norms%20and%20Practices/Norms%20and%20PracticesSession.htm> for Conference Proceedings from “Undergraduate Research and Scholarship and the Mission of the Research University,” November 14-15, 2002, University of Maryland.

16 J. Kinkead (Spring 2003).

17 K. Strand, et al. (2003); David Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as a Source of Learning and Development*. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1984.

18 J. L. Citron and R. Kline, “From Experience to Experiential Education,” *International Educator* 10, 4 (Fall 2001): 18-26.

19 K. Strand, et al. (2003); 2 John Dewey, *Experience and Education*, New York: Collier Books, 1938.

20 J. Eyler and D. Giles (1999): 64.

21 Quotations are taken from J. Eyler and D. Giles (1999): 194-195. See also D. Kolb (1984).

22 K. Strand, et al. (2003); Jacoby and Associates (2003); Eyler and Giles (1999).

*ways... Students in a typical collaborative CBR project are usually called on not only to “do research,” but to take on a wide variety of tasks that help them develop all kinds of interpersonal skills...*

*Skills and knowledge of a more general academic nature are also developed through community-based research: critical analysis, the ability to develop reasoned argument, effective writing for different audiences, [and] organizing and presenting information... Furthermore, students acquire knowledge of matters as diverse as complex organizations, public and private funding, philanthropy and grant writing, social policy, legislative process, politics, interpersonal conflict, and community life.<sup>23</sup>*

The literature on CBR and service-learning also suggests that experiential learning is especially valuable when connected to traditional coursework. Indeed, according to Strand (2003), CBR both enhances students’ motivation to learn and deepens students’ understanding of what they learn in the classroom. CBR achieves the latter because it requires not only that students apply theories and research methods learned in the classroom but also “methods and approaches that are most accessible to community members...” Consequently, “students often get broader and more realistic experience in designing and conducting research than they might in more traditional research courses,” as well as develop a more nuanced understanding of the “challenges of constructing knowledge from the perspective of their discipline.”<sup>24</sup> Students’ motivation to learn is enhanced when they collaborate with community partners because they are “invigorated by [the] accountability and a heightened sense of purpose” that comes with responsibility for not only mastering course material but generating a product that is important to the partner and larger community.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to scholarship and theory, Rice’s QEP derives inspiration from the lessons of experiential learning already ongoing at the university. For example, over the past 20 years in particular, a notable spirit of volunteerism has emerged among members of the Rice community; each year hundreds of students, faculty, and staff take part in a range of programs and events organized by the Rice Student Volunteer Program (RSVP) and Community Involvement Center (CIC).<sup>26</sup> The examples of student and institutional commitment cover a range of social issues and involve students in myriad ways. In addition to public service programs, Rice un-

dergraduates are involved with the larger community through undergraduate internships and exchanges with community organizations, businesses, and the Texas Medical Center offered through the Career Services Center, and public performances and exhibits presented by the Rice Players, the Shepherd School of Music, the Rice Media Center, and the Rice University Art Gallery.

The requirement that we think anew about how best to join intellectual inquiry with experiences outside the classroom is informed not only by institutional culture and advances in pedagogical research but also by the rapid pace of social change. Today’s global society is a diverse and fast-changing environment that poses challenges unimaginable only a decade ago. To meet these challenges, our students must develop critical thinking skills, the capacity to collaborate with diverse populations, and the ability to respond creatively to ambiguity. They must learn to adapt standard theory to nonstandard settings and acquire a deep understanding of the implications and limitations of that theory. These skills can only be learned from the sort of active engagement with theory that rarely occurs in a traditional classroom setting—the type of engagement research in Houston that is Rice’s QEP.

While Rice has been distinguished by the intensity of its academic classroom work, it has not fully bridged the gap between formal, assignment-based education and the informal, experiential learning that happens beyond the perimeter of the campus. By integrating traditional course-work and classroom theory with the enriching experience of community-based research, interaction with community partners, and structured reflection, Rice’s QEP is an important step toward closing that gap.

We believe that the relationship between research, design, and Houston’s urban problems is synergistic in a positive sense. Together, Rice students, scholars, and community partners have the energy, insight, and intellect to forge innovative solutions to problems old and new. The QEP will spark such collaboration while achieving the goal of enhancing undergraduate students’ knowledge, skills, and civic engagement. By enabling undergraduates opportunities to take part in a transformative experience—conducting research or design projects in collaboration with Rice faculty and community partners throughout urban Houston—engagement research in Houston will also contribute to students’ development of both the skills and insights

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23 Strand, et al. (2003): 124-125.

24 Strand, et al. (2003): 124-125.

25 Ibid. See also E. Pascarella and P.T. Terenzini (2005).

26 See <http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~rsvp/> and <http://www.ruf.rice.edu/service/> for more information on the RSVP and CIC programs.



that will allow them to become civic-minded and principled leaders in today's global society. With the help of the QEP, many Rice undergraduates will move beyond simply treating the symptoms of social ills, through their admirable commitment to volunteerism and outreach, to taking the lead in proposing the solutions our community needs.

### III. QEP PLAN DEVELOPMENT

#### *A. Reimagining the Undergraduate Experience at Rice University*

The genesis of the QEP can be traced to the start of David W. Leebron's tenure as the seventh president of Rice University. During his inaugural semester as president, he began to outline an agenda for undergraduate education at Rice. First, President Leebron determined that Rice's approach to undergraduate education should be holistic: It should educate the whole person, inside and outside the classroom, by developing the broad base of knowledge that would serve students well throughout their lives. This would include efforts both to integrate the life of the mind with life inside the residential colleges and to make Houston a part of students' intellectual and academic experience. Second, the president suggested a re-orientation of the curriculum toward a liberal arts education that would arm undergraduates with the skills—in communication, leadership, creativity, and disciplined inquiry—essential to success in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

To encourage increased engagement with Houston, President Leebron initiated the Passport to Houston program in November 2004. This program provides undergraduates with a free pass for unlimited use on METRO public transportation systems (including the light rail and city buses) as well as unlimited, year-round access to cultural venues throughout Houston. In a demonstration of impact, more than 100,000 boardings on the METRORail and bus lines by Rice undergraduate students have been recorded since the program's inception. Average total boardings per month increased fifteen percent (15%) from the spring 2005 semester (10,154 boardings per month) to the fall 2005 semester (11,913 boardings per month). During the fall 2005 semester approximately 1,663 students used the free admission provided by the Passport to visit the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Houston Museum of Natural Science, and the Houston Zoo (see Appendix G).<sup>27</sup> An additional 4,162 boardings by Rice students were recorded on Rice-provided shuttle buses to nearby shopping centers during the 2005 fall and spring semesters.

The Passport program has a companion website, [www.rice.edu/passport](http://www.rice.edu/passport), which effectively communicates the rich opportunities available to undergraduate students beyond the hedges of our campus, including invitations to attend Rice Night Events sponsored by the university and Passport partners such as the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, the Houston Zoo, the Houston Museum of Natural Science, Houston Symphony, and Da Camera of Houston, each averaging between 250 and 300 students in attendance. As one Rice undergraduate wrote about her experiences with the Passport:

*Really, the best part of the Passport to Houston wasn't how much money I saved (though that was nice); it was knowing the latest Houston opportunities and transportation options available to me. If I hadn't gone to the Rice Night at the Symphony, I never would have known about the Randy Newman concert or the student discount tickets. If the bus routes to Hobby airport weren't posted at the Passport site with detailed directions, times, and maps, I never would have taken advantage of that mode of public transit. In short, thank you for this great program! I hope my personal account is a positive testament of the Passport to Houston! —Junior at Hanszen College*

Early conversations concerning the QEP coincided with the development of Passport. Consequently, using Passport as an integral component of a QEP focused on civic engagement emerged as an important factor in the initial phase of the university's QEP development.

Another important factor in the QEP's early development was the creation of a new position, Dean of Undergraduates. The Dean of Undergraduates both replaces and augments the previous position of Vice President of Student Affairs. While the latter had been almost wholly concerned with students' lives outside the classroom, the new position oversees all aspects of undergraduate education. At the announcement of the new position in September 2004, President Leebron explained that the Dean's mandate was as follows:

*[To] take a holistic approach to all spheres of undergraduate endeavor—from the classroom to campus life to engagement with the cultural and educational riches offered by the nation's fourth-largest city. The dean will assure that our concern for undergraduate education is fully reflected in every decision the university makes, especially with regard to the planning and development of the undergraduate curriculum... . This position and its related staff will preserve the best of the past, such as the open door students have for help, while closing the gaps between the education that occurs in labs and classrooms and that which takes*

27 Public transportation statistics provided by the Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County (METRO), Rice University U.Pass Ridership Analysis November 2004–November 2005; attendance at cultural venues recorded by tracking systems coordinated by Passport partners. See Appendix G for more on METRO and Passport to Houston.

*place in the [residential] colleges, on the playing fields, in club offices, and off campus.*<sup>28</sup>

After a semester-long search, Dr. Robin Forman was named Dean of Undergraduates in January 2005. Forman's appointment sent a signal to the Rice community about the university's commitment to undergraduate education. At the time of his appointment, Forman was chair of the Department of Mathematics and Master of one of Rice's nine residential colleges. College Masters hold positions of unique experience, influence, and respect at Rice. Forman brings a new perspective to undergraduate affairs and a well-developed understanding of the faculty, curriculum, and the dynamic realities of students' academic, intellectual, and extracurricular lives.

Forman was appointed co-chair of the QEP Steering Committee (detailed below and in Appendix A) in January 2005. As co-chair of the Steering Committee, Dean Forman highlighted the importance the university attaches to the QEP and ensured that the QEP would be fashioned in consonance with the academic goals for the undergraduate experience.

Under Dean Forman's leadership, Rice sharpened its QEP planning process and formulated a plan that will not only help fulfill the president's hopes for a holistic undergraduate learning experience but also build on the university's strength in undergraduate research. A significant step in this regard was the decision to place the new Center for Civic Engagement in the Office of the Dean of Undergraduates.

## ***B. Rice Community and the Planning Process***

### ***1. The Steering Committee***

It took the work of many people in many stages to move the QEP from a general vision for a more holistic and civically-engaged undergraduate experience to the detailed plan offered here. In January 2005, President Leebron and Provost Eugene Levy created the QEP Steering Committee to oversee the QEP's development. Members of this Committee were chosen from all relevant constituencies of the university community, from the Board of Trustees to the undergraduate population. Designation of the Dean of Undergraduates as committee co-chair and inclusion of several other senior academic officers, as well as the university's Vice President for Finance, indicated Rice's intention to commit

the necessary human and financial resources to develop and implement the QEP. See Appendix A for a list of the Steering Committee members.

The Steering Committee began monthly meetings in February 2005.<sup>29</sup> Early meetings were devoted to review of SACS accreditation rules and procedures, consultation with accreditation experts, and discussion of the rationale for a QEP focused on civic engagement. As the Committee's focus sharpened—from civic engagement, generally, to community-based research, in particular—individual Committee members and sub-working groups were assigned various investigative tasks. These tasks included reviewing best practices, service learning, and community-based research programs at peer institutions; organization and facilitation of discussions of the QEP with faculty members; meeting with program assessment consultants; and, meeting with Rice alumni and community leaders.

Between March and December 2005, the members of one committee subgroup reviewed service learning and community-based research programs at peer institutions (see Appendix B). The review included visits to Princeton, the University of Pennsylvania, and Stanford; conference calls with program directors at Duke, Georgetown, Notre Dame, Princeton, and Stanford; and, attendance of SACS and Campus Compact conferences in Tulsa, Orlando, Austin, and Atlanta. These activities proved instrumental to the Committee's thinking on the need for creation of a "Center" to house the evolving QEP program.

Throughout the summer and fall of 2005, Steering Committee subgroups met with Rice faculty, developed an assessment protocol, and identified potential community partners. The Dean of Undergraduates and his assistant organized group and individual meetings with faculty. These meetings allowed the Steering Committee to enlist the faculty in defining how best to use Houston as a connector between what students learn in the classroom and what they can experience and learn outside of it. The meetings also proved a precursor to the formation of the Faculty Advisory Group.

### ***2. The Faculty Advisory Group***

During the summer of 2005, the Dean of Undergraduates assembled a group of Rice faculty to discuss community-based research.<sup>30</sup> This group, including representatives from all six of the university's Schools,

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28 "President's Letter to the Alumni and Parents," David W. Leebron, September 14, 2004, available at <http://www.professor.rice.edu/professor/040914.asp>.

29 Appendix E chronicles Steering Committee meetings and activities.

30 See Appendices A, C and E.

identified a number of courses in the curriculum that included community-based research assignments or had the potential for such assignments. The group also identified existing faculty partnerships with community organizations. Members of the Steering Committee met individually with more than 20 faculty members whose teaching and research interests intersected promisingly with the QEP.

Based on these meetings, Dean Forman formed a Faculty Advisory Group (the Group) to assist in the development of the *Civic Inquiry Program*. Faculty Advisory Group members were selected based on their experience teaching courses that included community-based research projects. The members of the Faculty Advisory Group are:

Philip Bedient,  
Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering  
Christopher Hight,  
Assistant Professor of Architecture  
Stephen Klineberg,  
Professor of Sociology  
Lisa Meffert,  
Assistant Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology  
Maria Oden,  
Lecturer and Design Lab Coordinator in Bioengineering  
Evan Siemann,  
Associate Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

Dean Forman facilitated a series of meetings of the Faculty Advisory Group in the fall of 2005. During these meetings, the Group, assisted by higher education assessment consultants Will Weber and Jerry Osborne, identified QEP learning objectives and outcomes, and provided key feedback on the design and implementation of the assessment protocol. The Faculty Advisory Group was essential for building consensus and support for the QEP in Rice's six Schools. Dean Forman reinforced the work of the Group by meeting with department chairs and deans.

### 3. The Student and Staff Advisory Groups

Beginning in October 2005, the Director of the Community Involvement Center (CIC) and student officers of the Rice Student Volunteer Program (RSVP) held open forums to solicit student input on the QEP. The open forums were followed by the formation of a Student Advisory Group, which was charged with planning a strategy for informing undergraduates about the QEP. The Student Advisory Group presented the QEP to the Student Association (SA)—the Rice University student government—on January 30, 2006, and hosted a campus-wide forum on the QEP on February 8, 2006. The

latter included break-out sessions, facilitated by Rice faculty, in which students discussed civic engagement, research at Rice, and the kinds of community experiences that might best attract students to QEP courses (see Appendix I). Additional efforts to educate students about the opportunities presented by the QEP were undertaken by the Student Advisory Group throughout the spring semester.

