Quality Matters^{TM} Pilot Implementation 2015

University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee

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Authored by: USFSM Quality Matters Task Force

Quality Matters Pilot Implementation 2015 Plan

Overview

Quality Matters

To ensure the quality and continual improvement of online and hybrid course offerings at USFSM, after a review of alternatives and consideration of feedback from faculty who had experience with other models, our academic community has decided to pursue implementation of the Quality Matters (QM) standards of practice at our institution. Quality Matters is a faculty-centered, peer review process that is designed to certify the quality of online and blended courses. QM is a leader in quality assurance for online education and has received national recognition for its peer-based approach and continuous improvement in online education and student learning. University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee (USFSM) is committed to implement the Quality Matters standards for the design of online and hybrid courses, and we will begin to systematically build and evaluate our courses based on these rigorous, research-supported standards. The Quality Matters standards assure that the online components of these courses promote learner engagement and provide students with all the tools and information they need to be successful learners. USFSM will work to incorporate Quality Matters into all phases of its course design processes and to develop the capacity to conduct unofficial and official course reviews. USFSM will commit to implement Quality Matters for a period of one year.

Governance

The Office of the Regional Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs is accountable for ensuring the quality of online and hybrid courses, and has charged the QM Task Force with responsibility for leading the Quality Matters Implementation Pilot. They will accomplish this work in collaboration and consultation with the Faculty Senate and Academic and Student Affairs Leadership Team. The Coordinator of Faculty Development and E-Learning Services will be responsible for day-to-day operations as directed by the QM Task Force. The QM Task Force will inform faculty, staff, and the campus community of the progress of its work. This implementation plan has been approved and endorsed by both the USFSM Faculty Senate and the Academic and Student Affairs Leadership Team.

Task Force Members
- Diane Fulkerson, M.A., M.L.S., Director of Information Commons
- Susan Fulton, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Communication Sciences & Disorders
- Timi Hager, M.I.T.E., Assistant Director of E-Learning, (Quality Matters Peer Reviewer Certified)
- Bonnie Jones, Ph.D., Assistant Vice President of Institutional Research and Effectiveness

- Colleen Lord, Ed.D., Instructor, Educational Leadership, Faculty Senate Liaison
- Dina Osborn, Ph.D., Instructor and Coordinator, M.A. Online Teaching and Learning
- Brianne Reck, Ph.D., Associate Professor and Faculty Development Coordinator (Chair)
- Anthony Spall, B.A., Instructional Media & Web Support Technologist
- Carol Vance, Ph.D., Instructor in Accounting, College of Business
- G. Pat Wilson, Ph.D., Interim Dean & Associate Professor, College of Education

Pilot Framework

The QM Rubric - The Quality Matters Higher Education Rubric, Fifth Edition, 2014 is a set of 8 General Standards and 43 Specific Review Standards used to evaluate the design of online and blended courses. The Rubric is complete with Annotations that explain the application of the Standards and the relationship among them. A scoring system and set of online tools facilitate the review by a team of Peer Reviewers.

Unique to the Rubric is the concept of alignment. This occurs when critical course components - Learning Objectives (2), Assessment and Measurement (3), Instructional Materials (4), Course Activities and Learner Interaction (5), and Course Technology (6) - work together to ensure students achieve desired learning outcomes.

Peer Review Process - Quality Matters promotes a peer review process and provides a database of trained QM Peer Reviewers eligible for assignment to a peer review team. Any subscribing institution may conduct internal or informal reviews or contract with Quality Matters to conduct an official review. Official subscriber-managed course reviews may be conducted only by eligible subscribers. Courses that successfully meet the QM Rubric Standards in an official course review are eligible for QM recognition.

