

# QEP Impact Report

March 2014

Sophomore Scholars-in-Residence Program

## Original Goals and Program Changes

In 2008 the University of Richmond developed a quality enhancement plan to build a living-learning program for sophomores, the Sophomore Scholars-in-Residence (SSIR) program. As stated in the original plan:

*The University envisions Sophomore Scholars-in-Residence as an opportunity to enhance undergraduate sophomore education by bridging curricular and residential experiences of students through experiential and innovative curricular and co-curricular activities both on and off campus as well as in the residential living environment. Sophomore Scholars-in-Residence represents the University's commitment to enrich undergraduate education in a substantive and measurable way.*

The SSIR program is designed as a year-long living-learning program that blends a rigorous academic experience with co-curricular activities and the residential experience. During the Fall semester, students take one of the courses offered in the program, each of which focuses on a different thematic area. By the end of the Fall semester, students develop a capstone project proposal that they will pursue in the spring. Then, during the Spring semester, students work in faculty-supervised groups to complete their capstone projects, which culminate with a capstone presentation delivered to interested members of the University community.

The original plan identified eight goals for the SSIR program but, on the advice of the On-Site Committee, these were reduced to five:

1. To promote academic excellence, critical thinking, and creativity through service, experimental, and innovative curricular and co-curricular activities both on and off campus;
2. To foster the development of a supportive and inclusive community of diverse students, faculty and staff through sharing of common experiences in the living environment, field, seminars, and in the classroom;
3. To develop students' communication skills, team-building skills and leadership skills through students teaching each other and working together on team projects;
4. To create an environment that enhances student development as life-long leaders, citizens, scholars and professionals; and
5. To change the dominant culture of undergraduate education by creating an overall experience that can be seen as a cumulative effort among faculty members and students to build a culture of collaboration, new knowledge, and innovation.

To accomplish these goals, the plan called for the program to integrate the following components into its design: thematic, residential, academic, active and self-sustaining components.

### Thematic Component

Each course in the SSIR program is designed around a specific theme developed by the faculty member. This component allows students with shared interests to work intensively with a faculty member in a specific discipline. The intent was both to draw students and faculty together to explore shared interests as well as to enable sophomores to explore a potential major by offering programs across multiple disciplines and schools. In the first five years of the program courses have been offered in a wide variety of disciplines including American Studies, Dance, English, Latin American and Iberian Studies, Leadership Studies, Management, Modern Literatures and Cultures, Music, Psychology, Political Science, Rhetoric and Communication Studies and Theatre. All three traditional undergraduate schools (Arts and Sciences, Business and Leadership Studies) have been represented in the program offerings.

One of the original intentions of the SSIR program was to offer courses from multiple disciplines to allow sophomores to begin to explore majors in more depth than they would have normally. However, in practice what we found was that participating in this program was much more attractive to faculty who were seeking an outlet to teach outside the constraint of their department's curriculum. The result has been that the majority of SSIR courses have been interdisciplinary in nature, rather than standard courses in the major. Despite this, feedback from students clearly indicate that they did feel that the program provided the kind of in-depth academic experience that we had intended. An unintended benefit of this is that the program has enabled faculty to expand the University's curricular offerings. Of the 36 courses offered over the first five years of the program, 33 (92%) have been new course offerings.

## Residential Component

All students in the program live together in University residence halls that have been designed to support living-learning programs. Originally all of the SSIR courses were housed in a new residence hall, Lakeview, that had been designed to support living-learning, including a classroom in the hall. As the program grew, the program split into two residence halls. Students enrolled in a specific program course were housed together but several programs were in Lakeview and others were in Freeman Hall which had recently been renovated to facilitate living-learning. Both residence halls have a classroom and that is where most of the SSIR courses are held to further integrate the academic and residential components of the program. The only time courses are not held in the residence hall is if there is a scheduling conflict that cannot be resolved. In practice this has been very well received by students. However, faculty are less satisfied with it because there is less immediate support if they encounter a problem (with technology, etc.) than in an academic building. Also, because it is in a residence hall the computer equipment in the room gets much heavier use than in academic classrooms and so, breaks down more frequently. Overall, however, it has been successful.

