

Luther Rice College and Seminary



RISE:
**Research and Information Skills
Enhancement**

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
SUMMARY OF COMPLIANCE WITH SACSCOC 7.2A-E	2
CHAPTER 1: TOPIC DEVELOPMENT.....	4
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT DATA	4
STUDENT SURVEY DATA.....	8
SUMMARY.....	13
CHAPTER 2: BROAD-BASED SUPPORT OF INSTITUTIONAL CONSTITUENCIES	14
COMMITTEES.....	14
STUDENTS	16
FACULTY	16
STAFF.....	17
ADMINISTRATION	18
BOARD OF TRUSTEES	19
COMMUNITY LEADERS.....	19
SUMMARY.....	20
CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	21
DOMAINS OF INFORMATION LITERACY	21
TEACHING INFORMATION LITERACY	23
SUMMARY.....	26
CHAPTER 4: STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES	27
LEARNING OUTCOMES.....	27
BASELINE DATA	31
TARGETS FOR IMPROVEMENT.....	35
SUMMARY.....	37
CHAPTER 5: STUDENT BODY AND QEP DESIGN	38
LUTHER RICE STUDENT BODY.....	38
QEP DESIGN	38
SUMMARY.....	46
CHAPTER 6: RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND IMPLEMENTATION.....	47
HUMAN RESOURCES	47
TECHNOLOGICAL RESOURCES	48
MATERIAL RESOURCES	48
FINANCIAL RESOURCES	48
ADDITIONAL FUTURE EXPENSES.....	50
RESOURCE ALLOCATION TIMELINE	52
SUMMARY.....	54
CHAPTER 7: ASSESSMENT PLAN	55

STUDENT LEARNING VS. STUDENT SUCCESS	55
SPECIFIC	55
MEASURABLE	56
APPROPRIATE	58
DIRECT	60
FORMATIVE AND SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT.....	60
INSTITUTIONAL PERSONNEL	60
SUPPORT FOR INSTITUTIONAL PERSONNEL.....	61
ASSESSMENT TIMELINE.....	63
SUMMARY.....	67
CONCLUSION	68
REFERENCES.....	69
APPENDICES.....	70
APPENDIX A – QEP TOPIC RATIONALE AND MOTION	70
APPENDIX B – INFORMATION LITERACY LEARNING OUTCOMES (ILLO) ASSESSMENT RUBRIC.....	72
APPENDIX C – STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE MINUTES: NOVEMBER 9, 2022	74
APPENDIX D – QEP 2025-2030: POTENTIAL TOPICS REPORT.....	76
APPENDIX E – QEP STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES: OCTOBER 26, 2023.....	86
APPENDIX F – FACULTY MEETING MINUTES: OCTOBER 18, 2023	88
APPENDIX G – RESULTS OF SEPTEMBER 2024 QEP SURVEY	92

Executive Summary

Luther Rice will launch its inaugural QEP, RISE: Research and Information Skills Enhancement, in the fall of 2025. Over the next five years, RISE will “improve students’ information literacy and its expression within academic writing.”¹ Students will learn to

1. Integrate sources appropriately.
2. Seek information from multiple perspectives.
3. Assess sources’ logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions.

Two sources of quantitative data indicated the need for RISE. First, in a two-part survey series, students identified research and information literacy skills as their #1 choice of QEP topic. Second, in a review of SLO assessment data, the QEP Steering Committee observed a gap in achievement with respect to undergraduate Information Literacy Learning Outcomes (ILLOs).

In addition to quantitative data, the QEP Steering Committee developed RISE in consultation with students, faculty, staff, administration, Board members, and community leaders. Library staff suggested the topic initially and faculty concurred. Students registered strong support for the topic in the two-part survey series mentioned above. Administration and Board members supported the topic after hearing the input of students, faculty, and staff. Community leaders with expertise in education and accreditation standards helped to shape the plan and its assessment.

RISE takes its learning outcomes from undergraduate Information Literacy Learning Outcomes 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1. The learning outcomes are specific, measurable, and important for student learning. The QEP Steering Committee devised a plan to improve student performance with respect to these learning outcomes based on best practices and current literature on the subject.

The plan requires the investment of human, technological, material, and financial resources. Necessary resources have been identified and are discussed in this document.

The QEP will be implemented and assessed in 15 undergraduate Bachelor of Arts in Religion courses at the Information, Practice, and Mastery levels. Assessment data from one semester will be used to drive changes the next semester.

¹ Luther Rice College & Seminary, “Topic Rationale and Motion,” 1. Please see Appendix A.

Summary of Compliance with SACSCOC 7.2A-E

SACSCOC Standard	Evidence of Standard	Chapter/Heading Title
7.2A: has a topic identified through its ongoing, comprehensive planning and evaluation processes.	The need for RISE was identified by reviewing SLO assessment data from the Information Literacy Learning Outcomes (ILLO) assessment cycle.	Chapter 1: Topic Development Appendix A: QEP Topic Rationale and Motion. Appendix B: Information Literacy Learning Outcomes Assessment Rubric
7.2B: has broad-based support of institutional constituencies	Library staff broached the topic initially to the Strategic Planning Committee. Students selected information literacy skills as their #1 choice of topic. Faculty voiced their support for the topic during an October 18, 2023 faculty meeting. Two members of the Board of Trustees served on the QEP Steering Committee. Various community leaders – including a member of the Newton County Board of Education and a longtime accreditation liaison for DeKalb County Schools – served on the QEP Steering Committee.	Chapter 1: Topic Development Chapter 2: Broad-based Support of Institutional Constituencies
7.2C: focuses on improving specific student learning outcomes and/or student success	RISE derives its learning outcomes from undergraduate Information Literacy Learning Outcomes 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1.	Chapter 4: Student Learning Outcomes Chapter 5: Student Body and QEP Design
7.2D: commits resources to initiate, implement, and complete the QEP	Human, technological, material, and financial resources have been identified to support the QEP.	Chapter 6: Resource Allocation of Implementation
7.2E: includes a plan to assess	QEP learning outcomes will be assessed in 15 undergraduate	Chapter 7: Assessment Plan

achievements	courses at the Information, Practice, and Mastery levels. A rubric has been developed to assess Practice- and Mastery-level assignments. Assessment data from one semester will be used to make changes the following semester.	
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Chapter 1: Topic Development

This chapter describes how the topic of RISE was identified from two primary sources of data. The chapter will first sketch Luther Rice's Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) assessment cycle, which furnished the Information Literacy Learning Outcomes (ILLO) data used to identify the topic of RISE. Accordingly, the topic of RISE was "identified through [Luther Rice's] ongoing, comprehensive planning and evaluation processes."²

The chapter will then describe a two-part student survey, in which students identified research and information skills as their #1 choice of QEP topic. This survey data demonstrates students' impact in selecting the topic of RISE and provides initial evidence that RISE "has broad-based support of institutional constituencies."³ Chapter 2 will continue in this vein, illustrating more fully the extent to which RISE "has broad-based support of institutional constituencies."

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Data

Luther Rice faculty assess five levels of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs): Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs), Information Literacy Learning Outcomes (ILLOs), and Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs). While Institutional Learning Outcomes are assessed on a 5-year basis, Program, General Education, Information Literacy, and Course Learning Outcomes are assessed yearly.

Student Learning Outcomes are assessed according to the following schedule:

- Beginning in May, the Dean collects samples of student work to assess each variety of learning outcome. To do so, the Dean follows the *Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan*, which identifies assessment assignments and sampling percentages for each outcome.
- By July 1, the Dean assigns faculty teams to assess the collected samples. To do so, faculty use assessment rubrics keyed to the individual learning outcome. Please see Appendix B for an example assessment rubric.
- By August 15, the faculty teams complete their assessment.
- By September 1, the Dean distributes the results of the assessment to the various academic program committees. The committees evaluate the data and make recommendations to improve their respective programs.
- By December 1, the Dean collects the recommendations from the various academic program committees and compiles them as the *Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report*. The Dean submits the report to the Executive Vice President, who submits it to the Board.

² SACSCOC, "Reviewing the Quality Enhancement Plan: An Evaluative Framework," 1, <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/Quality-Enhancement-Plan-Framework.pdf>.

³ SACSCOC, "Reviewing the Quality Enhancement Plan," 1.

- Between January and May, the academic program committees, under the supervision of the Dean, implement their recommendations. The cycle then repeats the following year.

Subsequent discussion of the involvement of the Strategic Planning Committee and the QEP Steering Committee will emphasize Information Literacy Learning Outcomes (ILLOs) since assessment of these outcomes drove the development of RISE.

Strategic Planning Committee

The Strategic Planning Committee writes and oversees Luther Rice's 5-Year Strategic Plan and identifies necessary actions to implement the plan. Each year beginning in September, the Strategic Planning Committee reviews the previous year's strategic plan and updates it for the current year. The finished plan is presented to the President in November and to the Board in January.

According to Strategic Objective 2.1 of the 5-Year Strategic Plan, Luther Rice will "successfully meet all requirements for SACSCOC" accreditation. In keeping with this objective, the Strategic Planning Committee met on four occasions in 2022 (April 4, September 14, October 12, and November 9) to make preliminary preparations for the QEP.

In its April meeting, the Strategic Planning Committee mapped out the steps of the QEP development process pertinent to timeline, budget, and personnel. The committee met again in September, October, and November of the following fiscal year to identify sources of data that could aid the still-to-be formed QEP Steering Committee in determining a topic. The committee's data gathering efforts culminated in three reports presented during the November 2022 meeting:

- Ms. Alisha Blevins (Director of Library Services and Administration) reviewed Information Literacy Learning Outcomes assessment data from the 2021-2022 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle. Ms. Blevins advocated for Information Literacy as the topic of the QEP, noting that for the past three years, ILLO 5.2 at the graduate level had lagged behind other ILLO outcomes.
- Dr. Thomas Mapes (Dean) reviewed retention rates retrieved from OASIS, Luther Rice's Student Information System. Dr. Mapes highlighted undergraduate retention rates particularly, emphasizing students' need for skills coaching and additional opportunities for English and Mathematics tutoring.
- Dr. David Casas (Faculty) reviewed general education data from the 2021-2022 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle. Dr. Casas argued the data made a good case for a QEP emphasizing General Education competencies, particularly writing skills.

Ms. Blevins's, Dr. Mapes's, and Dr. Casas's reports are summarized in the November 9, 2022 minutes of the Strategic Planning Committee included as Appendix C of this document. However, the data they presented was compiled to form the *QEP 2025-2030: Potential Topics Report* included as Appendix D. The report originally featured data from 2019-2020, 2020-2021, and 2021-2022 but was updated the

following year by the QEP Steering Committee to include data from the 2022-2023 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle.

QEP Steering Committee

During the August 2023 Faculty Summit, Dr. Steinhilber (President) announced to the staff and faculty that Dr. Thomas Mapes (Dean) would serve as Luther Rice's QEP Director. After Dr. Steinhilber's announcement, Dr. Evan Posey (Executive Vice President) introduced a new English professor, Mrs. Jenny Medlin, to teach Dr. Mapes's English literature courses. On September 21, 2023, Dr. Posey announced the members of the QEP Steering Committee.

The QEP Steering Committee met monthly according to the schedule set forth below. Example minutes from the October 26, 2023 meeting are provided in Appendix E.

- September 28, 2023
- October 26, 2023
- November 21, 2023
- January 30, 2024
- February 29, 2024
- March 28, 2024
- April 25, 2024
- May 30, 2024
- June 27, 2024
- September 26, 2024
- October 31, 2024
- December 5, 2024
- January 21, 2025

To select the QEP topic, the committee reviewed assessment data from the Strategic Planning Committee's *QEP 2025-2030: Potential Topics Report* and solicited input from students, staff, faculty, administration, Board members, and community leaders.

During the September 28, 2023 and October 26, 2023 meetings of the committee, committee members reviewed the data in the *QEP 2025-2030: Potential Topics Report*. Since the report's initial composition the previous year, additional data had become available from the 2022-2023 Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle. The report was updated with this additional data.

At the undergraduate level, information literacy data from 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 was concerning. The committee reviewed the data presented in the table below:

Undergraduate Information Literacy Learning Outcomes Assessment Data

<i>Outcome ID</i>	<i>Learning Outcome</i>	<i>2019-2020</i>	<i>2020-2021</i>	<i>2021-2022</i>	<i>2022-2023</i>
<i>Frame 1.1</i>	Students look for indicators of quality when seeking information, distinguishing reliable from unreliable sources.	4.80	4.93	3.93	3.33
<i>Frame 2.1</i>	Some variety evident in selection of sources.	4.90	4.67	3.67	3.20
<i>Frame 3.1</i>	Students cite sources appropriately and relate sources' claims accurately.	5.10	4.20	3.27	2.60
<i>Frame 4.1</i>	Students seek information from multiple perspectives.	4.10	4.67	3.53	2.73
<i>Frame 5.1</i>	Students make an attempt to assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions.	4.10	4.47	3.60	2.53
<i>Frame 6.1</i>	Students make a focused argument, limiting the scope of research appropriately.	3.20	4.60	4.13	3.13

KEY: 1 or 2 (Incompetent); 3 or 4 (Competent); 5 or 6 (Very Competent)

As the table shows, Luther Rice undergraduates historically scored in the “Competent” (3 or 4) to “Very Competent” range (5 or 6) for information literacy. However, in 2021-2022, information literacy scores slipped to the lower edge of “Competent” with 3.27 for ILLO Frame 3.1, 3.53 for ILLO Frame 4.1, and 3.6 for ILLO Frame 5.1. Alarming, the decline had intensified with the most recent results from the 2022-2023 assessment cycle, with information literacy scores now in the “Incompetent” range for Frames 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1. The other frames (1.1, 2.1, and 6.1) were following a similar trend and were only marginally competent in 2022-2023.

The committee’s concerns were corroborated by its recruitment of faculty feedback. During the October faculty meeting (please see Appendix F), the QEP Director asked the faculty for feedback about their preference of QEP topic. At first, the faculty seemed to be divided in their recommendations. Several faculty recommended emphasizing information literacy skills, while others recommended writing skills. At length, however, common ground was established. The faculty who advocated writing skills were specifically interested in students’ ability to incorporate academic sources in written work. Namely, the faculty were concerned with two aspects of academic writing: First, students’ ability to integrate sources without losing their “voice” or ceding control of their argument, and second, students’ ability to subject sources’ claims to critical assessment.

Reflecting upon the faculty's feedback, the members of the steering committee noted that the professors' concerns mapped closely to Luther Rice's information literacy outcomes. For instance, ILLO Frame 3.1 measures students' ability to "relate sources' claims." The committee saw close overlap between this outcome and professors' concern about students' ability to integrate sources without losing their voice. Likewise, the professors' concerns about students' ability to analyze sources' claims critically restates ILLO 5.1, "Students make an attempt to assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions." In light of these observations, the committee felt that the faculty's input corroborated their review of ILLO assessment data.

One important result of the faculty's input in the final shape of the QEP is the assumption that information literacy, to be of practical worth, must be expressed in speech or writing. To view information literacy skills in isolation from communication is an exercise in artificiality. Accordingly, the committee resolved to fold information literacy and writing skills together. In the words of the committee's "QEP Topic Rationale and Motion" document, the QEP would focus "on the application of information literacy within academic writing" (Appendix A).

Student Survey Data

In addition to consulting SLO assessment data, the QEP Steering Committee wanted to hear from students directly. Accordingly, the committee created a QEP Topic Survey on SurveyMonkey. Links to the survey were emailed to undergraduate and graduate students on January 4, 2024.

January 2024 Survey Data

The text of the email read as follows:

Dear Students,

I wanted to let you know about an exciting future development. As a SACSCOC-accredited institution of higher education, Luther Rice will launch its QEP in 2025-2030. In case the term "QEP" is unfamiliar to you, it stands for **Quality Enhancement Plan**. Simply put, the QEP is a plan to enhance the quality of education here at Luther Rice.

QEPs are self-improvement projects. For our QEP, we'll select a topic that needs improvement here at Luther Rice, develop a plan to make that improvement, and then measure how much improvement we have made.

Here's where you come in: we need your input to select our QEP topic. Please let us know what topics would most help you to develop and succeed as learners. The link below will take you to a short 2-minute survey on SurveyMonkey:

Thank you so much for your input! Over the next few months, I'll update you on the progress of the Quality Enhancement Plan. I look forward to growing with you and enhancing the quality of Luther Rice!

While the committee drafted the text of the email, it was sent by Dr. Steve Pray, Director of Admissions and Records. Dr. Pray was a member of both the Strategic Planning Committee and the QEP Steering Committee. Since students are accustomed to receiving various surveys (course evaluations, student satisfaction surveys, exit interviews, etc.) from Dr. Pray, the committee felt he would be the natural choice to send the survey to students.

The survey was sent to 414 undergraduate students and 843 graduate students on January 4, 2024. Of the 414 undergraduates, 27 students responded within 20 days by January 23, 2024. Of the 843 graduates, 96 responded within 20 days by January 23, 2024.

Survey Response Rates

<i>Student Classification</i>	<i>Survey Responses</i>	<i>Students Invited</i>	<i>Response Rate</i>
<i>Undergraduate</i>	27	414	6.5%
<i>Graduate</i>	96	843	11.4%
<i>Total</i>	123	1257	9.8%

One of the graduate students, after taking the survey, sent Dr. Pray a response email. The student wrote,

Dr. Pray

I just finished the student survey you sent out and wanted to make one comment. One of the items I selected for the QEP was locating resources in the Luther Rice library. I might suggest that this topic be expanded to locating resources altogether. One of the reasons I felt it necessary to drop classes last year was because I couldn't help but feel overwhelmed by the citing requirements for written essays and papers. As someone without a religious degree and who lacks a library of faith based publications, I'm highly concerned about properly sourcing and citing my papers. I think this extends beyond the Luther Rice library to other libraries, the internet, etc.

The survey consisted of a single question, "As a student, the areas I need the most assistance with are (please pick 3)." In response to the question, students were asked to select the top three of the following choices:

- A. Advising/Registering for courses
- B. Finding sources in the Luther Rice Library
- C. Quoting, citing, and discussing sources in a paper
- D. Thinking through an argument critically

- E. Using time efficiently
- F. Studying for tests and exams
- G. Managing stress
- H. Maintaining work/life/school balance
- I. Speaking/presenting to a group
- J. Understanding difficult reading material
- K. Practicing self-discipline

Answer choices B, C, and D were intended to gauge student interest in information literacy outcomes, while answer choices E, F, G, and H measured student interest in retention and/or mental health outcomes. The remainder of the answer choices assessed student interest in topics gleaned from the committee's review of QEP Executive Summaries on SACSCOC's website, <https://sacscoc.org/quality-enhancement-plans/>.

Undergraduates were emailed one link to the survey and graduate students were emailed another. The following chart displays undergraduate students' responses. The final row divides total responses by three since each undergraduate student chose three answer choices.

Undergraduate Survey Responses

<i>Answer Choice</i>	<i># of Responses</i>	<i>Rank</i>
<i>A) Advising/Registering for courses</i>	4	
<i>B) Finding sources in the Luther Rice Library</i>	8	#4
<i>C) Quoting, citing, and discussing sources in a paper</i>	14	#2
<i>D) Thinking through an argument critically</i>	2	
<i>E) Using time efficiently</i>	7	
<i>F) Studying for tests and exams</i>	9	#3
<i>G) Managing stress</i>	5	
<i>H) Maintaining work/life/school balance</i>	20	#1
<i>I) Speaking/presenting to a group</i>	4	
<i>J) Understanding difficult reading material</i>	4	
<i>K) Practicing Self-Discipline</i>	4	
<i>Total</i>	81	--
<i>Total divided by three</i>	27	--

While answer choice H was far and away the most popular response, selected by 74.0% of all undergraduate students, the committee noted that answer choice C was the second-most popular choice, selected by 51.9% of undergraduates. F was the third-most popular choice, at 33.3%, and B was the fourth-most popular, at 29.6%.

