REPORT ON QEP “BROAD AREA” SURVEY:
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND IDENTIFICATION OF BROAD AREA

According to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) describes a carefully designed course of action that addresses a well-defined and focused topic or issue related to enhancing student learning.

The first step in defining the focused topic for UNC Asheville’s QEP is to identify the broad area. To do this, an online survey was distributed to faculty, staff and students during August 23 through September 6, 2010.

A total of 1,643 individuals responded to the survey, distributed as follows:
   166 (77%) of the 217 faculty
   140 (32%) of the 442 staff
   1,337 (36%) of the 3,742 students

The survey items were based on the following:

Six Student Learning Outcomes ([http://sacs.unca.edu/student-learning-outcomes](http://sacs.unca.edu/student-learning-outcomes))

Nine themes in the Strategic Plan ([http://www2.unca.edu/sp/](http://www2.unca.edu/sp/))

The Student Learning Outcome that was selected most frequently was:

**SLO #1: Students develop skills in critical thinking, clear and thoughtful communication, creative expression, and honest open inquiry.**

   45% of the survey respondents selected SLO #1 as the first choice, distributed as follows: 50% of the faculty, 59% of the staff, 43% of the students.
   
   22% of the survey respondents selected SLO #1 as the second choice.

The top three reasons for making this selection were:
   Topic that directly enhances student learning
   Topic that is important to our community
   Topic that is important to our university
The Strategic Plan theme that was selected most frequently was:

**Undergraduate Education: Provide excellence in public liberal arts emphasizing interdisciplinary learning and faculty-student mentoring.**

30% of the survey respondents selected this item as the first choice, distributed as follows: 43% of the faculty, 34% of the staff, 27% of the students

12% of the survey respondents selected this item as the second choice

The top three reasons for making this selection were:

- Topic that directly enhances student learning
- Topic that is important to our university
- Topic that is important to our community

It is also worth noting that among those who selected SLO #1 as the first choice, 37% selected Strategic Plan Theme "Undergraduate Education" as the first choice. Similarly, among those who selected Strategic Plan Theme "Undergraduate Education" as the first choice, 56% selected SLO #1 as the first choice.

Three different groups (the SACS Working Group, the QEP Leadership Team, and the SACS Executive Committee) met to draft the **broad area** from the SLO and the strategic plan theme that surfaced to the top:

**SLO #1:** Students develop skills in critical thinking, clear and thoughtful communication, creative expression, and honest open inquiry.

**Strategic Plan:** Undergraduate Education: Provide excellence in public liberal arts emphasizing interdisciplinary learning and faculty-student mentoring.

- Undergraduate Education:
  - Serve as the standard of excellence for public liberal arts undergraduate education, emphasizing interdisciplinary learning and exceptional faculty-student mentoring

The following **broad area** represents the effort of the three groups to unify SLO #1 and undergraduate education strategic plan theme into one summary phrase:

**Undergraduate experiences that foster the use of open inquiry, critical thinking, creative expression, and effective communication**

12% of the survey participants wrote comments. These comments are being categorized into themes, which will be used by the campus as we move forward to identify the **topic** for our QEP.
Now that the broad area has been identified, the campus will have the opportunity to provide input for the specific QEP topic within this area. Watch the QEP web site, and your email, for a list of these opportunities during October and November 2010.

For more information on UNC Asheville’s QEP: http://sacs.unca.edu/qep