In addition, the Resident Assistants (RAs) serving the living-learning groups were allowed to enroll in the SSIR courses even though they are upperclassmen so that they could actively participate and provide more direct support to the faculty and living-learning aspect of the course. This was an unanticipated change but it has been very successful in improving the connection between the academic and residential components of the program. Each course is assigned an RA through a special application process. The RAs participate in all of the work for the program, including the capstone experience, but are not included in the assessment results reported below.

## Academic Component

The SSIR program entails a one-unit (3.5 credit hours) course taught by a faculty member in the Fall semester followed by a half-unit (1.75 credit hours), supervised independent study in the Spring semester. Only students in the program are enrolled in the course. In order to integrate all of the SSIR components into the course, faculty participating in the program are required to spend the year developing the course. In most cases, once developed, the course is offered for two consecutive years in the program.

In order to incorporate the specific aspects of the program, faculty who want to participate in the SSIR program spend the year before participating in a faculty learning community. Faculty spend the academic year prior to offering their SSIR course for the first time working to develop the course curriculum and co-curriculum to fulfill the SSIR learning outcomes, while faculty who are currently teaching within SSIR are able to reflect upon their experience and seek advice from other faculty and professionals. The faculty learning community provides a forum for faculty to engage with one another over a specific topic, theme or teaching approach, given the unique nature of the program.

The monthly meetings of the faculty learning community occur over lunch and utilize expertise from around campus and research to inform their conversations. Topics include:

- Program standards for evaluating student projects, proposals, and classroom-embedded assessments;
- The emerging research around high-impact practices and their effect on retention, persistence and student satisfaction;
- Cross-cultural communication and teaching within diverse classrooms;
- How to effectively incorporate community-based learning in the course;
- Faculty role in the selection of a resident assistant;
- Interviewing and selection techniques for students applying;
- How to incorporate meaningful reflection into the learning community;
- Sophomore student development theory;
- Effectively incorporating co-curricular elements to their syllabus in intentional and meaningful ways;
- Issues related to traveling with students;
- Developing meaningful capstone project experiences; and
- The unique dynamic of students in class together as well as living together.

The program provides the faculty with one course release during the development year to support this process. However, faculty who have participated in the program have expressed the need to have the course release in the first year of teaching in the program rather than in the development year because it is so time-intensive. The program is currently considering making this change in the future.

## Active Component

Courses are designed to integrate active learning components into the curriculum so that learning is collaborative, experiential and problem-focused. The program faculty hold out-of-class activities in the residence hall as well as in the local community. The group projects consist of one of the following: a project of publication or conference quality; a discovery project (research, art project, etc.); or a service learning project. The program included a pool of resources equivalent to \$20,000 per course for faculty to use to support major course activities. These were originally envisioned to include a variety of activities such as travel, field trips, prominent guest speakers, etc. However, in practice, the resources have been used primarily for travel. In fact, the travel component has become a major feature of the SSIR program. All of the SSIR courses offered over the last five years have included a travel experience that is directly connected to the course and/or capstone project. This largely reflects the popularity of the course model that Dr. Rick Mayes, the faculty director of the program, had used in his Global Health course that served as a pilot for this program. Faculty recruited for the program found this model highly attractive, as did the students who applied to participate in the program. This has become such an important component of the program that, for students, it is now the defining feature, especially since the majority of the trips are international. An unintended consequence of the popularity of Dr. Mayes' SSIR course model is that students now expect international travel and express some disappointment at the outset with courses that only involve domestic travel. This disappointment usually wanes, however, after the program is over as they remark very positively on the domestic trips, so it is more of an issue for program recruitment.

