



QEP

**Compass: Navigating Excellence
through Effective Communication**

QEP Impact Report
March 1, 2024

SR | **SUL ROSS**
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Executive Summary

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) initiated the broad-based institutional process of identifying possible QEP topics in the fall of 2015, which involved solicited input from all stakeholders and a review of institutional data and best practices. From this process, the need for students to understand how to communicate effectively through written, oral, and visual communication emerged as our focus.

The purpose of this revised QEP document is to incorporate the SACSCOC Reaffirmation Committee suggestions. Five general committee recommendations are highlighted in red boxes and addressed throughout this revised document.

SRSU's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) addresses the student communication need across all academic programs, academic colleges, and campuses. Based on the input from the Reaffirmation Committee, the objective of SRSU's QEP, **Compass: Navigating Excellence through Effective Communication**, is achieved in one student learning outcome aligned with two program goals.

Successfully implementing **Compass** increases opportunities for SRSU students to demonstrate competency in written, oral, and visual communication, and will enhance the capacity of SRSU educators to teach communication skills through increased professional development opportunities. Accordingly, our goals with **Compass** include: enhancing student communication skills, and expanding our faculty's skills to teach oral, written, and visual communication. We believe these two goals combined will improve our students' ability to contribute to a learned society.

Our QEP is directed at junior and senior-level courses because Rio Grande College (RGC), our off-site instructional campus, enrolls only upper-level students. The following QEP-level student learning outcome (SLO) will be assessed in all SRSU's communication-infused courses: The student will create works that exhibit skill in prepared and purposeful communication (written, oral or visual).

SRSU will implement and monitor the QEP with the aid of Faculty Guides and Faculty Navigators teaching communication-infused Mapped Classes.

- Faculty Guides serve as mentors to faculty engaged in the development and instruction of Mapped Classes.
- Faculty Navigators are professors who redesign an existing course into a Mapped Class incorporating the QEP SLO.
- Mapped Classes will follow a syllabus template that clearly spells out expectations of the QEP and the use of the Cardinal Rubric to assess student work.

Students, faculty, staff, and community members should be encouraged by this QEP, as it aims to develop students in ways that can enhance their potential to contribute to a civil society as well as making them more marketable to potential employers. In this way, the name **Compass** is apt. We see this QEP as equipping students with the skills necessary to navigate toward a life of excellence.

Intended Outcomes and Initial Goals of *Compass*

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) initiated the broad-based institutional process of identifying possible Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) topics in the fall of 2015, involving input from all stakeholders, and including a review of institutional data and best practices. From this process, the need for students to understand how to communicate more effectively through written, oral, and visual communication emerged as our focus. SRSU's QEP entitled, *Compass: Navigating Excellence through Effective Communication (Compass)*, provides students with communication skills through communication-infused courses. *Compass* is achieved in one student learning outcome aligned with two program goals.

Student Learning Outcome

The student will create works that exhibit skill in prepared and purposeful communication (written, oral or visual).

The *Compass* student learning outcome is designed to enhance the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and values among the student population. The student learning outcome is infused into all academic programs, academic colleges, and campuses. Our QEP is directed at junior and senior-level courses, because the Del Rio, Eagle Pass, and Uvalde off-campus sites of SRSU enroll only upper-level students. Through *Compass*, SRSU aimed to develop students in ways that could enhance their potential to contribute to a learned society as well as making them more marketable to potential employers. In this way, the name *Compass* is apt; our QEP equipped students with the skills necessary to navigate toward a life of excellence.

Initial Goals

SRSU's initial goals with *Compass* included:

- Enhancing student communication skills
- Expanding our faculty's skills to teach oral, written, and visual communication.

SRSU implemented the QEP with the common understanding of terms:

- *Communication* is the process of sending, receiving, and interpreting messages through written, oral, or nonverbal communication channels to effectively convey information, and/or by which two or more people reach understanding.
- *Written Communication* is any type of message that makes use of the written word.
- *Oral Communication* is the process of expressing information or ideas by word of mouth.
- *Visual Communication* is the conveyance of information in forms that can be seen.
- *Guides* are experienced faculty who mentor, support, and recruit Navigators.
- *Navigators* are faculty who agree to teach Mapped Classes at SRSU.
- *Mapped Classes* are infused with the QEP SLO and use the Cardinal Rubric to score communication-related assignments.
- *Cardinal Rubric* is used to rate students' success.

