Foundations for Change

2019 QM COMMUNITY IN REVIEW

EVOLVE

COLLABORATE

SUPPORT

Table of Contents

─ MEMBERS* RECEIVING ─ QM CREDENTIALS

322 👥
became certified/
re-certified to deliver
the Applying the QM
Rubric workshop

52 👥
became certified/
re-certified to deliver the
Improving Your Online
Course workshop

323
Teaching Online Certificates issued in 2019

*QM has over 1,200 member organizations and over 80,000
individual members who access QM through an
organizational or individual membership.*

Benchmarks of Quality. Foundations for Change.

A DECADE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

In 2003, a small group of colleagues encountered a problem in the fledgling world of online learning. Institutions collaborating on sharing seats in online classes were concerned with how to assure that course quality would be equivalent for all students regardless of where the course originated. It was not a trivial question.

But it was tackled head-on by a group of dedicated colleagues, including Jurgen Hilke, whose pioneering work in online education is the foundation for many of the quality initiatives that exist today.

Flash forward to 2019. The transformation in the world of online education has been, in a word, breathtaking. As the awareness of quality assurance moves more to the forefront, we're seeing many initial quality concerns diminish. It's no longer common for courses to miss the mark on standards such as measurable and aligned module-level learning objectives, multiple activities for students to measure their own progress, descriptive grading criteria, or clear expectations for instructor responsiveness. Because we now know better, thanks to the broad adoption of quality standards, we can do better.

We are seeing the results of continuous improvement, and with each new edition of QM Rubrics, all levels of education are moving forward in their quality assurance initiatives. More and more courses are being designed to QM Standards, professional development participation is increasing and informal review processes for courses are producing better outcomes.

In 2020, we will reach 10,000 course reviews. An amazing benchmark.

It's been a good decade.

NEW DECADE, NEW VISION STATEMENT

In 2019, the Quality Matters Board of Directors voted to update our vision statement.

Why?

The lines between the various modalities of education delivery are blurring. Online, blended and face-to-face learning are becoming less like discrete destinations and evolving into more of a continuum with additional disruptions/enhancements due to approaches such as adaptive learning and synchronous online learning. The Board wanted to recognize that our research-supported approach to quality and quality assurance works well for all learning modalities — even traditional classroom-based learning — while not diminishing emphasis on our specialized expertise in digitally enhanced teaching and learning environments.

We needed to expand the vision beyond "online learning," and the result is our new vision statement:

Quality Matters is the global organization leading quality assurance in online and innovative digital teaching and learning environments.

Quality Matters is at the table representing our community in discussions about the future and implications for teaching and learning. Through our involvement in forums, associations, working groups, and more, we are 1) keyed into issues such as data transparency and the articulation of skills and competencies, 2) providing guidance on quality assurance issues regarding credentialing for the more than 730,000 educational and training opportunities listed in the Credential Engine Registry, 3) contributing in the realm of micro-credentials and alternative digital credentials, and 4) pursuing initiatives around globalization of basic quality standards.

All of these are vitally important in the future of education, and clearly beyond the literal purview of "online learning," but are well within the scope of "innovative digital teaching and learning environments."

SURVEY: COURSE REVIEWS AND BARRIERS TO USING THEM

Another interesting theme we've encountered over the decade is that while quality assurance, Quality Matters, and the use of both by our members has matured over the decade, questions about how to achieve quality still come up as if they're new questions.

Given that a rigorous review process is the cornerstone of how we envision our members attaining quality, we needed to find out what was going on. So, we conducted a survey of our community to see how our members were using course reviews and what barriers they might be encountering. As with any well-conceived survey, it was enlightening. A couple key takeaways:

We found that many institutions are implementing both internal reviews and official reviews, and saw a strong implication that internal processes support and extend official reviews yielding QM-Certified courses.

We also saw that institutions are working on and achieving a clearly defined and systematic process for course review, in spite of reported challenges in implementing and sustaining such a review cycle. Even though we have a turnkey process for this, implementing within

QUALITY MATTERS IS THE GLOBAL ORGANIZATION LEADING QUALITY ASSURANCE IN ONLINE AND INNOVATIVE DIGITAL TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS.

institutional structures and cultures can require significant planning and support. To assist, we have created a new implementation consulting initiative to reduce the barriers to entry of implementing these essential processes. You'll be hearing more about it this spring.