Dr. Mayes' course model also unexpectedly helped increase interest in courses with a community-based learning component. A community-based learning component involves intentional course activities in which students provide service-learning or work with local community partners on projects related to the course. In 2009-10, the Global Health course was the only SSIR course with a community-based learning component but in 2013-14, eight of the ten SSIR courses included a community-based learning component. This unexpected development has benefited the program by further strengthening the active component to the courses.

## Self-Sustaining Component

The original plan called for a faculty director, drawn from the University's full-time faculty, to oversee the program (representing an additional 2/9ths of a nine-month faculty position) and the creation of a living-learning coordinator position, comparable to an area coordinator position. It soon became clear, however, that more and higher level administrative support would be required to ensure a high quality program and to manage the complexity of the group travel. So, in addition to the faculty director position, two administrative positions were created to support this program as well as other living-learning programs and another new program, the Roadmap extended orientation program. The Director of Living-Learning and Roadmap Programs and the Administrative Coordinator positions are funded equally by the SSIR program budget and the Student Development division. The Director position oversees the residential and co-curricular programming for the program, both on and off campus. In addition to general administrative support for the program, the Administrative Coordinator handles all of the travel arrangements for the group trips.

As originally planned, there is also a Faculty Advisory Committee that serves the program made up of a group of six faculty members representing the social sciences, biological sciences, physical sciences, fine arts, leadership and business disciplines. Faculty members are selected based on their experiences teaching courses that integrate a community learning model and for broad representation of disciplines. This committee helps retain broad-based faculty involvement in the program.

## Program Implementation

The original plan included a five-year time line for implementation beginning in 2009-10 after an initial pilot in 2008-09 (prior to the QEP's final approval). As illustrated in Table 1 below, the program developed according to the original plan in terms of the number of courses offered per year, growing from four in 2009-10 to ten in 2013-14. The total expenditures were less than originally projected, partly due to expense-sharing with Student Development for the program staff and additional funding from the Office of International Education for international travel expenditures. Due to the 2008 economic crisis and subsequent loss of endowment revenue, the University reduced all budgets by 5% for FY09 including the SSIR program budget. In addition, the University changed its budgeting practice to eliminate the automatic annual budget increase that had been included in the original budget projections. These also account for some of the differences in what was originally budgeted and what was actually spent. Despite these budgetary changes,

the University maintains a strong financial commitment to this program, investing the equivalent of \$3,148 per student participant in 2013-14.

Table 1: Projected vs. Actual Program Expenditures

Academic Year	Number of Courses Offered		Total Expenditures	
	<i>Originally Projected</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>Originally Projected</i>	<i>Actual</i>
2009-10	4	4	\$248,500	\$233,249
2010-11	6	6	\$314,683	\$291,523
2011-12	8	8	\$382,240	\$364,131
2012-13	8	8	\$405,198	\$380,377
2013-14*	10	10	\$480,045	\$469,065

\*The actual expenditures for 2013-14 represent the total budget for the program.

Over the five years of implementation, the number of faculty and students participating in the SSIR program has tripled (see Table 2 below). In 2013-14, approximately one out of every five sophomores was participating in the SSIR program.

Table 2: Program Participation

Academic Year	Number of Faculty	Number of Sophomores
2009-10	4	49
2010-11	7	84
2011-12	9	109
2012-13	8	112
2013-14	12	147

The original plan intended for admission to the program to be determined by the SSIR Faculty Advisory Committee so that it could focus on reaching out to more diverse students. However, this was not implemented because allowing faculty full control over the students admitted to his/her course became paramount for recruiting faculty to participate in the program. This unintentionally led to a less diverse group of participants in the first year than desired (18%), although still higher than the overall sophomore class (13%). The program director addressed this by working with each faculty member in the program to ensure a focus on diversity. This strategy was successful and the percent of students of color in the program increased to 26% in the following year. This trend continued so that in 2013-14, 37% of SSIR participants are students of color, a significantly higher representation than in the overall sophomore class (25%).

### Sample SSIR Courses

Dr. Mayes' interdisciplinary course on Global Health served as a model for many of the SSIR courses that were developed over the last five years. This community-based learning course combines course work with international and domestic travel focused on public health issues. It has been offered each year in the program and continues to be in high demand with students. See description below.

