Summer planning
- Have an agenda-by-meeting that would give us a focus and allow us to clearly know what the targets are for each meeting
- How will we report to the full planning committee at the end of August? The outcome of our summer working group is a document that
  - identifies half a dozen possible themes, student needs at Mason, draft criteria for evaluating potential topics/themes
  - becomes a document to share at departmental/college/constituency group meetings
  - provides the base for soliciting feedback → we discussed having two person teams attend various meetings to spread the word
- Have Karen Gentemann come to one of the next two meetings
  - She has knowledge of SACS; ask her to give us a sense of what has gone well and what has not in terms of QEP issues at other institutions
  - Ask for presentation of what we know about institutional needs vis-à-vis student learning based on our surveys (graduating senior survey, NSSE, CIRP, etc.)
  - What do we know about what works re: student learning outcomes / gains?
- Notify Executive Council – want to share our document of where we are at the end of the summer
- Notify the Board of Visitors (BOV)
  - Get QEP on their agendas
  - Let BOV know that they can influence the process because it is bottom-up
  - Let them know that we are using the Strategic Plan and our prior assessment data as a foundation for the QEP
  - There should be a general SACS discussion for the Board—along with a QEP discussion
- Find out when (if) departments/colleges are having all-faculty meetings in August/September
  - Get QEP on their agendas so we can share our document
  - Let folks know that we are using the Strategic Plan and our prior assessment data as a foundation for the QEP
- Our summer focus group:
  - Undergraduate curriculum coordinators/advisors
    - Would have insight into the needs of undergraduates
      - DFW (D/Failing/Withdraw) rates
    - Department chairs should have the responsibility of informing these coordinators about the QEP
  - Associate Deans
  - Department Chairs → we discussed that department chairs could identify key people for involvement (might be the undergrad curriculum coordinators, point person for curricula, or undergrad advisor)

New topic evaluation criteria
- The QEP topic should clearly address the “Peer Evaluator’s Perspective” boxes in the QEP Handbook

What is a theme?
- Broad general areas that our QEP should focus on
• 3 things to be reading for in our institutional documents: Mason’s needs, SACS’ criteria, potential themes
  o We’re looking for the intersection of the three (like a Venn Diagram)
    ▪ The center piece (the overlap) is what will be communicated to Deans and department heads
  o Maybe have 3-7 “themes” identified by the end of the summer
  o Being able to cross potential themes off would be helpful as well—items that do not fit the SACS criteria
• Needs to be realistic—elegant but simple
• Come up with things that might be required to make it happen (i.e. resource issues)
  o Are there enough faculty? Money? Would the culture have to be changed?
  o Needs to be measurable

Creating a document with potential themes
• Create a document that we could then approach all constituents with...
• The document would include:
  o Our criteria, potential themes, identification of undergrad learning/student needs at Mason
  o A couple of examples and non-examples that people could see before we ask them to provide feedback
  o Definition of QEP—what it is and what it isn’t
    ▪ Should be practical, measurable, realistic
• Have all of this information in the document—and people can go to the website for more information
• Have the initial email (with our document attached) come from Provost
  o The focus groups that are receiving the email need to know who is identified with the QEP planning committee
  o Develop a QEP email address?
    ▪ Have a feedback button from the website directly to the QEP email address
    ▪ Use the CTE as a mailstop for those who are looking to avoid technology
  o Have Provost send the email to department chairs
    ▪ Then the department chairs can forward the message to those in their departments
• In the early fall, the document would be presented for community feedback
• Call a special meeting of department chairs?

Soliciting feedback
• Do it through email—and ask for feedback from faculty, department chairs, associate deans
  o What is a QEP – what it is and what it isn’t (should be practical, measurable, realistic)
  o A couple of examples that people could see before we ask them to provide feedback
  o Ask them to pick the top two or three and write a paragraph about their choices
    ▪ Why are those topics important?
    ▪ What are the two things in your college that fit this mold?
  o This would allow us to see what rises to the top as concerns among the colleges
  o Then we could incorporate those potential themes into our document at the end of the summer – as we share it then folks can help to narrow it and make it more focused
  o Use themes from strategic plan, mission, Learning Reconsidered, and other documents
• As we begin focusing in on a topic, it might lead to organizational processes and how to proceed with the next steps
• Reach students in the fall—have the topics more concrete (the overlap)
• Gen Ed’s need to be at the forefront to reach undergraduates
• Set up a wiki or blog for feedback?
- Have multiple methods of feedback—ways to keep it private if people want to give private feedback
- Need for confidentiality clause—it's not anonymous, but won't be shared either
  - Who has access to the email? Will be shared with committee?
- Blackboard?
- Technology should not be the barrier to the communication of our message
- Maybe use the Center as a mailstop for people who want to write and mail their feedback
- Call us
- Would help get feedback from subgroups
- Benchmarks? How do we measure our success?