

**TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-SAN ANTONIO CENTER FOR ACADEMIC INNOVATION  
STRATEGIC PLAN  
ACADEMIC YEARS 2025-2028**

**July 2024/Approved September 2024**

## **Introduction**

Quality centers of academic innovation (CAI) have a series of unique and engaging activities that facilitates learning. While introducing faculty members to educational technology is one component of a Center for Academic Innovation, focusing on helping instructors improve their courses in multiple ways is a growing component for CAI units. With the addition of Generative AI (GenAI), another dimension is created for academic innovation. At A&M-SA, the CAI is also responsible for the SACSCOC Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) and the TAMUS representative for institutional ACUE offerings. Consequently, the CAI has become central for supporting important A&M-SA strategic initiatives, such as accreditation, the rise of GenAI for instruction, and a culture of excellence.

### ***The Past: Where the Current CAI Iteration Began***

Multiple staffing and focus changes occurred in the Center for Academic Innovation between 2020-2024. Thus, the need to level set a strategic plan for CAI for 2025-2028 becomes important to assure good management and success. The present document offers the strategic plan for A&M-SA's CAI based upon conducting an environmental scan of the CAI, a PESTEL analysis, and a SWOC analysis. These analyses are accompanied by a needs analysis conducted by the current CAI Faculty Fellows to determine what, if any, changes need to occur in the Faculty Fellows program.

Specific information came from the application of a needs assessment in four areas of the CAI: What A&M-SA needs for a strong center of academic innovation; what the campus wants in a strong center of academic innovation; what the limitations are for the CAI; and lastly, what the Faculty Fellows program needs to take hold at A&M-SA. Faculty were surveyed in Fall 2024 regarding their interests. Current Faculty Fellows conducted a needs analysis of the Faculty Fellows program in Spring 2024. Responses to these questions provided the foundation for establishing the mission, vision, values, and outcomes for the CAI.

### ***Today: Where CAI is as of June 2024***

After several months of discussions with various stakeholders, reviewing available documents from 2018-2023, and speaking with faculty and staff, a clearer mission, vision, values, and outcomes for the Center for Academic Innovation has emerged.

## **Mission, Vision, Values and Outcomes for the Center for Academic Innovation**

***Mission Statement*** Texas A&M University-San Antonio Center for Academic Innovation offers the A&M-SA faculty and community partners with high quality teaching, learning, and scholarship opportunities that benefit faculty development and student success.

***Vision Statement*** Texas A&M University-San Antonio's Center for Academic Innovation supports a teaching and learning environment where all faculty can excel by discovering innovative, evidence-based practices connected to quality assessment and evaluation methods.

**Values Statement** The Center for Academic Innovation is committed to the following values:

- **Innovation** for finding and presenting the most current and best practices for faculty development
- **Inspiration** for faculty by offering emerging pedagogies and pedagogical ideas through investigation, learning, and reflection
- **Curiosity** for encouraging faculty to engage in new ideas, new practices, new evidence, and new scholarship to improve the educational experiences of A&M-SA students

### **CAI Emerging Practices 2025-2028**

The five areas the Center for Academic Innovation considers to be the emerging practices 2025-2028 are as follows:

- Ensuring Universal Design for Learning that Includes Dual Enrollment Students
- Connecting Learning Objectives to Pedagogy, High Impact Practices, and Assessment
- Supporting Flipped Pedagogy
- Encouraging appropriate Generative AI pedagogical practices
- Creating templated elements for easy of faculty course creation in Ultra

### **Center for Academic Innovation Outcomes**

The Center for Academic Innovation outcomes for faculty participation include

1. Presenting current accepted pedagogical and andragogical standards to faculty to improve course design
2. Establishing a community to support engaged teaching and learning across the University
3. Offering opportunities for faculty to learn about and to adopt teaching strategies that lead to on-going student success
4. Fostering the creative and scholarly growth of faculty to flourish as professionals

### **CAI Environmental Scan**

The COVID pandemic from 2020-2023 demonstrated that higher education overall has entered a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous stage or VUCA condition. From news reports in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Education*, and other outlets, higher education as a sector is in a VUCA situation that makes decision making challenging. Post-pandemic economic and political concerns combined with the rapid rise of generative AI forms and predictive AI contribute to situations on many college and university campuses that are difficult to manage.