It's been quite a journey since those early days in 2003. And through every step of the journey, Quality Matters has been there. Researching, creating standards, then revising, improving, building, growing, expanding.

These are the foundations for change. The change today that becomes the foundation for tomorrow.

— JURGEN HILKE: A FOUNDING FORCE —
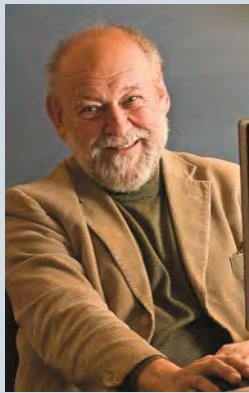
It's said that one of the best ways to judge the value of an athlete in a team sport isn't just to evaluate how he performs, but to see how he can elevate those around him. How he can make others better just by being himself, by "playing his game."

By those standards, it's clear that Jurgen Hilke, a founding force of not only Quality Matters but of the way an entire community of educators thinks about online course quality, is not solely an outstanding team player. He's put himself squarely in the quality assurance Hall of Fame.

We could spend thousands of words talking about Jurgen's early work and accomplishments in the field...in the late 1990s developing the first list of criteria — 56 in all — to address when designing quality online courses. He not only created the Standards, but went further by insisting that review teams would reflect a diversity of ideas by stipulating that teams include members from institutions other than the one being reviewed. Revolutionary ideas at the time, but ideas that inspired colleagues in other schools, and germinated the beginnings of a comprehensive process of quality review.

His work laid the foundation for so many of the quality initiatives that exist today. But his example motivated and inspired a multitude of like-minded quality disciples that have changed the course of online education.

But don't listen to us...listen the colleagues he has inspired and elevated.

"Jurgen has been a source of inspiration and initiator of deep analytical discussions about how to improve online learning for students, for instructors, and for institutions. His creativity and innovations never cease to amaze me." — *Dr. Kay Shattuck*

"Jurgen's work has organized modern 'learning' pedagogy with easy to use tools and resources." — *Bonita Hall, Albuquerque Public Schools*

"His leadership and vision for how we design online learning experiences for students and prepare faculty for success continue to influence how I approach my work. … He always challenged us to expand how we think about and do the work." — *Susan Biro, UMBC*

"For two decades Jurgen has been, almost literally, a guiding light through the nuances and challenges of online/digital learning." — *Julie Porosky Hamlin, MarylandOnline*

If the measure of an individual is in how he inspires others, Jurgen has certainly set a very high standard. Serving very literally as a foundation for the change we have seen in online education. As Jurgen enters retirement from serving as Executive Director of the Center for Distributed Learning at Frederick Community College, we all wish him well and send heartfelt thanks.

The Year in Research

Research is at the heart of everything we do at Quality Matters, and the year 2019 was no different. In addition to new initiatives, such as our QM Research Online Conference, we had new developments and publications in several of our established areas. Here are some of the highlights.

✔ CHLOE 3 REPORT PUBLISHED

In March, the CHLOE 3 report (Changing Landscape of Online Education) was published. A multi-year collaboration between Quality Matters and Eduventures, CHLOE not only examines the changes in online education but provides survey results and information to those who can use them and helps assist those involved in online education place their institution within a broader context of online education to possibly influence strategic decisions and organizational changes.

All three CHLOE Reports are included in the new HigherEd Polling Dashboard, a helpful source for researchers, journalists, and the general public who are interested in understanding public opinion on higher education issues.

Inclusion in this report is evidence and affirmation of Quality Matters as a research leader in online education and places us in good company with organizations such as Inside Higher Ed that conduct surveys and analyses on online education.

CHLOE 3 breaks new ground in identifying a number of different institutional approaches to online learning, as crystallized in the descriptions of five models (e.g., Enterprise Schools, Community Colleges). Major themes in CHLOE 3 include a more complete picture of the growth, prevalence, and scope of the Chief Online Officer position; the emergence of online committees and councils as a component of institutional shared governance; associations between online course structure, student engagement and outcomes; and the widespread neglect of coordinated blended learning.