The committee made several observations in response to undergraduate students' responses. First, both retention and information literacy were well represented given that the top four responses

corresponded to either retention or information literacy topics. The committee noted with satisfaction that the data and recommendations supplied by the Strategic Planning Committee were validated by student responses to the survey. Second, the popularity of answer choice C supported the faculty's assertion that information literacy should be expressed in authentic communication, not in a vacuum. The students were interested in "quoting, citing, and discussing sources in a paper," not in an acontextual manner isolated from communication.

The graduate student survey consisted of the same question, "As a student, the areas I need the most assistance with are (please pick 3)." Responses were as follows:

Graduate Survey Responses

<i>Answer Choice</i>	<i># of Responses</i>	<i>Rank</i>
<i>A) Advising/Registering for courses</i>	18	
<i>B) Finding sources in the Luther Rice Library</i>	36	#3
<i>C) Quoting, citing, and discussing sources in a paper</i>	44	#1 (tied)
<i>D) Thinking through an argument critically</i>	34	#4
<i>E) Using time efficiently</i>	17	
<i>F) Studying for tests and exams</i>	16	
<i>G) Managing stress</i>	18	
<i>H) Maintaining work/life/school balance</i>	44	#1 (tied)
<i>I) Speaking/presenting to a group</i>	8	
<i>J) Understanding difficult reading material</i>	32	
<i>K) Practicing Self-Discipline</i>	21	
<i>Total</i>	288	--
<i>Total divided by 3</i>	96	--

In some respects graduate student responses were similar to those of undergraduate students. Retention and information literacy still accounted for the top four answer choices (H, C, B, and D). However, the balance had shifted in favor of information literacy. Information literacy answer choice C was tied with retention answer choice H at 45.8% apiece, but the remaining answers choices in the top four were information literacy options. Information literacy answer choice D showed a remarkable increase between undergraduates and graduates. While only 7.4% of undergraduates reported that they needed assistance thinking through an argument critically, 35.4% of graduate students reported they did.

In sum, while undergraduates showed a strong interest in information literacy, graduates showed an even stronger interest. The committee interpreted this fact as an indication that offering undergraduate students information literacy instruction would prepare them for the rigors of graduate education.

Moreover, the student's email to Dr. Pray stating that he withdrew from classes the previous year because he struggled to find quality sources for his papers suggested the possibility of a link between

retention and information literacy. Various of the committee members noted that in aiming to improve information literacy outcomes, the QEP may improve retention as a secondary benefit.⁴

September 2024 Survey Data

A weakness of the January 2024 survey data was the low response rate. The undergraduate response rate of 6.5% was particularly disconcerting. Accordingly, the QEP Director (Dr. Thomas Mapes) and the Accreditation Liaison (Dr. Evan Posey) consulted with Dr. Patricia Parrish, Luther Rice's SACSCOC VP. Dr. Parrish recommended embedding the QEP survey in Moodle for Fall 2024 undergraduate courses.

The QEP director followed Dr. Parrish's recommendation, embedding the survey in 31 undergraduate courses in the Fall 2024 semester. 307 students completed the survey, the results of which appear in Appendix G but are summarized below.

<i>Answer Choice</i>	<i># of Responses</i>	<i>Rank</i>
<i>A) Advising/Registering for courses</i>	24	
<i>B) Finding sources in the Luther Rice Library</i>	76	
<i>C) Quoting, citing, and discussing sources in a paper</i>	160	#1
<i>D) Thinking through an argument critically</i>	66	
<i>E) Using time efficiently</i>	95	#4
<i>F) Studying for tests and exams</i>	88	
<i>G) Managing stress</i>	55	
<i>H) Maintaining work/life/school balance</i>	149	#2
<i>I) Speaking/presenting to a group</i>	35	
<i>J) Understanding difficult reading material</i>	114	#3
<i>K) Practicing Self-Discipline</i>	56	
<i>Total</i>	918	
<i>Total divided by 3</i>	306 ⁵	

Assessing the data, the members of the QEP Steering Committee observed a marked difference in sample size between the January and September undergraduate surveys. While the January survey's sample size of 27 undergraduates had caused the committee some anxiety about the survey's ability to represent the undergraduate student body reliably, the September survey's sample size of 307 undergraduates gave the committee a high degree of confidence.

⁴ Committee members commented frequently on the interrelationship between information literacy and retention. See for instance the October minutes of the committee, item #13, in Appendix E.

⁵ A total of 307 students took the survey. While 307 students indicated a first choice, one neglected to indicate a second choice and two neglected to indicate a third choice. As a result, the total responses divided by three equals 306 instead of 307.

Comparing the results of the two surveys, the committee observed the top two responses in both surveys were answer choices C) and H). In the January survey, answer choice H) was first with 20 of 81 responses and answer choice C) was second with 14 of 81. Contrarily, in the more robust September survey, answer choice C) was first with 160 of 918 responses while answer choice H) was second with 149 of 918.

Once again, the QEP Steering Committee noted that student survey responses reinforced the Strategic Planning Committee's initial recommendations of Information Literacy and Retention as potential topics. While undergraduate students prioritized retention above information literacy in the limited January survey, in the more robust September survey they prioritized information literacy as their #1 choice. The following chapter will describe in more detail the input of students, faculty, staff, administration, board members, and community leaders in selecting the topic of RISE.

Summary

SLO assessment data provided the QEP Steering Committee with objective, quantitative data supporting a QEP topic to improve students' research and information literacy skills. Complementary to SLO data, the results of the January and September student surveys provided the QEP Steering Committee with subjective yet still quantitative data also supporting a QEP addressing research and information literacy. This data, taken together with the insight of staff, faculty, administration, Board members, and community leaders, confirmed the QEP Steering Committee in its selection of RISE: Research and Information Skills Enhancement as the topic of Luther Rice's QEP.

Chapter 2: Broad-based Support of Institutional Constituencies

RISE “has broad-based support of institutional constituencies.”⁶ This chapter describes the participation of Luther Rice constituencies in selecting the topic of RISE and developing the plan. It also forecasts how stakeholders will be “informed” and “engaged” in the “implementation and assessment of the plan.”⁷

Committees

As described in the previous chapter, two committees were instrumental in the identification of Luther Rice’s QEP topic. These committees were the Strategic Planning Committee and the QEP Steering Committee. A third committee, the QEP Implementation Committee, will be formed in the Spring of 2025 to oversee the implementation of RISE.

The chart below lists Strategic Planning Committee membership for 2023-2024. Membership is listed alphabetically by the “Position” column.

Strategic Planning Committee Membership

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Committee Membership</i>
<i>Dr. Evan Posey</i>	Administration (Executive VP)	Chair
<i>Dr. Steven Steinhilber</i>	Administration (President)	Ex Officio
<i>Mr. Ken Stokes</i>	Administration (VP for Information Technology)	Member
<i>Mr. Casey Kuffrey</i>	Administration (VP for Financial Affairs)	Member
<i>Dr. Thomas Mapes</i>	Faculty (Dean)	Member
<i>Dr. Rusty Ricketson</i>	Faculty, Doctoral Program Coordinator	Member
<i>Dr. Joshua Stewart</i>	Faculty, Doctoral Program Coordinator	Member
<i>Dr. David Casas</i>	Faculty, Undergraduate Program Coordinator	Member
<i>Mr. Jake McMillian</i>	Staff (Academic Advisor)	Member
<i>Ms. Vanessa Nealey</i>	Staff (Assistant to the President, HR Director)	Member
<i>Dr. Steve Pray</i>	Staff (Director of Admissions and Records)	Member
<i>Mrs. Padma Sajja</i>	Staff (Director of Financial Aid)	Member
<i>Ms. Alisha Blevins</i>	Staff (Director of Library Services and Administration)	Member
<i>Dr. Margie Miller</i>	Staff (Director of Student Affairs)	Member

⁶ SACSCOC, “Reviewing the Quality Enhancement Plan: An Evaluative Framework,” 1, <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/Quality-Enhancement-Plan-Framework.pdf>.

⁷ SACSCOC, “Reviewing the Quality Enhancement Plan,” 1.

As the “Position” column demonstrates, the Strategic Planning Committee comprised four members of the Administration, four members of the Faculty, and six members of the Staff. Administration, Faculty, and Staff were the constituents active in the pre-planning stage of QEP preparation. These constituents collected institutional data for the QEP Steering Committee to use in selecting a topic.

The chart below lists members of the QEP Steering Committee arranged in alphabetical order according to the “Position” column.

QEP Steering Committee Membership

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Committee Membership</i>
<i>Dr. Evan Posey</i>	Administration (Executive VP), Alumnus (MDiv)	Member
<i>Mr. Kenneth Kuffrey</i>	Administration (VP for Financial Affairs)	Member
<i>Dr. Bill Houck</i>	Board of Trustees	Member
<i>Mrs. Deborah Wilson</i>	Board of Trustees, Community Leader (SACSCOC accreditation liaison, retired, Dekalb County Schools)	Member
<i>Mr. Matt Alexander</i>	Community Leader (Pastor)	Member
<i>Mr. Trey Bailey</i>	Current Student, Community Leader (Newton County Board of Education), Alumnus (MA)	Member
<i>Mr. Joseph Washington</i>	Current Student, SGA President	Member
<i>Dr. Thomas Mapes</i>	Faculty (Dean)	Chair, QEP Director
<i>Dr. David Casas</i>	Faculty, Undergraduate Program Coordinator, Alumnus (MDiv)	Member
<i>Dr. Ron Cobb</i>	Faculty, Undergraduate Program Coordinator	Member
<i>Dr. Casey Hough</i>	Faculty, Graduate Program Coordinator	Member
<i>Dr. Doug Taylor</i>	Faculty, Graduate Program Coordinator, Alumnus (MDiv)	Member
<i>Dr. Marcus Merritt</i>	Faculty, Doctoral Program Coordinator, Alumnus (BA, MDiv)	Member
<i>Dr. Joshua Stewart</i>	Faculty, Doctoral Program Coordinator, Alumnus (BA)	Member
<i>Ms. Vanessa Nealey</i>	Staff (Assistant to the President, HR Director)	Member
<i>Dr. Steve Pray</i>	Staff (Director of Admissions and Records)	Member
<i>Ms. Alisha Blevins</i>	Staff (Director of Library Services and Administration), Alumna (Certificate)	Member
<i>Dr. Margie Miller</i>	Staff (Director of Student Affairs), Alumna (MDiv)	Member

As the “Position” column demonstrates, the QEP Steering Committee consisted of two members of the Administration, two members of the Board, three Community Leaders, two Current Students, seven

Faculty, four Staff, and eight Alumni.⁸ These constituents selected the QEP topic, devised the assessment process, and planned the content of QEP instruction.

The charts above provide an initial glimpse of the role of each constituency in identifying and developing the QEP topic. More detailed description of each constituency's involvement is provided below.

Students

Student participation was critical to the selection and development of RISE. Students first heard of the QEP topic selection process on January 4, 2024. They submitted their topic choices via the QEP Topic Survey, which guided the steering committee's selection of topic. Undergraduates were selected for a second survey in September of 2024. Please see Chapter 1 for a detailed discussion of student surveys and their importance in the QEP identification process.

Faculty conducted a RISE baselining project in December of 2024. Student papers were assessed according to the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric shown in Chapter 7. Assessment was for diagnostic purposes only, and did not affect students' grades. Given that students had not received RISE instruction at this point, their performance indicated their baseline competence pertaining to RISE SLOs. Data gained from the rubric baselining project was used to determine the RISE SLO targets identified in Chapter 4.

The full rollout of RISE will commence on September 7, 2025. At this point, students will participate fully in QEP interventions and their work will be assessed for a grade by the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric. For specific details about RISE content and structure, please see Chapter 5 of this document. Likewise, for details about the RISE assessment process, please see Chapter 7.

After the rollout of RISE, the QEP Director will update students at the beginning of each semester. Updates will take the form of video recordings and will summarize assessment metrics from the previous semester. In simple terms, the updates will highlight progress the student body has made and emphasize progress to be made in the future.

Faculty

Faculty input has also shaped the QEP since its inception. As described in Chapter 1, the faculty's insistence that information literacy be wedded to real communication informed the development of the topic. The wording of the topic – "to improve students' information literacy and its expression within academic writing" – is a direct result of the faculty's leadership.

⁸ Note that a single member frequently occupied multiple "positions." For instance, Mr. Trey Bailey is a current student, an alumnus, and a community leader. Similarly, Dr. Margie Miller is both a staff member and an alumna.

Faculty were first informed of the QEP when Luther Rice initially gained SACSCOC accreditation in 2020. Since then, the QEP has been a recurrent theme in faculty meetings. Moreover, faculty supplied four members of the Strategic Planning Committee and seven members of the QEP Steering Committee.

Given that RISE will be embedded in 15 BAR courses, the faculty teaching these courses will be front-line instructional personnel. Prior to the implementation of RISE, faculty will tailor the QEP to their courses. As explained in Chapter 5, the tailoring process will require faculty to determine the correct place within their courses to place the RISE Information-, Practice-, and Mastery-tier lessons. It will also require them to select a Practice-level and a Mastery-level assignment from among existing course assignments. Likewise, as explained in Chapter 5, the QEP will require faculty to assess Practice-level and Mastery-level assignments using the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric.

Implementing RISE will require faculty to be trained. While Luther Rice faculty have extensive experience teaching online courses and are adept users of Moodle, Luther Rice's LMS, the QEP Director and Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs will aid them to perform the practical tasks of positioning Information, Practice, and Mastery lessons in their courses and integrating the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric to assess assignments.⁹ Beyond these practical matters, however, faculty will need training and practice with the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric to evaluate student work accurately and consistently. Toward this end, faculty who teach the 15 courses selected for RISE will participate in two rubric norming sessions during the Spring of 2025. Thereafter, throughout the duration of RISE (Fall 2025 – Fall 2030), RISE faculty will meet twice semesterly as members of the QEP Implementation Committee to evaluate assessment data and to participate in training as needed.¹⁰

Staff

Like faculty, staff have anticipated the QEP since Luther Rice's 2020 accreditation with SACSCOC. Staff lent six members to the Strategic Planning Committee and four members to the QEP Steering Committee. The idea that would eventually become the QEP topic was articulated by a member of the staff – Ms. Alisha Blevins, Director of Library Services and Administration – during the November 2022 meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee. The Library Director also served as a member of the QEP Steering Committee, where she was a vital resource to define information literacy standards and craft RISE interventions.

Staff, the library staff particularly, will have an essential role on the QEP Implementation Committee. The Information Literacy Learning Outcomes Rubrics that Luther Rice has used for many years to assess

⁹ Please see Chapter 5 for more detail about RISE lessons and the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric.

¹⁰ For more detail about the activities of the QEP Implementation Committee, please see Chapter 7, particularly the "Assessment Timeline" subsection.

ILLO standards were written as a collaboration between the QEP Director (then an assistant professor of English) and the Director of Library Services and Administration. Accordingly, the Library Director's expertise will be called on again to oversee RISE's implementation of information literacy instruction.

Following the implementation of RISE, library staff will support students as they find and use resources to complete RISE Practice-level and Mastery-level assignments. In truth, library staff are instructional personnel every bit as much as faculty are. For this reason, library staff will participate with faculty on the QEP Implementation Committee through the duration of RISE.

Other staff members will be essential to implement RISE. The Director of Admissions and Records will collaborate with the QEP Director to create surveys to assess students' perception of and attitude toward RISE across its five-year duration. The Director of Student Services and her team of academic advisors will field questions from current and prospective students about RISE. The Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs will respond to student questions pertinent to completing and submitting RISE assignments in Moodle, Luther Rice's LMS.

Finally, IT staff in the Office of Instructional Technology (OIT) will be indispensable to the delivery and assessment of RISE. Broadly speaking, since RISE will be delivered through Moodle, the OIT will facilitate RISE's delivery to students. More specifically, however, the OIT will implement tools necessary to track, monitor, and aggregate student performance. Given the purely online delivery of the QEP, the OIT will play a critical role in RISE's content delivery and data aggregation and analysis. For more detail about the role of OIT and the data aggregation tools to be used in QEP assessment, please see Chapter 6 of this document, Resource Allocation and Implementation.

Administration

Administration includes the President and the various Vice Presidents of Luther Rice. Luther Rice has four administrators – Dr. Steven Steinhilber (President), Dr. Evan Posey (Executive Vice President), Mr. Ken Stokes (Vice President for Information Technology), and Mr. Kenneth Kuffrey (Vice President for Financial Affairs). Each of the four administrators has a pivotal role in the QEP.

The Executive Vice President chairs the Strategic Planning Committee and is a member of the QEP Steering Committee. Under his leadership, the Strategic Planning Committee researched institutional data to furnish the QEP Steering Committee a strong empirical basis upon which to build the QEP topic. The Executive Vice President is the QEP Director's immediate supervisor and is also Luther Rice's Chief Academic Officer and SACSCOC accreditation liaison. Consequently, the QEP Director works closely with him to plan training for faculty, write the agenda for QEP Steering Committee meetings, and solve day-to-day problems as they appear.

The Vice President for Information Technology is the head of OIT, discussed above. He is responsible for the build, maintenance, and oversight of Luther Rice's LMS, Moodle. Since Moodle is open source, the OIT has made a number of modifications and customizations to sync it with Oasis, Luther Rice's

proprietary SIS (which was also designed, built, and maintained by the OIT). As discussed previously, the QEP will be delivered online entirely through Moodle, and student data – including RISE assessment data -- will be stored in Oasis. Moreover, data collection and aggregation will be conducted using built-in tools such as Moodle’s Competencies report as well as third-party tools such as IntelliBoard. The VP for Information Technology oversees the technical aspects and day-to-day maintenance of Moodle, IntelliBoard, and the corpus of Luther Rice’s technological infrastructure.

The Vice President for Financial Affairs writes the budget and controls financial outlays. He reviewed Chapter 6 of this document, Resource Allocation and Implementation. Furthermore, given his oversight and management of the Budget, the Vice President for Financial Affairs worked with the Executive Vice President during the hiring process of Professor Jenny Medlin to provide teaching relief for the QEP Director.

The President has supported the QEP since Luther Rice’s initial accreditation with SACSCOC in 2020. He has attended QEP training seminars at SACSCOC annual meetings with the then-future QEP Director. He approved the roster of the Strategic Planning Committee and QEP Steering Committee. He announced the QEP Director to the faculty and staff during the 2023 Faculty Summit. He has also supported, endorsed, and championed the QEP through innumerable conversations with Luther Rice staff, faculty, administrators, and Board members.

Board of Trustees

As the chief decision-making body of Luther Rice College & Seminary, the Board approved the QEP topic and budget.¹¹ Beyond that, however, the Board was actively involved in the identification of the QEP topic and planning of QEP assessment. Two members of the Board of Trustees served on the QEP Steering Committee, Mrs. Deborah Wilson and Dr. Bill Houck. One of the two – and frequently both – was present at every QEP Steering Committee meeting between September 2023 and January 2025 when this document was finalized. Moreover, the Board members were active between meetings advancing discussion. They engaged faculty, staff, and administrators in conversation to learn their personal insights about questions raised during QEP Steering Committee meetings. These insights often clarified the committee’s questions and frequently served as starting points for discussion during subsequent meetings.

Community Leaders

The QEP Steering Committee also benefitted from the insight of local community leaders. Mr. Trey Bailey is a member of the Newton County Board of Education, Mr. Matt Alexander is a local pastor, and Mrs. Deborah Wilson is a retired educator and longtime accreditation liaison for the DeKalb County

¹¹ Minutes of the May 2024 Board of Trustees meeting are available upon request.

School System. While most of these individuals hold other positions at Luther Rice as students or Board members, their experience in the local community is an important reason why they were chosen to serve on the QEP Steering Community.