While many states and institutions face economic and enrollment downturns starting in 2025, Texas, and Texas A&M University-San Antonio, should not see the dramatic economic and enrollment downturns as seen currently along the East Coast and in Midwestern universities. In fact, it may be that A&M-SA's enrollments will rise, given recent agreements to move forward with dual credit students' attending Jaguar Promise and a strong base of local students attending Alamo Colleges who can enter under the Jaguar Promise program.

The environmental scan provides an overall mixed look at the next three to five years in higher education. Figure 1 offers a review of the environmental trends and patterns shaping the A&M-SA CAI. Environmental trends and patterns were developed from reviewing several sources, such as

*The Chronicle of Higher Education, Inside Higher Education, Texas Monthly, Texas Tribune, The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Atlantic, and The Wall Street Journal among other sources.*

**Figure 1**

*A&M-SA CAI environmental scan*

<b>Context</b>	<b>Current Conditions</b>	<b>Emerging Trends &amp; Patterns</b>	<b>CAI Future Challenges &amp; Opportunities</b>
<b>Institution</b>	<b>High Growth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating new programs of study</li> <li>• Bringing significant numbers of dual credit students to campus</li> <li>• Retaining students through all four years</li> <li>• Moving to R2 status</li> <li>• Generating more research and grants dollars</li> <li>• Entering a period of high growth and Institutional change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More faculty needed developing new and more faculty workshops</li> <li>• Offer sessions to address specific needs of dual credit students</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for faculty scholarship (e.g., Jaguar Writing Spaces)</li> <li>• Create various new faculty activities to establish strong faculty culture</li> </ul>
<b>Higher Education</b>	<b>Cautionary</b>	Facing an enrollment cliff starting in 2025, the industry as a whole facing growing number of closures because of financial exigency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will any of these concerns shape A&amp;M-SA decisions in the next three years?</li> <li>• CAI offerings may need to pivot as necessary to focus on retention strategies faculty can use</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Developments</b>	<b>Complex</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rise of GenAI</li> <li>• Growing oversight of accrediting agencies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies/procedures for GenAI needed</li> <li>• Opportunities to provide continued faculty training on GenAI models</li> <li>• Stay current with changes to QEP</li> </ul>
<b>State/Region</b>	<b>Stable</b>	Border concerns dominate much of the discussions in the state; nationwide, families/students beginning to see	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assuring the public that higher education can be trusted and is important for high school graduates.</li> <li>• CAI training can be used to show that</li> </ul>

		education at all levels “optional”	A&M-SA is committed to providing quality instruction for our students
<b>World</b>	<b>Cautionary-Complex</b>	Current civil unrest in multiple parts of the world; lack of clarity on AI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A challenge is what the US will do in protest situations and how those decisions might affect higher education spending, university funding, and student attendance.</li> <li>• Sponsoring AI sessions to help faculty develop good pedagogical and andragogical practices for clarity in their instruction</li> </ul>

For the CAI, the focus needs to be on providing events that support the institution in gaining the trust of the public to send their students to A&M-SA. As A&M-SA is anticipated to become a high-growth institution, CAI must be able to provide a range of faculty workshops and professional development opportunities to address the hiring of new faculty members, recognize high-performing faculty, and provide opportunities for faculty to focus on research, scholarship, and creative activity aligned to their disciplines.