#### **Political Science 363: Global Health, Medical Humanities & Human Rights**

*Offered in 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14*

In this course, students studied what makes people sick, what keeps them healthy, and what it would take to give good health the upper hand in developing countries. Students studied how and why society already knows how to prevent or treat some of the world's deadliest pathogens, yet why disease continues to sicken and kill unless an investment is made in the health and economic welfare of all people. In a business and philanthropic environment students learned that public health demands results and accountability and that health interventions have the added advantage of being quantifiable. The course examined both domestic public health issues as well as public health issues in the developing world. In 2009-10, students traveled to Pampas Grande, Peru over Thanksgiving Break to see first-hand international public health issues in the developing world. Students volunteered, providing education about birth control and dental hygiene during the trip. In following years, students traveled to Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic over Thanksgiving break to see first-hand international public health issues in the developing world and to work with the international partner, Esperanza International. Each class also traveled to Grundy, VA to experience public health issues domestically. They spent a weekend with Remote Area Medical, a non-profit that provides free medical and dental services to people in Appalachia who are underinsured or not insured, where they were able to interact with both patients as well as health care providers while volunteering to help the clinics run efficiently. Over the course of the Fall semester, students conducted research on a variety of global and public health issues, culminating in a research paper on one topic due at the end of the Fall semester. During the Spring semester, students worked in groups with their classmates to create a capstone project and subsequent presentation to the University community on a global or public health issue.

Below are other examples of courses that have been or are currently being offered in the program to illustrate the diversity of subjects offered.

**American Studies 398: The Urban Crisis in America**

*Offered in 2009-10*

This course was designed for students with an interest in urban areas, social problems that occur there, and working for social change. Students had the opportunity to explore social issues from a historical context and connect their learning to related activities outside the classroom. Students used Richmond as a case study to understand both the specific challenges the region faces as well as national trends in poverty, public housing, transportation, urban renewal, segregation, and sprawl. They met with local government officials, examined downtown development plans, and discussed social issues with non-profit leaders. Over Spring break, students expanded their knowledge to New York City, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC where they examined and compared how leaders, planners, and activists worked to improve those cities and to share what they had learned in Richmond. Working in groups, students created documentary films on social issues in metro Richmond, including areas for enacting change for their capstone project.

**Leadership Studies 290: Leadership and the Common Good**

*Offered in 2010-11, 2011-12*

In this course, students examined political, economic, moral, and religious approaches to how societies determine and pursue the common good. The course was structured around the comparative exercise of conceiving, measuring, and achieving collective goals. The principal political contexts of comparison in the course were the United States, Scandinavian countries, and Mediterranean Europe. Students met with speakers hailing from various countries and world views to discuss their visions of the common good. The students traveled to Madrid, Spain and Copenhagen, Denmark, two European capitals, to meet with leaders, nonprofits, and professors in those countries to see the leadership models that the students had studied in the Fall semester. Over the course of the Fall semester students researched a country's leadership culminating in a research paper on one topic due at the end of the Fall semester. Over the Spring semester, students worked in groups with their classmates to create a capstone project and subsequent presentation to the University community. For the capstone project, groups chose a country, analyzing it in terms of a set of tradeoffs individual versus collective goods; equality versus efficiency; theory versus practice and how well or poorly leaders in that country have helped articulate and achieve communal goals.