The fourth survey for the CHLOE project began in April 2019 with expanded coverage of issues chief online officers told us they want CHLOE to explore.
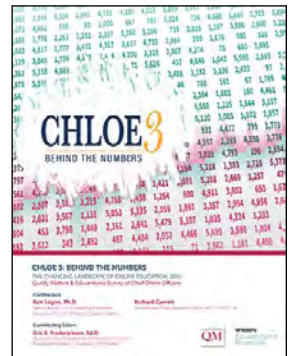
✔ ACADEMIC RIGOR SERIES

Our Academic Rigor series of white papers was published in the fall of 2019 as a way to help contextualize and standardize the concept of rigor throughout the educational landscape. Defining rigor was a main focus of our efforts in 2017, and, with this series of white papers, we expand upon many of the issues we identified at that time. We invited Dr. Andria F. Schwegler, Associate Professor of Psychology in the Counseling and Psychology Department at Texas A&M University-Central Texas, to author these white papers.

Given the absence of a widely accepted definition of academic rigor, an erosion of academic expectations in the learning context is a threat to student learning. An objective, measurable definition of academic rigor can facilitate high expectations by prompting a review and implementation of research-based practices. Evidential support for decisions made in crafting and maintaining the learning context provides a rationale for educators to uphold standards even when confronted with resistance or pressure to lower expectations.

Part 1 of the series provides the reader with background on the concept and use of the term academic rigor, along with a comprehensive definition of the term.

Locating academic rigor in the higher education landscape requires an explicit consideration and detangling of the constructs that are commonly conflated with it. Many definitions of academic rigor confound it with other variables such as curriculum and/or student learning.

Part 2 of the series provides context to academic rigor, examining how various elements of the learning environment affect and support academic rigor.

Finally, the concluding paper in this series helps institutions understand how to align their processes to support academic rigor with the observable definition. Such an undertaking requires a critical examination of existing procedures and documents to verify they acknowledge the multiple, evidence-based ways to demonstrate rigor and accommodate the implications of doing so. A more explicit and aligned approach to demonstrating rigor facilitates clear communication with stakeholders regarding the value of student learning to the institution.

QM RESEARCH ONLINE CONFERENCE

November's QM Research Online Conference offered viewers a range of research-related topics — some tightly focused on QM, with others expanding out to online teaching and learning, in a convenient, single-afternoon time period, free of charge.

This event supported individuals and organizations in pursuit of their quality assurance goals by providing research-related information to help organizations conduct research on their quality assurance initiatives. Presented initially in November 2019, the seven sessions — more than five hours worth of information — are available on the QM YouTube channel.

The seven sessions offer a range of perspectives and insight from across the education landscape.

▶ **NSSE-QM Data on the Online Student Experience**, presented by Shimon Sarraf

▶ **California State University – East Bay: Data and Analysis on QM Impact to Students' Learning**, presented by Dr. Roger Wen, Sr.

▶ **Designing for Change: Using the Community of Inquiry and Transformative Learning to Create Authentic Learning Experiences**, presented by Dr. Patrick Dempsey and Dr. Sarah Martin

▶ **Using Learning Analytics: The Benefits and Pitfalls**, presented by Dr. Karen Swan

▶ **Disseminating Research on Online Education: Best Practices**, presented by Dr. Mary Ellen Dello Stritto

▶ **Practical Methods for Designing Research Studies and Analyzing Data in Educational Settings**, presented by Dr. Whitney Zimmerman

▶ **Online Instructor Competencies, Motivations, Attitudes, and Values: What the Research Literature Tells Us**, presented by Dr. Kay Shattuck and Dr. Will Diehl

RESEARCH WEBINARS

Professional development is vital for those in the QM community, and with these Research webinars we provide this important function at no cost to QM members, in an easy-to-access format. Several webinars are presented each year, and archives of all sessions are available.