Drilling into the environmental scan, a PESTEL (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, and Legal) analysis was conducted to determine if specific issues would take precedence that could influence the CAI in the period between 2025-2028. Sources for the PESTEL analysis presented in Figure 2 were *The Chronicle of Higher Education, Inside Higher Ed. Com, Texas Tribune, Forbes, Wall Street Journal, Harvard Business Review, New York Times, Washington Post, Hanover Research, and Educause.*

**Figure 2**  
PESTEL Analysis *CAI areas highlighted in red*

Political	Economic	Social	Technological	Environmental	Legal
Student concerns over global politics	State funding issues	<b>Adult &amp; Non-traditional student success</b>	<b>Rise and proliferation of GenAI across all areas of living and working</b>	What is the core mission/ institutional value of public higher education?	GenAI legislation needed to protect FERPA
Some potential FT faculty avoiding or leaving Texas because of political	Student loan forgiveness	Growing numbers of students seeing education as optional	<b>Open Educational Resources (OER) to offset</b>	Determining high-return, quality academic	Revisions in Title IX
	Performance-Based Funding	The need to provide more wrap-around			

stances (i.e., SB 17)	<b>Need for more faculty</b>	services to assist students in need	<b>textbook costs</b>	programs for growth	DACA cf. State of Texas v. USA (2023)
Border concerns	Rising prices in Texas affecting families' ability to send students to college	<b>Create systems of relationship-building to help students feel like they belong at the university</b>	<b>Using technology to boost faculty engagement and retention</b>	Agile finances and operations	FAFSA
Student rise over free speech issues	Reducing enrollment barriers	<b>Increasing numbers of students and faculty need counseling to avoid depression/burnout</b>	Need to have multiple levels of cybersecurity to protect academic enterprise	The return of standardized testing for college entrance beyond TSI	
Prop 5 approved to create the Texas University Fund to generate research	Capital Improvement Projects	Racial/ethnic/gender diversity	<b>Rise of blended learning experiences</b>	Safety on college campuses	
	Student debt load				

**PESTEL areas that could immediately affect CAI between 2025-2028 are the increase in dual credit enrollment/Promise programs at A&M-SA, as many university faculty members are not trained in teaching high school students. GenAI is also an important area for CAI activities, as we will have an AI Faculty Fellow and Advisory Board to guide AI faculty training. The future need for more faculty may also require more faculty training in areas like OER, use of technology, use of blended learning.** With the approval of Prop 5 to create the Texas University Fund, CAI may be asked in the coming years to assist in developing items for training research faculty or offering more writing retreats like the current Jaguar Writing Spaces.

**SWOC Analysis**

Given the information uncovered in the Environmental Scan and PESTEL analysis, the following Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges (SWOC) analysis was conducted. The CAI SWOC analysis focused on internal areas of strength, weakness, opportunity, and challenges for the next three years, 2025-2028. Figure 3 outlines the SWOC analysis results.

**Figure 3**  
*Center for Academic Innovation SWOC Analysis*

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong in instructional design</li> <li>• Strong in SACSCOC QEP knowledge</li> <li>• Strong in institutional knowledge</li> <li>• Strong in assessment/evaluation knowledge</li> <li>• Solid in project management</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small staff size/Capacity</li> <li>• CH 306 not large enough to hold meetings or adaptable for various activities/events</li> <li>• Low attendance at events because of competing activities across institution</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grow the Faculty Fellows program</li> <li>• Blackboard migration to Ultra updates instruction</li> <li>• Create an AI center with advisory board to develop institutional awareness</li> <li>• Complete rebranding of Connect the Dots QEP after 2024 SACSCOC Summer Institute</li> <li>• Adding part-time instructional designer will help with faculty migration to Ultra</li> <li>• Bringing Leo Lambert to A&amp;M-SA to generate relationship-rich education processes as part of Duane Williams' Title V grant</li> <li>• New Faculty Academy</li> </ul>	<p><b>CHALLENGES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ultra migration will take time to phase in completely</li> <li>• Raise attendance at CAI events. People sign up, but no-show is common</li> <li>• Overcoming dislike/lack of awareness of current QEP Connect the Dots will take time. Bringing on two or three more Faculty Fellows in the area may help, but restructuring Faculty Fellows' roles may be needed so as to be more engaged with internal awareness rather than publications.</li> </ul>

**The first major opportunity** for the revived CAI is the 2024 creation of an extended New Faculty Academy that runs between mid-August and April of the new faculty's first year at A&M-SA. **The second major opportunity** is to participate in the Title V grant with Dr. Duane Williams to have a University Reads program focused on building relationships with students to foster a sense of belonging on campus. Dr. Leo Lambert, president emeritus of Elon University and the author of Relationship-Rich Education (John Hopkins UP, 2020), will come to campus in November 2024 for a day of workshops with faculty and staff to enact relationship-rich practices with students. **The third major opportunity** is a rebranding of the Connect the Dots QEP in Fall 2024. Rebranding of the Connect the Dots QEP began August 2024.