Also in October 2005, the Dean of Undergraduates Office and Director of the CIC convened a Staff Advisory Group. The Staff Advisory Group, comprised of individuals with extensive involvement in student experiential learning programs, was asked to review the QEP proposal and, in particular, work on identifying experiential and institutional goals. Feedback from both groups was integrated into the development of the co-curricular learning objectives. See Appendix A for a list of individuals participating in the Student and Staff Advisory Groups.

### 4. Community Partners

In developing the QEP, it has been one of the Steering Committee's priorities to ensure that Community Partners have a voice in not only the projects but also the process of project development. Lessons learned from peer institutions strongly indicate that this is a critical component of their success. Beginning early in the fall 2005 semester, the Steering Committee brainstormed the types of information to collect from community partners. At a minimum, organizations needed to: 1) be a nonprofit or governmental agency, 2) have an existing or previous contact with Rice University through either curricular experiences (class projects or internships) or co-curricular volunteer experiences, 3) have a clearly established presence in the Greater Houston community, and 4) be open to discussion of the new opportunities and limitations of opportunities provided by the Center for Civic Engagement.

Through a series of three meetings in November 2005, the Steering Committee provided information to over twenty community partners on the structure and reasoning behind the QEP and also received constructive feedback on the planned activities.<sup>31</sup> While being clear that the substantive part of the QEP courses would not be open for expansion until spring 2007, we asked for suggestions for improvement to the plan.

Each meeting opened with a brief synopsis of the work completed thus far on the QEP and the opportunities that could be available to community partners. A particular emphasis was placed on the nature of the QEP as a research opportunity for students and com-

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31 Appendix D provides a list and brief description of the community partners involved in the community-based research discussions.

munity partners. Great care was also made to differentiate the student as a volunteer, intern, and researcher, as each role has different responsibilities to the university, professor, and community partner. Participants then introduced themselves and commented on past experiences with Rice University students.

It became apparent very quickly that the community partners understood and were enthusiastic about the opportunities presented by the QEP. Over the course of the three meetings, ideas ranging from the development of electronic medical records for outreach case workers to investigating the possibility of extending the Americans with Disabilities Act internationally through treaties were brought forth. The focus of each meeting was redirected toward emphasis of student research as a means of capacity building for nonprofit and governmental organizations. The more community partners understand the community assets available, the needs of their client base, and the outcomes of their efforts, the greater their ability to serve the Houston community.

These meetings set the foundation from which the work of the Director of the Center for Civic Engagement will proceed. With thousands of nonprofit agencies in Houston, it is critical to provide a more discrete set of options from which the program can grow. Participants in the community partner meetings were left with the assurance that there would be follow up conversations to explore the opportunities they presented. In the interim, a number of agencies have already started some preliminary work to develop research questions appropriate for inclusion in QEP courses.

### *C. Development of an Assessment Protocol*

Recognizing the importance of assessment to the QEP's implementation and effectiveness, the President's Office, in March 2005, launched the Engaging Houston Survey ([www.rice.edu/engage](http://www.rice.edu/engage); Appendix H). This Survey was used to develop a comprehensive assessment of Rice's current engagement with Houston and to provide a baseline for the university's QEP efforts.

At the direction of the Steering Committee, the university's Office of Institutional Research, educational assessment consultants Dr. Jerry Osborne and Dr. Will Weber, and representatives from the Steering Committee were given responsibility for planning a strategy for assessing the QEP and its learning outcomes. On July 27, 2005, Weber and Osborne met with members of the Steering Committee and the director of the university's Office of Institutional Research to discuss assessment approaches and options. Thereafter, Weber and Osborne

met monthly with key members of the Steering Committee to design processes for identifying QEP learning objectives and outcomes, as well as for the collection, dissemination, and use of assessment data.

Dr. Janice Bordeaux, Associate Director for Undergraduate Research and Assessment in the George R. Brown School of Engineering, was also involved in charting the assessment strategy. Dr. Bordeaux recently played a leadership role in the development of assessment protocols for the School of Engineering's ABET accreditation process.

In concert with the Dean of Undergraduates, Weber and Osborne also facilitated a series of meetings with the QEP Faculty Advisory Group. The Faculty Advisory Group, chaired by Dean Forman, was comprised of representatives from the Schools of Architecture, Engineering, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences. Members of the group were selected on the basis of their experience teaching courses that included successful community-based research or design modules. During these meetings, the group identified the QEP learning objectives and outcomes, and provided feedback regarding the design and implementation of the assessment protocol. The Faculty Group was essential for building consensus and support for the aims of the QEP among the faculty at large. The Dean of Undergraduates reinforced the work of the Faculty Group by meeting with the deans of the various Schools and a variety of department chairs.

### *D. Surveying Best Practices*

In addition to conversations within the Rice community, the Steering Committee sought guidance for plan development from a number of external sources, including peer institutions, Web-based resources, and professional associations. The Steering Committee examined best practices in higher education with regard to both service-learning and community-based research, including other national and peer group data derived from carefully designed research.<sup>32</sup>

Members of the Steering Committee participated in two Campus Compact conferences and conferred with directors of research and service-learning programs at Duke, Notre Dame, the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton, Stanford, and Georgetown (see Appendix B).

Campus Compact is a national organization with a mission to advance the public purposes of colleges and universities by deepening their ability to improve community life and educate students for civic and social responsibility. As a member institution in Campus

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<sup>32</sup> See Bibliography for a list of web-based resources consulted as part of this investigation.



Compact and one of the founding universities of Texas Campus Compact, Rice University has worked with the organization to stay abreast of recent research and the best practices related to civic engagement. Campus Compact's Indicators of Engagement Project, sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, documents and disseminates best practices of civic and community engagement on different types of campuses.<sup>33</sup>

As part of the QEP development process, the Steering Committee responded to a Request for Proposals issued by a regional Campus Compact conference entitled "Educating Citizens through Service and Learning: Celebrating 20 Years of Campus Compact." The proposal was one of 15 accepted, and a subset of the Steering Committee traveled to Tulsa, Oklahoma, on July 20-22, 2005, to obtain guidance and advice on the QEP from community service and service-learning practitioners at campuses throughout Texas and Oklahoma. Additionally, members of the Committee attended the SACS Quality Enhancement Institute in Orlando in July 2005, and the annual SACS-COCS conference in Atlanta in December 2005, to learn from the experiences of peer institutions and to solicit feedback from colleagues on Rice's QEP.

Feedback from these experiences and conference participants highlighted three key areas for consideration in the ongoing development of the QEP:

- Community partners should be involved in the planning of the QEP; they must see the value of this new opportunity for involvement with the university as augmenting existing relationships (e.g., volunteer and internship placements).
- A culture of civic engagement should be nurtured in all segments of the university. Potential areas of development for faculty include seminars on the pedagogy of community-based research and funding for the development of new courses. Likewise, students participating in community-based research must feel supported and be given the opportunity to pursue their interests after QEP courses are completed. These opportunities could be in the form of seed money for community-based projects, internship placements with nonprofit and governmental agencies, access to employers in the public service industry, and co-curricular experiences that allow for further exposure to challenging social issues.
- Assessment had proved challenging for a variety of QEP projects at other universities. Development of an assessment protocol should be at the top of the Steering Committee's priorities.

The Steering Committee also identified six civic engagement programs at peer institutions that provide contextually appropriate benchmarks for Rice's QEP:

- Duke University's Research-Service-Learning program (RSL)
- Princeton University's Community Based Learning Initiative (CBLI)
- Stanford University's Haas Center for Public Service (Haas Center)
- Georgetown University's Center for Social Justice Research, Teaching and Service (CSJ)
- The University of Pennsylvania's Center for Community Partnerships (CCP)
- The University of Notre Dame's Center for Social Concerns

Our research into these programs consisted of on-site visits or phone interviews with key personnel from each university, usually including the Center director.<sup>34</sup> These conversations highlighted both the potential and challenges of community-based research. Based on consultations with these peer institutions, the Steering Committee identified four areas of concern that informed our discussions and planning:

#### 1. *Determining the Appropriate Mix of Curricular and Co-curricular Programs*

- Several, although not all, peer institutions offer some gateway courses or "threshold" experiences as prerequisites to participation in community-based work; all provide some orientation and/or training for student participants.
- Students are civically engaged through coursework in addition to experiences not specifically tied to any particular course.

After careful reflection, the Steering Committee decided the QEP should include gateway courses on a variety of topics. These courses will not serve as prerequisites for enrollment in QEP research or design courses but, rather, as venues for introducing first- and second-year students to many of the skills and values associated with civic engagement. Individual faculty members will retain control over granting permission for enrollment in their courses.

#### 2. *Supporting Infrastructure and Faculty Participation*

- Many of the centers employ a faculty director who is assisted by a professional staff.
- A critical factor in the success of the centers is the ability of the director to work with faculty and understand their concerns about the pedagogy and assessment of service learning (specifically, what

33 <http://www.compact.org/advancedtoolkit/indicators.html>

34 Appendix B lists the dates and individuals involved in consultation on-site visits and conference calls.



students learned) and about barriers to faculty participation.

- Recruiting tenured and tenure-track faculty to teach classes that include community-based projects can be difficult.
- Peer institutions disagree about whether non-tenured faculty should participate.

Examination of service-learning and community-based research programs at peer institutions provide convincing evidence of both the value of faculty leadership and the difficulty of securing faculty participation for such programs. The Steering Committee was particularly struck by the fact that every peer program examined, except Penn's, has had extremely limited success at persuading tenured and tenure-track faculty to teach courses and mentor community-based projects, even after years of intensive efforts. Accordingly, the Steering Committee devoted considerable energy throughout 2005 to meeting with Rice faculty members, individually and in groups, to enlist their assistance and advice in plan formulation. The Steering Committee also determined that the newly established Center for Civic Engagement should be placed under the authority of the Dean of Undergraduates and led by a director drawn from the Rice faculty.

The Committee was not persuaded that non-tenured faculty should be excluded from teaching community-based research courses. While junior faculty who teach such courses at Rice agreed that they can be time consuming, there was no evidence that such courses distracted from faculty members' own research and progress toward tenure. Nonetheless, to encourage and support faculty participation, one of the Center's most important functions will be to relieve faculty of the administrative burdens associated with the design and supervision of community-based research courses.

### 3. *Forging Successful Relationships between University and Community Partners*

- Confining community-based projects to a semester-long format is often challenging.
- Program directors must be sensitive to the differing expectations of community partners, faculty mentors, and students.

Colleagues at peer institutions affirmed that even well organized and funded programs would falter if relationships between community partners and the university were not carefully and continually managed. As a first step toward understanding the needs and expectations

of community partners, a subgroup of the Steering Committee held a series of meetings with a diverse assortment of Houston organizations in the fall of 2005. The Steering Committee also recommended that the person hired as executive director of the Center have extensive experience in cultivating and sustaining partnerships with community organizations. Finally, placement of the Community Involvement Center and Leadership Rice within the Center will greatly assist with this concern, since these offices already maintain excellent relationships with scores of community organizations throughout greater Houston.

## IV. THE PLAN

### A. *The Civic Inquiry Program*

The *Civic Inquiry Program* will achieve the goals of enhancing students' knowledge, skills, and civic engagement by providing undergraduates opportunities to engage in the transformative experience of conducting research with Rice faculty and community partners throughout urban Houston. This academic core of the QEP has three curricular components:

#### 1) *QEP Courses*

QEP Courses will be upper-level undergraduate courses that are built around or include a significant community-based research or design project. The courses will be offered across academic disciplines in Rice's six Schools: The Wiess School of Natural Sciences, the George R. Brown School of Engineering, the School of Humanities, the School of Social Sciences, the School of Architecture, and the Shepherd School of Music (see Appendix F).

QEP Courses will both expand the number and type of research and design experiences available to undergraduates and provide participating students with a structured process of critical reflection on the intellectual and civic aspects of their community experiences.

To qualify as a QEP Course, the following must be present:

- A major assignment that is a community-based research or design project.
- The major assignment that includes meaningful interaction for students with a community partner in both defining the research or design problem and carrying out the associated project.
- A structured process of critical reflection on the intellectual and civic aspects of the students' community experiences.<sup>35</sup>

35 Studies of service learning suggest that critical reflection can contribute importantly to academic learning outcomes for students. Eyler and Giles (1999): 172-177; Jacoby and Associates (1996): 6-10, 160-162. Sarah L. Ash, Patti H. Clayton, and Maxine P. Atkinson, "Integrating Reflection and Assessment to Capture and Improve Student Learning," *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* (Spring 2005): 49-60.

- The generation of a “product” for the community partner.
- A public presentation of student work to campus or community audiences.

QEP Courses will be offered in a variety of formats:

- Students will work individually on projects to fulfill a research assignment for a single semester course.
- Students wishing to work on projects that extend beyond a single semester will enroll in independent research seminars, year-long course sequences, or pursue summer research fellowships through Leadership Rice and the Center for Civic Engagement.
- Students will take courses in which every member of the class will work on a single project.
- Students will work on projects that have multi-semester lives, passing on their portion of the project at the end of a semester-long course.

We anticipate that the majority of QEP courses, particularly during years one and two of the plan, will conform in many ways to the traditional model of an upper-level, semester-long, three-credit course, in which a major research or design assignment caps the learning experience. In many of these courses, students will have the option of selecting a civic engagement track, which allows them to fulfill the research requirement with a community-based project managed by the Center.

As the university encourages, and the Center for Civic Engagement facilitates, development of new QEP Courses, we anticipate that many faculty members will tailor new courses to specific research and design projects. Such classes might see all members of a class work on a single project, and the project might well have a multi-semester or even multi-year life, allowing the instructor to offer the course in successive years. One model for such courses is “Houston: The Sociology of City” (Sociology 308), in which students have joined Professor Stephen Klineberg over the past two decades in the design, administration, and analysis of the well-known Houston Area Survey.

Similarly, we believe that the QEP and the Center will stimulate an increased number of independent research seminars, allowing individual students to pursue research and design inquiry in collaboration with a faculty mentor and community partner. Independent research seminars will offer advanced students the benefit of close collaboration with a faculty member and immersion in a focused research or design project.

The ideal QEP experience will be course-based to provide a ready-made venue for students involved in QEP projects to discuss their community experiences with fellow students, thus expanding the potential impact of their civic engagement. Discussion of community

engagement in the classroom—as well as over meals in the residential colleges—will, we believe, play an important role in deepening the culture of civic engagement across the Rice University campus.

## 2) *Summer Research Fellowships*

Leadership Rice, which already runs a robust program of summer internships, placing an average of 45 students per year with individual mentors in a variety of community organizations, will oversee development and funding of community-based summer research and design projects. Leadership Rice will oversee grants to undergraduates who wish to continue projects begun in a QEP course or independent research seminar. Students who are awarded such grants will be required to enroll in a course, including weekly seminars and progress reports on their work, and be required to make a public presentation during the Center’s annual research symposium.