Faculty Navigators were essential in implementing and monitoring *Compass*. Navigators were paid a stipend and expected to teach the Mapped Course each year of the QEP. Mapped Courses followed a syllabus template that clearly defined the goals of the QEP, the SLO, and included the Cardinal Rubric.

SRSU witnessed growth of the QEP. Over the five years, a total of 1,646 students were enrolled in QEP Mapped Courses. We also saw large faculty participation and achieved our unofficial

participation goal of including faculty from every college. The following table provides instructor, course, and enrollment details:

	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Fall 2021	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Spring 2023
Instructors & QEP Courses	5	5	9	10	15	17	19	17	24	19
Students in QEP Courses	69	87	165	190	223	199	165	174	243	131

In addition to Mapped Courses, opportunities for students to demonstrate competency in communication were enhanced across SRSU. We honored *Compass* Scholars (the student with the highest score on artifacts) with a cash prize and school-wide email. *Compass* showcased outstanding student artifacts in student publications and partnered with the Undergraduate Research Symposium to highlight student communication assignments. *Compass* partnered with various departments and clubs, such as Career Services and the debate club, to sponsor more opportunities for communication across campus. *Compass* also hosted a yearly QEP New Year’s Celebration for all students, faculty, and staff at SRSU that featured a guest speaker talking about some aspects of communication (for example, “Communication in the Workplace” or “Communication in Personal Relationships”), as well as giveaways and contests to win communication-themed prizes. Participation in these activities furthered the importance of improving communication and the visibility of the QEP and its Mapped Courses.

For students to learn how to communicate effectively, it was imperative that SRSU faculty had the resources and opportunities to improve their classroom instruction, particularly in the area of oral, written, and visual communication. At the beginning of each semester, QEP Coordinators hosted an orientation session for Navigators, giving them clear expectations and support. During that time, Navigators were assigned to Guides, who were faculty who had taught a Mapped Course before. Guides were there to provide answers and additional support in designing and assessing assignments. A QEP library and teaching guides were created by the Coordinators and Guides to serve as resources for Navigators. *Compass* also coordinated and sponsored multiple sessions of faculty workshops (in-person and virtual) each year on pedagogy and also communication techniques and the assessment of them. *Compass* provided faculty with the required tools and methods to help them enhance their skills in teaching and assessment.

Changes Made to *Compass*

While SRSU’s QEP was largely implemented as intended, it became apparent that there were more efficient ways to manage data, personnel, and procedures to accomplish our goals as our QEP progressed through the years. All changes made were based on formal or informal suggestions from Navigators, Guides, or QEP Coordinators.

Changes in Managing Data

After the first year, we realized that we needed a Navigator Application to formally recruit new faculty to teach Mapped Classes, so we devised one using Microsoft Word. In the second year, we realized these forms were difficult to find and file, so we migrated the application to Qualtrics, making it easier to access and fill out and to track and administer.

The Navigator Survey (administered in Mapped Courses at the end of each semester) evolved from a paper survey, to one created and administered online, to finally focus groups. The original survey gave us some information after the first two years of implementation, but for the following years, we wanted to collect more qualitative responses, so we moved towards faculty focus groups led by the QEP Coordinators, which resulted in more candid responses and more meaningful, pointed suggestions for improvement. The QEP student survey remained in place for the five years, which provided summative, indirect information for us to use to plan faculty professional development and guidance to Navigators to enhance teaching.

The coordination and analysis of student artifact assessment was improved in the second year. A more appropriate assessment method was designed by the QEP Data Coordinator. Frequency tables for each of the artifact responses were created instead of calculating statistics for the results of the reviews. This is the method we used for the following years.

By the third year, we realized that we needed more coordination and verification of *Compass Mapped Courses* in the *SRSU Course Catalog* to attract more students and also to be more transparent about the communication focus in those sections. A process was implemented where the QEP Secretary communicated with the registrar's office about sections needing designation and the Secretary audited the courses in the catalog after publication years.

