Based on the responses from the university community, the QEP goal is to use critical thinking skills to solve community problems. The plan will be implemented in three stages.

**FIRST**, there will be an increased focus on building critical thinking skills in the general education program.

**SECOND**, the undergraduate major courses will seek to build on the critical thinking skills developed in the general education program.

**THIRD**, students will be given the opportunity to complete a culminating experience inside or outside of their major in which they will use the skills they developed throughout their education to attempt to solve real community problems.

While some programs may choose to develop the culminating experiences earlier, it is expected that these three stages will be phased in over approximately 5-6 years, so there is time to develop quality culminating experiences for students across the university. Initially, the project is focused on undergraduate students, but graduate student involvement will be encouraged.

In spring 2005, the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) team issued a university-wide call for BIG IDEAS for the QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN. People were asked to identify ways that the University of Louisville could improve student learning.

Extensive consultation with all University constituencies yielded a surprisingly strong and clear call for an increased focus on building critical thinking skills and engaging students in solving real world, community-based problems.

**THE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN FOCUS**

**THE UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**General Education**
Develop Critical Thinking Skills

**Major Courses**
Enhance Critical Thinking Skills

**Culminating Experiences**
Senior Capstone Projects
Service Learning Projects
Internships
Research Projects
Senior Thesis

**NEXT STEPS**

First, the university will have two open forums to discuss the QEP focus. Second, academic units will form QEP teams to discuss how the plan would work best in their programs. The unit QEP teams will provide feedback to the university QEP team as the plan is more fully developed.