## 3) *Rice Undergraduate Scholars Program (RUSP)*

The RUSP is designed for undergraduates in any department who may be considering graduate school and careers in research or scholarship. Participating students (approximately 15 per year) work with individual faculty mentors, attend weekly class meetings featuring presentations on topics related to research methods and scholarship, and present required progress reports and final presentations.

## **B. *The Civic Experience Program***

The Civic Experience Program is intended to introduce Rice undergraduates to the city of Houston through a multifaceted foundation of volunteer programs that provide students greater access to and knowledge of urban Houston. This will support the *Civic Inquiry Program’s* focus on enhancing student learning through community-based research and design. Integrated under the Office of the Dean of Undergraduates, these programs will encourage civic engagement and make a vital connection to Houston a distinctive feature of a Rice education. Through a combination of curricular and co-curricular components, students will learn about the people, social issues, and community assets outside the boundaries of campus. Additionally, we believe that these experiences will not only encourage students to see Houston as a vibrant, dynamic environment for learning but also stimulate them to pursue the inquiry-based opportunities for learning provided by QEP courses.

Curricular Component:

1. *Gateway Courses* will prepare students for successful participation in the QEP Courses, including preparing students for effective interaction with

community partners. The Gateway Courses, aimed primarily at first- and second-year students, will include modules on ethics, community history, communication and presentation skills, and research and design methods.

## 2. *Leadership Rice*

Through academic courses and meaningful experiences “in the world,” Leadership Rice helps students discover and develop their leadership capacities by understanding how heart and mind, theory and practice, and ideas and actions come together to allow leaders to make a positive impact on the world. Course offerings in leadership theory and practice, entrepreneurship, ethics, and communication, along with a one-on-one mentorship experience, provide students with experience both in and out of the classroom that enhance their understanding of world issues.

Enhancements to this program will include a repositioning of the role of leadership in student civic development. Through incorporation of the QEP, students within the Leadership Certificate track ([www.ruf.rice.edu/~leading/](http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~leading/)) will be offered a wider variety of activities to complete their program requirements.

## Co-Curricular Component:

### 1. *Community Involvement Center*

The Community Involvement Center is the campus hub for student-run service organizations, such as Habitat for Humanity, One-on-One Tutoring, Friends of Young Minds, ESL Tutoring and a variety of other outreach and volunteer programs.

### 2. *Passport to Houston*

Passport to Houston provides undergraduate students a means of experiencing the greater Houston community on their own terms. Students have free access to the Houston METRO system, including METRORail and the bus lines, in addition to free or reduced admission to many cultural sites and activities throughout downtown and the Museum District. Many of the agencies served by Rice University students fall within this range of transportation and students are encouraged to explore Houston and get to know the neighborhoods. Events such as Outreach Day during Orientation Week teach new students how to access METRORail and learn about and serve our surrounding neighborhoods.

### 3. *Urban Immersion*

Urban Immersion is an intensive, service-oriented program that introduces incoming first year students to the urban issues, social needs, and cultural diversity of Houston. The students selected for

participation in this program have a strong passion for learning about the lives of those we serve and want to make a direct impact on the lives of those in Houston. In addition to direct service work, students are also exposed to educational opportunities through community speakers and representatives from nonprofit agencies.

### 4. *Career Services Center*

The Career Services Center (CSC) offers undergraduate internships and exchanges with community organizations, businesses, and the Texas Medical Center.

### 5. *QEP Site Visits*

Working in collaboration with the newly established Center for Civic Engagement, the Community Involvement Center will offer site visits to agencies at which community-based research is in progress. First- and second-year students will have the ability to access these agencies through tours, information sessions, and lay volunteer placements in an organized group setting. Faculty sponsoring research or those with established community relationships will be invited to provide context to their work and explain how upper-division students are involved in transformational work.

### 6. *Office of Student Activities*

The Office of Student Activities offers training and support in the areas of student outreach and leadership.

### 7. *Civic Engagement Mentors Program*

This new program will connect first- and second-year students in one-on-one relationships with upper-division students and graduate students, and involve them with specific opportunities to work with the “civic engagement community” (political parties, nonprofit organizations, the media, schools, colleges, and universities). In addition to their involvement with younger students, Mentors will receive research support for independent studies that offer insights on how to increase civic awareness and participation among young adults.

## C. *Expanding the QEP Curriculum and Communicating to Students*

The table on the following page presents an outline of the university’s goals for expansion of QEP course offerings. This projection is based on a review of existing courses that include community-based research and/or may be appropriate for adaptation to QEP requirements, conversations with directors of CBR and service-learning programs at peer institutions, and Rice’s recent experience with the Cain Project in Engineering and

<b>2006 - 2007</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer one Gateway course on working in the community and begin development of two additional Gateway courses on communication and presentation skills, and on identifying and designing community-based projects</li> <li>• Offer at least one QEP course in each of five Schools</li> </ul>
<b>2007 - 2008</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer two or three Gateway courses</li> <li>• Offer 10-12 QEP courses, including two in Architecture, spanning five Schools</li> </ul>
<b>2008 - 2009</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer three Gateway courses and expand enrollment capacity of Gateways as needed</li> <li>• Offer 15-20 QEP courses, including two in Architecture and one in Music, spanning the six Schools</li> </ul>
<b>2009 - 2010</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate/expand/revise Gateway program as needed</li> <li>• Offer at least 25 QEP courses, including three in Architecture and two in Music, spanning the six Schools</li> </ul>

## Professional Communication.

Experience and study of programs at peer institutions tell us faculty are willing to take on a new project when four conditions are present: the university supports the project with adequate resources; the project engages or stimulates faculty members' research agendas; the project provides exciting educational experiences for undergraduates; and, the project is a good "fit" with the faculty culture.<sup>36</sup>

Recent development at Rice of the Cain Project in Engineering and Professional Communication suggests the last two factors are particularly important at Rice, and informs the sense of optimism that underlines the Rice QEP.<sup>37</sup> The Cain Project began in 1998, when the Gordon and Mary Cain Foundation provided funding (nearly \$6 million over a 10-year period) for communication instruction for science and engineering students. Less than seven years later, the Project fully supports 35 to 40 courses in science and engineering annually and accepts about 10 new courses for three-year development each year.

Generous funding certainly was important to the Project's growth, but faculty attitudes proved even more critical. Positive faculty response started at the top: The Dean of Engineering at the time, Sidney Burrus (a member of the QEP Steering Committee), formed a faculty advisory committee to supervise planning and implementation of the Project. Dean Burrus also encouraged this committee to be mindful in its planning of the favorable national context: The Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) had recently adopted new criteria for outcomes-based assessment, including the ability to communicate effectively

and the ability to work in diverse teams, that would be implemented in 2000.

The faculty advisory committee responded by adopting the goal of preparing students to lead through excellence in communication, as well as the four strategic objectives:

- Foster positive attitudes toward communication and develop relationships;
- Sponsor and support innovations in communication instruction in science and engineering courses;
- Conduct research pertinent to the Project mission; and
- Provide national and international leadership in the field of professional communication.

These goals resonated with engineering faculty. In a December 1998 survey, over 60 faculty members indicated a desire to work with the project. Faculty recognized from their own professional experience the importance of communication. As people whose careers depended on skill in writing proposals, articles for publication, reports, and lectures, giving talks at conferences, and developing visual aids for a variety of settings, faculty members knew their students needed similar competencies. What is more, many were frustrated by the lack of communication proficiency as demonstrated in students' semester projects, presentations, and lab reports. As a result, many faculty members were open to collaborations to address these problems, and they encouraged students to take advantage of the Project's offerings, such as presentation coaching and writing tutorials.

As individual faculty members engaged the Project and, in particular, as they witnessed the Project's notable impact on student learning and skills, word quickly began

<sup>36</sup> Robert G. Bringle and Julie A. Hatcher, "Implementing Service Learning in Higher Education," *Journal of Higher Education*, 67, 2 (March/April 1996). See also "Incorporating Disciplinary Norms and Practices into Administrative Strategies," Conference on Undergraduate Research and Scholarship and the Mission of the Research University, November 14-15, 2002, University of Maryland, available at [www.sunysb.edu/Reinventioncenter/conference/Norms%20and%20Practices/Norms%20and%20PracticesSession.htm](http://www.sunysb.edu/Reinventioncenter/conference/Norms%20and%20Practices/Norms%20and%20PracticesSession.htm).

<sup>37</sup> See the Cain Project website: <http://www.owl.net.rice.edu/~cainproj/>.



to spread across the Natural Sciences and Engineering Schools. Five years into the Project, three departments had voluntarily enhanced all of the courses required for their major with communication instruction. Today, a fourth department has done so and three others are in the third year of a National Science Foundation-sponsored curriculum and research integration project in which the Cain Project supports presentations, writing, and poster design.

Like the Cain Project, the QEP, we believe, will benefit from a national—and now institutional—context that encourages outcomes assessment and curriculum reform focused on community-based learning and civic engagement. Also, faculty enthusiasm for teaching undergraduates and applied work in their fields will prompt curricular innovation that includes research assignments beyond the hedges of our campus. Above all, we believe Rice University faculty members will embrace the QEP as the benefits of participation in QEP courses to student learning and achievement become apparent.

Growth of the QEP academic program will also depend on effectively communicating to students the goals and benefits of QEP participation. Efforts in this regard began in the fall of 2005 with formation of the QEP Student Advisory Group. Working closely with members of the Steering Committee, the Student Advisory Group composed a plan for informing undergraduates about the QEP, including designation of QEP liaisons for each of Rice's nine residential colleges.

Other key elements of the communication plan include:

- **Academic Advising:** The Center will assist the Office of Academic Advising in the training of Divisional Advisors—faculty members who advise all freshmen and sophomores—ensuring that all Rice undergraduates are advised about QEP courses and the place of a research or design experience in a Rice education.
- **New Student Orientation:** The orientation period at Rice, known as “O-Week,” will feature panels on “Undergraduate Research and Design at Rice.” The panels—organized by School—will be comprised of students who have participated in QEP projects and in research and design, both on and off campus, with Rice faculty.
- **Webpage:** The QEP Web page (<http://www.rice.edu/qep>) will be featured as a prominent link on the Rice University homepage that almost all undergraduates use to access their campus email accounts, course registration, and the university events calendar.
- **The Student Newspaper:** Articles in the *Thresher* will explain the QEP Program (see Appendix I).
- **Information Sessions:** QEP liaisons will lead information sessions in each of the residential colleges.

## D. Assessment: Strategy, Protocols, and Instruments

### Cognitive Learning Objectives

By the completion of any QEP course, undergraduate students will be expected to achieve the three primary goals defined below:

#### **Goal #1: Students will have acquired rigorous, discipline-specific inquiry skills. They will be able to:**

- Define a research or design problem.
- Design an inquiry method that takes the researcher from problem to solution.
- Demonstrate basic knowledge of and facility with a repertoire of appropriate research or design techniques and instruments.
- Identify, access, and evaluate the validity of appropriate evidence and scholarship in their field of inquiry.
- Work as self-directed researchers.

#### **Goal #2: Students will be able to apply theories to, or construct models for, solving real-world problems. Specifically, they will be able to:**

- Identify relevant theories, principles, laws, or models for application to specific problems.
- Recognize how a specific problem relates to broader forces and/or larger questions.
- Synthesize information from multiple disciplines for application to specified problems independent of the academic setting.
- Identify and distinguish more practical or realistic solutions from other less feasible alternatives.
- Critically analyze existing theory and/or models in light of their research/design experience.

#### **Goal #3: Students will acquire enhanced ability to interact with, and present their work effectively to, audiences beyond the academic community. They will be able to:**

- Collaborate with non-academic partners to define and study a problem.
- Identify appropriate audiences and methods of communication for formal presentations and informal interactions.
- Demonstrate effective presentation skills and understanding of appropriate forms of dissemination for different audiences.
- Solicit and respond appropriately to feedback from audiences within and beyond the academic community.

### Experiential Learning Objectives

Undergraduates' participation in the *Civic Inquiry and Civic Experience Programs* will also contribute to the achievement of the following objectives:



**Goal #4: Upon graduation, undergraduates will consider a vital connection to urban Houston to be a distinctive feature of their Rice education. Students will:**

- Develop a lasting sense of public responsibility and an enhanced commitment to diverse forms of civic engagement.
- Explore and better appreciate the diverse artistic and cultural offerings of urban Houston.

**Goal #5: Undergraduates will better understand the roles that larger communities play in their education and life after graduation. Students will be able to:**

- Describe how their understanding of complex social problems was enriched by their community experiences.
- Recognize the qualities that prepare them for citizenship in multicultural, urban communities.
- Articulate how community experiences clarified their career and educational goals.
- Continue their civic involvement after graduation through service to their home communities.
- Value and respect non-academic skills and talents.

### **Community and Institutional Objectives**

While principally concerned with creating meaningful learning opportunities for our undergraduates, Rice University's decision to develop a QEP centered on community-based inquiry is also mindful of an institutional commitment to serve and learn from the Houston community. As President Leebron said at his inauguration, "Rice and Houston can achieve great things in the years ahead, but neither can do it without the other. We are joined together, great research university and great city, in a symbiotic relationship."<sup>38</sup> So, while we will look to community partners to provide learning opportunities for our students, we will look also to respond to the needs of our neighbors and partners and to teach our students the values of service and civic engagement.

**Goal #6: The QEP will develop a culture of civic engagement across the Rice academic community. The program will:**

- Foster discussion of community issues in Rice classrooms and residential colleges.
- Support and increase participation in undergraduate volunteer organizations that assist with the problems addressed by civic organizations in Houston.
- Increase the number of undergraduate alumni who choose to live and work in Houston.

**Goal #7: The QEP will leverage Rice University's intellectual capital for the benefit of our city, our local economy, and our quality of life. The program will:**

- Foster and develop enduring relationships between the university and community organizations and between individual faculty members and community organizations.
- Encourage Rice undergraduates to take the lead in working with fellow Houstonians to identify and implement solutions to the social ills that afflict our community.

Based on these seven goals, the success of the QEP will be measured in five ways:

- The extent to which enhancements in student learning have been demonstrated.
- The extent to which QEP programs foster an enhanced culture of civic engagement on campus.
- The increase in the number of undergraduates participating in civic engagement programs and community-based research and design.
- The expressed satisfaction by community partners with the contributions made to partners' organizations and goals by QEP programs.
- The lasting benefits, in terms of skills, knowledge and attitudes, from participation in community-based research and design as reported by alumni of the QEP.