Changes in Managing Personnel

SRSU assigned two coordinators to work with the Assistant Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness to implement the QEP the first year. Almost immediately, we realized that we needed to add a QEP Secretary to assist with administrative tasks and arrangements, as well as a QEP Data Coordinator to assist with assessment and general student data collection and analysis. One of the biggest challenges we faced throughout the QEP was turnover of staff and faculty. For this reason, we created role-specific job descriptions. This assisted our team in replacing staff members and recruiting new faculty members to join us at Navigators because we could let them know what to expect and offer them a support system. Over time, we also made checklists and calendars to help people in each role know what to do and when.

Changes in Procedures

While our goals and student learning outcome did not change over the years, some of the processes used to achieve them did.

Early on, the QEP Coordinators recognized that communication among Faculty Navigators and Guides was critical, so we used the SRSU Blackboard learning management system to create a QEP organization site and enrolled all Navigators to promote better communication. Navigators were introduced to the site and its contents (forms, calendars, rubrics, slides from professional development sessions, and more) each August during a QEP Faculty Navigator Orientation. Throughout the semesters, Navigators responded to discussion posts created by the QEP Coordinators in Blackboard and posted student artifacts at the end of each semester.

At the core of our effort to assess student learning was the adoption of a single Cardinal Rubric. This rubric, created by the original Navigators with the input of the QEP Coordinators, was influenced by the Association of American Colleges and Universities Oral Communication VALUE Rubric, the National Communication Association's Speaking and Listening

Competencies for College Students, Texas A&M University's Visual Communication rubric, Otis College of Arts and Design's Fine Arts rubric, Lane Community College Communicating Effectively Rubric, and Stephen F. Austin State University's assessment rubric for Oral and Visual Communication. The Cardinal Rubric provided a common standard and framework to align faculty assessment of student work. Over the years, there have been minor adjustments to the wording on the rubric to meet the needs of faculty assessing student work. The Cardinal Rubric has guided us through the QEP.

In 2018, *Compass* sponsored an "Assessment Day" at the end of each semester, in which all Navigators, and other members of the SRSU faculty body gathered in the same room to assess Mapped Course assignments. Navigators brought their oral, written, or visual student artifacts and distributed them to small groups to score. All attendees used the Cardinal Rubric on the Assessment Day to provide interrater reliability, to serve as validation of the instrument, and to ensure appropriate and consistent use of the Cardinal Rubric. In 2019, after two cycles of Assessment Days, the QEP Coordinators made the decision to change the name of the activity to "QEP Student Artifact Review," to only include Faculty Navigators and Guides in the event going forward, and to only adjust the timing of the event to be held once a year in May where Navigators would score artifacts from both fall and spring semesters. By developing a dedicated scoring cohort of faculty experienced with the rubric and the expectations of the QEP, scorer reliability was enhanced, and valuable faculty time was saved. In 2020, the QEP Student Artifact Review was reconfigured to a virtual event due to COVID-19, and worked so well that it was continued virtually in the final years of *Compass*. The result of the virtual review was similar to the in-person review, but the process was orchestrated through SharePoint. After the QEP Student Artifact Review, the Data Coordinator analyzed the scores for discrepancies and trends. Data on scoring trends (along with information derived from Navigator focus groups and student surveys) drove our professional development focus for the next year.

Based on the data and trends from the QEP Student Artifact Review, as well as from feedback from Navigators, themes for faculty development changed over the years from just addressing teaching oral, visual, and written communication to addressing the specific skills that were found weak or deficient. In 2019-2021, we focused on teaching Faculty Navigators how to get better written, oral, and visual communication artifacts from students, bringing in experts from SRSU and beyond to present workshops. In 2021-22, we focused on academic language and the student artifacts were markedly improved. In 2022-23, we focused on supporting materials and enhancing overall faculty feedback. Faculty consistently report these faculty development events had a positive impact on how they communicate and instruct *Compass* objectives to their students.