These are highly popular webinars, as shown by high registration both within the QM community and beyond. They allow attendees to join the QM Research Colleagues and other researchers from the QM Community for presentations of research on the impact of quality assurance in online learning and other related topics.

Sessions held in 2019 included:

• The Report Reader Checklist — A Research Resource: An invaluable method for evaluating research for quality and usefulness.

• CHLOE 3 - Behind the Numbers: Overview of the Third QM-Eduventures Changing Landscape of Online Education Survey: Listen as the researchers behind CHLOE 3 provide analysis and insight for this report.

• The Online Student Experience - Results from a NSSE-QM Collaboration: A presentation of the findings from a test set of questions on the student experience with online courses.

Q&A WITH KAY SHATTUCK

...as she transitions to her new role as Founding Director and Senior Advisor for Research

These are exciting times in the Quality Matters Research Department as longtime Director of Research Dr. Kay Shattuck transitions to a new role as Founding Director and Senior Advisor for Research, and Senior Research Colleague Dr. Bethany Simunich (far left in photo) is named the new Director of Research and Innovation.

As her title states, Kay was a founding member of Quality Matters. In fact, it can be stated unequivocally that when it came to building the foundation for change that is quality assurance, Kay was on the front lines of change by helping to create the then-nascent discipline of quality assurance for online learning.

We interviewed Kay recently about her time at QM.

Tell us about your start with QM.

Back in the 1990s, I hung out (professionally) with colleagues...as we worked with our "College-of-the-Air" (TV) courses. At some point, we were assigned by our respective colleges to work with the online courses that were popping up here and there. Around 2000, Jurgen Hilke shared his ideas over lunch for a way our group, by then the Distance Learning Initiatives Committee of MarylandOnline, could enlist faculty peers to assess the quality of — and to continuously improve — the online courses that were shared across Maryland colleges and universities. I worked on the "tools" (later called the rubric) committee and volunteered to map some of the academic literature that I had gathered to the "best practices" standards that had been gathered by the "tools" committee. I continued in the volunteer role until 2008 when I "retired" from full-time work and officially became QM's Director of Research.

What are some key accomplishments from your tenure as QM's Director of Research?

From modest beginnings as yellow-highlighted paper and online articles, with the help of Barbra Burch, QM Manager of Research and Development, we turned scraps of information into a searchable and ever-growing QM Research Library. We developed and guided the QM grant program, summarized and analyzed the research happening in the diverse QM Community, developed the Research Colleague program, and spent countless hours in my favorite activity of interacting with individuals interested in conducting research on online learning.

This led to our development of the QM Research Toolkit. Barbra and other QM staff were able to take my "what if we…" musings and turn them into what later became QM Research web pages. Most recently, we developed the ABCs workshop. All along, I had delicious scholarly conversations and idea sharing with QM Executive Director Deb Adair.

Tell us about the new role you'll have at QM.

I've always been an explorer, a miner of academic resources (yes, even theory) to build foundations with a clear eye on the frontline of application. QM has given me the opportunity to be involved in doing just that in the past, and in the future as I support Dr. Bethany Simunich and team as she takes QM research to new heights. Connecting practice to research can be slow, tedious, and frustrating but is always invigorating, crucial, and absolutely necessary. I will now focus my attention on assessing and reporting on research possibilities, developing more academic writings, providing historical and scholarly resources, and documenting and analyzing in-progress research efforts. It's my dream job as I continue to work on turning my theoretical semi-retirement towards practice. I am so proud to be a part of QM.

Dr. Kay Shattuck (center) received a plaque commemorating her contribution to Quality Matters at QM Connect.

Supporting Member Goals

A common theme found in members' stories for 2019 was student success — a laser focus on improving the student experience and student outcomes. Three key initiatives were vital in realizing these themes: Course Reviews, Professional Development and Program Certification.

COURSE REVIEWS

HE

Higher Education

In 2019, we conducted a survey of Higher Ed. QM Coordinators their use of Course Reviews. From this survey, some overarching themes were revealed. First, we discovered that respondents who engaged with official reviews during the last three years reported higher levels of satisfaction with their current online/blended courses than those who did not. We also found that a high number of those surveyed — 87% — reported using internal reviews in their workflow. Overwhelmingly, members cite internal reviews as an important part of their review processes — often used in combination with official reviews.