**Assessment Instruments: The above processes identified five types of assessment efforts (see tables 3a-c):**

1. Cognitive Learning Objectives will be assessed via an instrument to be developed at Rice—the Measurement of Student Learning Indicators (MSLI). The MSLI will be used to measure student cognitive and experiential outcomes. MSLI will be administered to all students in QEP Courses and to a Comparative Control Cohort (CCC) of students for each graduating class (2007-2011).
2. Experiential Learning Objectives will be assessed primarily by administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). NSSE offers an extremely well-tested and reliable method of assessing student engagement, which research has shown is an important predictor of student learning and personal development.<sup>39</sup> More than 850 different four-year colleges and universities have administered NSSE at least once since 2000. NSSE will be administered in year two (2007-08) and year four

38 "The Inauguration Address of David W. Leebron," David W. Leebron, October 2, 2004, available at <http://www.professor.rice.edu/professor/041002.asp>.

39 George D. Kuh, "What We're Learning from NSSE: Benchmarks for Effective Educational Practices," *Change* (March/April 2003); R. Carini, G. Kuh, and S. Klein, "Student Engagement and Student Learning: Testing the Linkages" (2004), available at <http://nsse.iub.edu/index.cfm>.

(2009-2010) of the QEP to measure supplemental outcomes, such as student engagement and campus climate issues.<sup>40</sup>

3. Rice will conduct assessment surveys of alumni, matching a comparison group of students who have not participated in QEP research projects to a group of QEP participants. These surveys will allow Rice to assess how alumni value community-based research and design experiences in comparison to other out-of-classroom educational experiences, and whether alumni with undergraduate experience in community-based research and design “perceive themselves to have attained higher levels of important general cognitive and personal abilities and skills than comparable alumni” with no community-based research and design experience.<sup>41</sup>
4. Assessment instruments will be developed to allow community partners to provide feedback on the contributions made by faculty and staff to their programs. These instruments will be administered at the conclusion of each semester.
5. Data will be collected on student participation in co-curricular civic engagement activities and programs, such as those sponsored by the Community Involvement Center, Passport to Houston, and Office of Student Activities. It is our expectation that the number of undergraduates participating in community-based research and design projects, and community-service programs will increase, as measured by NSSE, in comparison to 2001 baseline data.

### **Collection, Dissemination, Evaluation, and Use of Assessment Data:**

#### Collection

- Annual: The administration of the MSLI will be coordinated at the end of each semester by the Center and disseminated to the Faculty Advisory Board for evaluation. The Faculty Advisory Board will meet in February and submit recommendations for academic program adjustments to the Dean of Undergraduates no later than March 10.
- Annual: Collection of data on student participation in co-curricular programs will be coordinated by the Community Involvement Center (CIC) in April.
- Annual: The Dean of Undergraduates will convene the QEP Implementation Team (Associate Dean of Undergraduates, Executive Director of the Center for Civic Engagement, Director of the CIC, etc.) to

evaluate data and determine program adjustments.

- Annual: Beginning in year three of the QEP (2008-2009), Rice will administer a survey to all alumni who have participated in QEP programs. Each QEP alumnus will be “matched as closely as possible with two alumni who shared the same academic major, year of graduation, and cumulative grade point average” but did not participate in a QEP research and design project. We also anticipate a sub-cohort, comparison group of students who did not participate in QEP projects but who participated in campus-based research and design projects.<sup>42</sup>
- Annual: Student participation data will be collected by the Center.
- Years Two and Four of the QEP: NSSE will be administered.
- 2009-2014: Annual administration of the Career Services Center’s Post-Graduate Survey will be conducted.

#### Dissemination and Use

The following groups will receive the results of the QEP assessment:

- The faculty teaching the QEP courses will receive the results of the MSLI and the evaluations of student projects from the community partners for students enrolled in their classes. Faculty will use these results for the improvement of existing, and the design of new, QEP courses.
- The Faculty Advisory Board will receive the results of the MSLI reported in aggregate and the evaluations from the community partners for all QEP projects. The Board will meet annually to review the effectiveness of the overall program design and will make recommendations to the Director of the Center for Civic Engagement about program changes and enhancements.
- The Director of the Center for Civic Engagement will receive the results of the NSSE and reports on student participation in co-curricular civic engagement activities and programs, such as those sponsored by the Community Involvement Center, Passport to Houston, and Office of Student Activities. The Director and the Dean of Undergraduates will review the coordination of co-curricular activities and the efforts to increase student participation in these activities, and the Dean will implement program changes and enhancements.

(continued on page 24)

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40 National Survey of Student Engagement Viewpoint, November 2004. John Hayek, “National Survey of Student Engagement: Student Engagement in Learning,” Presentation at SACS Institute on Quality Enhancement and Accreditation, Orlando, FL, July 25, 2005.

41 The alumni assessment will include the Post-Graduate Survey, used by the Rice Office of Career Services, and an instrument based on a model used successfully by the University of Delaware, which demonstrated that “alumni judgment of undergraduate experience can be an accurate measure of undergraduate achievement.” K. Bauer and J. Bennett, “Alumni Perceptions Used to Assess Undergraduate Research Experience,” *Journal of Higher Education* 74, no. 2 (2003): 213-214.

42 Bauer and Bennett (2003): 216.

**Table A. Instructional Methods and Campus Activities Contributing to QEP Outcomes**

Student Outcomes	Examples of Instructional Methods and Campus Activities*
Acquire rigorous, discipline-specific inquiry skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborating with community partners (CPs) to define research questions*</li> <li>• Compose a research or design proposal*</li> <li>• Revision of proposals based on feedback</li> <li>• Gathering and analyzing data</li> </ul>
Apply theories to, or construct models for, real world problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Literature reviews</li> <li>• Collaborating with CPs to define research questions*</li> <li>• Research and design proposals*</li> </ul>
Acquire enhanced ability to interact with, and present work effectively to, audiences beyond the academic community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom and/or site-based interviews of CPs*</li> <li>• Shadowing CPs at research site</li> <li>• Collaborating with CPs to define research questions*</li> <li>• Collaborating with CPs to gather and analyze data</li> <li>• Oral presentation of research proposals</li> <li>• Cain Project coaching sessions</li> <li>• Juried presentation of final product/report*</li> </ul>
Consider a vital connection to urban Houston to be a distinctive feature of a Rice education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of Passport</li> <li>• CIC sponsored volunteer opportunities</li> <li>• Leadership Rice internships</li> <li>• Gateway courses</li> <li>• QEP Site Visits</li> <li>• Leadership Rice mentors' program</li> <li>• Career Services' Joint Venture Liberal Arts Internships</li> <li>• School of Humanities' Poverty Studies Program</li> <li>• Community-based research and design projects</li> <li>• Urban Immersion</li> <li>• Museum District programs</li> </ul>
Better understand the roles that larger communities play in their education and life after graduation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflection activities/assignments*</li> <li>• CIC sponsored volunteer opportunities</li> <li>• Leadership Rice mentors' program</li> <li>• Gateway courses</li> <li>• Community-based research and design projects</li> <li>• Urban Immersion</li> <li>• Civic Engagement Mentors</li> <li>• Career Services' Public Service Initiative</li> </ul>
Develop a culture of civic engagement across the Rice academic community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student research symposia</li> <li>• Faculty seminars on the pedagogy of community-based research</li> <li>• Civic engagement and research lectures in the Colleges</li> <li>• Increase the number of faculty teaching QEP Courses</li> <li>• Leadership Rice programs</li> <li>• Center for Civic Engagement</li> <li>• Gateway courses</li> <li>• Community-based research and design projects</li> <li>• Career Services' Public Service Initiative</li> </ul>
Foster and develop enduring relationships between the university and community organizations, and between individual faculty and community organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Center for Civic Engagement</li> <li>• QEP Courses</li> <li>• Community Involvement Center programs</li> <li>• Leadership Rice</li> <li>• Summer research fellows</li> <li>• Pursuit of joint grants with community organizations</li> </ul>
Support and increase participation in undergraduate volunteer organizations that assist with the problems addressed by civic organizations in Houston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Involvement Center programs</li> <li>• Summer research fellows</li> <li>• Civic Engagement Mentors</li> <li>• Internships sponsored by the School of Humanities' Poverty Studies Program</li> <li>• Rice On Board (Leadership Rice program)</li> </ul>
Leverage Rice university's intellectual capital for the benefit of our city, our local economy, and our quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Center for Civic Engagement outreach</li> <li>• QEP Courses and community-based projects</li> <li>• QEP course development grants</li> <li>• QEP summer research grants</li> <li>• CIC programs</li> </ul>

\* The instructional methods listed above are not exhaustive but, rather, examples of those indicated in discussions of the Faculty Advisory Group. Except where indicated (\*), choice of instructional methods will remain the discretion of QEP course instructors.

**Table B: Assessment Protocol: Instruments, Informants and Methods**

Instruments	Description	Informants and Methods
Research and Design Proposal Evaluation Process Evaluation by Instructors	Inquiry skills assessed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify issue or problem</li> <li>Formulate questions</li> <li>Gather information</li> <li>Critical analysis or problem solving</li> <li>Reflective knowledge</li> </ul>	Students and Student Teams coached by Course Faculty in collaboration with Community Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Written proposals</li> <li>Student-faculty conferences</li> </ul>
MSLI*	Assessment of disciplinary knowledge; inquiry and application skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify appropriate research methods and instruments</li> <li>Identify and evaluate evidence, theories, and models</li> <li>Synthesize information</li> </ul>	Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comparative data on skill and knowledge levels</li> </ul>
Oral Presentation Portfolio	Oral presentation skills coached by Cain Project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess audience and purpose</li> <li>Organize an argument</li> <li>Convey confidence through delivery skills</li> <li>Integrate visuals</li> <li>Handle questions and facilitate discussion</li> </ul>	Students and Student Teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faculty feedback on practice oral presentations</li> <li>Juried evaluation of final presentation</li> <li>Evaluation by Cain Project professional staff</li> </ul>
Community Partner Assessment Instrument* Community Partner Interviews	CPAI Assessments will determine a student's ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply appropriate theory to the problem in study</li> <li>Communicate (oral and written) with a non-academic audience</li> <li>Determine the appropriate research tools necessary to complete the project as defined</li> <li>Collaborate with community partners to define and study a problem.</li> <li>Solicit and respond appropriately to feedback from audiences within and beyond the academic community</li> </ul> <p>The usefulness for the community partner of participating in Rice's community engagement programs.</p>	Community Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Partner Assessment Instrument will be conducted by the Center for Civic Engagement</li> <li>Individual interviews with community partners will be conducted by the Center for Civic Engagement</li> </ul> Students and Student Teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Representative from the community organization will participate with faculty member in juried evaluation of student's presentation of final work</li> </ul>
Civic Attitudes and Experiences Report* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Survey of Student Engagement data</li> <li>METRO use data</li> <li>Career Services' Post-graduate Survey</li> <li>Student participation rates</li> <li>Rice Alumni Survey data</li> </ul> Engaging Houston Survey <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participation rates</li> <li>Number of QEP Courses offered</li> <li>Number of faculty members participating in QEP-related programs</li> <li>Community Involvement Center programs</li> <li>NSSE data</li> </ul>	The report will compile data from multiple sources in order to assess: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trends in student participation in undergraduate volunteer organizations that assist with problems addressed Houston civic organizations</li> <li>Extent to which participation in QEP activities positively affects students understanding of complex social problems</li> <li><i>Extent to which students attribute clarification of their career and educational goals to their community experiences</i></li> <li>Impact that participation in QEP activities has on students' appreciation of public responsibility and commitment to diverse forms of civic engagement</li> <li>Intention of students participating in QEP related activities to continue their civic engagement after graduation</li> </ul>	Alumni, Students and Faculty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Center for Civic Engagement will conduct regular data collection to track participation rates in QEP related activities</li> <li>Center for Civic Engagement will conduct assessment surveys with alumni who participated in QEP classes</li> <li>Student information will be collected annually via the NSSE</li> </ul>

\* The assessment methods for QEP outcomes listed are not exhaustive but, rather, the minimal instruments anticipated from discussions with the Faculty Advisory Group. The Center for Civic Engagement will assist faculty teaching QEP courses in selecting assessment methods that are appropriate for each course.

**Table C: Assessment Protocol Outcomes, Instruments and Use of Information**

Student Learning Outcomes	Assessment Instruments*	Use of Results
Acquire rigorous, discipline-specific inquiry skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposal Evaluation Instrument</li> <li>Process Evaluation</li> <li>MSLI</li> <li>Oral Presentation Portfolio</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuous feedback to students</li> <li>Course MSLI data to individual faculty</li> <li>Aggregate MSLI data to Center directors and Dean of Undergraduates</li> </ul>
Apply theories to, or construct models for, real world problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposal Evaluation Instrument</li> <li>Community Partner Assessment Instrument</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback to students</li> <li>Community partner data to course instructors and Center directors</li> </ul>
Acquire enhanced ability to interact with, and present work effectively to, audiences beyond the academic community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Partner Assessment Instrument</li> <li>Oral Presentation Portfolio</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback to students</li> <li>Community partner data to course instructors and Center directors</li> </ul>
Consider a vital connection to urban Houston to be a distinctive feature of a Rice education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Survey of Student Engagement</li> <li>METRO rail usage data</li> <li>Career Services' Post-graduate Survey</li> <li>Student participation rates</li> <li>Rice Alumni Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Director of CCE will receive all results and present annual report to the Dean for progress review</li> <li>Results will be shared with Faculty Advisory Committee and Campus Community Engagement Committee for review and program adjustments</li> </ul>
Better understand the roles that larger communities play in their education and life after graduation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NSSE National Survey of Student Engagement</li> <li>Alumni Survey Instrument</li> <li>Career Services' Post-graduate Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Director's annual report to the Dean</li> <li>Faculty Advisory Committee for decisions on expanding QEP course offerings</li> <li>Campus Community Engagement Committee for review of non-curricular offerings</li> <li>Annual report to executive directors of community agencies for review of community engagement projects</li> </ul>
Develop a culture of civic engagement across the Rice academic community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NSSE National Survey of Student Engagement</li> <li>Rice Alumni Survey</li> <li>Number of QEP Courses offered</li> <li>Number of faculty members participating in QEP-related programs</li> <li>Student participation rates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Director's annual report to the Dean</li> <li>Annual report to directors of community agencies</li> <li>Faculty Advisory Committee for decisions on expanding QEP course offerings</li> <li>Campus Community Engagement Committee for review of non-curricular offerings</li> <li>Annual report by Executive Director to the Student Association</li> </ul>
Foster and develop enduring relationships between the university and community organizations, and between individual faculty and community organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Partner Assessment Instrument</li> <li>Engaging Houston Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Director's annual report to the Dean</li> <li>Annual report to executive directors of community agencies</li> <li>Report to specific faculty offering QEP courses for process improvement</li> </ul>
Support and increase participation in undergraduate volunteer organizations that assist with the problems addressed by civic organizations in Houston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NSSE National Survey of Student Engagement</li> <li>Student participation rates</li> <li>Community Partner Assessment Instrument</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Director's annual report to the Dean</li> <li>Annual report to executive directors of community agencies</li> <li>Faculty Advisory Committee for decisions on expanding QEP course offerings</li> <li>Campus Community Engagement Committee for review of non-curricular offerings</li> </ul>
Leverage Rice university's intellectual capital for the benefit of our city, our local economy, and our quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community Partner Assessment Instrument</li> <li>Alumni Survey Instrument</li> <li>Career Services' Post-graduate Survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Director's annual report to the Dean</li> <li>Annual report to executive directors of community agencies</li> </ul>

\* The assessment instruments are not exhaustive but, rather, examples of those selected in discussions of the Faculty Advisory Group. The Center for Civic Engagement will assist faculty teaching QEP courses with selecting and developing assessment methods that are appropriate for each course.



