

# **Bridging the Gaps to Student Success: Fostering Workforce Readiness**

University of Central Florida  
Quality Enhancement Plan Concept Paper

## Executive Summary

**Description:** Workforce readiness is a critical component of UCF's focus and student preparation to meet workforce demands is a significant part of our charge. Unfortunately, students typically wait until a few weeks before graduation to prepare for post-graduation plans. Bridging gaps across academic content, disciplinary knowledge and career demands beginning in introductory courses will encourage student planning throughout their UCF careers. Such preparation will positively impact the employability and readiness of our graduates and meet student, institutional and employer needs. Success in integrating academic and career or graduate school readiness will also produce positive results related to retention, graduation and excess hours.

**Vision:** Student career readiness is a primary goal of all programs at UCF, regardless of discipline. Faculty and administrators across campus recognize that graduating students should reflect the content they have learned in classrooms through communication of their knowledge and skills to employers and others throughout the Orlando, regional, national, and international communities. Consequently, all stakeholders at UCF should support additional efforts to prepare our students not only to demonstrate the theories and practical application of their disciplinary specializations but also to adapt their educational skills to a variety of workplace scenarios and environments.

**Congruence with university's mission and strategic plan:** Undergraduates will benefit from focused attention on both scholarship and career preparation throughout their UCF careers. Our efforts to integrate these endeavors will enhance UCF's growing international reputation for undergraduate education excellence while providing additional opportunities for further diversifying our student body and including new populations and partnerships in the overall undergraduate experience at UCF. Consistent, coherent messaging and programming according to this model will serve the University's mission and result in undergraduates who are better prepared to succeed as graduate students, excel as capable and adaptable workers, and enrich society as engaged, productive citizens.

**Foundation:** A variety of data resources support the goals of the "Bridging the Gaps to Student Success" proposal. In addition to various local, state, national, and institutional data resources, information justifying this proposal can be obtained from campus entities such as the offices of Operational Excellence and Assessment Support (OEAS) and Institutional Knowledge Management. Moreover, an array of existing student outcome assessment and final destination surveys can provide valuable information in these regards, as will innovative tools featuring e-portfolios, OBOJOB modules, the "TeachLivE" program and the "Pegasus Path" initiative. In conjunction, these resources provide a multitude of venues for defining the issues being examined and assessing the impact of the project.