**The core unit skill set of the CAI is strong** in all areas connected to academic innovation. The Faculty Coordinator understands the institutional policies, procedures, and practices to guide activities from start to completion. The Manager of Instructional Designers is strong in all areas of instructional design and has been able to extend the CAI efforts into new areas like podcasting to deliver information to the faculty. The Executive Director has 35 years' experience in higher education, including being Full Professor Emerita at two R1 institutions, faculty at three different online institutions, and 25 years' experience at the coordinator, chair, director, and dean levels.

**The weakness is the small core staff size and office space** for being a high performing academic innovation center. With major events like migrating faculty to a newer LMS and QEP, it is easy to

have elements drop because of staff working on so many projects. Significant project management/planning is required for the next 18-24 months. The addition of two part-time remote instructional designers in Summer 2024 should help ease the pressure on the core staff.

**The on-going adaptation of CH 306 has improved some aspects of working in this space.** While CH 306 now has a conference table, which is good for meetings that can hold 10 people, it is not designed to hold larger events, like Jaguar Writing Spaces. The room size cannot accommodate individuals in activities and allow staff to conduct CAI business with university offices. Reliance upon Ad Astra to schedule rooms is not always optimal. Some rooms appear open until trying to schedule venues; sometimes, rooms are not available or available rooms are not adequate for large numbers of participants. CAI will continue to work with Ad Astra and building staff to find appropriate rooms/venues for events.

**Even with room availability issues, there are opportunities for CAI to develop robust offerings.** The remote part-time instructional designers will provide a wonderful opportunity for on-going faculty support as the Ultra migration period progresses. Having a dedicated instructional designer who can hold 1:1 consultation with faculty or demonstrate specific Ultra techniques is an important step forward for the CAI.

The second part-time remote instructional designer will be focused on QEP and assisting in generating a QEP campaign to reinvigorate Connect the Dots. That instructional designer will be working with the Executive Director and the QEP Faculty Fellows to create a certificate in Quantitative Reasoning and Literacy for those faculty who would like to have professional training to be able to speak about the QEP with accreditation, parents, or students who visit A&M-SA.

The CAI's greatest challenge is the same challenge facing many centers of teaching and learning across the US: lack of attendance at events (see Cavanaugh, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 7, 2024 <https://www.chronicle.com/article/after-a-tough-year-for-classroom-innovation-its-time-for-a-reset>). While as many as 14 people register in advance for events, attendance numbers run between 4-8 in a session. **According to recent news reports in the *Chronicle* and *Inside Higher Education*, six is average attendance at a session in 2024.** Capacity building is necessary for a well-trained faculty.

In 2024, CAI conducted a study of its offerings, surveying the faculty. Addressing days and times when faculty could attend gave us insight into how offer options for events; moreover, Cavanaugh's article pointed to several ideas that CAI will try for events in the 2024-2025 session to see if attendance improves.

The following events/topics are in planning stages to focus on faculty needs in 2024-2025:

- A Q&A Panel on use of AI in courses
- Creating Faculty Appreciation Day at midterm each semester from CAI
- Panel on blending faculty workload requirements for productivity/avoiding burnout
- How to quantify faculty activity in teaching, scholarship, and service (request from CAI Faculty Fellows)

These sessions are in addition to the items constructed for New Faculty Academy and already scheduled Brown Bag events.