- The Director of the Center will receive the results of all of the assessment activities and the reports from the Faculty Advisory Board and the Campus Community Engagement Committee. This information will be used to evaluate issues affecting the relationship of the QEP and the general undergraduate curriculum.
- The Director of the Center will provide an annual report to the Dean of Undergraduates, summarizing the effectiveness of the courses and co-curricular activities in satisfying the QEP learning objectives and making recommendations for program enhancements.

### E. *The Center for Civic Engagement*

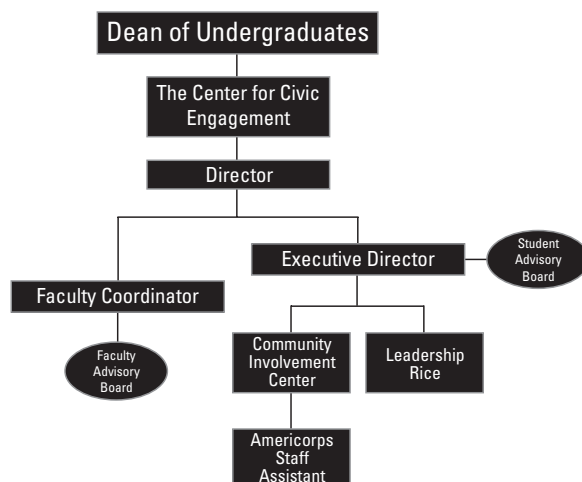
In the fall of 2006, Rice will establish a Center for Civic Engagement (the Center). The Center, in many respects, embodies the university's commitment not only to the QEP itself but also to the vision of an enhanced, holistic educational experience that informs the recent and ongoing reorganization of undergraduate affairs at Rice.<sup>43</sup>

Notably, the Center will be housed in the Office of the Dean of Undergraduates, whose position was created to facilitate thoughtful and innovative integration of the academic, intellectual, and co-curricular aspects of undergraduate life. The Center, which represents the first major new initiative of the Dean's office, will bring together the Community Involvement Center, Leadership Rice, and the student leadership and outreach programs supervised by Student Activities. All will now be housed in the Center and report to the Center's director (see diagram to the right), as will the faculty coordinator of QEP courses.

This reorganization will be supported by the proposed budget (see page 28) and other institutional resources, among which will be an experienced and energetic staff. Rice will hire a Director of faculty rank by August 15, 2006, to lead the Center. The Director will be assisted by a full-time Executive Director, to be hired with the input of the Director.

Because faculty involvement is so important, the Dean of Undergraduates will appoint a member of the Rice faculty to serve (half-time) as coordinator of the Center's curricular programs. In concert with the Director, this person will have responsibility for recruiting faculty colleagues to teach QEP courses, organizing faculty seminars on community-based research (CBR) pedagogy, chairing the Center's Faculty Advisory Board, aligning QEP projects with the university's curriculum, and ensuring alignment between the content of QEP courses

### Organizational Chart for The Center for Civic Engagement



and QEP learning objectives.

In addition to identifying, cultivating, and sustaining opportunities for community-based research and design projects appropriate for Rice undergraduates, the Center will also serve as an active liaison between Rice faculty, community organizations, and students to ensure fruitful matches for research and design projects in QEP *Civic Inquiry* courses. The Center will assist faculty with development and design of QEP courses, host conferences, and provide other support related to community-based research and “teaching-learning” for faculty engaged or interested in community-based research or design. Other Center functions will include funding stipends and grants for summer undergraduate research fellowships for QEP-related projects; integrating existing curricular and co-curricular efforts aimed at providing enhanced civic opportunities in Houston; organizing forums for oral presentation of student research and design projects to campus and community audiences; and conducting and coordinating ongoing assessment of the QEP.

### The Center will function as Facilitator of Collaboration

The most important functions of the Center will be the following:

- Providing a transparent starting point where any single party—student, faculty member, or community partner—can begin the process that leads to a fruitful relationship and collaboration.
- Designing and managing the processes by which community partners' needs, students' interests, and faculty members' research and teaching agendas are matched and crafted into research and design projects appropriate for Rice undergraduates.
- Managing the relationship between community partners and Rice students and faculty.

<sup>43</sup> Establishment of the Center for Civic Engagement also reflects the university's institutional and academic cultures. Rice houses more than 30 centers devoted to cutting-edge research in an impressive array of disciplines. See <http://www.students.rice.edu/students/Departments.asp#Centers>.

The importance of these Center functions cannot be overstated. Nothing like this occurs now at Rice. Instead, the community-based research and design projects that do occur—many of which are quite remarkable—are mostly the result of chance or isolated efforts by individual faculty, staff, and students.

Take, for instance, Professor Evan Siemann's partnership with the Houston Arboretum and Nature Center. This relationship, which metamorphosed into a research project for the students in Siemann's Conservation Biology class during the spring of 2005, resulted from a chance inquiry from the Arboretum (for graduate student interns) and required more than 100 hours of extracurricular work on Professor Siemann's part over the course of one semester, including time spent shuttling students to and from the research site. Had it existed at the time, the Center would have provided an obvious point of contact for the Arboretum; it could have eased Professor Siemann's burden significantly, assisting with development of the research problem and, especially, management of the project relationship; it could have organized transportation for students and reimbursed transportation and other expenses associated with the project; it could have organized a forum on campus for public presentation by participating students of their findings; it could have provided assessment of and valuable feedback on the student learning outcomes associated with the project; and, it could have cultivated an ongoing relationship between the Arboretum and Rice, perhaps leading to additional research, volunteer, and internship opportunities for Rice students.

Rice is fortunate to have dedicated faculty, such as Professor Siemann, who are able to transform a simple inquiry from a community organization into a rich learning opportunity for students. What we do not know, however, is how many equally wonderful opportunities go unrealized either because community partners with needs do not know how to access Rice faculty and student resources, or because faculty, feeling pressed for time and resources, never consider integrating off-campus experiences into their teaching.

Interviews with numerous members of the faculty convinced us that the latter is a significant factor. Indeed, many faculty members indicated that their enthusiasm for QEP participation would depend on the ability of the Center to provide support to faculty in the form of diplomatic and administrative management of relationships with community partners. Program administrators at Princeton, Duke, and Georgetown told us the same thing was true with their faculty.

Clearly, it will be essential that the Center's Executive Director and Faculty Coordinator provide hands-on guidance for these relationships. Negotiating student, faculty, and partner expectations, including elements such as project duration (a critical issue given the semester format of most QEP Courses), character and frequency of student-partner interaction, and project goals and evaluation, will be particularly important.<sup>44</sup>

Equally important, staff of the Center will have the expertise both to craft what might be an ill-defined need or project into one that is appropriate for Rice undergraduates and to recognize fruitful connections between individual projects, QEP courses, and Rice faculty members' research interests. When partner needs are not appropriate for undergraduate research, the Center will also have the ability to connect partners with other university resources—such as student volunteers or interns.

The Center will provide a similar benefit to Rice undergraduates. Currently, an undergraduate who has an interest in pursuing research or design of some sort off campus (or on campus, for that matter) has to rely on his or her own ability to identify the department and faculty member that fits that interest. The Center will not end this practice, but it will offer another, much more streamlined and, we believe, promising alternative. The Center will serve as a repository and clearinghouse of community-based research opportunities for undergraduates. In other words, just as community organizations will learn that the Center is indeed *the center* for off-campus organizations' inquiries, Rice students will be encouraged to view the Center as a facilitator of intellectual entrepreneurship and the transparent starting point to the curricular side of the QEP. Ideally, any student with an interest in or proposal for Houston-based inquiry will be able to come to the Center and receive help identifying opportunities to translate either into reality. To support this goal, the Center will maintain a constantly updated list of faculty research and design projects, community partners and their projects, summer research opportunities, and, of course, QEP courses and independent research seminars.

Thus, for example, a student who approaches the Center with an interest in environmental pollution could be quickly connected to Professor Phil Bedient's course on hydrology and groundwater contamination, Professor Matt Fraser's community-based study of air quality in Houston, or to projects at the Shell Center for Sustainability in the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy.

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44 Strand, Marullo, et al. (2003); Jacoby & Associates (2003).

### **The Center will coordinate Curricular and Co-Curricular Programs for Civic Engagement**

Rice University's QEP underscores the need to view the undergraduate experience as holistically as possible. Its success depends on bridging the gap between formal, assignment-based education with the informal, experiential learning that occurs beyond the doors of the classroom.

With this precise objective in mind, Rice University announced the creation of a new Dean of Undergraduates position in the fall of 2004. This position vests responsibility for university-wide aspects of the undergraduate experience in a single officer who will be in a position to advocate for undergraduates directly with the President and the Provost, as well as with other deans and administrative officials. The Dean of Undergraduates is charged with advocating for student interests in such matters as the crosscutting, general-education aspects of the curriculum as well as overseeing the residential and co-curricular aspects of the undergraduate experience.

Rice's QEP is a first, dramatic expression of the vision for the Dean's position coming to life as it seeks to integrate classroom education, experiential learning, and campus culture. To translate this vision and the goals of the QEP into practice, the Center will be organized to maximize intentional linkages between coursework, community-based experience, and co-curricular programs—that is, the Community Involvement Center, Leadership Rice, and oversight of the *Civic Experience* program will all be housed within the Center (see diagram on page 24).

This reorganization will produce a variety of essential collaborations and, we believe, enhance the impact of QEP programs. For example:

- *Gateway Courses:* Many Gateway courses will be taught by the professional staff members of the Community Involvement Center and Leadership Rice. Placing the Community Involvement Center and Leadership Rice under the supervision of the Executive Director of the Center, and in a structure that includes the Faculty Coordinator of the QEP curricular program, will help ensure that Gateway courses are designed and taught in ways mindful of the content and demands of the QEP courses themselves.
- *Interns, Volunteers, and Researchers:* The Center for Civic Engagement will become a one-stop shopping resource for students and community organizations. The result will be a more effective and efficient

matching of people, interests, needs, and resources. For example, a community partner might come to the Center with what the partner thinks is potential research project for Rice undergraduates. If the staff of the Center decides that the proposed project is not appropriate for a QEP course or student research, the story will not end there. Instead, because the Center is home to volunteer (CIC) and internship (CIC and Leadership Rice) programs, Center staff members will be able to direct the partner to more appropriate resources.

### **The Center will expand Opportunities for Community-Based Research and Design**

Staff members of the Center will bear principal responsibility for identifying potential opportunities for community-based research and design opportunities in the greater Houston area. The Center will be assisted in this year-round process by the staffs of the Community Involvement Center, Career Services Center, and Leadership Rice, which have excellent relationships with more than 200 community organizations. A centralized database of such relationships is being created throughout the QEP process, and we have engaged community organizations in thinking creatively about how they might advance their goals and build capacity by research and design collaborations with Rice faculty and students. In November 2005, the Steering Committee sponsored a series of meetings with community partners including representatives from a wide range of Houston-area nonprofit and governmental organizations (see Appendix D). This began the collaborative process necessary to expand Rice-community partnerships from volunteer-based relationships to research-oriented relationships.

The Center will organize, sponsor, and host teaching-learning colloquia for faculty engaged or interested in community-based research, as well as conferences on pedagogy and community-based research.

More than any other single factor, the success of Rice's QEP, because it is course-driven, will depend on faculty participation and enthusiasm. Experience and study of best practices and programs at peer institutions tell us faculty are willing to take on a new project when three conditions are present: the university supports the project with adequate resources; the project engages or stimulates faculty members' research agendas; and, the project provides exciting educational experiences for our undergraduates.<sup>45</sup> Equally important, the literature on community-based learning highlights the importance

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45 Bringle and Hatcher, (1996); Conference Proceedings: "Undergraduate Research and Scholarship and the Mission of the Research University: Humanities and Humanistic Social Sciences," November 14-15, 2002, University of Maryland, available at <http://www.sunysb.edu/Reinventioncenter/conference/Humanities/HumanitiesSession.htm>.

of providing faculty with training in the pedagogy associated with teaching experiential learning classes.<sup>46</sup>

In addition to creation of the Center and hiring of a professional staff, Rice University will support faculty interested in community-based research with a variety of financial and professional resources. For example, the Center will accept proposals for grants to be awarded annually to fund the design of new QEP courses or significant redesign of existing courses. The Center will also establish a teaching award that recognizes excellence in faculty mentoring of community-based learning. Finally, the development officer of the Office of the Dean of Undergraduates and Director of the Center will be tasked to identify and secure resources to support the Center's programs.

Taking advantage of Rice faculty members' interest in effective and innovative teaching methods, the Dean of Undergraduates and Director will make the Center a teaching-learning lab on campus—a place where faculty can gather to explore and discuss promising pedagogies and experiential learning. To launch this effort, the Dean and Center Director will take the following steps:

1. Appoint a Faculty Coordinator who will be drawn from the Rice faculty and will serve in a half-time capacity and oversee the curricular component of the QEP. In collaboration with the directors of the Center for Civic Engagement and the directors of other Rice University academic centers, the Faculty Coordinator will organize colloquia on pedagogy and best practices. The Center will also sponsor faculty participation in a yearly symposium, organized by Texas Campus Compact, on the scholarship of faculty engagement.
2. Name Faculty Advisors who will play a leading role in efforts to increase the number of academic departments that offer QEP courses.
3. Establish an annual colloquium on "Integrating Community-Based Research or Design into your Teaching" taught by leaders in the field, and will be offered annually to members of the Rice faculty who teach QEP courses or who are interested in offering a QEP course. Participants will receive an honorarium.
4. Establish a program of grants for development of QEP courses.