And when asked what institutions want to achieve by conducting internal course reviews, they responded:

- Prepare for official reviews for QM Certification

- Ensure all or most online/blended courses are reviewed before they are taught online

- Apply institution-specific standards to our online/blended courses

---

NEW MEMBER FOCUS: NEXFORD UNIVERSITY

Nexford University, founded in 2018, seeks to promote greater social and economic mobility globally by providing higher education to learners online. Licensed through the Washington, DC Higher Education Licensure Commission, it offers an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Business, a Bachelor in Business Administration (BBA) and an MBA.

A new QM member, joining in May 2019, Nexford jumped in with both feet. They were an early adopter of our new bundled membership package. Becoming very active in a short time, they already have two courses QM-Certified: BUS 1100: Roadmap to Success and BUS 6100: Global Business.

Nexford currently offers approximately 100 courses through their degree and certificate programs, including specializations, badges, and certificates.

According to Sheila Fournier-Bonilla, PhD, Chief Academic Officer of Nexford University, Nexford uses QM membership and their QM-Certified courses as evidence of their commitment to quality and, "as a way to support our credibility as [an] institution that is committed to quality of curriculum and the achievement of program outcomes that help learners succeed and attain upward mobility." Sheila continues, "Staff members already recognize the value of Quality Matters by the interactions they have had with the academic team and what current learners have said about Quality Matters and the value it brings to their education."

Most of their professional development is completed virtually, and their focus has been on maintaining the integrity of the curriculum by ensuring all courses align to Quality Matters standards and criteria. "We continue to build courses, always following QM's rubrics and feedback to drive our design process," says Sheila.

Nexford's two QM Coordinators are part of their academic team and help ensure that all faculty know and understand what Quality Matters is, why it is important at Nexford University, and how they can contribute to the mission of delivering a high quality education that is both relevant and affordable.

Nexford also uses their QM bona fides to support their accreditation efforts. In less than a year, they have earned full accreditation through ASIC in the UK and are seeking their initial accreditation through DEAC.

Some individual member highlights and quotes about using QM Course Reviews:

Texas A & M International University:
TAMIU has close to 150 QM-Certified courses and in working through these certifications, uncovered many benefits to the QM process. "One of the biggest things we hear after a course is reviewed is that there is a reduction in the number of clarifying questions from students to faculty," — *Dr. Patricia Abrego*

East Central University: QM Internal Reviews play a big part in ensuring that the University's online offerings are on par with their brick-and-mortar counterparts, "Changes made based on what's found during the review process help learners navigate online courses more easily so that they are better equipped for success in their classes." — *Adrianna Lancaster*

North Carolina State University: In feedback solicited by the University, learners in QM-Certified courses noted that the courses were well-organized and that expectations were very clear. "As more courses receive recognition and certification, it will result in an expansion of support to faculty in the design and development of online and blended courses of the highest quality." — *Bethanne Tobey.*

K-12

K-12 Education

In 2019, we saw more K-12 publishers and organizations turn to QM as they made additional investments in online learning quality. States with robust online offerings are also turning to QM as their preferred source for certifying course quality. (See sidebar at right on the University of California's recent initiative.)

A key element of any member's success is collaboration and innovative use of QM services in order to improve learner outcomes. Here are three exciting examples:

Virtual Arkansas: Virtual Arkansas has a very clear goal — to create and provide superior courses — for students and schools — that are the standard for all learning in the state of Arkansas and nationwide. They tell us that thanks to the QM course review process, their students receive a much clearer and consistent course, which is vital to reaching their goal.