Methods of faculty development shifted from traditional in-person gatherings to online events in the spring of 2020 due to COVID-19. We contracted with the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) to provide education on communication instruction throughout the life of the QEP. In the spring of 2020, COVID-19 forced SRSU to hold a virtual training with our ASCD presenter, but we found that the event allowed faculty more meaningful interaction time with the presenter. Virtual professional development also represented significant savings in the budget, as travel costs were not applicable for the trainer or for faculty at off-site locations. Because of this, we continued the virtual format until the spring of 2023, when we invited our ASCD trainer back to campus for both faculty development and a celebration of five productive years of *Compass*.

In our QEP, we wrote that SRSU planned to administer the ETS Proficiency Profile, which measures skill areas of reading, writing, mathematics and critical thinking, each year to a sample of seniors taking Mapped Classes. We did administer the ETS in all QEP Mapped Courses until the spring of 2020, when the ETS Proficiency Profile was discontinued by SRSU due to COVID-19 and budget constraints. Because of the incomplete data, ETS results are not included in this Impact Report.

Compass' Impact on Student Learning

In each Mapped Course, instructors were given autonomy in determining how to integrate the communication skills, which type of communication they wanted students to master (oral, visual, written, or a combination), and the freedom to instruct via different methods to suit their specific disciplines. Navigators turned in an SLO Artifact Assignment Description Form at the beginning of each semester that described their assessment measure, assignment, and how the assignment measured the student learning outcome. Navigators administered the assignment within their course that they felt best met the QEP communication SLO and used the Cardinal Rubric to assess student performance. Navigators often asked how to assign an A, B, C, D, F grade to the rubric scores, and it was our policy to allow them the freedom to assign the appropriate grade. QEP Coordinators collected student artifacts (with scores removed) from the Navigators at the end of each semester.

Each year, we conducted a Student Artifact Review. In the summers, reviewers scored student artifacts randomly selected from among the total pool of artifacts received by QEP Coordinators. Each reviewer was paired with another reviewer to provide two separate reviews of the same artifact to ensure consistency in scoring and allow for comparison between reviewers. Each reviewer was assigned 10-20 artifacts, and the two reviewer scores were averaged for each artifact into one single score prior to tallying the overall score levels.

The Cardinal Rubric was used to score student artifacts in all three communication modes (written, oral, and visual). The Cardinal Rubric measures six criteria of effective communication: Organization, Content, Development, Purpose, Academic Language, Supporting Materials and Technique. Each criterion was scored using the performance levels of Exemplary, Satisfactory, Developing and Formative. Once scored, performance levels were changed to numerical values: Exemplary = 4; Satisfactory = 3; Developing = 2; Formative = 1.

Based on total rubric scores, we categorized overall communication scores into performance levels of: Formative (6-10), Developing (11-14), Satisfactory (15-19), and Exemplary (20-24). Our target was to have 70% of students achieve Satisfactory or greater ratings. The tables below compare the Exemplary and Satisfactory score percentages for all artifacts by artifact type for the life of the QEP:

Written

Year	Organization	Content Development	Purpose	Academic Language	Supporting Material	Technique
2022-2023	76%	62%	84%	39%	46%	47%
2021-2022	72%	54%	59%	44%	41%	41%
2020-2021	53%	38%	66%	45%	30%	34%
2019-2020	71%	63%	81%	8%	52%	54%
2018-2019	65%	54%	75%	10%	40%	40%

Oral

Year	Organization	Content Development	Purpose	Academic Language	Supporting Material	Technique
2022-2023	90%	70%	78%	57%	39%	72%
2021-2022	94%	70%	76%	65%	36%	65%
2020-2021	87%	74%	69%	43%	56%	22%
2019-2020	96%	79%	86%	10%	68%	57%
2018-2019	80%	71%	56%	7%	54%	51%

Visual

Year	Organization	Content Development	Purpose	Academic Language	Supporting Material	Technique
2022-2023	84%	83%	83%	66%	67%	66%
2021-2022	77%	49%	61%	53%	35%	40%
2020-2021	64%	43%	61%	54%	25%	50%
2019-2020	58%	33%	42%	10%	33%	38%
2018-2019	50%	36%	39%	6%	30%	41%