Specifically, Mr. Alexander's expertise in ministry gave him insight into the needs and aspirations of Luther Rice students, many of whom serve in ministry already or intend to do so upon graduation. Mr. Bailey's experience as both a Luther Rice student and a member of the Newton County Board of Education enabled him to represent the needs of students individually and corporately. Finally, Mrs. Wilson's expertise as a retired educator and longtime accreditation liaison for DeKalb County Schools was particularly beneficial in selecting a topic and designing the assessment plan.

Summary

The selection and planning of RISE was a joint effort of Luther Rice staff, students, faculty, administration, Board, and community. RISE will continue to be a whole-of-institution effort as it is implemented and assessed. RISE "has broad-based support of institutional constituencies" and will continue to engage these constituencies moving forward.¹²

¹² SACSCOC, "Reviewing the Quality Enhancement Plan," 1.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

RISE is founded on best practices in higher education. Accordingly, its learning outcomes are normative and appropriate. Furthermore, its means and methods are well-founded and supported by research in the field.

This chapter synthesizes applicable publications in the field of information literacy in higher education. Its purpose is to highlight the concerns the QEP Steering Committee considered when shaping RISE. These concerns are two-fold:

1. What are the domains of information literacy?
2. How may information literacy best be taught?

The first question guided the QEP Steering Committee in their selection of RISE learning outcomes. The second question guided the committee in designing RISE interventions and the assessment plan.

Domains of Information Literacy

Information literacy is commonly conceived as the skill of distinguishing reliable from unreliable sources. While this skill is certainly a component of information literacy, it is not the sum total. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) explained its “Framework for Information Literacy in Higher Education” as being “based on a cluster of interconnected core concepts, with flexible options for implementation.”¹³ Accordingly, the QEP Steering Committee developed RISE Learning Outcomes to reflect selected ACRL standards.

Rise Learning Outcome 1 – integrate sources appropriately – reflects the following ACRL Knowledge Practices and Dispositions.

ACRL Designation	ACRL Standard
Knowledge Practice 3.1	Give credit to the original ideas of others through proper attribution and citation
Knowledge Practice 5.1	Cite the contributing work of others in their own information production
Disposition 3.1	Respect the original ideas of others
Disposition 3.2	Value the skills, time, and effort needed produce knowledge
Disposition 4.8	Follow ethical and legal guidelines in gathering and using information

RISE Learning Outcome 2 – seek information from multiple perspectives – reflects the ACRL standards shown below.

¹³ Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, January 11, 2016, 2, https://www.ala.org/sites/default/files/acrl/content/issues/infolit/Framework_ILHE.pdf.

ACRL Designation	ACRL Standard
Knowledge Practice 1.3	Understand that many disciplines have acknowledged authorities in the sense of well-known scholars and publications that are widely considered “standard,” and yet, even in those situations, some scholars would challenge the authority of those sources
Knowledge Practice 4.7	Synthesize ideas gathered from multiple sources
Knowledge Practice 5.7	Recognize that a given scholarly work may not represent the only - or even the majority - perspective on the issue
Disposition 1.1	Develop and maintain an open mind when encountering varied and sometimes conflicting perspectives
Disposition 4.1	Question traditional notions of granting authority and recognize the value of diverse ideas and worldviews
Disposition 4.6	Seek multiple perspectives during information gathering and assessment

Finally, RISE Learning Outcome 3 – assess sources’ logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions – reflects the following ACRL standards.

ACRL Designation	ACRL Standard
Knowledge Practice 4.8	Draw reasonable conclusions based on the analysis and interpretation of information
Knowledge Practice 5.4	Critically evaluate contributions made by others in participatory information environments
Disposition 1.3	Develop awareness of the importance of assessing content with a skeptical stance and with a self awareness of their own biases and worldview
Disposition 3.3	See themselves as contributors to the information marketplace rather than only consumers of it
Disposition 4.4	Maintain an open mind and a critical stance

The ACRL’s “Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education” is generally regarded as the standard in the field. Given the match between RISE’s Learning Outcomes and ACRL’s framework, the QEP Steering Committee considers its QEP outcomes to be normative and appropriate.

In addition to consulting ACRL’s standards, the QEP Committee also consulted Jacalyn E. Bryan’s “Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, and Quality Enhancement Plans” to weigh the inclusion of RISE Learning Outcome 3 -- assess sources’ logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions -- in a QEP that otherwise emphasizes information literacy. The committee’s concern was to maintain cohesion and to ensure that RISE’s learning objectives contributed to a unified effort. As Bryan observes, in the published literature “there seems to be a lack of consensus on the specific nature of the connection between critical thinking and information literacy.”¹⁴ Accordingly, she maps ACRL’s information literacy

¹⁴ Jacalyn E. Bryan, “Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, and Quality Enhancement Plans,” *Reference Services Review* 42, no. 3 (2014): 391.

standards against The Foundation for Critical Thinking's seven "elements of thought": Purpose, Question, Assumptions, Implications and Consequences, Information, Concepts, Conclusions and Interpretations and Points of View. Not only does Bryan demonstrate that ACRL's standards overlap with The Foundation for Critical Thinking's "elements of thought," she also argues that librarians, by inculcating information literacy, strengthen students' ability to think critically.

In terms of RISE, the QEP Steering Committee applies Bryan's work to justify its inclusion of RISE Learning Outcome 3 – assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions – as an information literacy skill. Additionally, Bryan's demonstration that librarians partner with faculty as instructional personnel informs Luther Rice's practice of including library staff in the design of RISE, training of faculty, and development of instructional materials for students.

Teaching Information Literacy

While the ACRL and Bryan guided the QEP Steering Committee in its creation of learning outcomes, various other sources guided the design of RISE itself and the creation of instructional materials. Lori Townsend, Korey Brunetti, and Amy Hofer, in their "Threshold Concepts and Information Literacy," observe that despite numerous theories and publications related to teaching information literacy, information literacy instruction is often ineffective. Accordingly, they turn to Meyer and Land's threshold concept to help instructional librarians teach information literacy in a way that students would understand and accept.

As Townsend, Brunetti, and Hofer explain, threshold concepts "are gateways for student understanding that, once traversed, transform the student's perspective."¹⁵ Rephrased, threshold concepts are the key ideas of a discipline that, once grasped, enable students to break through barriers to comprehension and understand what was previously unintelligible. Moreover, beyond helping students understand what is being taught, core concepts "have the potential to help address the 'why' questions that students often pose: Why do I need to learn about this database? What's the point of citing this paper correctly? When will I ever need to know about peer review? Why is this course required?"¹⁶

To explain how threshold questions answer these questions, Townsend, Brunetti, and Hofer write that threshold concepts teach students to think like insiders or practitioners of the discipline: "Threshold concepts can answer these questions in more meaningful ways by grounding procedural instruction in a disciplinary context."¹⁷ While doubtlessly true, what is missing from this explanation is the ethical

¹⁵ Lori Townsend, Korey Brunetti, and Amy R. Hofer, "Threshold Concepts and Information Literacy," *portal: Libraries and the Academy* 11, no. 3 (2011): 855.

¹⁶ Townsend, Brunetti, and Hofer, 856.

¹⁷ Townsend, Brunetti, and Hofer, 856.

dimension of a threshold concept. Threshold concepts are not “concepts” in a strictly cerebral sense. Instead, they double as values or warrants held by practitioners of the discipline.¹⁸ When students accept these values as their own, they adopt the ethical outlook of a practitioner. From this ethical perspective, the “why” questions make sense.

Quoting directly from Meyer and Land, Townsend, Brunetti, and Hofer supply five characteristics of threshold concepts:

- transformative—causes the learner to experience a shift in perspective;
- integrative—brings together separate concepts (often identified as learning objectives or competencies) into a unified whole;
- irreversible—once grasped, cannot be un-grasped;
- troublesome—often counter-intuitive, the place where students stumble or get stuck;
- bounded—may help define the boundaries of a particular discipline, are perhaps unique to the discipline¹⁹

From the above, it is clear that RISE learning outcomes are not threshold concepts but are outworkings of them. This realization may be applied productively if RISE learning outcomes are linked to the threshold concepts that undergird them. The QEP Steering Committee has identified two threshold concepts (or warrants) that undergird RISE learning outcomes:

1. Respect the contributions of others.
2. The purpose of research is not to win an argument but to discover truth.

The first supplies the ethical basis for RISE Learning Outcome 1, “Integrate sources appropriately.” When a student mentions an author by name or cites a source in a footnote, he or she acknowledges the scholar’s hard work in discovering and making the information available. Likewise, the student recognizes that his or her ideas did not form in a vacuum but were shaped and conditioned by others. Accordingly, citing sources is an expression of humility.

The second threshold concept supplies the ethical basis for RISE Learning Outcomes 2 and 3, “Seek information from multiple perspectives,” and “Assess sources’ logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions.” Frequently students think that “winning” an academic argument constitutes

¹⁸ Readers familiar with Stephen Toulmin’s analysis of argument will recognize the word “warrant.” While no researcher to date has investigated the relationship between Toulmin’s warrant and Meyer and Land’s threshold concept, similarities between them are striking.

¹⁹ Townsend, Brunetti, and Hofer, 854. Quotation taken from Jan Meyer and Ray Land, “Threshold Concepts and Troublesome Knowledge: Linkages to Ways of Thinking and Practicing within the Disciplines,” *ETL Project Occasional Report 4* (Edinburgh: Enhancing Teaching-Learning Environments in Undergraduate Courses Project, 2003), 9.

amassing sources supportive of their case. Such a misunderstanding often causes students to cherry-pick sources or even to distort sources' claims. RISE will ameliorate this behavior by teaching students to evaluate sources' contrasting arguments to discover truth, not simply to amass sources and "win."

A final source instrumental to the design of RISE is Phillip A. Smith's "Integrate and Assess: Information Literacy as Quality Enhancement of Undergraduate Curriculum." Smith describes Lincoln Memorial University's QEP "focusing on improving IL [information literacy] competency" among undergraduates.²⁰ Particularly relevant to RISE were two concerns Smith raised pertaining to tiered instruction and authentic assessment. As Smith describes, LMU adopted a tiered approach to information literacy instruction by teaching lower-level learning outcomes in freshman and sophomore composition classes (ENGL 101 and ENGL201), and higher-level learning outcomes in a junior or senior class that culminated in the creation of a research project. Smith identifies several challenges with this design, namely that students who transfer ENGL 101 or ENGL 201 credits from another university will lack the information literacy instruction they were intended to receive. Beyond this problem, the members of Luther Rice's QEP Steering Committee identified another: even in the best case scenario in which a student does not have transfer credit for ENGL101 or ENGL201, he or she would receive only three exposures to information literacy instruction over a four-year period. So little exposure over so long a time leaves ample opportunity for mental entropy.

Accordingly, Luther Rice's QEP Steering Committee designed RISE according to two principles: 1) Repeated exposures separated by short intervals, and 2) Longitudinal duration across students' undergraduate experience. As the QEP Steering Committee concluded, effective instruction must be short and long simultaneously. Exposure must recur at short intervals but instruction must extend across a long period.

The first principle led the QEP Steering Committee to design Information, Practice, and Mastery lessons within a single semester. Students are introduced to RISE learning outcomes initially via the Information-tier lesson in the first week of the semester. Assessment of the Information-tier lesson comes in the form of a quiz in which students identify the concepts taught but are not yet required to demonstrate them practically or (to borrow Smith's term) "authentically."

At the midpoint of the semester, students participate in the Practice-tier lesson. Instruction at this point extends beyond that of the Information-tier lesson and assessment is "authentic" in that it requires students to apply their learning to produce a short research assignment. Assessment of the Practice-tier lesson requires students to produce a short 300-500 word exercise illustrating, initially, the skills taught in the Information- and Practice-tier lessons.

Finally, in the latter weeks of the semester, students participate in the Mastery-tier lesson. Instruction extends beyond that of the Practice-tier lesson, and assessment takes the form a term paper. The term

²⁰ Phillip A. Smith, "Integrate and Assess: Information Literacy as Quality Enhancement of Undergraduate Curriculum," *Communications in Information Literacy* 10, no. 2 (2016): 215.

paper is expected to demonstrate fully the skills taught in the prior Information-, Practice-, and Mastery-tier lessons.

But RISE is not a semester one-shot. To further combat mental entropy, the QEP Steering Committee designed RISE to follow its second principle, that effective instruction is longitudinal. Accordingly, RISE will be embedded in 15 undergraduate courses throughout the BAR program.²¹ The effect of this provision is that RISE will be a recurring feature of students' undergraduate experience. Each repetition will remind students of RISE learning outcomes and give them instruction and practice implementing these outcomes in their research and writing. Admittedly, given choice of electives and the requirements of individual programs, few if any students will participate in RISE 15 times. However, most students will participate in RISE 4-5 times throughout their undergraduate curriculum.²² As a recursive element of students' experience, RISE will promote stable research habits and lasting academic improvement.

Summary

RISE learning outcomes are normative. RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3 compare squarely with ACRL's Knowledge Practices and Dispositions. RISE Learning Outcome 3 particularly is supported by Bryan's work aligning ACRL's "core concepts" with The Foundation for Critical Thinking's seven "elements of thought."

In terms of design, while RISE is unique to Luther Rice, its structure and materials are supported by research and best practices. RISE will harness Meyer and Land's theory of "threshold concepts" as adapted to information literacy instruction by Townsend, Brunetti, and Hofer. Furthermore, by assessing information literacy as it appears in students' speech and writing, RISE corresponds with Phillip A. Smith's idea of "authentic" assessment. Moreover, in teaching RISE learning outcomes progressively at short intervals across a long duration, RISE is informed by Smith's concept of tiered instruction.

²¹ For more discussion of this aspect of RISE – including a list of the 15 RISE courses – please see the "Scope of QEP" subsection of Chapter 5.

²² Please see the "Scope of QEP" subsection of Chapter 5 once again for analysis of the number of times a student will repeat RISE during his or her undergraduate experience.

Chapter 4: Student Learning Outcomes

This chapter will identify RISE's student learning outcomes, present and analyze baseline data, and identify targets for future achievement. The next chapter – Chapter 5: Student Body and QEP Design – elaborates several points initially addressed in this chapter. Accordingly, it may be desirable to read Chapter 5 as the companion piece to the present chapter.

Learning Outcomes

According to the QEP Steering Committee's "Topic Rationale and Motion" document (see Appendix A), the goal of the QEP is "to improve students' information literacy and its expression within academic writing."²³ The QEP Steering Committee has elaborated this overall goal in the form of three student learning outcomes:

- RISE Learning Outcome 1: Integrate sources appropriately.
- RISE Learning Outcome 2: Seek information from multiple perspectives.
- RISE Learning Outcome 3: Assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions.

Important

RISE is "focused on important outcomes related to student learning."²⁴ RISE learning outcomes are important not only to educate students to think critically but also to cultivate citizens suited to democratic society. RISE Learning Outcome 1 applies to ethics. "Integrat[ing] sources appropriately" requires students to respect the contributions of others, to acknowledge the ways their thought has benefitted from others whom they have heard and read, and to give others credit for discovering and promulgating knowledge.

Frequently, however, students' mishandling of a source reflects a deficit of skill rather than a deficit of integrity. Accordingly, the QEP Steering Committee determined to approach Learning Outcome 1 by teaching students how to introduce a source, how to include quotations and footnotes, and how to integrate sources' claims within one's argument without losing one's voice.

RISE Learning Outcome 2 is likewise important for academic discourse and democratic citizenship. Willingness to dialog with opposing arguments develops critical thinking and fairmindedness in high demand intellectually and civically. Students entering college often consider this intellectual behavior a

²³ Topic Rationale and Motion, 1.

²⁴ SACSCOC, "Reviewing the Quality Enhancement Plan: An Evaluative Framework," 2, <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/Quality-Enhancement-Plan-Framework.pdf>.

form of mental or even moral weakness and conscientiously shun arguments that oppose their own. Accordingly, the intervention pertaining to RISE Learning Outcome 2 is important to correct students' frequently mistaken views regarding contrary opinions.

Finally, RISE Learning Outcome 3 expresses a hallmark of intellectual behavior, encouraging students to consider not simply the sound byte or “drop mic” moment but the logic and evidence leading to it. In some cases, careful analysis may reveal that stirring rhetoric lacks a basis in reason and evidence. In other cases, analysis of the reason behind a conclusion may enhance one's appreciation of the conclusion itself.

Specific

In addition to being important, RISE learning “outcomes are specific.”²⁵ Each identifies a specific concept to be learned and expressed in student writing. Yet while RISE learning outcomes are specific in their own right, each contains component elements that students must learn. The matrix shown below identifies the component elements of each RISE learning outcome and has been used to plan and develop RISE instructional materials.

<i>Learning Outcome</i>	<i>Component Elements</i>
<i>RISE 1 – Integrate sources appropriately</i>	1) Introducing a source 2) Including quotations, footnotes, and attribution tags 3) Maintaining control – shifting between the source and one's own voice
<i>RISE 2 – Seek information from multiple sources</i>	1) Practicing humility 2) Using opponents to test your argument 3) Making concessions and reframing 4) Making refutations and rebuttals
<i>RISE 3 – Assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions</i>	1) Prioritizing reasons and evidence over authority 2) Understanding sources' claims accurately 3) Practicing charity – not attacking “weakest limbs” 4) Practicing integrity – not creating strawmen

²⁵ SACSCOC, “Reviewing the Quality Enhancement Plan,” 2.

Measurable

RISE learning “outcomes are [. . .] measurable.”²⁶ Each will be measured at three intervals: Information, Practice, and Mastery. In a semester of instruction, the Information level of assessment will occur at the beginning of the semester, immediately after initial instruction. The Information level of assessment will consist of a short quiz intended to measure whether students understand the learning outcomes at a basic conceptual level. While students will not be expected to implement the outcomes practically in writing at this point, the quiz will assess whether they understand what is meant by the language of the learning outcomes.

The Practice-level assessment will occur at the midpoint of the semester and will consist of a 350-500-word written exercise demonstrating RISE Learning Outcomes #1, #2, and #3. The exercise will be evaluated by the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric shown below. Given the short and less-than-formal nature of the assignment, professors may identify or even supply the sources for students to discuss. The focus of the assessment is not students’ ability to find sources but rather their ability to integrate, discuss, and analyze them. For more discussion of Practice level assignments, please see the “Learning Activities/Assignments” section of Chapter 5.

Mastery-level assessment will occur at the end of the semester and will take the form of a term paper also evaluated by the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric shown below. For this assessment, students are expected to demonstrate comprehension of RISE Learning Outcomes at length and in full detail. Please see the “Targets for Improvement” section, below in this chapter, for a description of expected performance.

²⁶ SACSCOC, “Reviewing the Quality Enhancement Plan,” 2.

RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric

RISE Outcome	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Integrate Sources Appropriately (RISE Learning Outcome 1)	Student discusses sources skillfully while maintaining control of the argument. Attribution tags, quotations, and footnotes enable the student to shuttle between the source's ideas and his or her own.	Student distinguishes sources' claims from his or her own. Quotations are introduced, discussed, quoted, and cited. Notwithstanding, discussion may be uneven, either superficial or superabundant.	Student attempts to distinguish the source's claims from his or her own, but problems are evident. The student may 1) Neglect quotations 2) Neglect to introduce quotations 3) Neglect to discuss quotations 4) Etc.	Student does not distinguish the source's claims from his or her own. Readers cannot tell what belongs to the student and what belongs to the source. Citation typically consists of a single footnote at the end of a paragraph.
Seek Information from Multiple Perspectives (RISE Learning Outcome 2)	Student appraises the claims of opposing sources in detail, rebutting them persuasively and/or making concessions and reframing. Sources' opposition enhances the student's argument.	Student identifies, in detail, the claims of opposing or differing sources. While the student's rebuttals may be imperfectly persuasive for a professional academic, the student understands the opposition and makes a valiant attempt to respond.	Student identifies opposing or differing claims, but problems are evident. Student may discuss claims superficially (as a requirement to be completed as quickly as possible), or in the abstract without citing a specific source.	Student does not identify opposing or differing claims. Argument is entirely one-sided. Student neglects controversy or pretends it does not exist.
Assess Sources' Logic/Argument (RISE Learning Outcome 3)	Student constructs a persuasive argument, exhibiting true academic skepticism and illustrating careful, conscientious thought.	Student typically uses sources responsibly, examining their claims without distortion, misrepresentation, or logical fallacies.	Student attempts to use sources responsibly. However, the student may misunderstand, distort (weakest limb), or misrepresent (strawman) sources' claims.	Student does not use sources responsibly. Treats sources as pure authorities with little to no analysis of claims.