### **Capacity**

Building capacity is critical for the CAI, as the capacity to follow through successfully on all major projects hinges on the size and ability of staff. Centers for academic innovation are designed to connect faculty members to innovation possibilities in pedagogical practices. However, since the

pandemic, the focus of centers for academic innovation have shifted. This is true of the A&M-SA CAI.

The current CAI staff is one faculty development coordinator and one instructional designer along with an Executive Director leading the unit. In process as of May 2024, is the hiring and onboarding of two part-time remote instructional designers to focus on assisting migrating faculty to Blackboard Ultra and to assist in closing the QEP loop. A number of Faculty Fellows are assigned to the CAI for various duties, from QEP to Title V grant to GenAI.

While it is anticipated that the Ultra migration will take time to ensure all faculty are ready to use Ultra, the two major challenges for capacity in the CAI is to raise attendance at CAI-sponsored events and to overcome the dislike/lack of awareness of the current QEP, Connect the Dots. The first step in this area is to determine how many Faculty Fellows should be dedicated to the QEP, which is process now with the needs assessment. Former Fellows connected to the QEP are being interviewed to see what strengths and weaknesses were in the program prior to 2023 and what Fellows might suggest to enhance the current QEP fellows model.

By position, the core competencies needed to be successful as a unit are presented.

**Faculty Development Coordinator:**

The faculty development coordinator manages projects and resources connected to the Center for Academic Innovation, handles processes and/or problems connected to components linked to faculty development. Faculty development coordinators understand the higher education institution, its practices and policies, and they have a demonstrated ability to analyze solutions connected to a wide variety of problems that can arise when planning events for faculty. Faculty development coordinators also understand the institutional, state, and system practices and procedures to advise on how specific events must be created, paid for, or scheduled.

Key responsibilities are collaborating with University departments to assure spaces, paperwork, and advertising are correct for CAI events, Facilitates designs, internal communication, or faculty development schedules on topics relevant to teaching and learning. Collaborates with University offices to hold events and with academic departments for room scheduling. The faculty development coordinator reviews budgets with the Executive Director and ensures all memberships are kept current.

**Manager, Instructional Design:**

The manager of instructional design provides a team of instructional designers with the vision, direction, guidance, development, coaching, and support needed to ensure the delivery of high-quality learning experiences for faculty development. The manager of instructional design has the knowledge of usability/accessibility requirements such as ADA Section 508, W3C Web Accessibility Initiative and Guidelines, and the ability to make timely, prudent, and sound decisions using creative approaches to address faculty needs. The manager of instructional design must also have a strong knowledge of and the ability to apply tested instructional system design practices, including needs and task analysis, pedagogical/andragogical theory, assessment strategies, and best practices for developing college level courses or programs.

Managers of instructional design must be able to collaborate with academic units and academic leadership to develop high quality, instructionally sound academic materials based on research and evidence-based practices. The managers of instructional design must be flexible and adaptive to changes across the university. Their roles are determined by departmental needs, pivoting from providing departments with assessment or course design ideas or presentations to assisting a team of instructional designers in how to carry out tasks.



## **Instructional Designers**

A&M-SA currently uses part-time, remote instructional designers to help execute and deliver content of all training-related needs for faculty. Such activities may include working with Ultra migration and offering faculty training in either 1:1 consultation or workshop style, developing job aid tools or infographic materials, discussing course related ideas with faculty in conjunction with the manager of instructional design. Also, tasks related to developing QEP materials and building QEP workflows or assessments for faculty are part of the instructional designers' purview.

## **Executive Director, Center for Academic Innovation:**

The Executive Director, Center for Academic Innovation oversees the administrative, developmental, and budgetary elements of the unit. The executive director also engages with faculty, with academic leadership, and with state and national networks to provide innovative instructional methods, whether developing logistics or programs to improve student performance, provide events across the institution to support faculty scholarly or creative activities, assist in training faculty on new software, consults with faculty and senior leaders regarding the need for programs, and administers external programs such as ACUE or other similar programs to offer faculty external professional development opportunities. When centers for academic innovation include accreditation components, the executive director maintains direction of accreditation activities related to the center.