One of the primary objectives of *Compass* was to highlight areas of deficiency and inform corrective actions. Programs which consistently demonstrate exemplary levels of achievement often are rightfully judged as not encouraging students to stretch their intellectual abilities. Therefore, we are neither embarrassed nor dismayed by the shortcomings highlighted over the course of five years. On the contrary, we incorporated this newfound knowledge into a decisive corrective plan. As an example, data from 2019-2020 indicated a deficiency in Academic Language among all communication types. After multiple professional development seminars and workshops, student performance in this metric increased proficiency in 2020-2021. We followed this method of determining deficiencies (lower than our 70% target rate), addressing them with Navigator professional development each year. The scores, along with qualitative data from faculty focus groups, do show that professors were altering instruction methods and students were achieving higher scores, although Supporting Material and Academic Language continue to be problem spots for students.

Students reported that the QEP had a positive effect on their learning and success. The Student Self-Reflection Questionnaire was administered in the final weeks of each QEP course. The table below summarizes key questions from the survey; question percentages reflect the students who rated the statement as “Strongly Agree” or “Somewhat Agree”:

Term	Response Rate	Written Skills Improved	Oral Skills Improved	Visual Skills Improved	Learned New Skills/ Techniques	Recommend to Others	Course Offers Sufficient Learning Opportunities
Spring 2023	18.5%	80%	93%	80%	93%	80%	100%
Fall 2022	12.9%	100%	92%	93%	100%	93%	92%
Spring 2022	22.6%	84%	58%	79%	79%	84%	90%
Fall 2021	18.3%	63%	50%	50%	75%	73%	75%
Spring 2021	19.6%	95%	92%	92%	95%	95%	95%
Fall 2020	40.2%	92%	78%	79%	84%	84%	96%
Spring 2020	23.4%	90%	80%	78%	84%	85%	93%
Fall 2019	29.0%	92%	80%	89%	81%	83%	89%
Spring 2019	31.7%	86%	85%	82%	91%	87%	91%
Fall 2018	35.9%	83%	86%	80%	90%	90%	95%

In their final semesters, all SRSU seniors complete the Graduating Student Survey. All students answered the question below, but students who had taken at least one QEP Mapped Course were identified on the survey to provide a comparison. The following question percentages reflect the students who rated the statement as “Somewhat” or “Very Much”:

How much did your education at SRSU contribute to your personal growth in each of the following areas?											
	Fall 2018	Spring 2019	Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021	Fall 2021	Spring 2022	Fall 2022	Spring 2023	
Speaking effectively											
QEP Student	73%	80%	76%	71%	75%	75%	82%	90%	87%	92%	
Non-QEP Student	74%	75%	72%	72%	75%	77%	81%	87%	83%	89%	
Communicating visual information effectively											
QEP Student	63%	76%	75%	81%	79%	74%	82%	89%	83%	88%	
Non-QEP Student	60%	71%	76%	84%	71%	69%	80%	85%	83%	84%	
Writing effectively											
QEP Student	80%	83%	86%	90%	86%	87%	90%	91%	90%	86%	
Non-QEP Student	80%	81%	83%	85%	85%	84%	88%	87%	88%	84%	

The perceptions of graduating students who took at least one QEP Mapped Course were generally higher than graduating students who had not taken a Mapped Course, which seems to corroborate other indicators that *Compass* had an impact on their growth and learning.