Course Certification - . Courses that successfully meet the QM Rubric Standards in an internal review are eligible for official course review and QM recognition.
An Official Course Review must meet the following criteria:

- Use of current QM Standards
- Review of online or blended (hybrid) course
- Three-person peer review team
- All reviewers are eligible QM-certified Peer Reviewers
- At least one reviewer is external to the institution submitting the course
- At least one reviewer is designated as subject matter expert
- Team Chair is a QM Master Reviewer

Phased Implementation:
Phase 1 – Faculty Professional Development; QM Rubric & Peer Review Training
Phase 2 – Course Review; Internal Review Team & Official Course Certification

Phase 1 – Faculty Development

The QM Rubric
Based on research-supported and published best practices, the QM Rubric is a set of standards by which to evaluate the design of online and blended courses. The rubric is complete with annotations that explain the application of the standards and the relationship between them. Applying the QM Rubric (APPQMR) course is the prerequisite for the Peer Reviewer Course.

Peer Review Course
The Peer Reviewer Course is designed to prepare experienced online faculty to become Quality Matters Certified Peer Reviewers. The Peer Reviewer Course includes a review of Quality Matters, practice critiquing and writing helpful recommendations, and a Practice Review in which the participants are asked to review Specific Standards in an online course using QM's Course Review Management System

Action Items

- Develop and conduct Quality Matters Information sessions. This session will be designed as an information session for Faculty and Administrators to learn about Quality Matters and how to become certified in Quality Matters. Session length 1 hour.
- Conduct face-to-face Quality Matters Applying the Rubric (APPQMR) training for faculty. Faculty development will be conducted by internal staff, Timi Hager, QM Institutional Representative. This faculty development will be conducted on campus (or synchronously online) and will take approximately 7.5 hours.
- Register Faculty with online teaching experience, who have successfully completing the APPQMR course, for the Online Peer Review Course (PRC). Faculty that complete the PRC training will be expected to participate as internal peer reviewers for the institution. The PRC course is a 2 week online training.

Phase 2 – Course Reviews

Internal Course Review Teams will be created and internal reviews will begin for qualified courses. Eligible courses – courses that have been taught for at least two semesters online – that have successfully undergone internal review, may be submitted to QM for Official Course Review. Continue ongoing Faculty Development for the QM Rubric & Peer Review Course.

Action Items:

- Develop and create internal Peer Reviewers for online/hybrid course reviews
- Begin internal course reviews; courses that have been taught for at least two semesters online will be eligible for review
- Develop tracking system to document faculty qualified to participate in internal reviews and list of courses in the review process
- Continue Faculty Development & Information Sessions

Engagement

As with any new University initiative, faculty and administrative engagement in Quality Matters implementation pilot will be essential to its success.

Institutional Representative Training – February 2015

USFSM has begun the engagement process by obtaining the necessary development and certification for the Institutional Representative (IR). As of February 2015, the IR has completed the Applying the Quality Matters Rubric (APQMR), Peer Review Course (PRC), and Institutional Representative Training. The Face to Face Facilitator Certification (FFC) course will be complete by March 2015. This professional development will provide the IR with the necessary tools to implement and maintain Quality Matters programming on campus and to conduct initial faculty development.

Quality Matters Overview Presentations – Spring/Summer 2015

The Institutional Representative (IR) will develop and offer administrator-oriented and faculty-oriented QM overview presentations using materials furnished by Quality Matters. The overview will include information about the Quality Matters (QM) program, the QM Rubric, the QM peer review process, and how all the pieces come together in an effective QM implementation.

Reporting – Ongoing

Reporting will be done on an ongoing, semester-to-semester basis. Reporting information should be disseminated broadly to all stakeholders throughout the institution, including through the institution's website. Reporting shall be rooted in distance gained towards the predicted benchmarks that follow.

Benchmarks

Build Internal Capacity through Faculty Development – Summer/Fall 2015

USFSM recognizes that in order to become self-sufficient in our QM implementation and to, eventually, be able to conduct Subscriber-Managed Course Reviews, USFSM must identify faculty and staff from across the institution who can serve in roles (such as QM Certified Peer Reviewer, and Master Reviewers) and develop them.