The Executive Director for the CAI understands the delivery of courses in online, hybrid/blended, and in person modalities. The Executive Director also understands the foundations of learning management systems (LMS) and how to provide support for faculty using the institutional LMS. At A&M-SA, the Executive Director also has knowledge of SACSCOC and the SACSCOC Quality Enhancement Program guidelines, as the role includes being the QEP Director. The Executive Director also attends SACSCOC conferences related to the QEP and national conferences connected to ACUE and POD Network.

## **Faculty Fellows:**

The Faculty Fellows conducted a needs assessment of the Fellows program in an effort to determine how to grow the program between Fall 2024 and Spring 2028. Part of the Faculty Fellows program is the appointment of a Provost's Fellow in Generative AI, which will help to establish a center within the CAI and an advisory council to develop institutional awareness.

The Fellows' focus prior to 2024 was on taking a course in the curriculum and using that as a way to set up research to publish. Such an approach may not be optimal for assuring a quality QEP. Attending the SACSCOC Summer Institute in July, which focuses on QEP, should help provide new insights for implementing a revitalized plan for the QEP Fellows in addition to the needs assessment being conducted.

## **Needs Assessment**

Faculty Fellows completed the needs assessment in Fall 2024. A second summary document will be sent forward to the Provost's Office once the Fellows have completed their assessment of the program.

Areas that need to be developed starting in Spring 2025:

- Council of Faculty Fellows to provide input and faculty direction on future CAI activities
- QEP representation on Faculty Senate through current Faculty Fellows
- Self-paced certifications to help faculty with professional development connected to their annual reviews

## CAI Strategic Plan 2025-2028

Based on the multiple analyses conducted, a strategic plan for 2025-2028 emerged as a short-term horizon to ensure the most critical goals are met in a timely manner and that emerging practices can be introduced as needed.

### CAI Most Critical Goals 2025-2028

- Establish AI presence on A&M-SA campus
- Accreditation QEP 5<sup>th</sup> Year Report and help with accreditation reaffirmation requirements for 2029
- Migration to Blackboard Ultra from Blackboard Learn
- Create a Culture of Teaching Excellence and Faculty Support

#### Action Plan Goal Year 1: Successful Migration to Ultra from Blackboard Learn

The major initiative for 2024-2025 is the migration to Blackboard Ultra from Blackboard Learn. Figure 5 provides the project scope and timeline strategy.

**Figure 5**

*Blackboard Ultra Migration Strategy and Timeline* **Time Horizon 6+ months**

<b>STRATEGY: ULTRA MIGRATION</b>		<b>CURRENT STATE: 70% IN OLDER BLACKBOARD</b>	
<b>INSTITUTIONAL IMPACT:</b> HIGH CONNECTED TO PERFORMANCE GAPS COMPARED TO OTHER A&M INSTITUTIONS IF NOT COMPLETED		<b>GOAL STATE:</b> 100% migrated in Ultra by Fall 2025	
		<b>KNOWN GAPS:</b> Some faculty will need more assistance to get to Goal State. Training support will be needed during the migration and for several months after faculty migration.	
<b>STAKEHOLDERS:</b> Faculty, staff, students		<b>CONSTRAINTS (LIMITATIONS &amp; DELIMITATIONS):</b> Not all faculty available in summer for training; going with Natural Sciences first because they feel comfortable piloting and most have strong Blackboard skills. Adding FYS, INRW, first-year English courses, and Developmental Math to the initial roll-out to provide Core Courses with a head start on migrating to Ultra.  Roll-out plan under development with kickoff meeting on 4/18/2024.	
<b>PROJECT SCOPE NOTES:</b>		<b>SUCCESS METRICS:</b>	
Need to create a set of infographics for students and faculty.  CAI setting up templates to help faculty create quickly upgradable materials to have for Ultra migration. Will share with Deans & Chairs when ready.		Training at least 15 faculty members to begin using Ultra before May 15, 2024. <b>DONE</b>  Training for CAI and IT in Blackboard Administration needs by August 15, 2024. <b>DONE</b>  Training CAI staff in Ultra basics by August 15, 2024. <b>DONE</b>	
<b>TIMELINE:</b>		<b>BENCHMARKS:</b>	