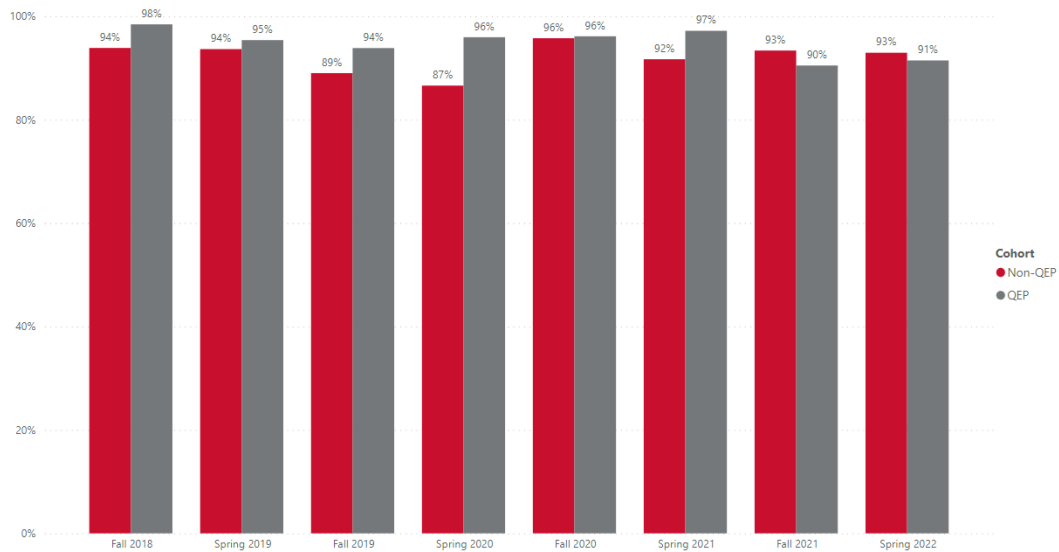
In 2022, *Compass* hosted a panel for students who were enrolled in Mapped Courses to reflect on how the QEP has affected their learning. Four students participated and reported to the moderator that their communication skills have improved, and several said they wouldn’t have been able to speak on a panel without the practice and techniques they had learned. Several cited that their attention to audience and organization had improved based on feedback and the scores on the rubric. Each student reported that they would take additional QEP Mapped Courses if they were available because the written, oral, and visual skills would assist them in their careers and beyond.

In the fourth year of the QEP, our new university president asked the question: “does *Compass* have any effect on course completion and persistence?” To answer this question, the QEP Coordinators sought to identify the effectiveness of *Compass* and the impact on participating students. QEP and student success were measured utilizing two methods, course rates and one-year persistence rates, both comparing students participating in QEP courses with those not participating in a QEP course for the semester studied. Because QEP courses were aimed at junior and senior level courses and because persistence rates for freshmen are lowest and might skew the results, freshmen and sophomore students were removed from this analysis.

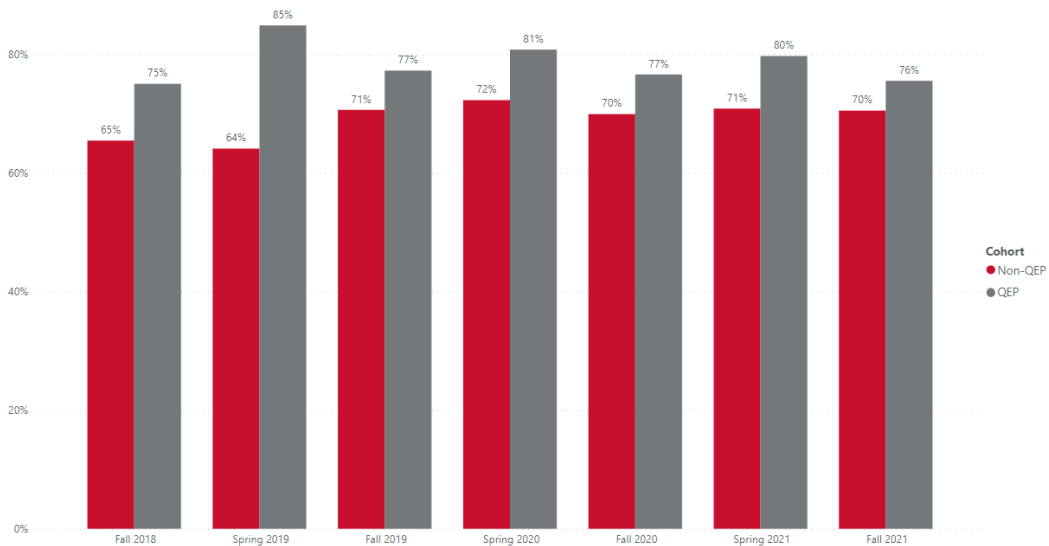
To measure the impact of the QEP treatment beyond the semester of the course, students were tracked for one year (Fall to Fall and Spring to Spring) to determine if they persisted at the institution. Students in both Fall and Spring semesters were included, as were full and part-time students. Inclusion in the non-QEP cohort was not limited to those students in QEP comparison courses. The one limitation to the inclusion of a student in the analysis was their potential

graduation prior to the one-year mark. Any student who graduated prior to the following year was excluded from the calculation.

