

Quality Initiative Initial Proposal

The purpose of the initial proposal is to identify a problem or opportunity as it relates to one of the strategic framework priorities. It is not intended to outline a specific plan or solution.

Title (*Brief working title that captures the essence of the problem or opportunity.*)

* Center for Literacy IMPACT: Becoming a Literacy-focused University

Problem/Opportunity Statement (*One or two sentence description of the problem or opportunity. Should focus on specific, observable indicators. Should not infer cause and should not include solutions.*)

* As an open-admissions university, some students entering Washburn University may have challenges with reading and comprehending the materials required for college level classes. With the expectation that Washburn will become the home of the Center for Literacy IMPACT, there is an opportunity for our center to provide assistance for our Washburn students as well as students in the PreK-12 schools and families in northeast Kansas. The Quality Initiative funding will provide the opportunity for the Center to provide college-level students with the resources and instruction needed to improved literacy and thus increase their prospects for success.

Proposal Themes (*Select one quality initiative theme for the proposal*)

- * Expand Learner Success Opportunities and Pathways
 - Enhance our Environment to Learn, Work, and Thrive
 - Accelerate Collaborative Partnerships to Grow the Community

(For more on Washburn's Strategic Framework, see the [Strategic Framework](#))

Description of how the problem or opportunity relates to the identified theme

* According to the Kansas Blueprint for Literacy Committee, "Literacy is the skill on which all other skills are built. In addition, reading is required for most employment, personal fulfillment, growing businesses, and for building a strong economy." Currently, about 40% of Kansas students in the PreK-12 schools demonstrate limited proficiency in reading. As would be expected, this would be reflected in the student population at Washburn University and Washburn Tech as well. As required for the Blueprint for Literacy legislation, the focus of the Literacy Center will be to improve literacy for students, families and communities. While much of the focus will be on pre-service and in-service educator preparation for teaching literacy, another main focus will be on providing resources for others to assist with the improvement of literacy skills for individuals beyond the PreK-12 school setting. The addition of a university student component of the literacy center could provide those students who struggle with literacy the skills necessary to succeed as they pursue the pathways toward their future goals. Similar to the math lab and writing center on campus, this could include small and large group offerings as well as individual tutoring for students with specific, unique needs. The literacy center would focus on current best practices in the science of reading and how to best work with striving readers and how to prepare students for success in the classroom and beyond.

Benefits (*Description of desired outcomes, both tangible, such as decreased costs or increased revenue, and intangible, that is those improvements that are important to control, protect or enhance but are difficult to quantify. Benefits should be realistic and measurable.*)

* The literacy center could be available for students at both Washburn University and Washburn Tech. Ultimately the benefit of the Washburn student component of the literacy center would be increased literacy skills, and thus improved performance in classes resulting in better grades. The presence of this resource for students would serve to attract additional students to Washburn University and Washburn Tech. Ultimately, this would be of benefit to both Washburn and to the community as it is assumed that this would increase the number of students completing their chosen programs at Washburn and would increase the number of people entering the workforce in the Topeka area and beyond.

Scope (*Description of the scope or impact on the institution as a whole. Specify if the scope is focused on specific areas, units or departments.*)

* This resource would be available to all students at all levels at both Washburn University and Washburn Tech. Further, this program could benefit all programs in which students can choose to study. Increases in student success across all programs and all levels would have a positive impact on the University and the community as a whole.

Stake Holders (*Identify all persons/groups that have an interest or position in the issue – both internal and external to the University.*)

* Stake holders would include students, faculty, and community members. Any student at any level and in any program could have an interest in the program. Further, all programs would benefit from this program and thus be an important stakeholder. Finally, community businesses that may hire program completers would be important stake holders in this proposed program.

Team Members (*Individuals who will work on development of full proposal and/or may work towards project implementation.*)

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Submitter Signature

11/01/2024

Date

After signing, click Submit Form below. Submitters will be contacted after committee review in late November 2024.