## **The Center will be a Forum for Presentation of Student Research and Design**

The literature makes clear that "structured reflection" is an essential tool for promoting student learning for participants in service-learning and community-based research.<sup>47</sup>

The decision that QEP courses must not only provide some form of structured reflection but also require public presentation by students of the results of their research derives directly from this scholarship and, in particular, from the QEP's student learning goals. Opportunities for reflection, both in and outside of the classroom, will help students acquire—and test—rigorous, discipline-specific inquiry skills; reflect on their community experiences and, thereby, better understand the roles that the surrounding community plays in their education; and, engage in conversations with peers and faculty alike, contributing to development of a culture of civic engagement across the Rice community.

The requirement that students in QEP courses present the results of their research to audiences of peers and community partners, of course, is intended to help students enhance their communication skills. However, this requirement also derives from the goal of fostering a culture of civic engagement on the Rice campus. We believe that the participation of a portion of the faculty and undergraduate population in QEP research experiences will both benefit and influence the entire campus community. Students' experiences researching and serving in the community will enliven conversations in classrooms and residential colleges, and across seminar and lunch tables alike, providing, we believe, the seeds for a growing culture of civic engagement at Rice.

To support the attainment of these QEP goals, the Center will sponsor and host a variety of formal and informal events open to the Rice community at which students will present progress reports and results of their community-based research and design projects:

- The Center will host annual or semi-annual research symposia for student presentations.
- The Center will sponsor a lunch series entitled "Food For Thought" at which students involved in community-based research and design projects present updates on their work. The talks will take place in the private dining rooms of Rice's nine residential colleges on a rotating basis.

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46 Bringle and Hatcher (1996); Dean A. Pribbenow, "The Impact of Service-Learning Pedagogy on Faculty Teaching and Learning," *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* (Spring 2005): 25-38.

47 Strand et al. (2003); Eyler and Giles (1999).



## F. QEP Budget

Rice University is committed to providing the financial and other resources needed to fund and sustain the programs of the QEP. The total budget for the QEP is \$3,539,200 over five years (FY 2007-2011). The budget will be comprised of funds from existing sources—such as those of Leadership Rice and the Community Involvement Center—as well as from new budget lines. Resources will also be sought as part of the fundraising activities of the Office of the Dean of Undergraduates and from various external agencies and foundations.<sup>48</sup>

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Salaries & Benefits	447,075	462,289	477,765	494,529	511,074	528,914
Programming <sup>1</sup>	15,000	15,000	17,500	17,500	17,500	17,500
Office Expenses	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300	2,300
Partnership Cultivation	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Faculty Training	19,490	23,650	27,815	31,475	28,815	28,815
Professional Development <sup>2</sup>	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Course Development	7,600	8,860	8,860	8,860	8,860	8,860
Assessment	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500	6,500
Transportation <sup>3</sup>	2,000	2,500	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Website Development & Maintenance	2,500	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Civic Experience Courses	6,325	12,650	18,975	18,975	18,975	18,975
Student Stipends/Research Grants	2,540	4,060	5,075	6,600	7,105	7,105
Volunteer & Outreach Programs	45,755	45,755	45,755	45,755	45,755	45,755
Leadership Activities	93,126	93,126	93,126	93,126	93,126	93,126
<b>Total</b>	<b>656,210</b>	<b>683,690</b>	<b>713,670</b>	<b>735,620</b>	<b>750,010</b>	<b>767,850</b>

### Notes:

Assumption—Fiscal year is July to June.

1. Student research symposia and on-campus events for community partners.
2. Professional association memberships and conferences for Center staff.
3. Student and faculty travel to and from CBR project locations.

<sup>48</sup> Rice has already sought funding from three external sources: AmeriCorps, The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations, and the Bonner Foundation. From AmeriCorps, Rice has secured the services of a VISTA volunteer for one year, beginning in July 2006. Rice has applied for a grant of \$200,000 from The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations to underwrite the first two years of operation of The Center for Civic Engagement, and Rice has joined a group of universities, led by Princeton, in applying for a grant from the Bonner Foundation in support of community-based research.

## APPENDIX A

### QEP LEADERSHIP GROUPS

#### **QEP Steering Committee**

Robin Forman	Dean of Undergraduates & Professor of Mathematics, Co-Chair
Maryana Iskander '97	Advisor to the President, Co-Chair
Karen Ostrum George '77	Rice University Board of Trustees
Eugene Levy	Howard R. Hughes Provost & Professor of Physics and Astronomy
Robert Stein	Dean of the School of Social Sciences
Robert Yekovich	Dean of the School of Music
Sidney Burrus '57	Professor Emeritus in the School of Engineering
John Casbarian '69	Associate Dean of the School of Architecture
Kathy Collins	Vice President for Finance
Colleen Morimoto	Assistant to the Provost
Matthew Taylor Ph.D '92	Assistant to the Dean of Undergraduates
Janice Bordeaux	Associate Director of Undergraduate Education Research & Assessment for the School of Engineering
Cheryl Matherly	Assistant Dean for Student Affairs & Director of International Opportunities
R. Mac Griswold	Director of the Community Involvement Center
Suzanne Stehr	Director of Web and Print Communication
Nancy Carrasco '02	QEP Steering Committee Coordinator
Mary Zimmer	SACS Re-accreditation Project Manager
Robert M. Taylor, Jr. '74	Alumni Representative
Shawn Leventhal '05	Alumni Representative
Jason Lee '06	Undergraduate Student Representative

#### **Faculty Advisory Group**

Phil Bedient	Herman and George R. Brown Professor of Civil Engineering
Maria Oden	Lecturer and Laboratory Coordinator in Bioengineering
Lisa Meffert	Assistant Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology
Stephen Klineberg	Professor of Sociology
Christopher Hight	Assistant Professor of Architecture
Evan Siemann	Associate Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

#### **Staff Advisory Group**

Heather Masden	Director of Student Activities
Paul Sutera	Associate Athletic Director of Development
Carlos Garcia	Administrative Director of the Ctr. for Nanoscale Science & Technology
Debra Bailey	Reference & Collection Development Librarian
Nancy Laidlaw	Assistant Director and Counselor of Career Services

#### **Student Advisory Group**

Victoria Pridgen '07	Cognitive Sciences major
Jonathan Avalos '07	Psychology major
Matilda Young '08	Humanities major
Sean McCudden '07	Chemical Engineering major
Caitlin Thomas '08	Psychology major

APPENDIX B  
CONSULTATIONS WITH PEER INSTITUTIONS

Peer Institution	Consultant(s)	Contact Type	Date	Rice University Participants
Princeton University	Various staff; Office of Community-Based Learning Initiatives	Site Visit	May 31, 2005	Maryana Iskander
Princeton University	Tricia Thorne; Office of Community-Based Learning Initiatives	Conference Call	July 7, 2005	Steering Committee
University of Pennsylvania	Various staff; Center for Community Partnerships	Site Visit	July 15, 2005	Maryana Iskander
Duke University	Drs. Vicki Stocking and Betsy Alden; Office of Research Service-Learning (RSL)	Conference Call	August 4, 2005	Steering Committee
Georgetown University	Dr. Kathleen Weigart; Center for Social Justice	Conference Call	September 19, 2005	Steering Committee
Stanford University	Dr. Leo Ortolano, Jackie Schmidt-Posner, and Dr. John Bravman; Haas Center for Public Service	Site Visit	October 31, 2005	Robin Forman
University of Notre Dame	Reverend William Lies, Jim Paladino, and Bill Purcell; Center for Social Concerns	Conference Call	December 2, 2005	Steering Committee

## APPENDIX C

### LETTER TO THE FACULTY ON COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

July 15, 2005

Dear Faculty Colleagues:

As part of Rice's re-accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), we are asked to develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that demonstrates a university-wide commitment to a multi-year focused course of action designed to enhance student learning. Although accreditation requirements are not often viewed as opportunities, we believe that the QEP provides Rice with a real chance to enhance student learning in a meaningful way.

The QEP is entitled "Engaging Urban Houston: Undergraduate Education in the City" and will focus on cultivating and expanding community-based research opportunities for our undergraduates. The logic is simple: Rice has already achieved distinction in its dedication to undergraduate research. The QEP now offers us the opportunity to build on that success, to forge collaborations with community partners, and to leverage the application of faculty and student intellectual capital for the benefit of our students, our city, our economy, and our quality of life. We believe that community-based research experiences will help students to think like practitioners in their fields and recognize that the methods of inquiry learned on campus have practical applications beyond the hedges. Equally important, community-based projects will force students to examine the social contexts within which work and choices occur and to wrestle with the additional complexity of interfacing with real people and real problems. Successful engagement of even a minority of undergraduates in community-based research will alter and enrich the very nature and content of conversation on campus, both in the classroom and across the dinner table. Similarly, increased faculty interest and participation in such projects will inevitably spill over into classrooms and laboratories, sparking the development of new courses and, we hope, additional interest among colleagues and students in civic engagement and the very real problems of urban Houston.

Student interest in community-based research and civic engagement and, thus, the success of the QEP will depend, above all, on faculty input, support, and participation. We can begin this process by learning from programs already in place. For example, many of you are already providing undergraduates with opportunities for experiential learning. Many more have forged ties with community partners in government, education, business, medicine, and the arts, and have focused at least a portion of your research endeavors on the problems of Houston. In the fall, the QEP committee, appointed by Provost Gene Levy, will organize opportunities for faculty to share their reflections on these projects, as well as discuss the benefits of undergraduate participation in them. At the same time, however, we ask that all members of the faculty not only share their thoughts on this effort, but also think boldly and anew about the character and place of undergraduate research in Rice's distinctive academic mission and fortuitous geographic location.

David and I hope that you will participate in this important initiative. Although the Office of the Dean of Undergraduates will be following up with faculty in a variety of forums this summer and fall, you may contact Matt Taylor at either [ptt@rice.edu](mailto:ptt@rice.edu) or x4997 directly with any questions or ideas regarding the Quality Enhancement Plan.

Respectfully,

Robin Forman  
Dean of Undergraduates

David Leebron  
President



## APPENDIX D

### QEP COMMUNITY PARTNER MEETINGS: HOUSTON COMMUNITY NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS AND GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

Name	Title	Organization
Anneliese Davis	VP for Board Affairs	Planned Parenthood of Houston & Southeast Texas, Inc.
Cleo Glenn-Johnson	President	Black United Fund of Texas, Inc.
Donna Rochon	Research Associate	Healthcare of the Homeless - Houston (HHH)
Elena Marks	Director of Health Policy	City of Houston, Mayor's Office
Kathy Lord	Executive Director	Trees of Houston
Larry Payne	President	Houston Habitat For Humanity, Inc.
Matthew Marchinek	Manager of Volunteer Programs	Hermann Park Conservancy
Robbie K. Blanton	Executive Director	Women's Resource of Greater Houston
Walter L. Jones	Director of Community Based Initiatives	Neighborhood Centers, Inc.
Dr. Jean Herzog	Executive VP & COO	TIRR Systems
Jan Allison	Staff Development and Volunteer Services Coordinator	Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services
Janette Cosley	Executive Director	The Ensemble Theatre
Kathryn Bragan	Director of Membership Operations	Houston Zoo, Inc.
Naomi Scott	Executive Director	Ronald McDonald House
Roksan Okan Vick	Executive Director	Houston Parks Board
Stan Mays	Curator of Herpetology and Co-Director	Houston Zoo, Inc. & Houston Zoo & Rice University Consortium in Conservation Biology
Lex Frieden	Sr. VP for Grants Administration	TIRR Systems
Damon Williams	Executive Director	Greater Southeast Management District
Peggy Smith	Professor and Director	Balor Teen Helath Clinic
Brian Greene	President and CEO	Houston Food Bank
Dr. Rhea Brown Lawson	Director of Libraries	Houston Public Library
James Ainsworth	Director of Volunteer Services	Houston Food Bank
Ramona Davis	Executive Director	Greater Houston Preservation Alliance
Gary Packwood	Researcher	City of Houston, Dept. of Health & Human Services

## APPENDIX D (CONTINUED)

### COMMUNITY PARTNER MEETINGS (3)

#### **Community Partner Meetings**

**WELCOME & QEP OVERVIEW:** Maryana gave the welcome address and everyone introduced themselves. Maryana gave an overview of the QEP which included the purpose, mission, the Center, timeline and the importance of the inclusion of community partners in the process. She also briefly described the three ways Rice undergraduate students have interacted with community constituencies, i.e., volunteerism, internships, and research. Emphasis was made on utilizing students as researchers and the benefits that can be expected from such a relationship which is different than having students serve as interns which may only consist of staffing rather than researching and does not usually serve as academic credit.

Robin gave a briefing on the importance of student engagement in different forms with the Houston community and built on the discussion of bringing Houston into the classroom for not only academic credit but also for personal development. He also described the process of how the Center will coordinate with the three constituencies involved in community-based research, i.e., students, faculty, and community partners. Peer-to-peer marketing of QEP projects will be promoted through site visits and junior and senior mentors who have experience with community-based research.

**INTRODUCTIONS:** Each Community Partner described the mission and function of their organization and what experience they have had with Rice undergraduate students as well as what research needs they hope to meet by having Rice undergraduates serve as researchers.

#### **1. Neighborhood Centers, Inc.**

- a. Bringing Resources, Education, and Connection to Underserved Neighborhoods. Our philosophy of social service delivery is to combine the best of business practices with the best of social service goals.
- b. No prior experience w/Rice students; need help with building design processes, short-term impact measure studies, asset-based community development research.

#### **2. Health Policy Office—Brownfields Redevelopment Program, City of Houston**

- a. The mission of the Brownfields Redevelopment Program is to facilitate reuse of eligible properties identified as Houston brownfields (i.e., abandoned, idled, or under-used industrial or commercial properties with real or perceived environmental contamination).
- b. Have worked with Rice graduate students and undergraduate interns; want students to get experience and be involved with government to promote this field as a possible career path.

#### **3. Planned Parenthood of Houston**

- a. Our mission is to ensure the right and ability of all individuals to manage their sexual and reproductive health by providing health services, education, and advocacy.
- b. Have worked with Rice undergraduate interns; need assessment studies to determine what services are needed at various clinics in Texas and Louisiana as well as client population studies.

#### **4. Black United Fund of Texas, Inc.**

- a. We operate to improve the quality of life in the Black community. The organization's main thrust is to address the causes of problems facing the community, consequently to attain results, in order to stop re-cycling poverty.
- b. No prior experience w/Rice students; need help with needs-assessment and asset-based community development studies.