Students in QEP courses showed a higher completion rate in five (62.5%) of the eight semesters studied, with one additional semester reporting a tie between the two cohorts at 96%. The percentage comparison is the most basic view of a completion: did the student withdraw from the course prior to the end of class or not, no matter the grade they earned. In the chart below, we find that non-QEP students endured to the end of the course at a higher rate than non-QEP students in only two semesters, Fall 2021 and Spring 2022, in each semester, the difference was three percentage points or less:



Students in QEP courses showed a higher one-year persistence rate across all the eight semesters studied. Persistence rate differences ranged from six to 21 percentage points, as illustrated in the chart below:



Data indicates that student participation in QEP Mapped Courses did, in fact, have an impact on course completion and persistence, which was a positive, yet unintended, outcome of *Compass*.

What SRSU Learned as a Result of *Compass*

Through the QEP, SRSU learned the importance of communication and collaboration among faculty and administrators to increase student success, and that shows in the changes made to processes over the years. Coordinators observed and listened to the Navigators and Guides and implemented real time changes based on what we learned.

We learned about the importance and effectiveness of professional development to achieve higher student results and faculty satisfaction in teaching. Since implementing the QEP, SRSU has increased the amount of professional development across campus for all faculty and staff, the university has even purchased an online professional development subscription with modules on topics from pedagogy to communication to leadership.

We learned that faculty often do not get the chance to connect with others outside of their disciplines, and that giving them the chance to do so is an important positive element for their development as teachers and their awareness of other issues around campus. The format of the Student Artifact Reviews was the catalyst for a peer review of core curriculum assessments in the summer using the Cardinal Rubric. Another spin off has been the yearly peer review of Academic and Administrative Assessment Reports, and while we use another rubric to assess these reports, the event is very much inspired by the process of the Student Artifact Review. These types of sessions allow faculty to interact with those that they may not normally, and it widens their views of education on campus.

We learned the importance of developing an assessment tool that is valid and simple to use. One of the most essential pieces of *Compass* was the Cardinal Rubric. Instructors found the locally-developed rubric broad enough for multiple uses, from art classes to teacher education classes. The Cardinal Rubric will live on to assess students in core (general) education courses, and other professors have mentioned continuing to use it in their courses. After the Cardinal Rubric was used in the Science of Teaching Reading teacher preparation program, the superintendent of Alpine ISD requested permission for her teachers to use it widely in the high schools. A sign of success for any QEPs is sustainability, and the Cardinal Rubric, shown on the final page, will be used for years to come.

In conclusion, our institution, faculty, and students have benefited tremendously from *Compass*. Our goals were accomplished: student communication was indeed enhanced at SRSU, and faculty capacity to teach communication was increased. In addition, strong relationships and practices across campus were derived from this QEP experience. SRSU is already considering the next QEP with what we have learned in mind.

QEP MAPPED CLASS CARDINAL RUBRIC

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet formative (cell one) level performance.

