

LMU
Lincoln Memorial University
QEP Newsletter

Transparent Instruction in General Education and Gateway Courses for Student Success

First Place Faculty Award Recipients



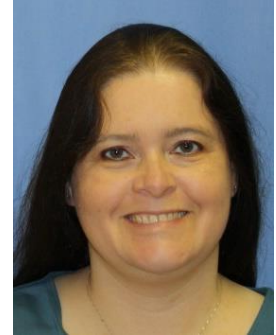
Ms. Erika Eschberger



Mr. Jason McConnell



Dr. Sheree Schneider



Dr. Elizabeth Yagodzinski

In the process of implementing our QEP, we wanted to be sure to recognize faculty that are demonstrating excellence in the classroom. Each year, we ask faculty, staff, and students to nominate faculty that they believe are doing an exemplary job with transparent instruction in the classroom. The first place award recipients for 2020-21 were members of a team of faculty that teach the ISYS-100 class in the School of Business. Erika Eschberger, Jason McConnell, Dr. Sheree Schneider, and Dr. Elizabeth Yagodzinski developed the materials that are used for all of the sections of ISYS-100.

They were nominated by a student that stated “I know that I can refer to my syllabus any time to know exactly what is expected of me.” While this may seem like a simple concept, it may not always be true in some classes. The student further stated “my professor also posts thorough examples on Blackboard of what an assignment should look like when the rubric is followed.” Nominations are reviewed and scored by a team of faculty. One of the reviewers commented “this is an outstanding representation of what the QEP is all about!”

When asked about the process for modifying assignments to be transparent, Erika Eschberger replied “following the Transparent Instruction QEP Manual and instructing a cohort of the QEP Workshop Series in 2019 gave me all the tools I needed. Both were immensely helpful. Once developed, the final step is the content is shared and copied for all the online instructors of the course so we can keep the sections consistent.”

When asked about the most challenging aspect of incorporating the transparent framework, Dr. Yagodzinski replied “None. It was an easy to follow process using the training resources.” Dr. Yagodzinski’s words of wisdom for other faculty are “Have an open mind about the process, change is good, and don’t fear giving students an exemplary example of what you are looking for in the assignment. Having a model to follow is very useful for learners.”

QEP Faculty Training

Each semester we have new faculty teaching at LMU and/or faculty new to teaching with the transparent instruction framework. We provide training for faculty that are new to transparent instruction to give them the background of the QEP as well as the tools needed to incorporate the purpose, tasks, and criteria into syllabi and assignments. We had twelve new faculty in fall 2021 go through the training. Faculty take a pre-training and a post-training survey at the beginning and end of the training session. Using a paired sample t-test to compare the means, we found that there was a positive significant difference between the surveys $p < .001$. We like to see that faculty are benefitting from the materials presented.

In addition to our faculty in the general education and gateway courses, the Physician Assistant Program has expressed an interest in also learning about transparent instruction. A training session was offered for eight members of their faculty. These faculty also responded to the pre-training and a post-training surveys. Using a paired sample t-test to compare the means, we found that there was also a positive significant difference between the surveys $p < .006$.

Training sessions include information regarding the demographics of LMU students, learning about formative and summative assessment, and learning how to incorporate transparency into syllabi and assignments. Adding the fall 2021 faculty participants, we have now provided training for 137 faculty since the start of our QEP. We believe that this a valuable investment into our faculty as well as into our students – a win/win!



Library Resources for Faculty Development

LMU Libraries have resources available for students, faculty, and the community. Librarian Amanda Sanders has created a special list of resources for faculty development with the transparent instruction pedagogy in mind. Resources include articles and books about assessment, engagement, rubrics, grading, quality questioning, accountability, and teaching in the virtual classroom. A list of library articles and books available can be found at this link: <https://library.lmunet.edu/qepresources> If you have suggestions of books and/or articles to add to this site, please contact Amanda at Amanda.Sanders@lmunet.edu.

The Transparency in Learning and Teaching project (TILT) also has a number of resources available on their website. Videos from the program founder, Dr. Mary-Ann Winkelmes, describe and explain the Transparency Framework as well as a number of articles. This site also includes sample transparent assignments from other institutions from academic disciplines such as Algebra, Biology, Calculus, Communication, Criminal Justice, Finance, Psychology, and Sociology to name just a few. Materials are available here: <https://tilthighered.com/tiltexamplesandresources>