Baseline data

Two forms of “baseline data [are] present and [have] been analyzed” for RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.²⁷ The first form of baseline data is furnished by the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric shown immediately above used to assess a research paper at the end of the Fall 2024 semester. The second form of baseline data is the ILLO assessment described in Chapter 1 that is part of Luther Rice’s yearly SLO Assessment Cycle. Both forms of baseline data are direct, objective measures of student performance.

Baseline Data from RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric

During the Fall 2024 semester, faculty used the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric, shown above, to assess 63 term papers from five undergraduate courses.²⁸ Since students had not received RISE instruction previously, the assessment indicates students’ current capabilities prior to instruction. The chart below summarizes the data collected.

The RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric has four categories of achievement – “Does Not Meet Expectations,” “Partially Meets Expectations,” “Meets Expectations,” and “Exceeds Expectations.” The QEP Director, in assembling Fall 2024 baseline data, converted faculty members’ rubric assessment to a number. Each assessment of “Does Not Meet Expectations” received a score of 1, “Partially Meets Expectations” a score of 2, “Meets Expectations” a score of 3, and “Exceeds Expectations” a score of 4. The chart below shows the average score for RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3, followed by the count of students who achieved a score greater than or equal to 1, greater than or equal to 2, greater than or equal to 3, or 4.

²⁷ SACSCOC, “Reviewing the Quality Enhancement Plan,” 2.

²⁸ The five courses were part of the larger group of 15 courses selected for participation in RISE.

Fall 2024 RISE Baselines – Aggregated Counts

	<i>RISE 1 – Integrate Sources Appropriately</i>	<i>RISE 2 – Seek Information from Multiple Perspectives</i>	<i>RISE 3 – Assess Sources’ Logic/Argument</i>
<i>Average of all Students (63 total)</i>	2.5	2.2	2.3
<i>Count of students with a score of 1 or above (Does Not Meet Expectations)</i>	63 (100%)	63 (100%)	63 (100%)
<i>Count of students with a score of 2 or above (Partially Meets Expectations)</i>	55 (87%)	42 (67%)	51 (81%)
<i>Count of students with a score of 3 or above (Meets Expectations)</i>	33 (52%)	28 (44%)	29 (46%)
<i>Count of students with a score of 4 (Exceeds Expectations)</i>	6 (10%)	6 (10%)	5 (8%)

As the “Average of all students” row shows, students on average scored between a 2 (Partially Meets Expectations) and a 3 (Meets Expectations) for each RISE Learning Outcome. Students scored an average of 2.5 for RISE Learning Outcome 1, 2.2 for RISE Learning Outcome 2, and 2.3 for RISE Learning Outcome 3. Notably, scores for RISE Learning Outcomes 2 and 3 lag behind scores for RISE Learning Outcome 1.

The rows labeled “Count of students ...” offer more detailed information. 100% of students scored greater than or equal to 1. Since 1 was the lowest score possible, every students scored a 1 or greater. However, 87% of students scored greater than or equal to 2. 52% scored greater than or equal to 3, and 10% scored a 4.

The QEP Steering Committee regarded the row labelled “Count of students with a score of 3 or above” with particular interest, since this row identified the number of students who met or exceeded expectations. Since these students met or exceeded expectations, the committee judged them to have mastered the learning outcome. 52% of students met or exceeded expectations for RISE Learning

Outcome 1. 44% met or exceeded expectations for RISE Learning Outcome 2. And 46% met or exceeded expectations for RISE Learning Outcome 3.

Phrased negatively, however, if 52% of students met or exceeded expectations for RISE Learning Outcome 1, then 48% either did not meet expectations or met expectations only partially. Similarly, if 44% of students met or exceeded expectations for RISE Learning Outcome 2, then 56% did not meet expectations or met expectations only partially. The same applies for RISE Learning Outcome 3: 54% of students either did not meet expectations or met expectations only partially.

Additional baseline data will be taken during the Spring 2025 semester. But already, the data collected in Fall 2024 demonstrates that RISE instruction is necessary and Luther Rice students have room to grow. Target figures for each RISE learning outcome are discussed below in this chapter in the “Targets for Improvement” section.

Baseline Data from ILLO Assessment

Another source of baseline data is provided by the Information Literacy Learning Outcomes (ILLO) assessment, which is part of the larger SLO assessment cycle conducted each year. Historically, Luther Rice has assessed ILLO competency according to student performance in EN1102, a freshman course. However, since RISE will be longitudinal, including 15 courses across students’ undergraduate curriculum, and since EN1102 will most likely be the first course in the sequence, the QEP Steering Committee determined that existing ILLO data collected from EN1102 was inadequate to assess RISE. Accordingly, an additional ILLO assessment was implemented beginning in the 2023-2024 assessment cycle to measure students’ ILLO performance as seniors immediately prior to graduation.

The tables below show ILLO data from both the freshman and senior assessments. Note that the senior ILLO assessment has data from one year only, 2023-2024.

ILLO Assessment Results – UG Freshmen

<i>Outcome ID</i>	<i>Learning Outcome</i>	<i>2020-2021</i>	<i>2021-2022</i>	<i>2022-2023</i>	<i>2023-2024</i>	<i>Rolling average</i>
1.1	Students look for indicators of quality when seeking information, distinguishing reliable from unreliable sources.	4.93	3.93	3.33	5.07	4.32
2.1	Some variety evident in selection of sources.	4.67	3.67	3.20	4.00	3.89
3.1	Students cite sources appropriately and relate sources’ claims accurately.	4.20	3.27	2.60	3.93	3.50
4.1	Students seek information from multiple perspectives.	4.67	3.53	2.73	3.93	3.72

5.1	Students make an attempt to assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions.	4.47	3.60	2.53	3.93	3.63
6.1	Students make a focused argument, limiting the scope of research appropriately.	4.60	4.13	3.13	4.07	3.98

ILLO Assessment Results – UG Senior

<i>Outcome ID</i>	<i>Learning Outcome</i>	<i>2023-2024 Scores</i>	<i>Amount Over (Under) Freshman Rolling Average</i>
1.1	Students look for indicators of quality when seeking information, distinguishing reliable from unreliable sources.	4.60	0.28
2.1	Some variety evident in selection of sources.	3.67	(0.22)
3.1	Students cite sources appropriately and relate sources' claims accurately.	4.07	0.57
4.1	Students seek information from multiple perspectives.	2.60	(1.12)
5.1	Students make an attempt to assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions.	3.40	(0.23)
6.1	Students make a focused argument, limiting the scope of research appropriately.	4.20	0.22

Comparing the tables, it is evident that freshmen, after taking EN1102, outperform seniors for ILLOs 2.1, 4.1, and 5.1. While freshman composition professors emphasize these ILLOs, they are not emphasized in students' subsequent courses. Since RISE will be embedded in 15 courses across the undergraduate curriculum (particularly in the book-study courses that furnish UG Senior ILLO data), RISE is expected to address the problem.

It should be noted that RISE Learning Outcomes were taken from ILLOs 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1. As a result, there is close correspondence between RISE learning outcomes and these ILLOs.²⁹ Consequently, the UG Senior ILLO assessment will show the cumulative, longitudinal effect of RISE as students graduate from the undergraduate BAR program.

²⁹ The QEP Steering Committee revised ILLO 3.1 to produce RISE Learning Outcome 1. The revisions the committee made will be presented to the full faculty with a recommendation to revise ILLO 3.1 itself. RISE Learning Outcomes 2 and 3, however, are very similar to ILLO 4.1 and ILLO 5.1.

Targets for Improvement

The QEP Steering Committee has developed targets for data collected from both the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric and the ILLO assessment cycle. These targets “are appropriate,” having been identified by the QEP Steering Committee as a result of analyzing student baseline data.³⁰

Targets for RISE Data

Student performance relative to RISE learning outcomes will be scored using the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric shown previously in this chapter. While the rubric will be used to assess both Practice-level and Mastery-level assignments, only the Mastery-level assignments will be compared to the target set forth below. The QEP Implementation Committee will monitor Practice-level assignments *en route* to achieving the stipulated target, but since Practice-level assignments are formative rather than summative, no formal target has been identified for them.

Since RISE courses are semester-length, the QEP Implementation Committee will review data furnished by Mastery-level assessment twice yearly, in January and September of each year for the duration of the 5-year QEP.³¹ Part of the committee’s review will include a comparison of Mastery-level data against the targets described below. Should Mastery-level data fall short of the target, changes will be implemented to RISE instructional materials and learning activities.

The specific criterion to be assessed is whether students earn a score greater than or equal to 3 (“Meets Expectations” or “Exceeds Expectations”) for each RISE learning outcome on the RISE assessment rubric. Since students participate in RISE repeatedly across their undergraduate curriculum, RISE targets increase incrementally year over year for the first three years of RISE’s duration. The expectation is that the more a student is exposed to RISE instruction and learning activities, the better he or she will perform relative to RISE learning outcomes. Accordingly, for Year 1, the target is a modest 15% improvement above the baseline for all three RISE learning outcomes. For Year 2, however, the target increases to a 20% improvement above the baseline. For Year 3, the target tops out at a 25% improvement above the baseline. After Year 3, it is expected that students entering RISE will balance students leaving RISE due to graduation, transfer, withdrawal, etc. Thus, the advanced achievement of students who have participated in RISE multiple times will be balanced by the efforts of students who have encountered RISE fewer times. Accordingly, targets for Years 4 and 5 remain at a 25% improvement above the baseline.

The table below lists Mastery-level targets by year for the 15 undergraduate courses participating in RISE.

³⁰ SACSCOC, “Reviewing the Quality Enhancement Plan,” 2.

³¹ Please see the “Assessment Timeline” chart at the end of Chapter 7.

RISE Mastery-Level Targets

<i>Target</i>	<i>Semester</i>	<i>Criterion</i>	<i>RISE 1</i>	<i>RISE 2</i>	<i>RISE 3</i>
<i>Year 0 Baseline</i>	Fall 2024 – Spring 2025	% of students scoring ≥ 3 on RISE SLO Rubric	52%	44%	46%
<i>Year 1</i>	Fall 2025 - Spring 2026	% of students scoring ≥ 3 on RISE SLO Rubric	60% (+15%)	51% (+15%)	53% (+15%)
<i>Year 2</i>	Fall 2026 - Spring 2027	% of students scoring ≥ 3 on RISE SLO Rubric	62% (+20%)	53% (+20%)	55% (+20%)
<i>Year 3</i>	Fall 2027 - Spring 2028	% of students scoring ≥ 3 on RISE SLO Rubric	65% (+25%)	55% (+25%)	58% (+25%)
<i>Year 4</i>	Fall 2028 - Spring 2029	% of students scoring ≥ 3 on RISE SLO Rubric	65%	55%	58%
<i>Year 5</i>	Fall 2029 - Spring 2030	% of students scoring ≥ 3 on RISE SLO Rubric	65%	55%	58%

Targets for ILLO UG Senior Data

Information Literacy Learning Outcomes (ILLO) assessment is conducted as part of the existing SLO assessment cycle. Since 2023-2024, data is collected from both freshman and senior students. The QEP Steering Committee has set the target for undergraduate seniors as 15% above the rolling average of the past four years of undergraduate freshman assessment. Since RISE outcomes are based on ILLOs 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1, the QEP Steering Committee's targets address these ILLOs specifically.³²

<i>Outcome ID</i>	<i>Learning Outcome</i>	<i>Current UG Freshman Rolling Average</i>	<i>UG Senior Target</i>
3.1	Students cite sources appropriately and relate sources' claims accurately.	3.50	4.03 (+15%)

³² The QEP Steering Committee used ILLO 3.1 as a starting point for RISE Learning Outcome 1 but felt revisions were necessary. ILLOs 4.1 and 5.1 were adopted near verbatim for RISE Learning Outcomes 2 and 3.

4.1	Students seek information from multiple perspectives.	3.72	4.28 (+15%)
5.1	Students make an attempt to assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions.	3.63	4.18 (+15%)

Summary

RISE learning outcomes are important, specific, and measurable. Not only will they improve student learning as demonstrated in speech and writing, but they will also teach students to respect the contributions of others, seek opposing ideas, and assess the logic and evidence leading to a given conclusion. Consequently, RISE learning outcomes are important academically as well as civically.

RISE learning outcomes are specific and measurable. Each identifies a specific concept in its own right, and the QEP Steering Committee has identified component concepts for instruction. Moreover, the QEP Steering Committee has devised means to assess RISE learning outcomes at the Information, Practice, and Mastery tiers. This effort includes the creation of the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric.

Baseline data has been collected for each RISE learning outcome, and a target has been identified. In Fall of 2024, baseline data was collected from five undergraduate BAR classes including a sample size of 63 students. While additional baseline data will be collected at the end of the Spring 2025 semester, extent data has been used to identify assessment targets. Specifically, for each RISE learning outcome, students who achieve a mark of "Meets" or "Exceeds Expectations" will increase by 15% during Year 1, 20% during Year 2, and 25% during Years 3-5 relative to the Fall 2024-Spring 2025 baseline.

Finally, baseline data has been collected for ILLOs, from which RISE learning outcomes are derived. The baseline data shows that freshmen, who receive information literacy instruction, currently outperform seniors, who do not, for ILLOs 4.1. and 5.1. Following the implementation of RISE, senior scores for ILLOs 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1 are expected to exceed freshman scores by 15%.

Chapter 5: Student Body and QEP Design

RISE follows a coherent design suited to Luther Rice's student body. This chapter will discuss the unique characteristics of Luther Rice's student body and show how these characteristics determine the structure of RISE. In sum, RISE will be delivered online in an asynchronous format to reach Luther Rice's body of nontraditional distance-education students.

Luther Rice Student Body

Luther Rice undergraduates are typically nontraditional, part-time students returning to higher education after years in the workforce. On average, Luther Rice undergraduates are 43 years of age, employed full-time and taking courses part-time. In addition to work and studies, Luther Rice undergraduates care for children or aging parents and serve as leaders within their churches. Many Luther Rice undergraduates serve their churches bi-vocationally, balancing ministry, career, education, and family. The average Luther Rice undergraduate enrolls for 6.75 credit hours per semester.³³ Additionally, 51% of Luther Rice students live and work in the state of Georgia while 41% reside out-of-state.³⁴ Of the 51% living within Georgia, many are beyond practical driving range of campus.

Luther Rice instruction is tailored to its student body, and the previous sketch explains two characteristics of Luther Rice instruction. First, Luther Rice undergraduate courses are predominately online. Second, Luther Rice undergraduate courses are predominately asynchronous. Online, asynchronous delivery of course content enables Luther Rice to serve a student body that is often distant from the campus and whose time is constrained by commitments to the church, workplace, and family.

Accordingly, RISE will also be delivered in an online, asynchronous format. The following section sketches the delivery, structure, and content of RISE.

QEP Design

RISE will "[address] the assimilation of information literacy into the writing of undergraduate students by focusing on Information Literacy Learning Outcomes (ILLOs) 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1."³⁵ As discussed in the previous chapters, ILLOs 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1 double as RISE's learning outcomes:

- RISE Learning Outcome 1: Integrate sources appropriately.

³³ Luther Rice College & Seminary, "2019-2024 BAR Program Review."

³⁴ Luther Rice College & Seminary, "2024-2029 Strategic Plan," 9.

³⁵ Luther Rice College & Seminary, "QEP Topic Rationale and Motion," 1. Please see Appendix A.

- RISE Learning Outcome 2: Seek information from multiple perspectives.
- RISE Learning Outcome 3: Assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions.

To teach these outcomes, Luther Rice faculty will create “interventions” in 15 undergraduate courses. The interventions will consist of instructional materials (video assets) plus learning activities (assignments). Instructional materials will consist of video-recorded lectures, round table discussions, and debates produced or provided by Luther Rice instructional personnel to teach RISE Learning Outcomes. Learning activities will consist of quizzes, short writing exercises, and full-length compositions that invite students to rehearse new knowledge, practice new skills, and demonstrate mastery of outcomes.

Instructional Materials/Video Assets

Instructional materials will largely consist of video assets (lectures, round-table discussions, debates, etc.) due to Luther Rice's online, asynchronous mode of content delivery. These video assets will be packaged using Moodle's “Lesson” tool. The “Lesson” tool enables various media to be bundled together as self-contained units. Once a “Lesson” is assembled, it may be inserted into any number of courses across Luther Rice's Moodle platform. For the purpose of RISE, information literacy lessons will be inserted into 15 BAR courses.

Each of the 15 courses will have three RISE lessons: an “Information”-tier lesson, a “Practice”-tier lesson, and a “Mastery”-tier lesson. Each lesson tier will contain instructional materials for all RISE learning outcomes. Thus, the Information-tier lesson will contain instructional materials for RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3 at an introductory level. The Practice-tier lesson will contain instructional materials for RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3 at an intermediate level. And the Mastery-tier lesson will contain instructional materials for RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3 at an advanced level.

<i>Information-Tier Lesson</i>	<i>Practice-Tier Lesson</i>	<i>Mastery-Tier Lesson</i>
RISE Learning Outcome 1	RISE Learning Outcome 1	RISE Learning Outcome 1
RISE Learning Outcome 2	RISE Learning Outcome 2	RISE Learning Outcome 2
RISE Learning Outcome 3	RISE Learning Outcome 3	RISE Learning Outcome 3

The lessons (Information, Practice, Mastery) in the 15 BAR courses will be identical, containing the same video assets.³⁶ Consequently, students will be exposed to RISE material multiple times throughout the

³⁶ For clarity, it should be understood that the video assets in the Information lesson are different from the video assets in the Practice lesson, which are different from the video assets in the Mastery lesson. Each tier of lesson contains new content that builds on that of the previous lesson. However, the Information lesson in one class will be identical to the Information lesson in another class. And the Practice and Mastery lessons also will be identical across classes. The intent of this design is to reinforce RISE content consistently across classes.

BAR program. However, as will be explained below, the learning activities (that is, the assignments) at the Practice and Mastery tiers are tailored to the individual course. As such, while students view the instructional materials repeatedly in successive courses, they apply them in new ways in each course. Thus, RISE takes advantage of the pedagogical benefits of repetition while offering students variety of expression.

Learning Activities/Assignments

Learning activities are linked to the three-tier system described above. Each lesson tier (Information, Practice, Mastery) has a learning activity that enables students to rehearse and demonstrate their learning. The Information-tier lesson has an assignment to show student's knowledge of RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3 at an introductory level. Similarly, the Practice-tier lesson has an assignment to show student's grasp of RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3 at an intermediate level. And finally, the Mastery-tier lesson has an assignment to show students' comprehension of RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3 at an advanced level.

The Information-tier assignment is a quiz included at the end of the Information-tier lesson. Given that lessons are replicated across courses, this quiz is identical in all 15 courses. It briefly enables students to register that they understand RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3 without requiring them to demonstrate actual possession of these skills. Students will perform satisfactorily on this quiz so long as they define the concepts associated with each RISE learning outcome. The quiz consists of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and matching questions. Students will repeat the quiz until they earn a 100%.

The Practice-tier assignment follows the Practice-tier lesson and is unique to the individual course. It addresses course content and may take the form of a written exercise, discussion board forum, or other written assignment. While this assignment is written, it is less rigorous than the Mastery-level assignment and thus should not be a term paper or research essay.