**5. Houston Habitat for Humanity, Inc.**

- a. We are a nonprofit ecumenical Christian ministry dedicated to eliminating substandard housing in the City of Houston by helping low-income families earn simple decent homes in which to live and raise their children. Habitat homes are sold at no profit, financed with affordable no-interest loans.
- b. Have worked with Rice undergraduate students through CIC, Leadership Rice, and have worked with Stephen Klineberg's class with his research; considering longitudinal research projects.

**6. Hermann Park Conservancy**

- a. Our mission is to encourage the development of more attractive, usable green space in Hermann Park, and to promote the restoration of the Park to its original standards of beauty.
- b. Have worked with 1 Rice graduate student intern per year; need help with demographic studies of public use of park space.

**7. Healthcare for the Homeless-Houston**

- a. The mission of HHH is to promote health, hope, and dignity for Houston's homeless through accessible and comprehensive care. Medical services are provided in a community-oriented primary care model.
- b. Have worked with Leadership Rice and volunteers. We have an electronic medical record (EMR) system that coordinates care among the various participating healthcare service sites by sharing a single patient record; would like students to research on how to make EMR more functional and perform annual needs assessment studies.

**8. Women's Resource of Greater Houston**

- a. Goals are to help women become economically self-sufficient, encourage prevention and early intervention of problems affecting women and children, support programs that help to develop and improve life skills, actively involve women in philanthropic decision-making, and educate women about charitable giving.
- b. The Women's Resource funds research on issues that affect women, girls, and families. Studies have included health issues and workplace issues such as child care, leadership skills, family friendly benefits and the "glass ceiling"; would also like research done to measure the impact of financial literacy classes.

**9. Trees for Houston**

- a. We are dedicated to the orderly planting of street trees along Houston's major arterial streets and freeways. We address not only the visual enhancement of Houston, but also the urban forest issues in Houston by working productively with both private and public sector support.
- b. Have worked with Rice students through work-study and internship programs on writing proposals; would like research done on air quality, quality of life, and carbon credit studies.

**10. Greater Southeast Management District**

- a. We enhance urban infrastructure and encourage economic/revitalization development in Houston.
- b. Have worked with students in Leadership Rice (rewarding for students but there is a question of accountability).

**11. Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services**

- a. Our mission is to promote a healthy and safe community by providing healthcare services to prevent illness and injury and providing health education.
- b. Have worked with graduate students in the Professional Master's Program in Natural Sciences.

**12. Ronald McDonald House**

- a. Our mission is to offer a home away from home to the families of children who undergo treatment for cancer and other serious illnesses at a Texas Medical Center institution.
- b. Have worked with volunteers and interns.

**13. Baylor Teen Health Clinic**

- a. The Baylor Teen Health Clinic (BTHC) program operates five health care clinics and one school-based clinic. The program provides free and accessible reproductive health services to adolescent and young adults.
- b. Have worked with Leadership Rice and have hired Rice students after they graduate.

**14. Houston Zoo, Inc.**

- a. We provide superior education and learning opportunities; promote conservation awareness and action; and provide a fun, unique, and inspirational experience fostering appreciation, knowledge, and care for the natural world.
- b. Have worked with graduate students in the Action Learning Program and with undergraduates on independent studies via the Houston Zoo and Rice University Consortium in Conservation Biology.

**15. TIRR Systems**

- a. TIRR serves as a Model System for interdisciplinary rehabilitation services, patient care and medical education, and a center of research.
- b. Do not recall having worked with Rice students but could use help with research projects related to policy, systems, independent living, data analysis, economics, media, qualitative impact studies on American Disability Act, development of infrastructure, outpatient studies, and rehab engineering.

**16. Houston Parks Board**

- a. We are committed to creating, improving, and protecting parkland in Houston.
- b. Have not worked with Rice with this organization but have worked with volunteers through Friends of Hermann Park. We could use help with photography, business, fundraising, air quality studies, and GIS studies.

**17. The Ensemble Theatre**

- a. The theater is a nonprofit organization that presents a repertoire of critically acclaimed dramas, comedies, and musicals. The theater also has an educational touring program and a summer young performers training program.
- b. Have not worked with Rice students but would love to get students involved in creating their own projects.

**18. Houston Public Library**

- a. We offer the Houston community a place for learning, access to innovative technology, creative solutions to information needs, and empowering personal and professional growth.
- b. Not sure if we have had experience with Rice students but could have students design and implement customer satisfaction surveys.

**19. Houston Food Bank**

- a. We are a private, nonprofit organization that seeks food donations, distributes to local charitable programs, and is a leader in disaster relief.
- b. Have worked with Rice volunteers but not sure about interns; we could use research related to data analysis, design presentations, and transportation systems.

**20. City of Houston, Department of Health & Human Services**

- a. HDHHS services include immunizations, prenatal care, screening for sexually transmitted diseases and tuberculosis control. Other services include investigating air pollution complaints, enforcing the smoking ordinance, licensing and inspecting food establishments and animal control, disease investigation, issuing birth and death certificates, and operating health centers, multi-service centers, and the Harris County Area Agency on Aging.
- b. Have worked with student volunteers and communicated via email answering student questions as well as perform educational visits to present health topics to students; deliver GIS maps to the Shell Center for student research/inquiry; we have several research opportunities in various health-related areas like epidemiology, demographics of uninsured immigrants, community health centers, health statistics, etc.

**21. Greater Houston Preservation Alliance**

- a. We promote the preservation and appreciation of Houston's architectural and cultural historic resources through education, advocacy, and committed action, thereby creating economic value and developing a stronger sense of community.
- b. Have worked with graduate students via the Action Learning Project; we could use research relating to public policy and advocacy, survey of the city's historic resources, develop business plans/structures, and documentation of oral histories of community residents.



## APPENDIX E

### QEP STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARIES

<b>Date</b>	<b>Meeting Type</b>	<b>Description</b>
17-Feb-05	General Committee	Kick-off meeting to give overview of SACS Accreditation and developing the rationale for civic engagement; review proposed workplan.
9-Mar-05	General Committee	Discussion on Campus Compact, develop rationale for civic engagement, and identifying learning outcomes.
13-Apr-05	Consultant Meeting	Initial meeting and discussion with SACS consultant, Dr. Gerald Lord, regarding current state of QEP.
16-Jun-05	Consultant Meeting	Meeting with consultant, Ephraim Schechter, to discuss QEP assessment.
20-Jun-05	General Committee	Discussion on meeting with Dr. Schechter, defining community-based research, identifying programs/initiatives and faculty to begin developing QEP.
7-Jul-05	Conference Call	Discussion with Trisha Thorne at Princeton University to learn about the structure of the Community-Based Learning Initiative.
15-Jul-05	Institutional Visit	Maryana visited with UPenn staff regarding the structure of the Center for Community Partnerships.
19-Jul-05	Assessment Subcommittee	Initial discussions with key faculty regarding community-based research and learning outcomes.
20-Jul-05	Conference	Maryana, Robin, and Mac gave a presentation on Rice QEP at Regional Campus Compact Conference.
24-Jul-05	Conference	Maryana attended SACS Quality Enhancement Institute in Orlando, FL.
27-Jul-05	Assessment Subcommittee	Discussion regarding assessment measures and models.
4-Aug-05	Conference Call	Discussion with Vicki Stocking of Duke University regarding the structure of the Duke Research Service-Learning Program.
10-Aug-05	General Committee	Updates on presentations and meetings with peer schools, assessment, current status of QEP, and creation of subcommittees.
26-Aug-05	Conference Call	Discussion with Dr. Lord on the QEP evaluation process and update on progress of Rice QEP.
30-Aug-05	Alumni/Community Outreach Subcommittee	Discuss coordinating community and alumni outreach/involvement in order to identify community partners for first set of projects.
31-Aug-05	Assessment Subcommittee	Discussion on QEP collaboration with The Boniuk Center for the Study and Advancement of Religious Tolerance.
12-Sep-05	General Committee	Update on conference call with Dr. Lord, The Boniuk Center, Assessment Model, Alumni/Community Outreach, QEP Lead Evaluators, and conference calls with peer schools.

19-Sep-05	Conference Call	Discussion with Dr. Weigert of Georgetown University regarding the structure of Center for Social Justice and how the program is run as well as addressed any problematic issues.
5-Oct-05	Faculty Advisory Group	Discussion with key faculty regarding their experiences with community-based research and learning outcomes.
13-Oct-05	General Committee	Discuss conference call with Georgetown, meeting with key faculty, review assessment timeline, begin discussion of proposed QEP infrastructure and budget, and review QEP draft document.
19-Oct-05	Faculty Advisory Group	Discussion and definition of learning outcomes.
21-Oct-05	Assessment Subcommittee	Develop a timeline for the QEP draft and assignment segments of the Draft to other members to coordinate and write.
24-Oct-05	Assessment Subcommittee	Discussion with Office of Institutional Research regarding the pros and cons of different surveys and to determine which assessment tools for the QEP.
24-Oct-05	Student Advisory Group	Rice Student Volunteer Program meeting. General membership meeting and social event. Basic outline of the QEP and discussion.
25-Oct-05	Student Advisory Group	CIC Service Council meeting. Presidents of all student service organizations advised by the CIC. Basic outline of the QEP and discussion.
26-Oct-05	Staff Advisory Group	Meeting with a small group of staff members who have participated in co-curricular service with students. Representatives from Fondren Library, Development, Nanotechnology, Career Services Center, and Student Activities. Discussion on their experiences working with students and suggestions on assessment of secondary outcomes.
27-Oct-05	Student Advisory Group	Creation of the QEP Undergraduate Panel which consists of five undergraduate student leaders (plus our undergraduate committee member, Jason Lee) who have had experiences both with Leadership Rice and some aspect of the Community Involvement Center. Students will be small-group facilitators for future sessions with the general undergraduate population.
29-Oct-05	Institutional Visit	Robin visited with Stanford University staff regarding the HAAS Center for Public Service.
3-Nov-05	Assessment Subcommittee	Discussion regarding peer institutions and what we have learned.
3-Nov-05	Assessment Subcommittee	Discussion with the Provost regarding the academic program component of the QEP.
3-Nov-05	Faculty Advisory Group	Discussion of learning outcomes and assessment protocol.
3-Nov-05	Student Advisory Group	Mac and Jason discussed with Student Advisory Group which student group leaders and organizations to target in order to begin discussions about the QEP.
8-Nov-05	Alumni/Community Outreach Subcommittee	Preparation meeting for community partners meetings who are interested in learning about the QEP and would like to participate in community-based research.

9-Nov-05	Alumni/Community Outreach Subcommittee	Meeting # 1 with community partners who are interested in learning about the QEP and would like to participate in community-based research.
14-Nov-05	Student Advisory Group	Mac and Matt met with two students from the Student Advisory Group and Student Association President James Lloyd to talk about ways to inform students about the QEP.
15-Nov-05	Alumni/Community Outreach Subcommittee	Meeting # 2 with community partners who are interested in learning about the QEP and would like to participate in community-based research.
15-Nov-05	General Committee	Briefing on Community Partner Meetings #1 and #2 and updates on QEP Draft document, Student Advisory Group meetings, and discussion regarding measuring assessment outcomes.
16-Nov-05	Alumni/Community Outreach Subcommittee	Meeting # 3 with community partners who are interested in learning about the QEP and would like to participate in community-based research.
21-Nov-05	Conference Call	Discussion with Jackie Schmidt-Posner of Stanford University to learn about the structure of the HAAS Center for Public Service.
2-Dec-05	Conference Call	Discussion with staff from the University of Notre Dame's Center for Social Concerns to learn about its structure and programs.
3-Dec-05	Conference	Matt attended the SACS-COC Annual Meeting to learn more about SACS' perspective on the QEP.
7-Dec-05	General Committee	Review QEP Draft document, briefing on SACS-COC Annual Meeting, briefing on Notre Dame's Center for Social Concerns, and update on faculty/student meetings.
8-Dec-05	Faculty Advisory Group	Discussion of QEP learning outcomes, instructional strategies, and assessment protocol.
19-Jan-06	General Committee	Review the QEP Draft document and develop timeline for distribution to SACS and other constituents.
27-Jan-06	Student Advisory Group	Develop plan for open student forum scheduled for Feb. 8 4-5 p.m.; Student Advisory Group will present QEP to the Student Association on Jan. 30.
30-Jan-06	Student Advisory Group	Mac and QEP Undergraduate Panel made QEP presentation at the Student Association general meeting.
3-Feb-06	Student Advisory Group	Mac and QEP Undergraduate Panel discussed speaking format and talking points for the student open forum.
8-Feb-06	Student Advisory Group	Campus-Wide Open Forum; purpose is to raise awareness about the QEP and how it will impact academic careers at Rice; forum to include faculty guest speakers involved with community-based research.
14-Feb-06	General Committee	Review QEP Draft document and discuss agenda and who should be present for SACS On-site Visit in April.

