

Title of QEP: Digital Citizenship – A Guide for Students in a Digital Society

Institution: University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Why the proposed topic is important to UNCCCharlotte?

The role of Information Technology in our society has become pervasive. In the past 20 years, communications and computing technology have transformed our work, our social lives and are even now making fundamental changes in our legal and political lives as well. Digital Citizenship is cross disciplinary addition to the curriculum that deals proactively with the transformation in our society brought on by these technologies. The goal is to prepare our students for work and life in a century that will be driven by technological change.

This QEP will educate students about:

- Digital Literacy for the 21st Century. The project for Digital Literacy will address the adoption and integration of new technology skills by our students. While it is generally believed that students today are quite facile with technology, their knowledge is quite shallow. UNC Charlotte students should have the basic information technology skills that allow them to compete for the knowledge based jobs of the future.
- Social Implications of Technological Change. Our students live in a world that has been revolutionized by instant and pervasive communications. Their relationships with each other, with their community and their society are evolving in a rapid manner. The ability to understand the societal impacts of this change will be a critical skill necessary in the development of citizen leaders for the future.
- Ethical Implications of Digital Technology. Digital etiquette will concentrate on the appropriate use of digital communications. This will address such issues as appropriate use of social networks, cyber-bullying, stalking, and rights to online privacy. We will help our students learn what it means to become a responsible citizen in a digital society.
- Laws and Government in the Digital Age. Rapid technological change is a challenge to our 18th century system of laws and government. From the Patriot Act to Google Street View, the ability of organizations to collect and manage information places was simply unimaginable even twenty years ago. Digital citizens will have a critical role in defining how our legal and government structures adapt to this rapid change.

How the proposed topic will affect student learning?

The model proposed is to develop digital learning modules that can be added to relevant courses or made available as a stand-alone hybrid course. The content would be developed and refreshed annually through a series of seminars or workshops that address various aspects of the topic. The content of those educational activities would be produced as learning modules.

What existing problems or gaps in student learning will the proposed topic address?

UNC Tomorrow Goal 4.1.1 states

UNC should prepare its students for successful professional and personal lives in the 21st Century, equipping them with the tools they will need to adapt to the ever-changing world.

The topic of 21st Century Skills has been hotly debated and is still rather ambiguous. Given that information and communication technologies are the primary change agents in our world today, engaging our students in understanding how that change affects their society, their laws, their government and their personal lives may be the most important and enduring skill that we can give them.

What portion of the student body will be affected by the proposed topic?

This QEP would affect the majority of students on campus. As UNC Charlotte is part of a digital society, most of our students will be affected by this QEP. This educational component would augment our curriculum offerings in academic and student affairs. The content from the QEP would also be uploaded to the North Carolina Learning Object Repository to be used by anyone working in a teaching capacity for the state of North Carolina.

Is the proposed QEP a new endeavor or a significant extension of ongoing efforts?

This QEP is a new endeavor and may be built upon in the future to an entire course or extended program.