The Practice-tier assignment should demonstrate RISE learning outcomes practically or authentically, in writing. To demonstrate RISE Learning Outcome 1, the student will need to integrate sources smoothly and effectively as he or she learned in the Information-tier lesson and the Practice-tier lesson. To demonstrate RISE Learning Outcome 2, the student will need to discuss a source that opposes his or her thesis (again, as he or she learned previously in the Information-tier lesson and the Practice-tier lesson). Given the intermediate nature of the Practice-tier assignment, the professor may supply the opposing source to the student. Finally, to demonstrate RISE Learning Outcome 3, the student will need to discuss a source's logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing its conclusion.

Practice-tier assignments will be assessed by the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric shown in Chapter 4 of this document and reproduced below. Since the Practice-tier assignment is a formative assessment, the QEP Steering Committee has not identified a formal target. All the same, the QEP Implementation Committee will monitor results of Practice-tier assessments closely to provide an early indication of students' likely performance on the Mastery-tier assessment.

Mastery-tier assignments follow the Mastery-tier lesson and typically take the form of a term paper or research essay due at the end of the semester. As with any research assignment, the Mastery-tier assignment will demonstrate the student's specific learning within the course. However, it will also demonstrate the student's apprehension of RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.

Practice and Mastery assignments will be assessed by the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric shown below. Targets for Mastery assignments are discussed in Chapter 4.

RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric

RISE Outcome	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Integrate Sources Appropriately (RISE Learning Outcome 1)	Student discusses sources skillfully while maintaining control of the argument. Attribution tags, quotations, and footnotes enable the student to shuttle between the source's ideas and his or her own.	Student distinguishes sources' claims from his or her own. Quotations are introduced, discussed, quoted, and cited. Notwithstanding, discussion may be uneven, either superficial or superabundant.	Student attempts to distinguish the source's claims from his or her own, but problems are evident. The student may 1) Neglect quotations 2) Neglect to introduce quotations 3) Neglect to discuss quotations 4) Etc.	Student does not distinguish the source's claims from his or her own. Readers cannot tell what belongs to the student and what belongs to the source. Citation typically consists of a single footnote at the end of a paragraph.
Seek Information from Multiple Perspectives (RISE Learning Outcome 2)	Student appraises the claims of opposing sources in detail, rebutting them persuasively and/or making concessions and reframing. Sources' opposition enhances the student's argument.	Student identifies, in detail, the claims of opposing or differing sources. While the student's rebuttals may be imperfectly persuasive for a professional academic, the student understands the opposition and makes a valiant attempt to respond.	Student identifies opposing or differing claims, but problems are evident. Student may discuss claims superficially (as a requirement to be completed as quickly as possible), or in the abstract without citing a specific source.	Student does not identify opposing or differing claims. Argument is entirely one-sided. Student neglects controversy or pretends it does not exist.
Assess Sources' Logic/Argument (RISE Learning Outcome 3)	Student constructs a persuasive argument, exhibiting true academic skepticism and illustrating careful, conscientious thought.	Student typically uses sources responsibly, examining their claims without distortion, misrepresentation, or logical fallacies.	Student attempts to use sources responsibly. However, the student may misunderstand, distort (weakest limb), or misrepresent (strawman) sources' claims.	Student does not use sources responsibly. Treats sources as pure authorities with little to no analysis of claims.

Scope of QEP

As described above -- complete with Information, Practice, and Mastery lessons and Information, Practice, and Mastery assessments – RISE will be implemented in 15 undergraduate courses. The courses are listed below:

- | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| • BI1200 | • NT3206 | • OT1200 |
| • EN1102 | • NT3207 | • OT2201 |
| • EN2103 | • NT3215 | • OT2206 |
| • NT2204 | • NT4219 | • OT3228 |
| • NT2205 | • NT4227 | • OT4214 |

These courses are either required courses or elective requirements. Consequently, they have some of the highest enrollment in the BAR program and will enable RISE to capture all BAR students.

Additionally, since RISE is repeated in 15 courses, most students will have multiple exposures. This design ensures that RISE is not a one-and-done affair but a repeated experience for BAR students. As explained above, while the instructional materials are identical, the learning activities are unique to each course. Thus, students will become more and more familiar with the material as they repeat RISE across five years, but they will apply it differently in each course. Thus RISE harnesses the power of sameness in difference. The repetitive aspect of RISE will help students become familiar with the expectations and techniques that the QEP teaches, while the variety of assignments will prevent staleness and challenge students to implement their knowledge in new ways.

Analysis of enrollment data shows that over the last five years (8/1/2019-6/30/2024), there were 504 unduplicated students within the Bachelor of Arts in Religion program. If RISE had begun 5 years ago in the previously listed 15 undergraduate BAR courses, it would have produced the following statistics:

- Average Number of Times a Student Would Have Completed the QEP Block: 4.97
- Maximum Number of Times a Student would have Completed the QEP Block: 15
- Minimum Number of Times a Student Would Have Completed the QEP Block: 1
- Median Number of times a Student Would Have Completed the QEP Block: 4
- Count of Students who would have Completed 1-5 Cycles of the QEP Block: 321 (63.69%)
- Count of Students who would have Completed 6-10 Cycles of the QEP Block: 119 (23.61%)
- Count of Students who would have Completed 11-15 Cycles of the QEP Block: 64 (12.70%)

The following table lists students' hypothetical RISE exposure had RISE been launched five years ago. The table lists exposure from most to least, showing that, at most, 1 student would have experienced the QEP 15 times in the past five years.

Number of Cycles	Number of Students	% of Students	Running Total %
15	1	0.20%	0.20%
14	6	1.19%	1.39%

13	20	3.97%	5.36%
12	18	3.57%	8.93%
11	19	3.77%	12.70%
10	20	3.97%	16.67%
9	21	4.17%	20.84%
8	26	5.16%	26.00%
7	23	4.56%	30.56%
6	29	5.75%	36.31%
5	35	6.94%	43.25%
4	46	9.13%	52.38%
3	51	10.12%	62.50%
2	74	14.68%	77.18%
1	115	22.82%	100.00%

The table is particularly useful to identify how many times, at minimum, a given percentage of the student body would have experienced RISE in the past five years. As the table shows, 0.20% of the student body would have experienced RISE 15 times in five years. 1.19% of the student body would have experienced it 14 times. And so on. As the number of cycles declines, the percentage of students increases. 52.38% of students would have experienced RISE at least four times during the past five years.

The table below reverses the number of cycles from least to most:

Number of Cycles	Number of Students	% of Students	Running Total %
1	115	22.82%	22.82%
2	74	14.68%	37.50%
3	51	10.12%	47.62%
4	46	9.13%	56.75%
5	35	6.94%	63.69%
6	29	5.75%	69.44%
7	23	4.56%	74.00%
8	26	5.16%	79.16%
9	21	4.17%	83.33%
10	20	3.97%	87.30%
11	19	3.77%	91.07%
12	18	3.57%	94.64%
13	20	3.97%	98.61%
14	6	1.19%	99.80%
15	1	0.20%	100.00%

As this table shows, 22.82% of students would have experienced the QEP only once. 37.50% would have experienced it once or twice, and 47.62% fewer than four times. On the face of it, these numbers suggest that these students may be underexposed to the QEP. However, the students who experienced RISE so few times most likely enrolled in the BAR program at some point in the middle to end of the 5-

year period. Since they did not participate in RISE for the full extent of its duration, they experienced it fewer times. However, in terms of the time of their participation within the BAR, they likely received the same concentration of exposure to RISE as the other students. In fine, the 15 courses selected for participation ensure that all BAR students participate in RISE, and the majority participate repeatedly.

A final consideration of RISE's scope applies to its extent across Luther Rice programs. The QEP Steering Committee resolved to limit RISE to Bachelor of Arts in Religion (BAR) students for numerous reasons. The most important reason is that ILLO data from the BAR revealed a critical need for intervention, while ILLO data from other programs did not. ILLO assessment scores from the BAR showed a sharp decline in 2021-2022 and again in 2022-2023. By contrast, ILLO assessment scores from other programs remained relatively stable. For this reason, the QEP Steering Committee resolved to tailor RISE instruction to BAR students as primary recipients.

Moreover, since ILLO standards are tiered to undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral levels of instruction, then RISE instruction tailored for undergraduates (the BAR is an undergraduate program) may or may not aid graduate or doctoral students to achieve ILLO standards at the graduate and doctoral levels. For this reason, the QEP Steering Committee resolved to limit RISE to undergraduates.

Additionally, other undergraduate programs use a different style guide than the BAR. While the BAR uses Chicago/Turabian style, the Bachelor of Arts in Psychology (BAPY) uses APA style. Consequently, RISE instruction relative to footnote and bibliography citation will be counterproductive for BAPY students. While footnote and bibliography citation is a component of RISE Learning Outcome 1 only, the members of the QEP Steering Committee were loath to introduce confusion for BAPY students. Accordingly, if RISE instruction is made available to BAPY students in the future, a separate "track" of RISE instruction will need to be developed specifically for them.

Finally, the BAR is Luther Rice's largest and eldest undergraduate program. It has a long history of assessment data, including ILLO assessment data, to demonstrate the need for RISE. By contrast, the Associate of Arts in General Studies (AAGS) is brand new and does not yet have any students, and the BAPY is not yet two years old and has assessment data from only the past year. As the largest undergraduate program, the BAR will reach the most students. And as the program with the longest assessment history, metrics such as baselines and targets are possible for the BAR but not for the BAPY or AAGS.

For these reasons and many others, the QEP Steering Committee resolved to limit the formal implementation of RISE to the BAR degree program. The structure of Information, Practice, and Mastery lessons and assessments will be implemented in the BAR program only. Likewise, assessment data will be collected from the BAR program only. However, less formal applications of RISE assets may be possible. For instance, instructional materials developed for RISE will be made available to the faculty generally. If professors in other degree programs wish to include video lectures developed for RISE in their courses, there is scant reason to prevent them from doing so. Similarly, the QEP Steering

Committee is considering a proposal to enroll all Luther Rice students in an open-ended Moodle course shell that would contain all instructional materials developed for RISE. This course shell would act as a repository of instruction providing students access to RISE materials on an as-needed basis. If adopted, this measure would enable RISE to involve all students while prioritizing BAR students for formal instruction and assessment.

Summary

The composition of Luther Rice's student body – adult, nontraditional, frequently part-time students with full-time jobs and family and church responsibilities – determines the structure of Luther Rice instruction. Accordingly, RISE will be offered online in asynchronous format.

15 undergraduate BAR courses have been selected for participation in RISE. Each of these courses will have an Information lesson at the beginning of the semester to introduce RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3 and offer initial instruction. A Practice lesson will be embedded at the semester midpoint to offer intermediate instruction. Finally, a Mastery lesson will be embedded before the end of the semester to offer advanced instruction.

Each lesson tier will have an assessment assignment. The Information lesson will be assessed by a quiz requiring students to demonstrate conceptual knowledge of learning outcomes. The Practice lesson will be assessed by a short research exercise requiring students to demonstrate learning authentically in writing. The Mastery lesson will be assessed by a term paper requiring students to demonstrate learning fully and authentically. Practice and Mastery assessment assignments will be graded by the professor using the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric developed by the QEP Steering Committee.

The QEP Steering Committee consulted enrollment data in determining the number of courses to include in RISE. On average, BAR students will participate in RISE 4-5 times across their undergraduate experience.

Finally, RISE instruction has been tailored to BAR students specifically since assessment data has identified a critical need among BAR students. However, RISE materials may be made available to students in other degree programs less formally in a variety of ways.

Chapter 6: Resource Allocation and Implementation

Luther Rice has committed “resources to initiate, implement, and complete the QEP.”³⁷ This chapter will identify the human, technological, material, and financial resources allocated to the QEP. It will also delineate the process of “ongoing planning and evaluation” by which the QEP Implementation Committee will identify additional needed resources “as the plan proceeds.”³⁸

Human Resources

The Dean of the College and Seminary has been identified as the QEP Director. He has an administrative assistant who will help him oversee RISE as the plan progresses (see next paragraph). Likewise, he currently chairs a QEP Steering Committee and in the future will chair a QEP Implementation Committee. While the committees are responsible for planning, oversight, and assessment of RISE, the QEP Director is responsible for day-to-day administration of RISE and collection of assessment data.

Recent restructuring of staff duties have enabled the Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs to support the QEP Director in his oversight of RISE. In March of 2023, the existing Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs was promoted to Student Accounts Manager. When she transitioned to her new role, she took the management of the Luther Rice online bookstore with her. At the same time, attendance monitoring responsibilities were shifted from the role of Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs to the role of Academic Advising. Consequently, compared to the previous year, the role of Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs now has substantially less responsibility. For the 2023-2024 year, the reduced responsibility was filled with training as the new Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs learned her position. However, in subsequent years the gap will be filled with QEP responsibilities as the QEP Director determines. Thanks to the restructuring of staff duties, the Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs has been freed to help the QEP Director oversee RISE.

Faculty teaching 15 undergraduate courses are also front-line personnel in delivering RISE. Faculty will fit the Information-, Practice-, and Mastery-tier lessons within their courses. While these lessons are discrete, prepackaged units, faculty will identify the best place to integrate them within their respective courses.

Likewise, faculty will retool existing course learning activities to serve as Practice- and Mastery-tier assessment assignments. When students submit these assignments, faculty will assess them using the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric shown in Chapters 4 and 5.

³⁷ SACSCOC, “Reviewing the Quality Enhancement Plan: An Evaluative Framework,” 2, <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/Quality-Enhancement-Plan-Framework.pdf>.

³⁸ Ibid.

Moreover, library staff will inevitably support RISE by answering students' questions and aiding them to find, evaluate, and discuss library sources. Academic advisors will similarly field questions from students and offer encouragement and support. Finally, IT staff will facilitate the delivery of RISE through Moodle and support various assessment tools used to collect assessment data.

The Luther Rice Video Studio, including the staff videographers, also has a critical role in facilitating RISE. As faculty continue to develop instructional assets prior to the launch of RISE, and as changes and adjustments are determined by the QEP Implementation Committee following the launch of RISE, the video studio and videographers will be tasked with filming and editing new instructional videos.

The aforementioned personnel were employed at Luther Rice prior to the beginning of preparations for the QEP. However, one faculty member was hired specifically to relieve the QEP Director of teaching responsibilities. This faculty member's hire was a direct result of the QEP.

Technological Resources

The signal technology resource for RISE is Moodle itself. RISE will consist of lessons and assignments created in Moodle and delivered to students as part of their existing Moodle courses. While Luther Rice owned and operated Moodle prior to RISE, it is a critical resource nonetheless.

Creation of RISE video assets also requires the camera equipment in the video studio. While maintaining and upgrading this equipment is part of the standing Luther Rice budget, it is nevertheless critical to the QEP.

Potentially, Luther Rice may purchase an additional technology platform, IntelliBoard. IntelliBoard was designed to work with Moodle to enhance its reporting capabilities. Specifically, IntelliBoard will enable the QEP Director to compile assessment data with the click of a button for the Information-, Practice-, and Mastery-level assessments. In this way, IntelliBoard will greatly increase the availability of assessment data, and greatly reduce the portion of the QEP Director's time spent locating, collecting, and organizing assessment data.

Material Resources

At this point, the QEP Steering Committee projects that no material resources will be allocated to the QEP given that RISE will be delivered online through Moodle. This forecast may change in the future as new needs are identified.

Financial Resources

The QEP Director, the Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs, the faculty, the library staff, the video studio staff, the academic advising staff, and the IT staff were employed prior to the beginning of QEP preparations. Nevertheless, these personnel are paid for their work, and RISE will be part of their

work in the future. This is especially true of the QEP Director, the Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs, and the faculty who teach the 15 RISE courses.

Similarly, Luther Rice built its Moodle infrastructure prior to the beginning of QEP preparations. Again, however, there are costs associated with operating Moodle, and Moodle is the sole means by which RISE content is delivered to students.

Two significant financial outlays may be attributed directly to RISE, however. The first was the hire of a new faculty member in September 2023 to alleviate the workload of the QEP Director to free him to undertake the QEP. The other is the potential future purchase of IntelliBoard (or a similar platform) to aid the QEP Director in the collection and organization of QEP assessment data.

Luther Rice is committed to add and allocate the necessary resources to initiate, implement, and complete the QEP. The following table provides an overview of the QEP financial budget for the years 2024/2025 to 2028/2029.

Table 1: LRCS Quality Enhancement Plan-Five Year Budget

Luther Rice College and Seminary

Quality Enhancement Plan Five-Year Budget

	<i>Source</i>	<i>2024-2025</i>	<i>2025-2026</i>	<i>2026-2027</i>	<i>2027-2028</i>	<i>2028-2029</i>
Administrative Costs						
Salaries and Benefits	Allocated	\$ 55,928	\$ 52,853	\$ 53,382	\$ 53,915	\$ 54,455
Professional Development	Allocated	\$ 325	\$ 325	\$ 325	\$ 325	\$ 325
Accreditation	Additional	\$ 24,500	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Travel	Allocated	\$ 650	\$ 650	\$ 650	\$ 650	\$ 650
Supplies	Allocated	\$ 250	\$ 250	\$ 250	\$ 250	\$ 250
Misc. Expense	Allocated	\$ 550	\$ 550	\$ 550	\$ 550	\$ 550
Administrative Costs Total		\$ 82,203	\$ 79,628	\$ 80,157	\$ 80,690	\$ 81,230
Instructional Costs						
Salaries and Benefits	Allocated	\$ 145,424	\$ 121,793	\$ 123,011	\$ 124,241	\$ 125,483
Salaries and Benefits	Additional	\$ 37,978	\$ 38,168	\$ 38,550	\$ 38,935	\$ 39,324
Professional Development	Allocated	\$ 750	\$ 750	\$ 750	\$ 750	\$ 750
Instructional Costs Total		\$ 184,152	\$ 160,711	\$ 162,310	\$ 163,926	\$ 165,558
Support Costs						
Salaries and Benefits	Allocated	\$ 46,365	\$ 37,628	\$ 38,004	\$ 38,384	\$ 38,768
Professional Development	Allocated	\$ 120	\$ 120	\$ 120	\$ 120	\$ 120
Student Government Association	Allocated	\$ 90	\$ 90	\$ 90	\$ 90	\$ 90
Travel	Allocated	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 150	\$ 150
Supplies	Allocated	\$ 270	\$ 270	\$ 270	\$ 270	\$ 270
Misc. Expense	Allocated	\$ 845	\$ 595	\$ 595	\$ 595	\$ 595
Support Costs Total		\$ 47,840	\$ 38,853	\$ 39,229	\$ 39,609	\$ 39,993
Marketing and Advancement						
Salaries and Benefits	Allocated	\$ 3,860	\$ 2,217	\$ 2,239	\$ 2,261	\$ 2,284
Direct Marketing Costs	Additional	\$ 4,600	\$ 3,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
Alumni Engagement	Allocated	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300	\$ 300
Graphic Artwork	Allocated	\$ 218	\$ 131	\$ 131	\$ 131	\$ 131
Supplies	Allocated	\$ 75	\$ 75	\$ 75	\$ 75	\$ 75
Marketing and Advancement Total		\$ 9,053	\$ 5,723	\$ 4,745	\$ 4,267	\$ 4,290
Information Technology						
Salaries and Benefits	Allocated	\$ 9,509	\$ 7,645	\$ 7,721	\$ 7,799	\$ 7,877
Hardware	Allocated	\$ 200	\$ 160	\$ 160	\$ 250	\$ 250
Software	Allocated	\$ 7,718	\$ 8,490	\$ 8,500	\$ 8,500	\$ 8,500
Miscellaneous	Allocated	\$ 250	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 200
Information Technology Total		\$ 17,677	\$ 16,495	\$ 16,581	\$ 16,749	\$ 16,827
Subtotal		\$ 340,926	\$ 301,409	\$ 303,023	\$ 305,242	\$ 307,897
Proposed 5-year budgeted Expenses		\$ 4,147,036	\$ 4,162,309	\$ 4,204,982	\$ 4,256,832	\$ 4,309,138
% allocated to QEP		8.22%	7.24%	7.21%	7.17%	7.15%

The basis for the QEP budget is the Luther Rice 5-year financial budget. Expenses, including assumptions for annual increases or decreases, are informed by the 5-year budget. Luther Rice departments engaged with the QEP are assigned a QEP Budget Category for reporting purposes. Department QEP related expense line items are identified based on expected QEP related work. All department QEP expense line items are classified as either additional or allocated expenses. Additional expenses are new and direct costs incurred by Luther Rice with regard to the QEP. Allocated expenses are budgeted Luther Rice expenses allocated to the QEP by year in accordance with expected QEP related work.