## APPENDIX F

### CIVIC INQUIRY PROGRAM – SAMPLE

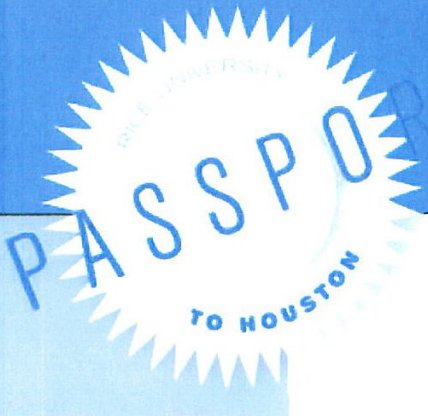
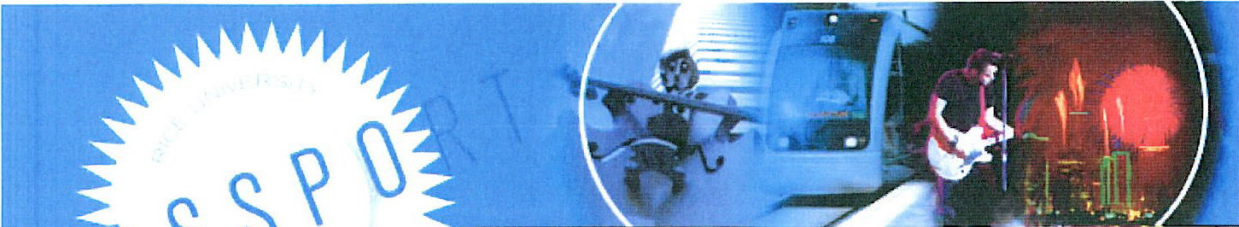

Candidates for Year One Courses Include:

1. **Civil/Environmental Engineering 412: Hydrology and Watersheds Analysis.** Professor Philip Bedient engages students in his revolutionary research on flood control and water quality issues in Houston and the Gulf Coast region. Student groups evaluate community risks for flooding using data they obtain on sites in the Houston Metropolitan Area.
2. **Visual Arts 327: Documentary Production.** Brian Huberman, whose film credits include documentaries aired on PBS and a widely respected cinematic oral history of Holocaust survivors, teaches students the expressive possibilities of documentary film production using digital systems.
3. **Spanish 440: Bilingualism: Cognitive, Linguistic and Social Factors.** Rafael Salaberry and his advanced students analyze bilingualism from cognitive, linguistic and socio-cultural viewpoints, while working directly with dual language schools and the Hispanic community in Houston.
4. **Political Science 441: Common Property Resources.** Common property resources (CPRs), such as aquifers, fisheries and the Internet, pose a fundamental governance dilemma involving economic and political institutions because they are public goods that can be privately consumed and depleted. Professor Rick Wilson's students identify CPR issues in Houston, study community organizations' efforts to resolve them, and present their findings to community partners.
5. **Sociology 309: Race and Ethnic Relations.** Michael Emerson's students study historical and contemporary theories of race and ethnic relations in the U.S., while conducting field-work in Houston neighborhoods, focused on group patterns of assimilation and conflict.
6. **Architecture 426/429: Designing the Low-Cost House.** Under the auspices of the Rice Building Workshop, students collaborate with community organizations to design, permit, and construct a small house in mid-town Houston for Project Row House, a noted grassroots project promoting neighborhood revitalization and community service.
7. **Bioengineering 451: Design I (Maria Oden).** In this project-based course, senior Bioengineering students, working in teams, design devices in biotechnology or biomedicine in collaboration with partner researchers and physicians in the Texas Medical Center.
8. **Biosciences 310: Independent Study for Undergraduates.** In concert with the Consortium in Conservation Biology Zoo Project, students in Professor Lisa Meffert's course conduct research on endangered species at the Houston Zoo.
9. **Sociology 308: Houston: The Sociology of a City (Stephen Klineberg).** Students in this course assist in the design, administration, and analysis of the Houston Area Survey, which for two decades has set the standard for urban sociology case study research on a major metropolitan area in order to explore contemporary social change.



## APPENDIX G

### PASSPORT TO HOUSTON



ABOUT THE PASSPORT

STUDENT ADVISORY BOARD

MAPS

METRO

COMMUNITY

ENTERTAINMENT

FOOD

MUSEUMS

OTHER VENUES

PERFORMING ARTS

RICE VILLAGE

SERVICES OPPORTUNITIES

SHOPPING

SPORTS

FAQs

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

PHOTOS

CONTACT US

#### Welcome to Passport to Houston

*"Houston has a great deal more to offer our undergraduates than what they might learn in the classroom or laboratory. Indeed, we want our students to see Houston as perhaps one of the most important learning environments available to them while they are at Rice. Whether it is attending an exhibition in the world-class Museum District that neighbors our campus, participating in a public service internship with a government or nonprofit organization, or hopping the light rail to enjoy any number of Houston's diverse cultural, athletic, and culinary offerings, Rice students must view this dynamic city as an integral part of their experience on an urban campus."*

— President David W. Leebron

#### What is Passport to Houston?

The Passport provides Rice undergraduate students, who are registered for the 2005-06 academic year, a METRO U.Pass for unlimited use from **August 14, 2005–May 13, 2006**. The Passport also provides (1) unlimited year-round access to the Museum of Fine Arts, (2) unlimited access to permanent exhibitions and the Cockrell Butterfly Center at the Houston Museum of Natural Science during the academic year, and (3) unlimited access to the Houston Zoo during the academic year when presenting a valid Rice student identification card. Read the [FAQs](#) for additional information and terms of the program.

Undergraduate students are also invited to attend **Rice Night Events** sponsored by Rice University and Passport partners. These events are free to undergraduate students with a valid Rice student identification card. Mark your calendars for these Rice Night events:

January 27	Houston Grand Opera
March 3	Houston Zoo
April 21	TBD

Please check this site often for updated and additional information throughout the year and enjoy exploring Houston!

Office of the President

Dean of Undergraduates

#### Passport in the News

- » ["Rice truly is stepping out from behind the hedges"](#)
- » ["Selling students on Houston"](#)

*"Really, the best part of the Passport to Houston wasn't how much*

# APPENDIX G (CONTINUED)

## PASSPORT TO HOUSTON STATS FOR FALL & SPRING 2005

Houston Zoo		Fall 2005
Month	# of Students	
August	19	
September	76	
October	195	
November	204	
<b>Total</b>	<b>494</b>	
Avg. Attendance/week from Aug 22-Nov 30, 2005 = 34		

HMNS		Fall 2005
Venue Type	# of Students	
Exhibit Halls	418	
Butterfly Center	154	
IMAX Theatre	80	
Planetarium	8	
Special Exhibits	72	
<b>Total</b>	<b>732</b>	
Avg. Attendance/week from Aug 22-Nov 30, 2005 = 49		

RICE NIGHT EVENTS		Spring '05 - Spring '06
Venue	# of Students	
MFAH	300	
HMNS	240	
Symphony	300	
Da Camera	200	
Opera	400	
Zoo	TBD	
Dance Salad	TBD	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1440</b>	

MFAH		Fall 2005
Month	# of Students	
August-Sept.	214	
October-Nov.	223	
<b>Total</b>	<b>437</b>	
Avg. Attendance/week from Aug 1-Nov 30, 2005 = 25		

MFAH		Spring 2005
Month	# of Students	
Feb.-March	67	
April-May	130	
<b>Total</b>	<b>197</b>	
Avg. Attendance/week from Feb 1-May 17, 2005 = 13		

METRO Boardings		Fall 2005
Month	METROBus	METRORail
August	297	4,185
September	1,082	10,331
October	1,192	12,233
November	986	11,391
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,557</b>	<b>38,140</b>
Avg Boardings/month =		1,016
Avg Total Boardings/month =		(up 15%) 11,913
Overall Total Boardings for 2005 =		87,391

METRO Boardings		Spring 2005
Month	METROBus	METRORail
January	545	6,584
February	573	9,001
March	738	11,186
April	624	10,776
May	251	5,416
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,731</b>	<b>42,963</b>
Avg Boardings/month =		8,593
Avg Total Boardings/month =		10,154



## APPENDIX H

### ENGAGING HOUSTON SURVEY



[President's Office](#) ▶ [Educational Outreach](#) ▶ [Passport to Houston](#) ▶ [Survey \(Rice Only\)](#) ▶

#### Welcome to the "Engaging Houston" Survey.

Dear Colleague,

I write to invite your participation in Rice's first-ever comprehensive survey of university engagement with Houston and the world, the results of which will be published in print form and on a searchable website. By identifying and quantifying both formal programs and individual commitments, we will seek to demonstrate Rice's already commendable participation in the life of our city, as well as evaluate what new efforts would prove beneficial.

The survey has two components:

#### 1. Individual Community Commitments (All Rice Faculty and Staff)

Individuals affiliated with Rice University engage our community not only professionally, but also personally. To better understand this informal network of relationships by Rice community members, we'd like to know about your affiliations and collaborations beyond the hedges. The Office of Student Activities will collect relevant information pertaining to students. Your name will not be publicly released or linked to the information you provide below:

Name:

Community Organization/Activity:

City:

State or Country:

Position (e.g., Board of Directors, Chairperson, Member, Volunteer, etc...):

*Enter additional entries here.*

**Note to Rice Faculty:** I encourage all faculty members to also include this information in the Faculty Information System (<http://www.faculty.rice.edu/>) where we have created a new category for outreach entitled "Houston Engagement." You may log into the system, and the click the following buttons: "Service," then "Outreach Activities," then "Add New Outreach Activity." From there, choose "Houston Engagement" from the "Type" selection menu. Next, fill out the form. If you wish to capture more than one activity, simply click "Add New Outreach Activity" button, making sure to specify "Houston Engagement" for each new record.

#### 2. Rice-Sponsored Programs and Activities (Pre-approved Record Managers)

A subset of Rice faculty and staff have been identified as the leaders of major, university sponsored activities that engage Rice with Houston and the world. If you have not already been contacted to complete a survey record, and feel that you are the leader of a major Rice-sponsored outreach activity, please contact [engage@rice.edu](mailto:engage@rice.edu). If you are a pre-approved record manager, you may access your record on the following page.

I wish to express my personal thanks to all members of the Rice community for their efforts in completing this survey.

Sincerely,

David W. Leebron  
President



## APPENDIX I

## QEP STUDENT NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

the Rice Thresher  
January 27, 2006

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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tive and rhetoric seen on the *Thresher* opinion page the last couple of years. Both Grawert and Reus offered their evidence and conclusions without inferring that others are ignorant, stupid or blind, and the combined presentation left the reader able to decide who gave the better case.

I thank Grawert for presenting an honest critique of Christian thought, and I thank Reus for attempting to demonstrate the uniqueness of the resurrection without drowning it in purely Biblical arguments and by instead referencing the changed lives of Christ's disciples. I applaud both of them for their fair treatment of the question presented, and here's to seeing more of this in the future.

Jacob Neu  
Martel junior

## Students will benefit from Rice's QEP

To the editor:

The Quality Enhancement Plan appears that it will provide great opportunities to students ("Rice to foster involvement in Houston with new center," Jan. 20). There are currently many opportunities for students to do research, but they are mostly restricted to the campus. The community surrounding Rice could benefit immeasurably from the efforts of its students.

Tying this community-based research into academic courses would allow students to enhance their "real-world" skills while helping out the community and progressing toward graduation. Opportunities for academ majors are the most obvious: researching, English as a second language classes, learning how non-profits run and so on. But the type of research would not have to be limited. I envision research

projects on engineering problems around Houston; they certainly do enough road construction.

I hope the QEP provides an avenue for students to benefit the community while they develop skills in class and prepare for life after Rice.

Sean McCudden  
Baker sophomore

## CONTACTING THE THRESHER

### Letters

■ Letters to the editor should be sent to the *Thresher* by e-mail to [thresher@rice.edu](mailto:thresher@rice.edu). Letters must be received by 5 p.m. on the Monday prior to a Friday publication date.

■ All letters to the editor must be signed and include college and year if the writer is a Rice student.

■ Letters should be no longer than 250 words in length. The *Thresher* reserves the right to edit letters for both content and length.

### Subscribing

■ Annual subscriptions are available for \$50 domestic and \$125 international via first class mail.

### Advertising

■ We accept display and classified advertisements. Advertisements must be received by 5 p.m. on the Monday prior to a Friday publication date. Please contact our advertising manager at (713) 348-3967 or [thresher-ads@rice.edu](mailto:thresher-ads@rice.edu) for more information.

# Rice to foster involvement in Houston with new center

by Ted Wieber  
THRESHER STAFF

Bringing Rice and Houston closer together will be the goal of a new center for civic engagement, to be formed at the beginning of the fall semester.

*"It's sometimes easy, living within these hedges, to forget that there is a world out there that can really benefit from our energy and talents."*

— Jason Lee  
Wiess College senior

The center, which has not yet been named, will aim to facilitate research partnerships between Rice students and faculty and community organizations, and incorporate such research into the curriculum. The center will also serve as an umbrella organization for Leadership Rice and the Community Involvement Center.

The center was developed as part of Rice's re-accreditation process, which happens every 10 years and is currently underway. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools requires Rice to develop a plan to improve education in a measurable way. The result, called the "Quality Enhancement Plan," describes plans for the center.

Assistant to the Dean of Undergraduates Matthew Taylor (Ph.D. '92), a member of the QEP steering committee, said the center will make research opportunities more accessible to students. Instead of having to search in different departments for a research position, students will be able to come directly to the center to learn about opportunities, Taylor said.

Community Involvement Center Director Mac Griswold, also a committee member, said Rice's curriculum may also have QEP-designated courses as soon as Fall 2006. Courses will earn the designation if they contain a substantial community-based research or design project, require significant interaction with a community organization and yield a product that can be publicly presented.

"The largest responsibility of the new center for civic engagement will be to organize these

curricular efforts in support of community-based research," Griswold said.

Nine classes that meet many of the requirements for QEP designation include ECON 461: Urban Economics, ARTV 327: Documentary Production and LING 419: Bilingualism, according to the QEP website, [www.rice.edu/qep](http://www.rice.edu/qep). The site also states that incentives will be offered to faculty who develop QEP-designated courses.

While the plan for the civic engagement center is still being developed, the center will likely be the hub for different autonomous organizations, including Leadership Rice, Natalia Ksiezzyk, an assistant director for Leadership Rice, said.

"[Leadership Rice] will be affiliated with the civic engagement center, and our missions will overlap," Ksiezzyk said. "The center's focus will be more research and academics, while ours will be hands-on experience. I imagine we'll do a lot of collaborating with Career Services and the Community Involvement Center."

Wiess College senior Jason Lee, the student representative to the committee, said he thinks the plan will benefit the community.

"It's sometimes easy, living within these hedges, to forget that there is a world out there that can really benefit from our energy and talents," Lee said. "One of the primary goals of the QEP is to match what we have to offer as Rice students with the opportunities available to us."

Committee Chair and Adviser to the President Maryana Iskander (Wiess '97) said the QEP follows recent initiatives — such as the Passport to Houston program started by President David Leebron in 2004 — to strengthen Rice's community ties.

Leebron also commissioned an "Engaging Houston survey," to identify the extent of Rice's involvement in Houston, Iskander said.

The results of the survey state that Rice community residents logged more than 1.3 million hours of participation in Rice-affiliated outreach programs during the 2004 academic year. Results of the survey can be found at [www.rice.edu/engage](http://www.rice.edu/engage).

The civic engagement center will be staffed by a half-time executive director that is also a faculty member, a full-time managing director and an Ameri-corps volunteer, Taylor said. The hiring process for the positions will begin in the late summer or early fall, he said.

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Campus Compact: <http://www.compact.org/advancedtoolkit/indicators.html>

Center for Community Engagement & Service Learning, University of Denver: <http://www.du.edu/engage/index.htm>

Center for Community Partnerships, University of Pennsylvania: <http://www.upenn.edu/ccp/index.shtml>

Center for Social Concerns, University of Notre Dame: <http://socialconcerns.nd.edu/about>

Center for Social Justice Research, Teaching, and Service, Georgetown University: <http://socialjustice.georgetown.edu/>

Center for Undergraduate Excellence, University of Virginia:  
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The Center for Values and Service, Loyola College, Maryland: <http://www.loyola.edu/cvs/about/index.html>

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