<b>Ultra training began 4/23/2024</b>	<b>Completion of first round of training 5/3/2024.</b>
	<b>Prepared/offered training during Convocation Week 8/19/2024.</b>
<b>INTENDED COMPLETION DATE: FALL 2025 (FULL MIGRATION)</b>	<b>ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE: TBD with revision each quarter</b>

Key Performance Indicators for Goal 1:

- Faculty migration at 65% or greater by May 2025
- Faculty migration at 100% by September 2025
- Faculty videos and tools for A&M-SA faculty by April 2025

**Action Plan Goal Year 2: Successful QEP 5<sup>th</sup> Year Review by SACSCOC & Assist with Accreditation**

A strong focus will be on attending SACSCOC annual and summer events with an emphasis on assuring QEP review in 2025 is successful and the development of a new QEP for the decennial is in place by 2028 for the 2029 decennial report. The addition of a part-time instructional designer to be a co-developer of a rebranding of the current QEP and the creation of a certificate for faculty and staff on QEP knowledge should also benefit closing the loop for accreditation.

**Figure 6**

*QEP 5<sup>th</sup> Year Review by SACSCOC Strategy and Timeline* **Time Horizon for QEP 5<sup>th</sup> Year Review met March 2023** *QEP revisions announced by SACSCOC in April 2024 with training at July 2024 Summer Institute – revisions may be needed and have been completed early September 2024 as required.*

<b>STRATEGY: ACCREDITATION</b>	<b>CURRENT STATE: QEP 5<sup>TH</sup> YEAR DRAFT IS WITH INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS</b>
<b>INSTITUTIONAL IMPACT: VERY HIGH</b> CONNECTED TO PERFORMANCE, CULTURE, LEADERSHIP GAPS IF NOT COMPLETED & NOT MET	<b>GOAL STATE:</b> Clean and approved QEP 5 <sup>th</sup> Year Report/No Monitoring <b>ON-GOING STATE:</b> Develop QEP Action Plans based on new QEP practices to be outlined at the 2024 Summer Institute
<b>Time Horizon Assist with Accreditation 6+ months</b>	

Key Performance Indicator for Goal 2:

- 100% of any revisions to QEP addressed at 2024 SACSCOC July Summer Institute for Fifth-Year Review document incorporated for Fall 2024
- 100% draft of QEP document approved for use in Fifth-Year Review during Fall 2024

**Action Plan Goal Year 3: Establish a Culture of Teaching Excellence and Faculty Support**

**Figure 7**

*Establish a culture of teaching excellence and faculty support* **Time Horizon 1+ years**

**Goal Year 3: Establish a Culture of Teaching Excellence and Faculty Support**

STRATEGY: ESTABLISH A CULTURE OF TEACHING EXCELLENCE AND FACULTY SUPPORT	CURRENT STATE: RE-ESTABLISHING A CULTURE OF TEACHING EXCELLENCE AND FACULTY SUPPORT
Providing summer programs for Quality Matters and the Online Learning Consortium for interested faculty in addition to ongoing ACUE opportunities	<p><b>GOAL STATE: Multiple options for professional faculty development (ACUE, QM, POD Network, OLC, Lily Conferences, AAC&amp;U, CAITE, other emerging faculty development programs in coming years)</b></p> <p>Bringing these ideas from faculty who attend professional faculty development presentations back to A&amp;M-SA to present innovative ideas to encourage new instructional/pedagogical practices.</p> <p>Offering a variety of presentations, colloquia, and workshops/competitions to showcase faculty and student scholarly and creative activities.</p>

**Key Performance Indicators**

- Provide faculty with three to six opportunities to take summer programs with Quality Matters and the Online Learning Consortium through existing memberships with both QM and OLC
- Create TAMU-SA Professional Development Certificates in University Teaching and Distance Learning (2 different certificates)
- Create a colloquium session by August 2028 to feature various faculty using QM, OLC, or AI based course activities to kick off the Fall 2028 semester
- Encourage between two and four faculty representatives to attend and present ideas at POD Network or Lily Conferences

