

Summary of How Warner University’s QEP Focuses on Improving Student Success

Warner University’s QEP has been termed VITAL (Value in Tasks, Achievement, and Learning), and its purpose is to promote academic success among undergraduate students, particularly first-generation, underrepresented minoritized students (FG-URM) enrolled in three first-year courses: Composition I, Composition II, and Christian Life, Faith, and Practice. To realize this purpose, the VITAL initiative will involve embedded **Utility Value Interventions (UVIs)** in these courses, with UVIs being **assignments that require students to reflect about the perceived usefulness or relevancy of course tasks in light of their future plans.**

The study will involve two UVIs in each targeted course. For these two supplemental writing responses, each participant will have a hand-coded Utility-Value score, as well as a text analysis generated word count, based on nine Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) dictionaries. At the end of the 16-week courses, course achievement data will be collected from University records and shall include writing assignment grades, final course grades, cumulative grade point averages, and enrollments in the subsequent semester (retention). Achievement data is appropriate for this approach because it allows the analysis loop to close with end-of-course achievement measures. Additionally, five-year pass and persistence rates related to the selected courses will be analyzed.

A table that summarizes how UVIs have impacted student success at other institutions is provided below. As demonstrated by the table, the University believes that its VITAL QEP **appropriately focuses on improving student success.**

Table
Timeline and summary of utility-value research

Authors	Stated Aims	Key-Findings
Hulleman, C.S., Godes, O., Hendricks, B.L., & Harackiewicz, J.M. (2010)	To enhance academic interest and performance by encouraging students to discover the relevancy of what they were learning using UVI	Students with low-performance expectations benefited the most from UVI and those with high-performance expectations were not harmed by it.
Canning, E.A., & Harackiewicz, J.M. (2015)	To examine differential effects of directly-communicated and self-generated utility-value information	Self-generated utility-value had positive effects for participants with low self-confidence while directly-communicated utility-value information undermined interest and performance.

Harackiewicz, J.M., Canning, E.A., Tibbetts, Y., Priniski, S.J., & Hyde, J.S. (2016)	To reduce achievement gaps by disentangling UVI effects among race and social class	UVI improved course grades, averaged across all students, but particularly for FG-URM students.
Rosenzweig, E.Q., Harackiewicz, J.M., Priniski, S.J., Hecht, C.A., Canning, E.A., Tibbetts, Y. & Hyde, J.S. (2019)	To examine the effectiveness of high and low choice UVI	More choices were likely to be more effective than interventions which included fewer choices
Hecht, C.A., Harackiewicz, J.M., Priniski, S.J., Canning, E.A Tibbetts, Y., & Hyde, J.S. (2019)	To examine long-term persistence in biological and medical sciences using UVI	UVI had indirect effects by improving course performance, which in turn had strong effects on persistence, and these indirect effects were strongest for FG-URM students.
Priniski, S. J., Rosenzweig, E. Q., Canning, E. A., Hecht, C.A., Tibbetts, Y., Hyde, J. S., & Harackiewicz, J. M. (2019)	To compare the most common features of UVI from previous research within a single study by manipulating the types and structures of writing assignments	UVI was most effective when students were offered a variety of self-focused or other-focused writing prompts and given a choice between the two. Grades were higher when students were assigned a combination e.g. a self-focused assignment followed by an other-focused assignment.
Hecht, C. A., Grande, M.R., & Harackiewicz, J. M. (2020)	To compare self-generated utility-value writing exercises and directly communicated utility-value information	Self-generated utility-value exercises improved participation for all participants, over and above the effect of directly-communicated utility-value information.

References

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