**Management 349/Chemistry 433 The Business of Science (a team-taught, crosslisted course)**

*Offered in 2013-14*

Students in this course investigated the design process for developing new pharmaceuticals and their impact on the businesses that make them. Students, through cross-disciplinary exploration, learned about theory and research of drug and vaccine design. The course merged this theory and research with practice and observation within business management contexts. Combining literatures from management and molecular life sciences, the course examined the components of successful entrepreneurial endeavors. Students studied some of the basic science needed for discovery and validation of potential pharmaceutical agents and subsequent progress through clinical trials, as well as issues surrounding intellectual property of the discovery. From a business management perspective, the course examined the organization, mission, and financial factors that influence the biotechnology industry. Students then had the opportunity to put their theory into practice by engaging with biotechnology oriented businesses in the Richmond community and in the Dominican Republic while working with the partner organization, Esperanza International. Students helped build awareness in the Dominican Republic for a vaccine campaign promoted by Esperanza International. Students drew on their collective capabilities and newly developed theoretical expertise by designing and distributing speaking books. Students presented the outcome of their knowledge and research to the fundraising and healthcare teams at Esperanza during their community trip over Fall break. In order to utilize the knowledge and skills they learned, students prepared and implemented a proposal for the production of a campaign to augment the healthcare mission of Esperanza in the Dominican Republic as their capstone project. The students presented their plans to a panel of leaders from Esperanza who debated the issues to decide which plan was most likely to be funded/have best chance to succeed.

**Music 117: Salsa Meets Jazz**

*Offered in 2010-11, 2011-12*

In the classroom, students explored the genealogy of shared rhythms of Latin music to understand the beginnings and musical transformation of Afro-Cuban music and American jazz into Latin jazz and salsa. Once the musical style was understood, students listened to Latin jazz (salsa) groups in the Richmond area not only to understand the history and sound of Latin jazz in Richmond but to interact with the players. Outside the classroom, students interacted with the Latin jazz and salsa community in Richmond by going to venues to listen to and meet the musicians. Students produced video vignettes characterizing each of the five primary genres of Cuban music and their accompanying styles of dance. Over Winter break, the class visited San Juan, Puerto Rico in order to meet with, interview and videotape performances by local musicians and dancers in order to create documentary films as their capstone project.

## Modern Literatures and Cultures 397: What is Art For?: 19th-Century French and Russian Painting

*Offered in 2013-14*

In this course, students investigated the multilayered, formative dialogue between painting and other significant cultural and intellectual forces in Russia and France during the 19th century during which both cultures underwent significant cultural, social, and political change. The specific and distinctively different narratives of that development in the painting of both countries and the creation and expression of those narratives in the painterly aesthetic of both cultures was the particular focus of study. During Spring break, students traveled to St. Petersburg, Russia to see first-hand what they had studied throughout the Fall semester. This extraordinary opportunity helped students make the connection between what they studied in books to be able to see it in-person. For the capstone project, students created their own virtual exhibitions during the course, and as a final joint capstone project, co-curated a group exhibition at the University of Richmond of French and Russian paintings and drawings from the collection of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. The students worked closely with University Museums' training docents in developing the online collection book.

### Impact on Student Learning

The Sophomore Scholars-in-Residence program has had a demonstrable impact on student learning for students participating in the program. Through the SSIR program, students were able to practice and develop their ability to delve into a topic and apply their knowledge as well as communicate with a variety of audiences and individuals and work in groups. The skills and abilities that students gained will be carried forward in their future academic work and careers.

The QEP originally identified eleven student learning outcomes, but on the advice of the QEP evaluator and on-site committee, these were reduced to six. The six outcomes focus on in-depth knowledge, knowledge application, effective communication, self-reflection, interaction and engagement, and attitude and behavior. To allow for a single assessment protocol for such varied courses, all courses were prescribed a common set of assignments along with designated outcomes that had to be incorporated into those assignments, although the content of these assignments was still specific to each course.

During the Fall, faculty assessed a selected classroom assignment, capstone proposal and self-reflection from each of the students in the course. Then, in the Spring, faculty assessed students' capstone projects, capstone presentations and self-reflections. In addition, faculty assessed students' performance and communication skills when working as part of a group, and the students completed a self and peer evaluation of the same outcomes.