Launch Springfield Public Schools: The course review process was a learning experience for Launch team. Both of their initial courses met QM K-12 Secondary Standards during the initial review, and they received feedback and recommendations they plan to apply to all courses. "Students will definitely benefit from our first reviews because our courses are now easier to navigate and we more clearly present resources for academic support."— *Dr. Meghan Roe*

Pointful Education: Pointful Education's immediate plan is to have remaining

K-12 PUBLISHERS GET HELP ACHIEVING GOALS

QM Certification enables course providers in California to become UC Approved

In 2019, the University of California (UC) rolled out a new directory of online course publishers. Schools and districts can use the directory to select courses for students in order to fulfill A-G requirements — a series of courses that students must complete for minimum admissions eligibility for the University of California and California State University. Inclusion in the directory requires an annual course verification process. Unless...the publisher or district independently seeks and earns QM certification for their courses. Then, the registered course will not only be specifically identified as QM-certified in the UC directory, the publisher will be exempt from the annual verification process.

Plus, courses found to be out of alignment with A-G course criteria during the verification process are removed from the directory. Those courses would then need to be reviewed and certified by QM before they can rejoin the directory.

Edmentum scores and saves with QM certifications

In 2019, K-12 publisher Edmentum had four courses reviewed — Algebra 1, Biology, English 9, and English 10 — and certified for three different states, Maryland, Missouri and South Dakota. Why is this a big deal?

For less than the cost of two content reviews, Edmentum was able to get three certifications. And the savings were more than just financial. With just one full review required, rather than three, Edmentum saved significant time as well. Dr. Shane Dennison explains, "Edmentum is committed to working with QM to get as many courses as possible reviewed, edited, and certified in multiple states through the nationally recognized Quality Matters program. Our objective is to serve each state's needs the best we possibly can. The QM Rubric, process and reviewers help us attain the best quality we can per course to put us in a position to meet that goal."

courses in its catalog QM certified with the newly released fifth edition of the K-12 Publisher Rubric, and to have new courses undergo QM-Managed Official Reviews, helping to ensure that today's students succeed now and in the future "Since QM was introduced early in the process, we were able to create courses with Standards in mind." — *Steve Southwick*

CPE
Continuing & Professional Education

For a couple years, QM has been an avenue for certification of quality for Texas Educator Preparation Programs — helping educator preparation programs meet requirements set forth in the Texas Administrative Code.

INSPIRE TEXAS, a division of the Region 4 Education Service Center, has stood out among the many programs endeavoring to have their programs reviewed by QM. In 2019, INSPIRE TEXAS earned Certification on 16 courses used to help prepare teachers for the classroom. As mentioned in past years, meeting the criteria for QM Program Certifications in Program Design and Teaching Support is one option for complying with the Texas code.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As we discuss in Recharging Through the Journey, Professional Development is a vital part of the quality assurance process, and a core function of Quality Matters. Great news: record enrollment for the first and second quarters of 2019 shows how engaged and enthusiastic the Quality Matters community is regarding professional development. Many institutions

are requiring faculty to complete QM workshops in order to teach online.

Some specific Professional Development highlights from the year include:

North Carolina Central University: QM tools and resources play a significant role in developing courses that promote student success and the QM Rubric is used to continuously review and evaluate online courses. The "Applying the Quality Matters Rubric" workshop (APPQMR) "empowers faculty with the research-supported best practices necessary to promote student success in the online learning environment." — *Racheal Brooks, Ph.D.*

Appalachian State University: "Much of the coursework in the TOC [Teaching Online Certificate] is designed to have the faculty examine their course through the perspective of their students. Having faculty experiencing the courses as online learners and focusing their attention on their own course design and considering how learners might interact with the course resources and activities will likely yield better experiences for our students." — *Emory Maiden*

Last year QM facilitated dedicated online sessions for a number of institutions. Institutions are providing professional

development to improve the quality of online education. Coordinating workshops that are dedicated to one institution fosters a culture of continuous improvement on a group level. Institutions that took advantage of dedicated workshops include:

- Umpqua Community College
- Australian Institute of Business
- Notre Dame of Maryland University
- Virtual Arkansas
- Marshalltown Community School District
- Lee College
- Piedmont College
- Appalachian State University
- Miami Dade College
- Tohono O'odham CC

> QM not only gives us an "anchor" of sorts with course design, but the constant and consistent weaving in of highly quality teaching and learning standards overall plus timely assessment practices makes QM a total package.
>
> **LYNN SESSLER NEITZEL BLACKHAWK TECHNICAL COLLEGE & WISCONSIN VIRTUAL SCHOOL**