Additional expenses are identified in the following expense line items: accreditation, instructional salaries and benefits, direct marketing. The accreditation expense budget will capture any new cost incurred by the QEP, including a potential purchase of the IntelliBoard platform. The additional instructional salaries and benefits expense budget captures the hire of a new faculty member in Fall 2023 to alleviate the workload of the QEP Director. The direct marketing expense budget captures direct marketing expenses aimed towards promoting the QEP to students, alumni, and other Luther Rice constituents. Year one (2024/2025) additional expenses total \$67,078.

All remaining QEP related expenses are budgeted Luther Rice expenses allocated to the QEP. Salary and benefits expenses make up the majority of allocated expenses. Allocated percentages are department specific and consider the estimated workload incurred annually by the respective faculty and staff. Time commitment to the QEP will be monitored throughout the years to assess the budgeted percentage allocation. If allocation percentages need to be adjusted or additional resources are required, the QEP director will make the needed recommendation. Annual increase assumptions derived from the 5-year financial budget are included in years two through five for the expense line items.

Year one QEP total expense (allocated and direct) is estimated at \$340,926 or 8.2% of the total Luther Rice expense budget. Year two QEP total expense drops slightly to \$301,409 or 7.2% of the total Luther Rice expense budget. Years three to five are relatively consistent with year two with regard to the QEP expense as a percentage of the total Luther Rice budget. Year one expenses are more than future years due to allocated personnel required in year one to initiate and implement the plan.

Luther Rice believes that resources committed to the QEP are reasonable and sufficient for the scope of the QEP and the size of the institution. All Luther Rice personnel have been informed of their expected QEP time and resource commitment and have made any necessary accommodations to fulfill their QEP responsibilities.

Additional Future Expenses

Preparations for RISE were made well in advance, such as the hire of an additional professor to give the QEP Director relief from teaching responsibilities and the reassignment of duties for the Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs. Similarly, RISE repurposes many existing resources, including human resources such as the QEP Director, Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs, Faculty, Staff, and Videographers, and technological resources such as Moodle and the video studio. As a result of the foresight of Luther Rice administration and the repurposing of existing resources, the QEP Steering Committee does not anticipate additional financial outlays other than those identified above.

What remains to be completed prior to the launch of RISE is faculty will finish filming instructional videos in the Luther Rice video studio. These instructional assets will be bundled in Moodle to form the Information, Practice, and Mastery lessons of RISE. Once assembled, the Information, Practice, and Mastery lessons will be “evergreen” resources that may be deployed in as many courses as desired semester over semester without incurring additional cost.

Should the QEP Implementation Committee determine that new or different instructional materials are necessary, Luther Rice faculty and videographers are prepared to create them. Creation of video materials is part and parcel of Luther Rice faculty responsibilities, and professors are expert in the preparation and presentation of video assets. By the same token, video studio staff are expert in the production, filming, and editing of video assets. Due to the skills of Luther Rice personnel, new instructional materials are routinely produced without incurring additional cost.

Should additional financial outlays become necessary, the QEP Implementation Committee will recommend them to the Executive Vice President and Provost, who will make a determination. The Executive Vice President and Provost is Luther Rice’s accreditation liaison and Chief Academic Officer.

Resource Allocation Timeline

Date	Event	Action	QEP Resource Allocated	Result
March 2023	Promotion of Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs to Student Accounts Manager	Reassignment of Online Bookstore to Student Accounts Manager Reassignment of Attendance Reporting to Academic Advising	Human Resources	New Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs has more availability to support QEP Director
March 2023	Hire of new Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs	Training	Human Resources	Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs position filled
August 2023	Announcement of QEP Director		Human Resources	QEP Director position filled
August 2023	Announcement of New Faculty Hire	Reassignment of QEP Director's courses to new faculty member	Financial Resources	Relief for QEP Director
September 2023	Announcement of QEP Steering Committee	QEP Steering Committee meetings begin	Human Resources	Beginning of QEP planning. Planning will extend through February 2025
March 2025	Announcement of QEP Implementation Committee	QEP Implementation Committee meetings begin	Human Resources	Faculty training, RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric norming exercises
May 2025	** PROSPECTIVE** Purchase of IntelliBoard	** PROSPECTIVE** Use of IntelliBoard to collect assessment data for Practice	** PROSPECTIVE** Financial, Technological	** PROSPECTIVE** Faster data collection and analysis, more detailed data

		and Mastery assignments		reporting
September 2025-May 2030	Meetings of the QEP Implementation Committee	Recommendation of new instructional materials or tools	Human, technological, and potentially material or financial resources	If the recommendation does not require additional financial outlay, the QEP Director will direct its implementation If a recommendation does require additional financial outlay, the Executive Vice President and Provost will make a determination

Summary

RISE has already required financial resources to hire an additional faculty member to provide teaching relief to the QEP Director. In the future, RISE may require additional financial resources to purchase a data reporting tool such as IntelliBoard. The hire of the faculty member incurs ongoing cost in the form of salary, and the prospective purchase of IntelliBoard (or similar tool) will incur ongoing cost in the form of a yearly subscription.

In general, however, RISE will require the use of existing human and technological resources. The variety of skills among current Luther Rice staff and faculty enable instructional materials to be produced routinely without expense beyond that already budgeted for salaries and the maintenance and upgrade of equipment. Should additional financial outlays become necessary, the QEP Implementation Committee will make a recommendation to the Executive Vice President.

Chapter 7: Assessment Plan

This chapter will outline the assessment plan for RISE. In keeping with SACSCOC standard 7e, this chapter will demonstrate that

- “outcomes are specific, measurable and clearly related to student learning”
- “assessments are appropriate and directly assess the outcomes”
- “the plan includes both formative and summative assessments”
- “institutional personnel responsible for gathering and analyzing assessment data are identified and appropriately supported”
- “a timeline for interim formative analysis and plan adjustments is outlined.”³⁹

The following sections explain how Luther Rice’s assessment plan fulfills the requirements of standard 7e.

Student Learning vs. Student Success

The learning outcomes of Luther Rice’s QEP emphasize student learning. While they may contribute indirectly to student success, their manifest emphasis is student learning. RISE learning outcomes are as follows:

1. Integrate sources appropriately.
2. Seek information from multiple perspectives.
3. Assess sources’ logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions.

Specific

While the QEP learning outcomes are specific in their own right, each contains component elements that students must learn. Consequently, the QEP Steering Committee created the matrix below to identify the component elements of each outcome. This matrix has been used to plan QEP content and develop specific video assets.

<i>Learning Outcome</i>	<i>Component Elements</i>
<i>RISE 1 – Integrate sources appropriately</i>	1) Introducing a source 2) Quotations, footnotes, attribution tags 3) Maintaining control – shifting between the source and one’s own voice

³⁹ SACSCOC, “Reviewing the Quality Enhancement Plan: An Evaluative Framework,” 1, <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2019/08/Quality-Enhancement-Plan-Framework.pdf>.

*RISE 2 – Seek
information from
multiple sources*

- 1) Practicing humility
- 2) Using opponents to test your argument
- 3) Making concessions and reframing
- 4) Making refutations and rebuttals

*RISE 3 – Assess
sources’ logic and
evidence instead of
simply summarizing
conclusions*

- 1) Prioritizing reasons and evidence over authority
- 2) Understanding sources’ claims accurately
- 3) Practicing charity – not attacking “weakest limbs”
- 4) Practicing integrity – not creating strawmen

Measurable

QEP outcomes are also measurable. As Chapters 4 and 5 discussed, each outcome will be measured at three levels or tiers. At the Information tier, the outcomes will be measured in terms of students’ ability to define essential concepts. At the Practice tier, the outcomes will be measured in terms of students’ ability to demonstrate them at an intermediate level in a shorter, less formal writing assignment. Finally, at the Mastery tier, the outcomes will be measured in terms of students’ ability to demonstrate them at an advanced level within full-length formal research projects and term papers.

Each level or tier of assessment has a defined means of measurement. The means of measurement at the Information tier is a quiz, scored numerically as a percentage of 100. At the Practice and Mastery tiers, the means of measurement is the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric shown on the next page. Targets for assessment are discussed in Chapter 4 of this document.

RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric

RISE Outcome	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Partially Meets Expectations	Does Not Meet Expectations
Integrate Sources Appropriately (RISE Learning Outcome 1)	Student discusses sources skillfully while maintaining control of the argument. Attribution tags, quotations, and footnotes enable the student to shuttle between the source's ideas and his or her own.	Student distinguishes sources' claims from his or her own. Quotations are introduced, discussed, quoted, and cited. Notwithstanding, discussion may be uneven, either superficial or superabundant.	Student attempts to distinguish the source's claims from his or her own, but problems are evident. The student may 1) Neglect quotations 2) Neglect to introduce quotations 3) Neglect to discuss quotations 4) Etc.	Student does not distinguish the source's claims from his or her own. Readers cannot tell what belongs to the student and what belongs to the source. Citation typically consists of a single footnote at the end of a paragraph.
Seek Information from Multiple Perspectives (RISE Learning Outcome 2)	Student appraises the claims of opposing sources in detail, rebutting them persuasively and/or making concessions and reframing. Sources' opposition enhances the student's argument.	Student identifies, in detail, the claims of opposing or differing sources. While the student's rebuttals may be imperfectly persuasive for a professional academic, the student understands the opposition and makes a valiant attempt to respond.	Student identifies opposing or differing claims, but problems are evident. Student may discuss claims superficially (as a requirement to be completed as quickly as possible), or in the abstract without citing a specific source.	Student does not identify opposing or differing claims. Argument is entirely one-sided. Student neglects controversy or pretends it does not exist.
Assess Sources' Logic/Argument (RISE Learning Outcome 3)	Student constructs a persuasive argument, exhibiting true academic skepticism and illustrating careful, conscientious thought.	Student typically uses sources responsibly, examining their claims without distortion, misrepresentation, or logical fallacies.	Student attempts to use sources responsibly. However, the student may misunderstand, distort (weakest limb), or misrepresent (strawman) sources' claims.	Student does not use sources responsibly. Treats sources as pure authorities with little to no analysis of claims.

Appropriate

The QEP outcomes are appropriate to students' level of education. QEP outcomes are derived from ILLO outcomes, which were previously written by the faculty and approved by Luther Rice administration. In writing ILLO outcomes, the faculty wrote one set tailored to undergraduate students, another set tailored to graduate students, and a third set tailored to doctoral students.

The chart below shows ILLO outcomes at the undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral levels. Each level has six "frames" or learning outcomes. Frame 1.1 at the undergraduate level corresponds with frame 1.2 at the graduate level and frame 1.3 at the doctoral level. Similarly 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 correspond at the undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral levels. And so on – frames 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 correspond, as do 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3; 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3; and 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3.

<i>Undergraduate Information Literacy Learning Outcomes</i>	
1.1	Students look for indicators of quality when seeking information, distinguishing reliable from unreliable sources.
2.1	Some variety evident in selection of sources.
3.1	Students cite sources appropriately and relate sources' claims accurately.
4.1	Students seek information from multiple perspectives.
5.1	Students make an attempt to assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions.
6.1	Students make a focused argument, limiting the scope of research appropriately.
<i>Graduate Information Literacy Learning Outcomes</i>	
1.2	Students use sources with an appropriate level of authority.
2.2	Students seek a wide range of sources in a variety of formats including journals, monographs, and reference materials.
3.2	Students employ information ethically. Sources' claims are represented accurately, without misrepresentation or mischaracterization. Sources are quoted and cited appropriately according to the latest edition of <i>A Manual for Writers</i> .
4.2	Students seek information from various biblical interpretive models and theological viewpoints, with emphases on significant historical perspectives.
5.2	Students evaluate sources' claims from a perspective of informed skepticism, critically assessing sources' logic and evidence rather than simply summarizing their conclusions.

6.2	Students make a focused argument, limiting the scope of research appropriately.
<i>Doctoral Information Literacy Learning Outcomes</i>	
1.3	Students use sources with an appropriate level of authority.
2.3	Students seek a wide range of sources in a variety of formats including journals, monographs, and reference materials.
3.3	Students employ information ethically. Sources' claims are represented accurately, without misrepresentation or mischaracterization. Sources are quoted and cited appropriately.
4.3	Methodological research is both broad and evaluative. Student researches the methods of numerous other authors (broad), and highlights points of similarity and dissimilarity among them (evaluative).
5.3	Methodological research is intellectually rigorous. Student goes beyond merely summarizing what prior researchers have done by examining the reasons and rationales in their work.
6.3	Students make meaningful contributions to the field of study.

In fine, the frames interlock, but distinctions are visible at the various levels that reflect the faculty's concern to keep learning outcomes realistic and appropriate.

Frames 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 provide an apt illustration. At the undergraduate level, the learning outcome reads, "Students make an attempt to assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions." At the graduate level, frame 5.2 reads, "Students evaluate sources' claims from a perspective of informed skepticism, critically assessing sources' logic and evidence rather than simply summarizing their conclusions." At the doctoral level frame 5.3 reads, "Methodological research is intellectually rigorous. Student goes beyond merely summarizing what prior researchers have done by examining the reasons and rationales in their work." As this example demonstrates, the rigor of the ILLO "frames" increases in step with academic level. The faculty have taken action to ensure that learning outcomes are appropriate. Since the QEP Steering Committee took its QEP learning outcomes from existing ILLO "frames," the work the faculty has done in recent years to norm and vet ILLOs is built into the QEP.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ ILLO "frames" were initially proposed as a joint project between the Library Director and English faculty. The ILLOs were subsequently presented to the faculty, who recommended them to administration. In the years since, individual program committees have proposed various revisions and changes to the ILLO frames. For instance, in 2021-2022, the Master of Arts in Ministry committee

Direct

The QEP learning outcomes will be measured by direct assessment at all three Information, Practice, and Mastery tiers. At the Information tier, students will take a quiz to demonstrate their conceptual grasp of ILLOs 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1. The quiz will be scored numerically as a percentage of 100. At the Practice tier, students will write a short composition to demonstrate their practical grasp of ILLOs 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1. Professors will assess students' work using the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric shown above. At the Mastery tier, students will submit a formal research project to demonstrate a thorough grasp of ILLOs 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1. Professors will assess students' work using the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric once again. At each tier of competency, assignments and measurement instruments assess QEP learning outcomes directly.

Formative and Summative Assessment

The QEP incorporates both summative and formative assessments. Within a single semester, the Information- and Practice-tier assessments are formative. They enable faculty and students to gauge progress, identify weaknesses, and devise strategies to meet gaps. Moreover, these assessments are formative in that they represent waypoints *en route* to full mastery of RISE learning outcomes. Manifestly, then, the Mastery-tier assessment is summative in that it expresses not a waypoint but the desired end of RISE.

From the perspective of the full 5-year QEP process, however, even Mastery-tier assessments may be considered formative given the recursive nature of RISE. Since BAR students will participate in RISE repeatedly across their undergraduate experience, their performance is expected to improve with each iteration. In keeping with this expectation, student performance will be reported semestery. Data for each student will include a notation designating whether the student is a first-time participant, a second-time participant, a third-time participant, and so on. By this means, student performance may be tracked over time to determine whether repeat exposures to RISE generate additional improvement.

Institutional Personnel

The institutional personnel responsible for producing assessment data are the faculty of the 15 undergraduate RISE courses. When students submit Practice-tier and Mastery-tier assessment assignments, the faculty teaching these courses will assess the students' work using the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric.

proposed revisions to frames 3.2, 4.2, and 5.2 at the graduate level, which were approved by administration. Similarly, in 2022-2023, the Doctor of Ministry committee proposed revisions to 4.3 and 5.3, which were likewise approved by administration. The present form of the ILLO frames is the result of multiple years of collaboration and revision among library staff, faculty, and administration.

The institutional personnel responsible for collecting and organizing the assessment data from the 15 undergraduate RISE courses are the QEP Director and the Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs. In this, the QEP Director and Administrative Assistant will be aided by Moodle's "Competency" reporting. The fields of the RISE Learning Outcomes Rubric will be deployed within the 15 RISE courses as "Competencies." Competency data may be gathered from Moodle efficiently using the Competency reports tool. If IntelliBoard is purchased, this process will be even faster and more efficient.

The members of the QEP Implementation Committee are the institutional personnel responsible for assessing the data furnished by the faculty of the 15 undergraduate courses and compiled by the QEP Director and the Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs. The QEP Implementation Committee will be drawn from among faculty, students, administration, and staff, with particular emphasis on the faculty who teach the 15 undergraduate QEP courses. The QEP Director will serve as the chair of the committee. The QEP Implementation Committee will assess data generated by RISE on a semester-by-semester basis, identifying necessary adjustments and changes in real time. The QEP Implementation Committee will meet at least twice during the semester – once at the beginning of each semester and again at the end – but the QEP Director may call additional meetings as needed. Given that the committee meets on a twice-semesterly basis, revisions to RISE may be made speedily as data becomes available.

Support for Institutional Personnel

In terms of support, the faculty teaching the 15 undergraduate QEP courses will not be tasked with any work in addition to their normal teaching duties (excluding, of course, their selection to serve on the QEP Implementation Committee). QEP lessons and the Information-tier quiz are built as a discreet package that may be added to any course across the Moodle platform in plug-and-play fashion. Accordingly, faculty will not be responsible to develop new content for their courses. Likewise, the Practice-tier assessment and Mastery-tier assessment are merged with existing course assignments. Faculty will select one assignment from the midpoint of their courses to serve as the Practice-tier assessment and another assignment near the end of the semester to serve as the Mastery-tier assessment. Since these assignments existed within the courses previously, faculty will not do any work to assess them beyond what they were doing already.⁴¹

⁴¹ In crafting the QEP, the QEP Steering Committee was conscious of students' and faculty members' workload. The purpose of the QEP is not to add to students' workload. Instead, it is to improve the quality of students' work. Thus, the QEP was created to use existing course assignments. The anticipation is that, thanks to the QEP instructional materials, students' performance on these assignments will improve. This improvement will be measured by the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric.

Faculty, staff, and administration serving on the QEP Implementation Committee will perform additional work, but not outside the norms of Luther Rice personnel. All Luther Rice personnel are expected to serve on at least two committees. Prospectively, administration may give the members of the QEP Implementation Committee relief from one of the other committees on which they served previously.

The day-to-day responsibility of managing the QEP, collecting assessment data, and implementing changes determined by the QEP Implementation Committee will fall on the QEP Director. However, he is supported in a number of ways. First, his administrative assistant (the Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs) is tasked with helping him run the Academic Affairs department, which includes the QEP. Second, his teaching responsibilities were absorbed by the hire of a new faculty member in September 2023. And third, Moodle's Competency reporting features and the potential purchase of IntelliBoard will offset the labor of collecting, storing, and organizing assessment data.

Furthermore, recent restructuring of staff duties has enabled the Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs to support the QEP Director more fully. In March of 2023, the existing Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs was promoted to Student Accounts Manager. When she transitioned to her new role, she took the management of the Luther Rice online bookstore with her. At the same time, attendance monitoring responsibilities were shifted from the role of Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs to the role of Academic Advising. Consequently, compared to the previous year, the role of Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs now has substantially less responsibility. For the 2023-2024 year, the reduced responsibility was filled with training as the new Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs learned her position. However, in subsequent years the gap will be filled with QEP responsibilities as the QEP Director determines. Thanks to the restructuring of staff duties, the Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs has been freed to help the QEP Director oversee the QEP.