At the end of each semester, faculty used the standardized rubric provided to rate students work for each of the required assignments, or in the case of the self and peer group work evaluations, students completed the ratings. Faculty submitted ratings for each student's work for each outcome or criterion included in the rubrics. Students also submitted self and peer evaluations. All results were aggregated and analyzed by the Assessment Specialist in the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

The target established for each outcome was that 80% of SSIR students would demonstrate proficiency. In all four years, for each of the outcomes, the target was achieved in every assignment in which it was assessed. Proficiency ratings ranged from 85% to 100% in Year 1, 94% to 100% in Year 2, 89% to 100% in Year 3 and 94% to 100% in Year 4. Below is a breakdown of proficiency results for each student learning outcome by assessed assignment.

#### Outcome 1: In-depth Knowledge

*Students will demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding within the themed discipline.*

Table 3: Assessment Results for *In-Depth Knowledge*

Assignment	Target	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Classroom Assignment	80%	90%	94%	94%	96%
Capstone Proposal	80%	98%	98%	98%	97%
Capstone Project-Content	80%	94%	99%	99%	98%
Capstone Project-Evidence	80%	85%	99%	97%	95%
Capstone Presentation	80%	98%	99%	99%	95%

The percentage of students rated as proficient or better for this outcome ranged from 85% to 99% across the four assignments and four years, demonstrating clear command of the variety of themes encompassed within the courses offered. Particularly during the first year, proficiency percentages varied from assignment to assignment, and across the

four years, there was not a clear trend in the overall results. However, when looking at the percentage of students rated as exemplary, there were clear differences between the assignments completed in the Fall as compared to those completed in the Spring. In all but one instance, within each of the four years, the percentage of students rated as exemplary was higher for the Spring assignments including the evidence component of the capstone project, which specifically looks at skills associated with evaluating evidence (a high-level skill on Bloom's Taxonomy), than the Fall assignments. Still, in all instances across the Fall and Spring, the target set for the outcome was exceeded.

### Outcome 2: Knowledge Application

*Students will demonstrate the ability to identify and apply knowledge and techniques to solve problems critically and to create a mode of inquiry.*

Table 4: Assessment Results for *Knowledge Application*

Assignment	Target	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Classroom Assignment	80%	90%	96%	96%	97%
Capstone Proposal	80%	98%	98%	99%	96%
Capstone Project-Problem Solving	80%	96%	99%	95%	95%
Capstone Project-Mode of Inquiry	80%	93%	99%	95%	98%
Capstone Presentation	80%	93%	99%	98%	98%

Across all four years, students did well in demonstrating this outcome, with proficiency ratings ranging from 90% to 99%. Faculty provided multiple opportunities for students to apply what they were learning both in and out of the classroom. Several courses included service projects in the community where students were able to apply their knowledge to problems in a real-world setting. In general, faculty worked more closely with students in developing their skills related to this outcome and each of the others in the Fall semester than in the Spring semester, which was focused on the capstone project. However, after the experience of the first year, faculty met more frequently with students in the Spring semester to provide more guidance with the projects.

### Outcome 3: Effective Communication

*Students will demonstrate effective communication skills with faculty, peers, and other professionals.*

Table 5: Assessment Results for *Effective Communication*

Assignment	Target	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Capstone Proposal	80%	96%	93%	95%	96%
Capstone Project	80%	91%	99%	98%	98%
Capstone Presentation	80%	95%	99%	95%	97%
Group Work Assessment	80%	98%	99%	99%	95%
Self Evaluation	80%	100%	100%	97%	98%
Peer Evaluation	80%	89%	98%	93%	94%

The effective communication outcome involves being able to communicate in a variety of forms and with different audiences. As the program grew, results for this outcome remained high, ranging from 89% to 100%, but with some variation across assignments and years. Although the results for the capstone presentation exceeded the target set for the outcome, following the first year of the program, it was recommended that, in future years, faculty utilize the University's Speech Center to help students prepare for the presentation, and the Speech Center's director also worked to intentionally reach out to faculty teaching a Sophomore Scholars-in-Residence course. While the results for the capstone presentation did not follow a consistent trend, work with the Speech Center likely helped those students it worked with improve the quality of their oral presentation scores and also likely helped to keep the percentage of students demonstrating proficiency with the outcome high even as the number of students involved in the program increased.