— INTERNATIONAL MEMBER SPOTLIGHT —

One QM Latin American member — Tecnológico de Monterrey (TEC), Mexico — is planning to be the first international institution to obtain all four QM Program Certifications and achieve Exemplary Program status. With that goal in mind, they took their first step and recently earned their first QM Certification Mark for course design — marking the first QM-Certified course in Mexico and the entire Latin American region. TEC was also a recipient of the CHEA international Quality Award for 2019 — another example of its commitment to quality. In the coming years, QM and TEC will explore a potential partnership to collaborate on adapting QM standards and services to the Latin America and Caribbean region.

PROGRAM REVIEWS

Going a step beyond course certifications, QM offers Program Certifications related to online teaching and learning. Programs that achieve any of the individual Program Certifications receive a certification mark that can be displayed on websites and printed materials. Programs are also listed on the QM-Certified Programs page. Earning Program Certifications is quite demanding, but they denote institutions with a true dedication to quality. In 2019, we saw an encouraging increase in the numbers of institutions planning for and committing to Program Reviews.

Online Learner Success recognizes programs that are able to articulate a mission-driven definition of success for their learners that also meets the expectations of their external stakeholders and to demonstrate that their learners are achieving success at a high rate, based on external comparisons and benchmarks. The following QM members earned this certification:

• University of North Carolina Charlotte
• University of Alaska Fairbanks
• The Chicago School of Professional Psychology

Online Learner Support recognizes programs that provide all the critical student and academic services needed for learner success and use learner feedback to continuously improve those services. The following QM members earned this certification:

• Bowling Green State University
• Oregon State University
• San Antonio College
• St. Philip's College

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA-FAIRBANKS AWARDED QM EXEMPLARY PROGRAM STATUS

In August, Quality Matters awarded its highest level of quality certification to The University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF), making them the first university in the world to receive Quality Matters Exemplary Program Status. Dr. Joanne Healy, School of Education Program Head received a plaque commemorating the achievement at QM Connect in October.

Exemplary Program Status is achieved when all four individual certifications are earned within a period of three years. UAF previously earned certifications for Program Design, Teaching Support and Learner Support. Its fourth certification, Online Learner Success, was completed in June.

Though the process wasn't always easy, Joanne said it was definitely worth it. As a result of going through QM Program Certification and achieving QM Exemplary Program Status, Joanne reported that the teacher candidate experience improved and their skill levels increased. The program itself is also stronger, including the quality assurance components. And the synergy created by the collaboration benefited everyone involved.

While Exemplary Program Status may not be every organization's immediate goal, Joanne has advice for every QM member, "I think every instructor should bring one course through QM review. The results are wonderful and a baseline for further innovations."

Online Teaching Support recognizes programs that require all online faculty to undergo training in best practices for online course delivery, provide faculty with ongoing pedagogical support, encourage faculty professional development to increase their knowledge and skill in online teaching, emphasize instructor availability and feedback to learners, and collect and use feedback from learners to improve online teaching. The following QM members earned this certification:

• University of Alaska Fairbanks
• West Chester Univ of Pennsylvania
• University of Alaska Fairbanks

In addition to the areas listed, programs can also become QM-Certified in **Program Design** — which recognizes programs that are designed around measurable learning objectives or competencies. Design or revision of individual courses within the program aligns with program objectives, involves QM-Certified personnel, and is consistent with the relevant QM Rubric.
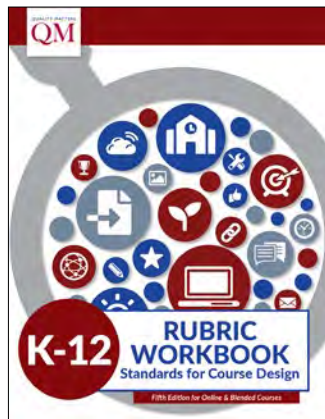
Supporting Quality Assurance

We are constantly on the lookout for improvement. Just as QM espouses continuous improvement in your courses and programs, we work toward constant improvement in the offerings and response we provide to our community. In supporting quality assurance, we work to assure that the Quality Matters implementation of quality assurance is ever robust and increasingly relevant to our community…and to educators and organizations everywhere.