	Exemplary	Satisfactory	Developing	Formative
Organization	Organizational pattern is clearly and consistently observable, skillful, and makes the content of the message cohesive.	Organizational pattern is clearly and consistently observable; contains elements of logical development; contains clear transitions; has a recognizable flow of ideas.	Organizational pattern is intermittently observable; lacks organization; it is sometimes disjointed and/or awkward.	Organizational pattern is not observable; has no discernible organizational structure; contains random unconnected elements.
Content Development	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the topic, conveying understanding or a useful perspective.	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context. It is clear, accurate and appropriate.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas but may have inaccuracies or may be unclear at times. Provides limited insight or information.	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work. May contain misinformation, or may be confusing or misleading.
Purpose	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work. The purpose of the message is clearly conveyed.	Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with audience, purpose, and context). The purpose of the message can be discerned with some effort.	Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions). The purpose of the message is vague or unclear.	Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience). The purpose of the message is not at all apparent or is missing.
Professional/Academic Language	Communication is grammatically correct. Language choices are imaginative, memorable, compelling, and demonstrate constructive knowledge, connects with audience and flows well. Error free.	Communication is grammatically correct. Language choices are thoughtful and generally effective, demonstrate constructive knowledge, connects with audience and flows well. Limited errors.	Grammar occasionally interferes with communication. Language choices are mundane, commonplace, and partially effective. Language is moderately appropriate to audience. Includes some errors.	Errors in grammar and format. Language choices are questionable and minimally effective. Language is not appropriate to audience. Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning.
Supporting Material	Demonstrates skillful use of a variety of supporting material that are high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the intended message or discipline. Sources are consistently attributed.	Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the intended message or discipline. Though limited, it refers to supporting information or analysis, or establishes credibility of authority on the topic. Generally attributes sources as appropriate.	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the intended message or discipline. Makes reference to weak/partial supporting information or analysis. Sources are inconsistently attributed.	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas but it insufficiently makes reference to information or analysis that minimally supports the intended message or topic. Fails to attribute sources as appropriate.
Technique	Demonstrates exemplary appropriateness and quality of technique for the chosen mode. For example, skillful execution of genre and disciplinary conventions on written works; skillful oral delivery; exemplary craftsmanship of visual works.	Demonstrates appropriateness and quality of technique for the chosen mode. For example, appropriate execution of genre and disciplinary conventions on written works; or, effective oral delivery; or, notable craftsmanship of visual works.	Attempts to demonstrate appropriateness and quality of technique for the chosen mode. For example, follows expectations of execution of genre and disciplinary conventions on written works; satisfactory oral delivery; satisfactory craftsmanship of visual works.	Marginal demonstration of appropriateness and quality of technique for the chosen mode. For example, attempts to execute basic genre and disciplinary conventions on written works; poor oral delivery; poor craftsmanship of visual works.

QEP MAPPED CLASS CARDINAL RUBRIC

Definition

The process of sending, receiving and interpreting messages through written, oral, or nonverbal communication channels to effectively convey information, and/or by which two or more people reach understanding.



Framing Language

Communication is transmitted through a variety of modes (oral, written, or visual). This rubric is specifically designed to evaluate communication in an academic environment to determine that the central message is conveyed, reinforced by multiple supporting materials and purposefully organized. Communication in an academic environment may include: a variety of written works such as academic papers, lab reports, poetry, webpages, personal essays; oral presentations of sufficient length such that a central message is conveyed, supported and purposefully organized; visual media, including but not limited to posters, PowerPoints, videos, graphic art, and infographics.

Glossary

The definitions below serve to clarify terms and concepts used in this rubric only.

- **Organization:** The grouping and sequencing of ideas and supporting material. Organizational patterns supporting effectiveness typically include an introduction, one or more identifiable sections in the body and a conclusion. An organizational pattern should be purposeful and make the content easy to follow. Potential patterns might include a chronological pattern, a problem-solution pattern, or an analysis-of-parts pattern.
- **Content Development:** The ways in which a topic is explored and represented in relation to its audience and purpose.
- **Purpose:** The main point/thesis/"bottom line"/"take-away" of a message. A clear purpose is easy to identify. For example, is the message meant to persuade or to inform, to report or to summarize, or to amuse?
- **Academic Language:** Language supporting the effectiveness of a central message is appropriate to the topic, genre/discipline, audience, is grammatically correct, and clear. Language enhancing the effectiveness may also be vivid, imaginative, and expressive.
- **Supporting Material:** In communication, students draw upon sources to extend, develop, define, or shape their ideas. Digital citizenship, the careful consideration of copyright and fair use of images is important. The student considers reliability of communication to include an understanding of accuracy, applicability, currency, liability, and completeness.
- **Technique:** Execution or performance of communication skills given the mode of communication. For example, in writing, technique may include mechanics and use of style; in oral communication, it may include nonverbal cues and use of voice; in visual works, it may include the use of the medium.

Cardinal Rubric was adapted from the Association of American Colleges and Universities oral communication VALUE rubric, the National Communication Association's Speaking and Listening Competencies for College Students, Texas A&M University's Visual Communication rubric, Otis College of Arts and Design's Fine Arts rubric, Lane Community College Communicating Effectively Rubric, and Stephen F. Austin State University's assessment rubric for Oral and Visual Communication.