#### Outcome 4: Self-Reflection

*Students will demonstrate the capacity for self-reflection and self-awareness that can lead to greater independence and personal self direction.*

Table 6: Assessment Results for *Self-Reflection*

Assignment	Target	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Self-Reflection 1	80%	90%	100%	97%	94%
Self-Reflection 2	80%	96%	96%	98%	95%

As with all of the other outcomes, results for the self-reflection outcome exceeded the target each semester each year. The results across the years show some variation, but in three of the four years the overall percentage of students rated as proficient or better increased slightly from self-reflection 1 in the Fall to self-reflection 2 in the Spring. The clearer indication of improvement with this outcome can be seen in the percentage of students rated as exemplary. In each of the four years, the percentage of students rated as exemplary increased from the Fall, where the percentages ranged from 46% to 64%, to the Spring, where percentages ranged from 62% to 73%. In planning for the assessment, faculty had to be intentional to ensure that self-reflection was incorporated in the courses, and they did so in a variety of ways including blogging, journaling, and writing weekly analysis-reflection papers.

#### Outcome 5: Interaction and Engagement

*Students will demonstrate the ability to interact with peers and engage them in the process of learning as part of a team approach.*

Table 7: Assessment Results for *Interaction and Engagement*

Assignment	Target	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Group Work Assessment	80%	97%	98%	97%	95%
Self Evaluation-Constructive Feedback	80%	100%	100%	98%	99%
Self Evaluation-Listening Skills	80%	100%	100%	98%	99%
Self Evaluation-Conflict Resolution	80%	93%	98%	91%	94%
Self Evaluation-Effective Directions	80%	96%	100%	95%	94%
Peer Evaluation-Constructive Feedback	80%	91%	96%	95%	98%
Peer Evaluation-Listening Skills	80%	91%	98%	95%	99%
Peer Evaluation-Conflict Resolution	80%	87%	96%	92%	94%
Peer Evaluation-Effective Directions	80%	87%	93%	89%	94%

Across all four years, results for the *interaction and engagement* outcome exceeded the target of 80%; however, some of the lowest results were seen in the self and peer evaluations for the conflict resolution and effective directions items, which both represent things that can be particularly difficult in group settings. In the first two years of the program, several classes used student pairs rather than groups of three or more for the capstone project. To encourage students to improve their skills and abilities related to this outcome as well as the next, it was important to have groups rather than pairs of students, so following the first year and each year thereafter, the importance of having groups of three or more was emphasized with faculty. In 2011-12 and 2012-13, all classes used groups of at least three students and many used much larger groups. Despite this change, results remained comparable to those of the first two years.

## Outcome 6: Attitude and Behavior

*Students will demonstrate respect for others, honesty, a consistently good work ethic, positive attitude, full participation and responsibility in the education process as well as in the living community.*

Table 8: Assessment Results for *Attitude and Behavior*

Assignment	Target	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
Group Work Assessment	80%	100%	99%	100%	97%
Self Evaluation-Viewpoint Discussions	80%	96%	98%	99%	98%
Self Evaluation-Viewpoint Appreciation	80%	96%	100%	96%	100%
Self Evaluation-Group Contribution	80%	98%	100%	98%	98%
Self Evaluation-Positive Attitude	80%	96%	100%	98%	97%
Peer Evaluation-Viewpoint Discussions	80%	93%	96%	98%	99%
Peer Evaluation-Viewpoint Appreciation	80%	91%	96%	94%	98%
Peer Evaluation-Group Contribution	80%	93%	96%	90%	95%
Peer Evaluation-Positive Attitude	80%	93%	96%	95%	100%

Results for the attitude and behavior outcome were consistently high with a majority of results being 96% or above across all four years. Despite the growth in the number and diversity of students involved in the program, the results for the outcome were able to remain high. In 2010-11, an entire class did not complete the self and peer evaluation because of confusion about the process, and a few other students were excluded from the assessment because of missing either self or all peer results. In response to this, the self and peer evaluations completed by students as well as all of the faculty-completed assessments were moved to an online system beginning in Spring 2012. After that change, the response rates for the self and peer evaluations were 99% and 100% in 2011-12 and 2012-13, respectively.