Assessment Timeline

The timeline below sketches a plan to assess RISE and implement changes as may become necessary. The chart designates personnel responsible to identify and implement changes, the student learning outcomes to be addressed by the changes, and the assessment data demonstrating the need for the changes.

Date	Activity	Action Item	Goal	Personnel Responsible	Assessment Data	Learning Outcomes Addressed
September 2025	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Review of baseline data: Fall 2024, Spring 2025, and Summer 2025	Update RISE targets given new Spring 2025 and Summer 2025 baseline data	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Baseline data from Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Summer 2025	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
November 2025	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Rubric norming session	Assess the usability of the RISE rubric. Track consistency of assessors' scoring.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Committee members' rubric scoring of 3 randomly selected student samples.	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
January 2026	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Review of Fall 2025 assessment data	QEP Director implements changes identified by QEP Implementation Committee.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Fall 2025 assessment data (Information, Practice, Mastery)	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
April 2026	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Rubric norming session	Assess the usability of the RISE rubric. Track consistency of assessors' scoring.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Committee members' rubric scoring of 3 randomly selected student samples.	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
September 2026	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Review of Spring 2026 assessment data	QEP Director implements changes identified by QEP Implementation Committee.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Spring 2026 assessment data (Information, Practice, Mastery)	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.

Date	Activity	Action Item	Goal	Personnel Responsible	Assessment Data	Learning Outcomes Addressed
November 2026	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Rubric norming session	Assess the usability of the RISE rubric. Track consistency of assessors' scoring.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Committee members' rubric scoring of 3 randomly selected student samples.	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
January 2027	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Review of Fall 2026 assessment data	QEP Director implements changes identified by QEP Implementation Committee.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Fall 2026 assessment data (Information, Practice, Mastery)	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
April 2027	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Rubric norming session	Assess the usability of the RISE rubric. Track consistency of assessors' scoring.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Committee members' rubric scoring of 3 randomly selected student samples.	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
September 2027	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Review of Spring 2027 assessment data	QEP Director implements changes identified by QEP Implementation Committee.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Spring 2027 assessment data (Information, Practice, Mastery)	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
November 2027	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Rubric norming session	Assess the usability of the RISE rubric. Track consistency of assessors' scoring.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Committee members' rubric scoring of 3 randomly selected student samples.	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
January 2028	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Review of Fall 2027 assessment data	QEP Director implements changes identified by QEP Implementation Committee.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Fall 2027 assessment data (Information, Practice, Mastery)	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.

Date	Activity	Action Item	Goal	Personnel Responsible	Assessment Data	Learning Outcomes Addressed
April 2028	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Rubric norming session	Assess the usability of the RISE rubric. Track consistency of assessors' scoring.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Committee members' rubric scoring of 3 randomly selected student samples.	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
September 2028	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Review of Spring 2028 assessment data	QEP Director implements changes identified by QEP Implementation Committee.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Spring 2028 assessment data (Information, Practice, Mastery)	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
November 2028	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Rubric norming session	Assess the usability of the RISE rubric. Track consistency of assessors' scoring.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Committee members' rubric scoring of 3 randomly selected student samples.	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
January 2029	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Review of Fall 2028 assessment data	QEP Director implements changes identified by QEP Implementation Committee.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Fall 2028 assessment data (Information, Practice, Mastery)	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
April 2029	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Rubric norming session	Assess the usability of the RISE rubric. Track consistency of assessors' scoring.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Committee members' rubric scoring of 3 randomly selected student samples.	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
September 2029	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Review of Spring 2029 assessment data	QEP Director implements changes identified by QEP Implementation Committee.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Spring 2029 assessment data (Information, Practice, Mastery)	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.

Date	Activity	Action Item	Goal	Personnel Responsible	Assessment Data	Learning Outcomes Addressed
November 2029	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Rubric norming session	Assess the usability of the RISE rubric. Track consistency of assessors' scoring.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Committee members' rubric scoring of 3 randomly selected student samples.	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
January 2030	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Review of Fall 2029 assessment data	QEP Director implements changes identified by QEP Implementation Committee.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Fall 2029 assessment data (Information, Practice, Mastery)	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
April 2030	Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Rubric norming session	Assess the usability of the RISE rubric. Track consistency of assessors' scoring.	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	Committee members' rubric scoring of 3 randomly selected student samples.	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.
September 2030	End of QEP, Final Meeting of the QEP Implementation Committee	Review of 2025-2030 QEP Impact Report	QEP Impact Report submitted to SACSCOC	QEP Director, QEP Implementation Committee	2025-2030 QEP Impact Report	RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3.

Summary

RISE learning outcomes are measures of student learning. They are specific, measuring students' ability to integrate sources appropriately, seek information from multiple perspectives, and assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions. They are measurable, as demonstrated by the Fall 2024 baseline and the use of the RISE Student Learning Outcomes Rubric to assess student work. Moreover they are appropriate to undergraduate BAR students, deriving from Luther Rice's existing Information Literacy Learning Outcomes (ILLOs) and consequently inheriting the work that faculty have invested over years to distinguish undergraduate ILLOs from graduate and doctoral ILLOs.

RISE assessments are direct indicators of student learning. The Information-tier assessment will take the form of a quiz and measure students' comprehension of RISE learning outcomes and the initial instruction offered by faculty. The Practice-tier assessment will take the form of a short written exercise and will measure students' ability to demonstrate RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3 practically albeit in abbreviated fashion. Finally, the Mastery-tier assessment will take the form of a term paper and will measure students' ability to demonstrate RISE learning outcomes fully and at length.

RISE assessments are "both formative and summative."⁴² Information and Practice assessments are manifestly formative as they represent waypoints en route to full mastery. By the same token, Mastery assessments are manifestly summative as they represent the end and culmination of RISE instruction. Viewed longitudinally across semesters, however, even Mastery assessments may be seen as formative in that students encounter RISE instruction semester over semester.

The QEP Steering Committee has identified "institutional personnel responsible for gathering and analyzing assessment data."⁴³ The QEP Director and the Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs will gather RISE data, and the QEP Implementation Committee will analyze it during its twice semesterly meetings. The QEP Implementation Committee's analysis will produce recommendations for change to improve student learning relative to RISE Learning Outcomes 1, 2, and 3. The QEP Steering Committee has devised an assessment timeline to show when the QEP Implementation Committee will meet, the data it will analyze when it meets, and the potential changes that will be identified as a result.

Finally, "institutional personnel responsible for gathering and analyzing assessment data are appropriately supported."⁴⁴ The QEP Director is supported by the hire of a new faculty member to teach his classes, as well as by the Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs. The Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs is herself supported by a recent reallocation of responsibilities to free her to assist the QEP Director to gather and assemble RISE assessment data. RISE faculty and students are supported by the design of RISE itself, which employs existing course assignments instead of requiring the completion and grading of additional assignments.

⁴² SACSCOC, "Reviewing the Quality Enhancement Plan," 2.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

Conclusion

As the foregoing pages have shown, RISE represents a whole-of-institution effort by students, faculty, staff, administration, Board members, and community leaders to improve student learning. The topic is important intellectually and civically, and seeks to create learners who can treat others' arguments with integrity while maintaining their own voice. RISE follows a rational plan, and student achievement will be assessed systematically by a three-tier plan of direct assessment. Given the consensus of Luther Rice's constituents in selecting the topic, RISE addresses a real need. Furthermore, given the collaboration among constituents to construct the plan, RISE offers a realistic solution well-suited to address the need. In light of the benefits that RISE will offer Luther Rice students, the QEP Steering Committee wishes to thank SACSCOC for setting them on this course. Accordingly, the committee and Luther Rice as a whole eagerly await the on-site committee's feedback.

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Appendices

Appendix A – QEP Topic Rationale and Motion

A QEP to improve students' information literacy and its expression within academic writing would address the following ...

- Increase students' performance on research papers and projects.
- Indirectly aid retention by enabling students to perform better in their classes.
- Develop better-informed citizens, better writers, better lifelong learners, and better communicators of good information in their place of ministry
- Contribute to ILO #5, enabling students to “research and study new subjects for [themselves] and to cultivate a lifestyle of lifelong learning.”
- Contribute to ILO #6, improving students' “ability to communicate effectively and accurately through both the written and spoken word.”
- Advance the mission of Luther Rice College & Seminary to “serve the church and community by providing biblically-based [. . .] education.

Communication through the written word is a learned skill. No matter the academic level of writing, being able to assimilate sourced information is both an art as well as a science. Guiding students in their ability to apply gathered information into their writing is a necessity considering we wish to create successful academic writers. With this in mind, we recommend a QEP topic that focuses on the application of information literacy within academic writing. This topic should be directed at the undergraduate level and focus on Information Literacy Frames 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1. Based on experience and the assessment data these frames received not only the lowest results (cf. Figure 1) but they also exhibit the highest reduction in competency over both the period of two years and one year (cf. Figure 2). However, it is not statistics alone that point to a need to focus on these Frames. These frames also seem to be the ones that are concerned with assimilation of information, which is the focus of this recommendation.

In short, the recommendation is as follows:

The QEP topic addresses the assimilation of information literacy into the writing of undergraduate students by focusing on Information Literacy Frames 3.1, 4.1, and 5.1.

Assessment Data -- Undergraduate Information Literacy

Figure 1

Outcome ID	Learning Outcome	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Frame 1.1	Students look for indicators of quality when seeking information, distinguishing reliable from unreliable sources.	4.80	4.93	3.93	3.33
Frame 2.1	Some variety evident in selection of sources.	4.90	4.67	3.67	3.20
Frame 3.1	Students cite sources appropriately and relate sources' claims accurately.	5.10	4.20	3.27	2.60
Frame 4.1	Students seek information from multiple perspectives.	4.10	4.67	3.53	2.73
Frame 5.1	Students make an attempt to assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions.	4.10	4.47	3.60	2.53
Frame 6.1	Students make a focused argument, limiting the scope of research appropriately.	3.20	4.60	4.13	3.13

1 or 2 (Incompetent); 3 or 4 (Competent); 5 or 6 (Very Competent)

Figure 2

Outcome ID	Learning Outcome	Difference from 20/21 to 22/23	Difference from 21/22 to 22/23
Frame 1.1	Students look for indicators of quality when seeking information, distinguishing reliable from unreliable sources.	1.60	0.60
Frame 2.1	Some variety evident in selection of sources.	1.47	0.47
Frame 3.1	Students cite sources appropriately and relate sources' claims accurately.	1.60	0.67
Frame 4.1	Students seek information from multiple perspectives.	1.94	0.80
Frame 5.1	Students make an attempt to assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions.	1.94	1.07
Frame 6.1	Students make a focused argument, limiting the scope of research appropriately.	1.47	1.00

1 or 2 (Incompetent); 3 or 4 (Competent); 5 or 6 (Very Competent)

Appendix B – Information Literacy Learning Outcomes (ILLO) Assessment Rubric

Undergraduate ILLOs #1.1-6.1

EN1102

English Composition II

Final Research Paper

Sample ID: _____

Year: _____

Assessor's Name: _____

Information Literacy Learning Outcomes		Levels of Competence						
		Incompetent		Competent		Very Competent		N/A
1.1	Students look for indicators of quality when seeking information, distinguishing reliable from unreliable sources.	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
2.1	Some variety evident in selection of sources.	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
3.1	Students cite sources appropriately and relate sources' claims accurately.	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
4.1	Students seek information from multiple perspectives.	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
5.1	Students make an attempt to assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A
6.1	Students make a focused argument, limiting the scope of research appropriately.	1	2	3	4	5	6	N/A

Notes:

Description of Rubric Scores for Learning Outcomes

The following provides a description and summary of each numerical valuation associated with the rubrics specified to assess student competency. Student competency is assessed for Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs); Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs); and General Education Learning Outcomes (GELOs). The rubrics are scaled from 1 (Unsatisfactory) to 6 (Exceptional).

1 – Unsatisfactory

The student demonstrates no comprehension of the learning outcome.

2 – Incompetent

The student demonstrates limited comprehension of the learning outcome, omitting or misunderstanding basic facts and concepts.

3 – Novice

The student demonstrates comprehension of the learning outcome's basic facts and concepts but neglects to discuss examples or draw connections between ideas.

4 – Competent

The student demonstrates comprehension of the learning outcome, discusses examples, and draws connections between ideas.

5 – Very Competent

The student demonstrates the outcome, discusses examples, and draws connections among various ideas. The student's discussion is full and robust.

6 – Exceptional

The student demonstrates the outcome, discusses examples, and draws connections among various ideas. The student's discussion is full and robust and shows a significant command of the field of study.

Appendix C – Strategic Planning Committee Minutes: November 9, 2022

Luther Rice College and Seminary
Strategic Planning Committee Meeting
November 9, 2022
Presiding Officer: Dr. Evan Posey, Chair

Members Present: Dr. Evan Posey, Vanessa Nealey, Dr. Steve Pray, Dr. Joshua Stewart, Alisha Blevins, Dr. Thomas Mapes, Padma Sajja, Dr. Rusty Ricketson, Dr. Margie Miller, Dr. David Casas, Ken Stokes, Casey Kuffrey

Members Absent: None

Action Items:

18. The meeting was called to order by Dr. Evan Posey, Chair, at 10:00 AM. Prayer requests were taken, and he led in prayer.

19. The minutes from the October 12, 2022 meeting were distributed and reviewed. There was a recommendation to approve the minutes.

Motion: Alisha Blevins
Second: Steve Pray
Motion Passed

20. Dr. Posey asked the three committee members to give their proposals for the QEP.

21. Ms. Alisha Blevins distributed and reviewed her proposal for Information Literacy Outcomes. This comes from Information Literacy Learning Outcome 5.2 for the Graduate Program. Historical data shows lower scores for ILLO 5.2 than any other outcome for the past 3 years, with one exception. There was some discussion.

21. Dr. Thomas Mapes distributed and reviewed his proposal for Student Success and Retention. Fostering academic achievement through skills coaching and student support is intended to improve retention and student success among undergraduate students. The plan is two-pronged, aiming to coach effective work habits and to support students to succeed. There was some discussion. Dr. Miller stated enrollment in the summer semester is difficult because of student's schedules and the rigor of the 11-week semester. Older students have a fear of English and Math courses. As part of the proposal for implementation, a learning lab for English and Math might be considered. Ms. Blevins stated that a class analysis might show if a face-to-face tutor for basic skills would be helpful. Dr. Pray stated that there is a Basic Skills tab on My Campus.

22. Dr. David Casas gave his presentation for General Education Learning Outcomes. General Education learning outcomes are at the core of our strategic objective to provide a quality academic program, particularly for the success of our current Bachelor of Arts in Religion

program, the Bachelor of Arts in Psychology program, and possible future dual enrollment and bachelor's in business administration program. The QEP in general education learning outcomes requires a two-prong approach. First, recognizing that there are significant overlaps with Information Literacy objectives as well as overall academic writing, improved writing across the curriculum is imperative. Secondly, the GELOs need to be broadened to include clear outcomes for the humanities (i.e., philosophy), mathematics and the natural sciences (i.e., college algebra and physical science), and the social/behavioral sciences (i.e., history and psychology). There was some discussion.

23. There was a recommendation to affirm the three QEP proposals from the Strategic Planning Committee and submit them to the QEP Committee for review.

Motion: Vanessa Nealey
Second: Alisha Blevins
Motion Passed

24. Dr. Posey reported that we are changing our Learning Management System from Blackboard to Moodle. We will longer be able to host Blackboard or have support. Moodle is open sourced, more affordable, and it can be hosted here. Mr. Stokes stated that Moodle is a globally accepted product. We are building a lot of integration into it. Dr. Posey stated that we are moving through the course creation process. There will be 4 courses in Spring 2023 in Moodle. By Fall 2023, all courses will be in Moodle. We are developing a template in Moodle so that courses can be converted from Blackboard.

25. Dr. Posey reported that the faculty will be recommending a new Ph.D. in Christian Scripture to the Board on November 16, 2022. If the Board approves it, we will present it to SACS and our other accreditors for approval. The plan is to launch it in Fall 2023.

26. The meeting was adjourned at 11:26 AM.

Next Meeting:

TBD

Appendix D – QEP 2025-2030: Potential Topics Report



QEP 2025-2030:

Potential Topics

Contents

<u>INFORMATION LITERACY</u>	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
<u>RATIONALE</u>	78
<u>ASSESSMENT DATA</u>	71
<u>Undergraduate Information Literacy</u>	7
<u>Graduate Information Literacy</u>	79
<u>Doctoral Information Literacy</u>	80
<u>RETENTION</u>	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
<u>RATIONALE</u>	81
<u>ASSESSMENT DATA</u>	81
<u>Retention by Year per Program</u>	82
<u>WRITING SKILLS</u>	ERROR! BOOKMARK NOT DEFINED.
<u>RATIONALE</u>	83
<u>ASSESSMENT DATA</u>	83
<u>GELO (General Education Learning Outcomes) Assessment</u>	83
<u>PLO (Program Learning Outcomes) Assessment</u>	84
<u>ETS (Educational Testing Service) Proficiency Profile</u>	85

Information Literacy

Rationale

A QEP to improve students' information literacy would ...

- Increase students' performance on research papers and projects.
- Indirectly aid retention by enabling students to perform better in their classes.
- Develop better-informed citizens.
- Contribute to ILO #5, enabling students to "research and study new subjects for [themselves] and to cultivate a lifestyle of lifelong learning."
- Advance the mission of Luther Rice College & Seminary to "serve the church and community by providing biblically-based [. . .] education.

Assessment Data

Luther Rice assesses information literacy at the undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral levels. The tables below provide a snapshot of information literacy assessment over the past four years.

Undergraduate Information Literacy

Outcome ID	Learning Outcome	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Frame 1.1	Students look for indicators of quality when seeking information, distinguishing reliable from unreliable sources.	4.80	4.93	3.93	3.33
Frame 2.1	Some variety evident in selection of sources.	4.90	4.67	3.67	3.20
Frame 3.1	Students cite sources appropriately and relate sources' claims accurately.	5.10	4.20	3.27	2.60
Frame 4.1	Students seek information from multiple perspectives.	4.10	4.67	3.53	2.73
Frame 5.1	Students make an attempt to assess sources' logic and evidence instead of simply summarizing conclusions.	4.10	4.47	3.60	2.53
Frame 6.1	Students make a focused argument, limiting the scope of research appropriately.	3.20	4.60	4.13	3.13

1 or 2 (Incompetent); 3 or 4 (Competent); 5 or 6 (Very Competent)

Graduate Information Literacy

Outcome ID	Learning Outcome	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Frame 1.2	Students use sources with an appropriate level of authority.	4.40	4.20	4.67	5.44
Frame 2.2	Students seek a wide range of sources in a variety of formats including journals, monographs, and reference materials.	4.95	4.45	4.36	4.50
Frame 3.2	Students employ information ethically. Sources' claims are represented accurately, without misrepresentation or mischaracterization. Sources are quoted and cited appropriately according to the latest edition of <i>A Manual for Writers</i> .	4.55	4.45	3.79	4.78
Frame 4.2	Students seek information from various biblical interpretive models and theological viewpoints, with emphases on significant historical perspectives.	4.55	4.48	4.15	4.00
Frame 5.2	Students think critically, setting the various biblical interpretive models and theological viewpoints in dialog.	3.65	4.14	3.64	4.17
Frame 6.2	Students make a focused argument, limiting the scope of research appropriately.	3.50	4.50	4.45	4.89

1 or 2 (Incompetent); 3 or 4 (Competent); 5 or 6 (Very Competent)

Doctoral Information Literacy

Outcome ID	Learning Outcome	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Frame 1.3	Students use sources with an appropriate level of authority.	4.50	4.27	4.93	5.53
Frame 2.3	Students seek a wide range of sources in a variety of formats including journals, monographs, and reference materials.	4.00	3.80	4.60	5.67
Frame 3.3	Students employ information ethically. Sources' claims are represented accurately, without misrepresentation or mischaracterization. Sources are quoted and cited appropriately.	4.00	4.53	4.67	5.20
Frame 4.3	Methodological research is both broad and evaluative. Student researches the methods of numerous other authors (broad), and highlights points of similarity and dissimilarity among them (evaluative).	3.71	4.53	4.00	3.40
Frame 5.3	Methodological research is intellectually rigorous. Student goes beyond merely summarizing what prior researchers have done by examining the reasons and rationales in their work.	3.63	4.20	3.80	3.67
Frame 6.3	Students make meaningful contributions to the field of study.	4.00	3.40	4.93	5.07

1 or 2 (Incompetent); 3 or 4 (Competent); 5 or 6 (Very Competent)

Retention

Rationale

A QEP to improve the retention rate of Luther Rice students would ...