The IR is certified to facilitate face-to-face workshops in Applying the Quality Matters Rubric (APQMR). Conducting this faculty development in house will provide a cost savings to the university.   Faculty, who successfully complete the APQMR training, will be invited to participate in QM's Peer Review Course.

Faculty Development & Anticipated Participants

Semester	QM Information Sessions	Applying the Rubric (APQMR)	Peer Review Course (PRC)
Spring 2015	10-15	5	0
Summer 2015	10-15	5	2
Fall 2015	10-15	5	2
Spring 2016	10-15	5	2

Quality Matters Faculty Learning Community/Peer Reviewers
A Faculty Learning Community is a cross-disciplinary group of 10 – 15 faculty who engage in an active, collaborative, and self-guided exploration of a teaching and learning issue. QM FLC participants immerse themselves in a prolonged exploration of Quality Matters as "expert" learners in an attempt to (1) better understand teaching and learning online, (2) make modifications to their teaching practice based on what they have learned, (3) promote better teaching and learning across the institution by sharing what they have learned with a wider audience and (4) serve on the internal Peer Review Team. The predicted outcome for the pilot implementation period is that 6 – 10 faculty, across disciplines, will be active peer reviewers, further expanded in number and content scope through collaboration with faculty at our sister institutions in the USF System.

Rubric Use
Throughout the pilot implementation process USFSM will use the QM Rubric for:

Professional Development: Faculty attending course development workshops will be given a copy of the QM rubric and provided with guidance, strategies and tools to address the 8 QM standards as they develop new and refine existing online and hybrid courses.

E-Learning Services Policy Development: Because the QM standards address such topics as technical support provisions, ADA standards for accessibility, student conduct, netiquette, etc., they can become a basis for dialogue in forming distance learning policy.

Guidelines for Course Development: USFSM's e-Learning Services uses the rubric as a standard for course development.

Unofficial, Internal and External Course Reviews: Courses submitted for review will use the QM Rubric as the quality standard. Strategies for use of the QM rubric will be adjusted over

time to meet our institutional needs. The rubric will not be used to evaluate faculty members for retention or similar purposes.

Course Reviews & Selection Criteria

Presently there are no guidelines as to the selection of courses for the full, course review process. As there are costs associated with QM-Managed reviews, policies will need to be put in place to dictate which courses will undergo review for QM certification by the QM Task Force. All online and hybrid courses that meet established criteria are eligible for assessment.

USFSM plans to conduct the following types of course reviews:

Internal Course Reviews will be used primarily as a faculty development tool to explore the peer review process and to provide immediate feedback to faculty who are developing courses. It will also serves as a means of recognizing stand out courses and faculty. Unofficial course reviews managed by USFSM are not recognized by Quality Matters. Internal course reviews will be voluntary. There are no costs associated with this review process, absent any incentives that may or may not be offered to faculty.

QM-Managed Course Reviews – Courses seeking QM certification will be submitted to QM for review. These are course reviews that are managed by Quality Matters (QM) staff and/or designees and are in compliance with the QM Course Review Standards. Courses meeting expectations after undergoing this type of review will be recognized by Quality Matters. Recognition allows the instructor to advertise their course as QM certified as a means of highlighting the quality of instruction to students, promoting both the institution and the faculty member. Courses will be selected for review based on to-be-determined selection criteria. QM charges $1000.00 per course review.

Course Review Timeline & Anticipated Reviews

Semester	Internal Reviews	QM Managed Reviews
Spring 2015	0	0
Summer 2015	1	0
Fall 2015	1	1
Spring 2016	1	1

Conclusion

In addition to semesterly reporting, a summative review of the implementation will be conducted by the QM Task Force at the conclusion of the 1 year pilot. This review will seek and

consider feedback from all stakeholders. The task force will make any necessary new implementation recommendations after review of this feedback, seeking endorsement from the Academic and Student Affairs leadership team and Faculty Senate