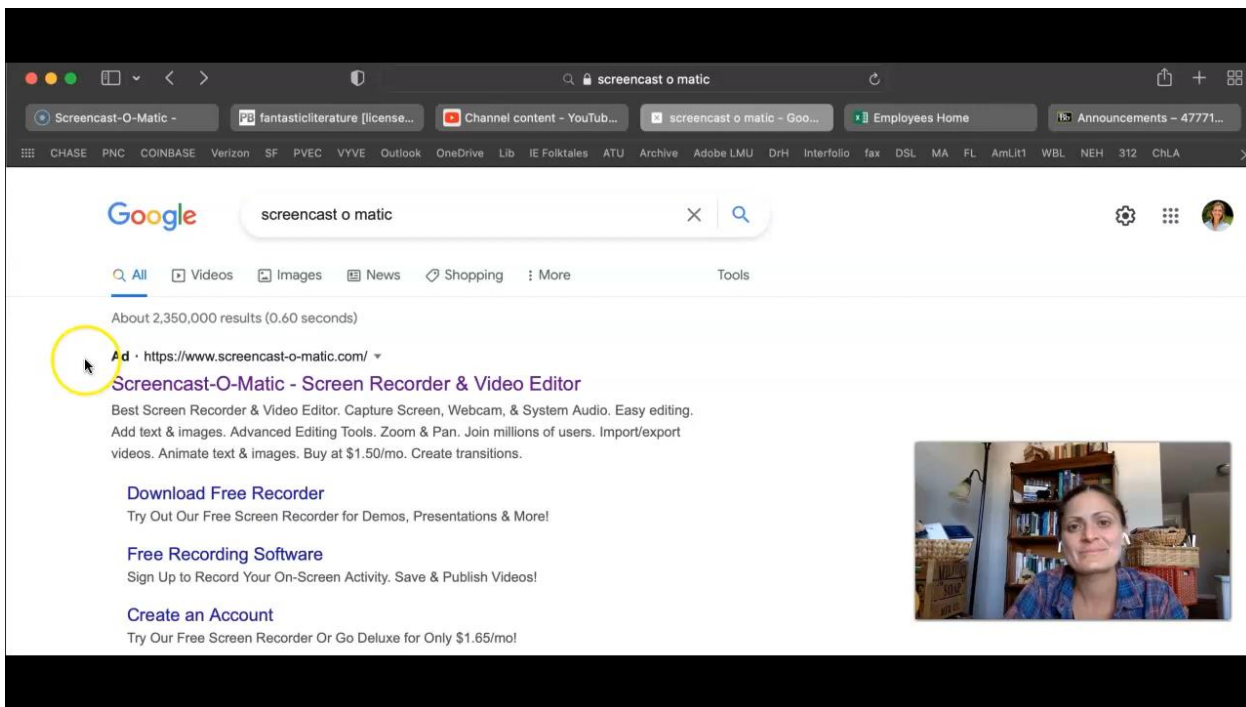
Dr. Abigail Heiniger's Tech Tips

Dr. Abigail Heiniger teaches Literary History and Culture (ENGL-250) courses in our general education program. In 2020-21, Dr. Heiniger was nominated for an Outstanding Faculty Award for Transparency and she was awarded third place. One of the reviewers commented about her materials having imbedded videos that “blew him away”. Here you will find a short message from Dr. Heiniger and a link to a video that can help you learn how to use technology for your classes:

There are some things you must capture on video: Big Foot, your two-year-old niece free-climbing the fridge to get to a package of cookies, and instructions for using any app-based tool!

Recording instructions on screen-capture videos has saved me time and provided supplemental support for written instructions with assignments. Here's how:

1. Open a screen-recorder app on your computer like SCREEN-CAST-O-MATIC.
2. Open app-based tool for assignment.
 - a. Put in “student view” setting.
3. Start recorder.
4. Walk through instructions or example problem.
5. Save and upload online (I like using YouTube because it works well with Blackboard).
6. Embed video on Blackboard.



Click this link to see a video on making video instructions and loading them on to Blackboard for students: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11M_qFqBr4Q .

We hope that this short instructional video has helped you gain a better understanding of how you could incorporate technology to supplement your teaching.

National Survey of Student Engagement Data

The QEP has multiple targets and measures to determine if we are making progress on our student success areas of focus. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) is one of the surveys where we pull data to assess our progress. This is a national survey that we deployed in the spring of 2021 to freshmen and senior undergraduate students. While the survey itself is rather lengthy, the QEP focuses on a couple specific areas. One of the target goals is to “increase student satisfaction on each survey so that the satisfaction is higher than the LMU Carnegie Class and Private, Non-profit peer institutions.” Even more focused, we look at statement 5B “Taught courses in an organized way.” Additionally, we are looking at mean scores for Effective Teaching Practices questions. We are happy to report that we have exceeded our goals for both of these areas. Below you will see the final scores for 2021 as well as our Baseline data and results from 2020.

Question 5B – “Taught courses in an organized way.”

Percentage Point Differences:

	Baseline	2020	2021
LMU Percentage	64 %	61 %	75 %
Not-for-Profit difference	-14	-17	+2
Carnegie Class difference	-9	-15	+1

Mean Scores for all Effective Teaching Practices Questions

	Baseline	2020	2021
LMU Mean Score	37.6	35.3	40.2
Not-for-Profit Mean Score	39	39.9	39.1
Carnegie Class Mean Score	38.5	39.9	39.5

We will deploy the NSSE survey again during the semester of spring 2023.

Important 2021/2022 Dates



October 11	Late Starting Classes Begin (2 LNCN-100 courses)
October 27	QEP Steering Committee Meeting
Nov. 15- Dec. 10	End-of-Semester Student Surveys Available
January 10, 2021	Spring 2022 Classes Start
February 7	Due date for spring 2022 syllabi & assignment submission

Work In Progress

We are in the midst of reviewing, scoring, organizing, and collecting data on a number of assessment measures.

- A team of 8 faculty are in the process of reviewing and scoring the fall 2021 transparent syllabi and assignments. Results will be shared with deans later this semester.
- Student and faculty focus groups are scheduled for mid November. If you are randomly selected to participate, please say yes!
- We are still waiting on our fall 2020 freshmen returning to fall 2021 statistics.

PURPOSE ~ TASKS ~ CRITERIA

By The Numbers . . .

213 Number of fall 2021 sections of general education & gateway courses.

137 Number of LMU faculty that have attended transparent instruction training sessions since the QEP start in 2019.

75 Percentage of students that thought LMU classes were taught in an organized way in the National Survey of Student Engagement Survey.

8 Number of faculty peer reviewing transparent syllabi and assignments using 4-point rubric scales.

2 Number of transparent assignments that should be included in each general education and gateway course to reflect transparent instruction.

Thank you for reading our newsletter. The QEP Office is located in 118 Grant Lee. If there is something you would like added to future newsletters, please email Molly.Duggan@LMU.net.edu.