By Year 3, 2028, an on-going and sustainable culture of teaching excellence and faculty support is in place and is central to the A&M-SA community. The goal is to provide a range of faculty professional development opportunities in specific external areas, such as ACUE, Quality Matters (QM), POD Network, the Lily Conferences, and the Online Learning Consortium (OLC) in addition to a robust series of internal faculty presentations, colloquia, and workshops to showcase faculty and student scholarly and creative activities.

Additionally, for those faculty who wish to have a professional development certificate in either University Teaching or Distance Learning (or both), there would be an internal professional development program available. These two certificates would be excellent opportunities for graduate students and adjunct faculty members as well as for new faculty members. The two certificates would be in place for self-paced learning by Fall 2025.

**Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms**

The strategic plan requires regular quarterly progress reviews to assess whether goals and KPIs are being met. Data collection methods will include sign-in sheets for events, post-event surveys, and possible focus groups with Faculty Fellows to gain insight into goals and CAI activities and to function as feedback loops.

During the quarterly progress review, a variance analysis will be used to compare actual results to the planned targets and to explore any significant deviations. For instance, if 12 people sign up for an event but only 3 people attend, we need to understand why people did not attend a session that was signed up for earlier. Throughout the process, an adaptive management style will be required to adjust plans based on evaluation findings and changing circumstances, such as a major shift in faculty focus (think GenAI or a health crisis like COVID), to adapt to faculty needs.

Each summer, an impact assessment will be conducted to determine the year-over-year long-term effects of the strategic initiatives on the department and the University. The impact assessment will focus on analyzing session trends and patterns over time and assess the broader impact on instruction. The impact assessment will also compare A&M-SA CAI results with external factors based on published reports from disparate sources like Hanover, Deloitte, The Chronicle of Higher Education, Inside Higher Education, Texas Tribune, and similar publications.

### **Budget Impact**

Current plans do not impact the budget allocations in place in the 2024-2025 academic year. Annual reviews of budget will occur to determine whether future budget allocations will be impacted.

### **Future Staffing**

There is a need to plan for growth given the planned development of A&M-SA through 2028. The phase-in process would be as follows.

While it would be ideal to return to 1 instructional designer dedicated to each college on the university campus, such an approach may not be feasible. If possible, having 1 dedicated instructional designer for each college does allow CAI to meet growth demands.

To accommodate future growth across A&M-SA without bringing back three instructional designers (one for each college), there are areas that needed to be staffed within the CAI to be comparable in offering services to other TAMU institutions.

**2025:** *1 Full-Time Instructional Designer II* in house to address the instructional design needs for the School of Public Health, AI materials, and future needs for the medical campus. Bringing in a designated ID for the position a year ahead of time will allow the selected individual time to receive access to all materials needed and prepare for the School of Public Health needs. *1 Part-Time Administrative Assistant* (19 hours/week) to handle basic office management and scheduling so the Faculty Development Coordinator can coordinate certification programs offered by CAI and keep our training records and business expenses organized. As CAI grows and faculty can have materials for their annual review in place, the Faculty Development Coordinator becomes important for solid recordkeeping.

**2026:** *1 Assistant Director of CAI* to be comparable to the other Texas A&M University sites. The Assistant Director of CAI can focus on faculty development in the areas of AI and academic technology. The Assistant Director can work with the Provost's Faculty Fellow, the AI Advisory Committee, and various college programs to build strong faculty development programs connected to AI and use of academic

technology, including badging credentialing for specific academic technology use (such as Blackboard or other future technologies)

- 2027:** 1 *Quality Matters Quality Assurance Coordinator* who will work with the Instructional Design team to review all courses in Blackboard to assure the courses meet Quality Matters standards and will be able to confirm that all courses in Blackboard meet SACSCOC Standard 10 for Distance Education in time for the 2028 reaffirmation visit.