Discussion of possible criteria for evaluating our topic

- Our topic should be “the train that is ready to go”
  - What is the current status? Is there something going on about this topic now?
  - Our topic should address a known issue and have relevancy

- It should be measurable, but we should also anticipate the intangibles
  - Ex: global peace
  - How do we plan to measure it?
  - Needs to have a wide range of specific outcomes plus the intangibles

- It should address and meet SACS “Relevant Questions for Consideration”
  - See SACS for a template for current initiatives

- Just because we don’t pick a specific topic, does not mean that it isn’t something Mason can’t address

Things to keep in mind when brainstorming for topics

- Needs to be something that stretches us and isn’t totally easy
  - We should figure out how to make our topic stretch us even though it maybe something that is already there—a middle ground
  - We can’t start with something that we don’t already have expertise on—so it won’t be completely new

Potential topic ideas and things to think about...

- How can students take a large body of material and figure out what the most important things are?
  - The desire to just “know what’s on the test”
  - What’s important is different for every student
    - Different motivations for learning
  - How do you sort through the noise?
    - Information literacy
    - Avoiding plagiarism with appropriate citations
  - Critical success factors for our student body (thinking for the future)
    - Have they changed?
    - What has proved to be important over the years—how do we get students thinking?
    - We want to create academic habits of mind
    - Need to create conditions under which connections can be made
    - Context: the changing world is happening right here at Mason—consider demographics and our campuses around the world

- Importance of synthesis/integrations across disciplines and experiences
  - Need to prepare students for multiple career options

- What does a globally educated student look like?
  - Cultural diversity and global peace—improving global knowledge, cultural awareness, cultural diversity, and global harmony
  - How can we accomplish our share of doing this?
  - We should engage our diversity around real subjects (e.g., music, science, philosophy, etc.)
Take people out of their nests of prejudices to have an engaging of minds
See what the different minds offer
Then you are not exploiting diversity as a “topic,” but are instead acknowledging it’s reality within a context

Soliciting feedback from the Mason community
• This committee should reach out rather than having a top-down process (i.e. talking to Deans and then having the Deans talk to faculty members)
• How do we reach the students?
  o Facebook ads—students check it often
  o A paper survey—more students might fill those out, more so than online
  o Approach the student body the same way we approach faculty
    ▪ Let student organizations do it—they need to buy into it first
    ▪ How would student groups market to their peers?
  o Give students a homework assignment to get ideas from them about the QEP
    ▪ Offer an incentive to the school/department that solicits the most feedback
    ▪ Use bookstore gift cards as a reward?
• As the Mason community solicits and endorses ideas—present rationale for how it meets the criteria

Ideas for the website & marketing methods
• Have a logo for the QEP—maybe even hold a contest to solicit input from the Mason community
• Need a website with QEP information
• How do we get people to actually visit the site?
  o “Patriot Mash-up” or “Mason Mash-up”
    ▪ A merging of ideas
    ▪ People may visit just to see what it is
    ▪ All faculty announcements
• Banners that say “Are you a QEP?”
• Does it become the theme the university markets to prospective students?

Concerns about resources, budget, and monitoring
• Will there be support to implement the new idea?
  o What kind of resources will we need to make it happen?
  o The scale of the plan should match the resources—needs to be feasible
• Departments should have an evaluation process to make sure that they are accomplishing what’s in the QEP
  o At the end of the year, ask what the departments contributed to the accomplishment of the QEP
• Possible range for the budget?
  o Part of the budget should be a public relations or marketing budget
  o Need several big pushes for marketing
    ▪ First, to make folks aware of the QEP process and invite contributions (Fall 2008)
    ▪ Secondly, to make folks aware of the QEP topic and invite contributions (Spring 2009)
    ▪ Next, to make folks aware of implementation (Fall 2010)
    ▪ Finally, to make folks aware of ongoing efforts everywhere (Spring 2011)
  o Best if website person was a fixed asset, someone who could develop, maintain, and update the website as needed