As evidenced in the assessment results presented in Tables 3-8, students exceeded the targets set for each of the outcomes in all of the assignments that were assessed. Although the percentage of students rated as proficient or better varied somewhat from year to year rather than following a clear trend, students were able to consistently demonstrate proficiency with the outcomes even as the number of students participating in the program more than doubled between the first and fourth years. With the variety of assignments included in the assessment, students were also able to demonstrate their abilities with the outcomes in a variety of formats both in and outside of the classroom including research papers, blogs, documentaries, service-learning projects, class discussions and formal presentations. Faculty engaged students in the learning process and incorporated opportunities for hands-on application of what was being taught in the classroom, and then students were able to bring together what they learned in meaningful capstone projects. Throughout all of this, faculty incorporated each of the six learning outcomes, and students were given multiple opportunities to practice and demonstrate their abilities with those outcomes.

## Reflection

Overall, the implementation of the University's QEP has been very successful. Participants in the SSIR program, faculty and students alike, have been very satisfied with their experience. The SSIR program has significantly enhanced student learning by providing a high-impact educational activity that intensively connects faculty with students in addressing an academic or societal issue. Consequently, the impact on the students and faculty involved has been great.

Over the last five years the program has become completely institutionalized and now serves as an important recruiting tool for undergraduate admissions. In addition, the program has had a broader impact on the University. Faculty participating in the program have had an opportunity to enhance their pedagogy and expand the curriculum which now serves their department course offerings. Some faculty have even used the program as an opportunity to team teach with a faculty member from another discipline to approach a topic from an interdisciplinary perspective. Furthermore, the model course for the SSIR program, Global Health, has helped develop a new interdisciplinary major and minor in the School of Arts and Sciences, Healthcare and Society, established in Fall 2012, which currently has 52 declared majors and 57 minors. The SSIR assessment plan also served the University well when it moved from a first-year core course model to a first-year seminar model. The experience of University assessment staff and program faculty working with the SSIR model of using common assignments and common rubrics to assess common learning outcomes across diverse courses and disciplines was instrumental in developing the assessment model for the new first-year seminar program. Some of the new first-year seminar courses have also been modeled after previous SSIR courses.

One of the goals of the QEP was to help change the dominant student culture on campus by providing an intensive academic experience in the residence halls. Evidence suggests that the SSIR program has been somewhat successful in this regard, at least for the sophomore class. One-fifth of the sophomore class participated in an SSIR this year. These participants represented more diversity than in the overall class. There were also more merit scholars and fewer fraternity and sorority members in the SSIR program than in the overall class. Student participants self-reported that one of top reasons for participating in the program was to meet and live with people with similar interests and to develop a peer group.

The challenge for the SSIR program moving forward will be how to continue to expand and develop the program while retaining a high quality experience. The current model requires intensive commitment from faculty and student participants for a full academic year (two or more years for faculty participants). This constrains the program's ability to expand to some degree. A possible solution would be to expand the program beyond the sophomore year or possibly connect with the first-year seminar program in some way. There are no definitive plans at this time but these will be the challenges and opportunities for the program over the coming decade.

Another challenge involves how to reach out to student subgroups who are not actively participating in the SSIR program. For example, intercollegiate athletes, especially males, have not been participating in the program to a large degree. The program staff have tried different tactics and appeals over the last five years to increase participation but with mixed success. This remains an important issue for future expansion.

Finally, the role of international travel in the program is uncertain. Over the last few years, international travel has become harder to incorporate into SSIR courses because airfares have increased substantially. The program has benefited from supplemental funding from other University sources which has helped support the travel to date (not reflected in the program budget and expenditures). However, the program may need to move to more domestic travel for long range financial sustainability.