- Extend Luther Rice's capacity to achieve its mission to "serve the church and community by providing biblically-based [. . .] education."
- Enhance students' graduation rates, career prospects, future earnings, and service within the church and community.
- Increase Luther Rice's tuition and fee revenue.

Assessment Data

Luther Rice tracks retention by year for each of its programs. A snapshot of this data appears on the next page:

Retention by Year per Program

Luther Rice Retention											
		Total Luther Rice									
		13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
Total		67.7%	66.4%	66.1%	66.3%	63.8%	62.1%	62.1%	64.0%	66.1%	63.1%
(excluding SPEC and CERT)											
		By Program									
		13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
BAR		69.2%	65.6%	65.3%	63.1%	60.3%	59.0%	61.6%	64.1%	70.7%	63.2%
MAA		75.4%	62.5%	65.6%	65.6%	71.1%	73.5%	71.0%	51.9%	81.0%	76.2%
MABC		63.1%	63.8%	61.3%	71.4%	52.4%	65.8%	63.4%	68.5%	71.7%	72.5%
MACS		77.6%	63.0%	60.4%	56.3%	67.9%	65.1%	59.1%	67.4%	59.4%	85.7%
MAL		62.7%	66.2%	69.8%	68.4%	48.3%	58.3%	52.6%	50.0%	60.9%	58.3%
MAM		0.0%	59.3%	66.7%	69.2%	63.0%	70.8%	71.0%	61.1%	68.0%	52.5%
MDIV		64.2%	70.3%	70.0%	69.6%	71.2%	64.1%	59.8%	69.5%	67.5%	59.0%
DMIN		62.5%	76.5%	62.1%	69.0%	67.9%	48.3%	61.0%	55.8%	45.8%	54.5%
PHDL		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	72.7%
SPEC/CERT		33.3%	42.9%	25.0%	20.0%	11.1%	0.0%	40.0%	33.3%	33.3%	23.5%
Total		67.4%	66.3%	65.8%	65.8%	63.2%	62.1%	62.0%	63.7%	65.9%	61.7%
Total		67.7%	66.4%	66.1%	66.3%	63.8%	62.1%	62.1%	64.0%	66.1%	63.1%
(excluding SPEC)											
MA		69.4%	63.5%	64.5%	66.8%	60.8%	67.3%	64.8%	62.0%	68.3%	67.9%
Undergraduate					63.1%	60.3%	59.0%	61.6%	64.1%	70.7%	63.2%
Graduate					68.1%	65.5%	63.8%	62.4%	63.9%	64.8%	63.0%

Writing Skills

Rationale

A QEP to improve Luther Rice students' writing skills would ...

- Improve students' performance on papers, projects, discussions, and essay exams.
- Enable students to think more clearly and with more precision. Thinking and communication are reciprocal processes.
- Indirectly aid retention by increasing students' success in-class.
- Contribute to ILO #6, improving students' "ability to communicate effectively and accurately through both the written and spoken word."
- Advance the mission of Luther Rice College & Seminary to "serve the church and community by providing biblically-based [. . .] education.

Assessment Data

Luther Rice tracks writing proficiency by program using a battery of instruments. These instruments include in-house PLO and GELO assessments as well as standardized testing provided by the Educational Testing Service/Terrarium.

The samples below were culled from assessment instruments for the Bachelor of Arts in Religion program.

GELO (General Education Learning Outcomes) Assessment

Outcome ID	Learning Outcome	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
GELOCOM-1	<i>Focus - the sections of the essay or speech make a unified argument; all sections support the same argument.</i>	4.70	4.00	4.73	4.80
GELOCOM-2	<i>Paragraph organization - each paragraph addresses a single topic that contributes to the overall argument of the essay or speech.</i>	4.53	4.13	4.53	4.53
GELOCOM-3	<i>Sentence style - the sentences of the essay or speech flow smoothly and clearly, and demonstrate facility with English grammar.</i>	3.80	3.60	3.33	4.00
GELOCOM-4	<i>Audience awareness - the student recognizes an audience's potential reservations, and employs appropriate logical, emotional, and ethical strategies of persuasion (logos, pathos, and ethos) to win assent.</i>	4.13	4.00	3.93	4.33
GELOCOM-5	<i>Research/Information Literacy - the student uses appropriate sources to support claims.</i>	4.20	4.00	4.80	4.73

1 or 2 (Incompetent); 3 or 4 (Competent); 5 or 6 (Very Competent)

PLO (Program Learning Outcomes) Assessment

Please see BARPLO-1 (highlighted) in the table below.

Outcome ID	Learning Outcome	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
BARPLO-1	<i>Demonstrate effectiveness in oral and written communication.</i>	4.53	3.73	4.00	4.53
BARPLO-2	<i>Articulate the ideas, events, and factors that have contributed to the development of world civilizations, and modern society and culture.</i>	4.67	4.67	5.15	4.00
BARPLO-3	<i>Critically and constructively apply a Christian worldview as it relates to various disciplines.</i>	3.13	3.60	3.80	4.33
BARPLO-4	<i>Demonstrate knowledge of the Bible, Christian theology, and church history with the purpose of ministry application.</i>	4.33	4.27	4.33	4.97
BARPLO-5	<i>Develop foundational skills for ministry and service in a local church.</i>	4.87	4.47	4.07	4.47

1 or 2 (Incompetent); 3 or 4 (Competent); 5 or 6 (Very Competent)

ETS (Educational Testing Service) Proficiency Profile

Please see “ETS: Writing” highlighted in the table below.

Area of Competency	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	ETS Comparison Group⁴⁵
ETS: Reading	116.18	115.91.	117.27	116.0	116.0
ETS: Writing	112.35	111.94	113.33	112.6	113.0
ETS: Critical Thinking	110.09	109.69	111.02	110.6	110.6
ETS: Mathematics	110.00	109.16	110.16	109.7	112.2
ETS: Humanities	115.65	114.63	115.63	114.7	114.6
ETS: Social Sciences	112.88	112.44	113.97	113.1	112.7
ETS: Natural Sciences	112.79	112.97	114.00	113.7	113.9
Total Score⁴⁶	434.56	432.94	438.21	435.2	437.5

⁴⁵ The comparison group consists of aggregated 2017-2022 scores of 12,573 seniors (90+ credit hours) from 32 colleges in the United States.

⁴⁶ The score range for each individual area of competency is 100 to 130. The total score range for the proficiency profile is 400 to 500.

Appendix E – QEP Steering Committee Minutes: October 26, 2023

Luther Rice College and Seminary
QEP Steering Committee Meeting
October 26, 2023
Presiding Officer: Dr. Thomas Mapes, Chair

<u>Member</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Matt Alexander		X
Pamela Rockett		X
Trey Bailey		X
Bill Houck	X	
Deborah Wilson		X
Vanessa Nealey	X	
Evan Posey	X	
Thomas Mapes	X	
David Casas	X	
Ron Cobb	X	
Casey Hough	X	
Doug Taylor	X	
Joshua Stewart	X	
Marcus Merritt	X	
Margie Miller	X	
Casey Kuffrey		X
Alisha Blevins	X	
Steve Pray		X
Joseph Washington	X	

Action Items:

10. Dr. Thomas Mapes, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM. Prayer requests were taken, and he led in prayer.

11. Dr. Mapes opened the floor for the members to express any ideas or thoughts about the topics that were presented at the last meeting.

- Dr. Cobb – Retention would be his choice. Retention motivates and excites him.
- Dr. Stewart – Would like to see a combination of Writing and Information Literacy. Dr. Taylor agreed.
- Ms. Blevins – The topic should be narrow enough that it is not overwhelming.

12. Dr. Mapes reviewed the assessment data on Information Literacy. The BAR has the longest history of data.

13. Dr. Posey stated that if information literacy is improved, we would likely see an increase in retention, which we can track. It would also likely improve the quality of our graduate students. He can research the data on how many of our undergraduate students move on to our graduate programs.

14. If Information Literacy is chosen, we would use only part of our BAR students. It would mostly likely be those in their first or second year of the program so that we can track them.

15. Dr. Posey stated that the Fall 2025 semester will be the first semester that we start to collect data. We can include direct and indirect assessment, as well as retention, as part of that data.

16. Dr. Mapes reported that the faculty discussed the topics at their meeting last week. Their conclusion was to do a combination of Information Literacy and Writing Skills. This would include aspects of writing for an academic paper.

17. Dr. Stewart stated that information literacy, by its very nature, is tied to writing. He would like to see the relationship between information literacy and the assimilation of resources explored as a part of the Quality Enhancement Plan.

18. Dr. Mapes asked the committee to review the topics again and be ready to make a recommendation at the next meeting. It should include the topic, scope of intervention, and particular methods.

19. Dr. Taylor stated that the best practices set up could be used for other programs moving forward.

20. The minutes from the September 28, 2023 meeting were distributed and reviewed. There was a recommendation to approve the minutes.

Motion: Marcus Merritt

Second: Doug Taylor

Motion Passed

21. The meeting was adjourned at 2:41 PM.

Next Meeting:

November 21, 2023, at 2:00 PM via Microsoft Teams.

Appendix F – Faculty Meeting Minutes: October 18, 2023

Luther Rice College and Seminary Meeting and Agenda Minutes Faculty Committee Meeting October 18, 2023

Members Present:

- | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Brad Arnett | 7. Scott Henderson | 13. David Mapes | 19. Tim Skinner |
| 2. Alisha Blevins | 8. Jenny Medlin | 14. Thomas Mapes | 20. Joshua Stewart |
| 3. David Casas | 9. Ann Kerlin | 15. Casey Hough | 21. Doug Taylor |
| 4. Ron Cobb | 10. Javan Payne | 16. Alan Posey | 22. Obbie Todd |
| 5. Bill Coleman | 11. William Wilson | 17. Evan Posey | 23. Jared Thompson |
| 6. Rusty Ricketson | 12. Scott Moody | 18. Bill Jaggar | |

Members Absent: Matt Solomon, Obbie Todd, Javan Payne.

The Faculty Committee meeting was called to order by Dr. Scott Henderson at 10:00 a.m. in Woodlawn Hall, Room 202-203, via Teams. Dr. Thomas Mapes led a devotion and prayer.

Agenda Items

Item #1: Approval of Minutes

Dr. Scott Henderson requested a motion to approve the September 20, 2023 meeting minutes as presented.

Motion: Dr. David Casas
Second: Dr. William Wilson
Vote: Unanimous

Item #2: Departmental Reports

CP – Dr. David Mapes- The Certificate Programs Committee discussed the addition of a new certificate program, the Graduate Certificate in Church Revitalization. The certificate will require the creation of three courses. In other news, the committee discussed PLO recommendations.

BAPY - Dr. Ron Cobb- The BAPY Committee met on October 3 at 7:30 p.m. to discuss PLO assessment due December 1. Each professor on the committee will make one recommendation for improvement. Recommendations are to be thoughtful with an end to enhancing the BAPY learning experience for students.

BAR – Dr. David Casas- The committee discussed the pending BAR Program Review, due in Spring 2023 term. The committee divided responsibility to assess video assets for each course in the program. The committee also discussed course credit hour assessment.

MAA – Dr. Doug Taylor- The committee discussed recommendations for MAA PLOs and ILLOs. Likewise, the committee finalized recommendations for the MAA 5-Year Program Review.

MABC – Dr. Ann Kerlin- Marking guides and rubrics were added to several MABC courses. Marking guides are used to grade discussion forums, and rubrics are used to grade papers. Some rubrics remain to be finished, but the marking guides are in place.

MACS – Dr. Wilson- The MACS Committee reviewed the draft of the program review and discussed observations and recommendations. The committee observed that the program is experiencing dramatic enrollment decline which directly relates to its viability. The committee discussed the probability that the MAM and the shortened MDiv continue to syphon interest from the MACS.

MAL- Dr.- The MAL committee is still discussing ways to keep students on track with their courses so that they do not end up taking many independent study courses. We also are discussing possible electives down the road. The new format for the Leadership Practicum course is going very well!

MAM – Dr. Alan Posey- There was a brief follow-up discussion concerning the addition of “shepherding” language to the Program Description. Dr. Coleman will present a first draft for the committee’s consideration in November. The committee agreed to commit our November meeting to the Program Assessment and prepare recommendations for improvement. The committee encouraged one another as we become more comfortable and proficient with Moodle.

MDIV – Dr. Casey Hough- Dr. Stewart distributed ILLO and PLO assessment results and reminded the committee of the December 1 due date PLO/ILLO recommendations. The November meeting of the committee will be devoted primarily to generating PLO and ILLO recommendations.

DMIN- Dr. Marcus Merritt- The committee discussed the potential future layout of DM9500. Tentatively, DM9500 course shells will be specific to the advisor. An advisor’s DM9500 course shell will contain all advisees assigned to him or her. Students will submit chapters of their project to a link within the DM9500 course shell.

PHDCS- Dr. Joshua Stewart- The PhD Christian Scripture committee met on 10/12/23 to address transfer credits and dissertation length. Regarding the former, no transfer credit will be accepted. Regarding the latter, the committee researched dissertation requirements at peer institutions and developed the following statement: “The dissertation must encompass at least 40,000 words. This count covers the main content and footnotes. However, it excludes the bibliography and any appendices. Students must ensure that their writing sufficiently supports and demonstrates their thesis.”

PHDL- Dr. Rusty Ricketson- The committee discussed the need to have all the PHDL courses available for the Spring 2024 semester. The committee agreed to appeal to Dr. Posey to add LD8802 and LD8806 to the spring semester line up. At the request of Dr. Mapes, going forward all syllabi will have dates listed for the weeks within each period.

Item #3: Health Insurance

Dr. Posey discussed 2024 open enrollment with Guidestone:

- There will be a 12% increase in health premiums for 2024.
- Luther Rice will continue with Guidestone through 2024 but will look at other providers in 2025.
- Luther Rice will continue to pay 80% of the employee's portion.
- Luther Rice is staying with both the 4000 80/20 and 5000 80/20 plan.

Business

Item #4: Special Motion

Dr. David Mapes requested a special motion be made to the board from the faculty recommending Hal Haller to be awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Luther Rice College and Seminary.

Motion: Dr. Joshua Stewart

Second: Dr. William Wilson

Vote: Unanimous

Item #5: Update of QEP

- Dr. Thomas Mapes asked the faculty to provide feedback on potential topics for the QEP.
- Dr. Mapes stated that the steering committee has met once and will meet again the following week. The committee is considering three topics: student retention, writing skills, and informational literacy.
- Dr. Joshua Stewart suggested combining information literacy and writing skills into a single topic, "Research Writing." He also recommended that the QEP target undergraduates.
- Dr. William Wilson stated that writing skills are perhaps the biggest problem professors see at the graduate and doctoral level.
- Dr. Evan Posey stated that students who struggle with writing are more likely to withdraw from courses. Given this, a QEP that targets writing skills may increase retention.

Item #6: Policy: Timely Grading Policy

Dr. Mapes asked the faculty to consider the following policy:

The faculty has identified reasonable expectations regarding the length of time necessary to assess the following types of assignments:

- *Quizzes and Objective Tests/Exams: to be graded within _____ week.*
- *Essay Tests and Exams: to be graded within _____ weeks*
- *Informal writing assignments (discussion forums, journals, response papers, etc.): to be graded within _____ week*
- *Formal writing assignments: to be graded within _____ weeks.*

Dr. David Casas recommended that professors be given one week to grade quizzes, two weeks to grade essay tests and informal writing assignments, and four weeks to grade formal writing assignments.

Dr. Thomas Mapes said four weeks for a formal writing assignment was too long.

Dr. Scott Henderson suggested that the professor research and find out if there is already a standard measurement for grading among other colleges.

Dr. Doug Taylor asked what the time frame would be for fifteen, four, and mini terms regarding the time needed for grading.

Item #6: Announcements

- Dr. Mapes highlighted three dates for DMIN advisors to remember: January 12, March 1, and April 26. First drafts of projects must be submitted by January 12. The final, edited version must be submitted by March 1. All defenses must be completed by April 26.
- PLO and ILLO are both due by December 1, 2023.

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Next meeting: November 15, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph B. Washington II
Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs.

Appendix G – Results of September 2024 QEP Survey

Total Students
307

	Question As a student, the area I need the most assistance with is ... (first choice)	Responses A.Advising /Registerin g for courses	B.Finding sources in the Luther Rice Library	C.Quoting, citing, and discussing sources in a paper	D.Thinking through an argument critically	E.Using time efficiently	F.Studying for tests and exams	G.Managi ng stress	H.Maintai ning work/life/s chool balance	I.Speaking /presenting to a group	J.Understa nding difficult reading material	K.Practicin g self- discipline	Total Choice 1
Responses (1st Choice)		7	23	64	27	31	20	11	79	10	19	16	307
Percentages (1st Choice)		2.3%	7.5%	20.8%	8.8%	10.1%	6.5%	3.6%	25.7%	3.3%	6.2%	5.2%	100.0%
	Question As a student, the area I need most assistance with is ... (second choice)	Responses A.Advising /Registerin g for courses	B.Finding sources in the Luther Rice Library	C.Quoting, citing, and discussing sources in a paper	D.Thinking through an argument critically	E.Using time efficiently	F.Studying for tests and exams	G.Managi ng stress	H.Maintai ning work/life/s chool balance	I.Speaking /presenting to a group	J.Understa nding difficult reading material	K.Practicin g self- discipline	Total Choice 2
Responses (2nd Choice)		6	30	54	22	39	34	29	29	12	34	17	306
Percentages (2nd Choice)		2.0%	9.8%	17.6%	7.2%	12.7%	11.1%	9.5%	9.5%	3.9%	11.1%	5.6%	100.0%
	Question As a student, the area I need most assistance with is ... (third choice)	Responses A.Advising /Registerin g for courses	B.Finding sources in the Luther Rice Library	C.Quoting, citing, and discussing sources in a paper	D.Thinking through an argument critically	E.Using time efficiently	F.Studying for tests and exams	G.Managi ng stress	H.Maintai ning work/life/s chool balance	I.Speaking /presenting to a group	J.Understa nding difficult reading material	K.Practicin g self- discipline	Total Choice 3
Responses (3rd Choice)		11	23	42	17	25	34	15	41	13	61	23	305
Percentages (3rd Choice)		3.6%	7.5%	13.8%	5.6%	8.2%	11.1%	4.9%	13.4%	4.3%	20.0%	7.5%	100.0%
Responses (All)		24	76	160	66	95	88	55	149	35	114	56	918
Percentages (All)		7.8%	24.8%	52.1%	21.5%	30.9%	28.7%	17.9%	48.5%	11.4%	37.1%	18.2%	299.0%
Rank		11	6	1	7	4	5	9	2	10	3	8	
Responses (Weighted) ¹		44.0	152.0	342.0	142.0	196.0	162.0	106.0	336.0	67.0	186.0	105.0	1838.0
Rank (Weighted)		11	6	1	7	3	5	8	2	10	4	9	

¹Weight of responses is calculated by multiplying each first-choice response by 3, each second-choice response by 2, and each third-choice response by 1.