NEW K-12 STANDARDS RELEASED AND REVISED

K-12 Rubric Fifth Edition Revision. In the past, two versions of this rubric were published as separate workbooks to help design and improve courses to result in student success. The K-12 Secondary Rubric was geared for schools, districts and state education departments that developed courses for use within their own schools. The K-12 Publisher Rubric was used by course providers — publishers, organizations, and/or school systems — developing courses that were distributed to others. These two Rubrics always supported one another and K-12 members could access both depending on their need. And many desired the merging of two into one comprehensive workbook.

With 2019's Fifth Edition revision, the two separate versions are now combined into a single K-12 Rubric Workbook. Users of the workbook can now easily see which Specific Review Standards apply to both K-12 Institutions and K-12 Publishers, and which are unique to the K-12 and K-12 Publisher review types. The Fifth Edition also includes notes in the Annotations relevant to reviewing elementary level courses. And, as always, this revision is supported by research and best practice, keeping our reviews relevant.

National Standards for Quality Online Courses Revised. QM, in partnership with the Virtual Learning Leadership Alliance, has led the revision of the National Standards for Quality Online Courses, Teaching, and Programs — building on the work started by the Aurora Institute, formerly iNACOL. The purpose of the National Standards for Quality revision initiative is to provide the K-12 online and blended learning community with an updated set of openly-licensed standards to help evaluate and improve online courses, online teaching and online programs. Tightly aligned with the QM K-12 Rubric, these standards are available for any organization to download and adapt. QM members can also use the NSQ Teaching Standards in the CRMS and Self Review tools.

These standards were sorely in need of revision, with the Program Standards not having been updated since 2009, and the Teaching and Course Standards since 2011. Given the innovation and change that has occurred in the industry since then, the entire K-12 community could see the importance of bringing these important resources up to date.

As usual, the QM community stepped forward to work on the project, with nearly 300 volunteers contributing to the revision process.

Supply and demand — reviews and reviewers showing growth

As interest in K-12 Course Reviews increases, so does the need for K-12 Reviewers. Good news, though, as we experience growth in the demand for reviews we are seeing growth in the certification of new Reviewers:

- **76 new K-12 Course Reviewers certified in 2019**, helping to handle the increasing demand for Official K-12 Course Reviews. Many report that reviewing courses is valuable professional development.

- **34% increase in K-12 membership.** Growth here creates additional resources and connections for our members and expands the community of organizations who are speaking the same language of quality assurance.

- **58% growth in K-12 Official Course Reviews.** A huge increase which demonstrates that schools and districts are committed not only to quality, but to equitable learning opportunities for all students — pro-viding a competitive edge, especially in course choice states.

- **QM certifies first courses for MOCAP (Missouri).** In 2019, QM became an approved courseware evaluator for the Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program (MOCAP). Courses that complete a QM Official Review including Missouri state standards and become QM-certified will be added to their course list.

HIGHER ED. AND ORGANIZATION-WIDE

Canvas is Coming

QM reads every participant evaluation submitted and frequently acts on recommendations and suggestions for improvement from our community. One of the most common suggestions in our Professional Development area has been to move to a more modern LMS. While our incumbent LMS, Moodle, has served QM and our community well, it became clear that it was time to undertake a review of other open source options available.

So, QM has partnered with Instructure to move our professional development courses to their Canvas platform in 2020. Once the QM team surveyed the landscape, we determined that Canvas would provide the type of experience our participants expect from the online

— COMMUNITIES WORKING TOGETHER —

One of the main strengths of Quality Matters isn't just the rubrics or the process, but the community. And when it comes to quality, our community does indeed collaborate.

QM Instructional Designers Association. It was another strong year for our Instructional Designers Association, which has increased to over 1000 members. The volunteer-based special interest group continues to work on engaging the ID community with regular activities.

Several members of the QM IDA leadership attended QM Connect: Penny Ralston-Berg, Anthony Salinas, and Steve Kaufman.

- On April 11, the QM IDA Listserv was launched as a way for instructional designers worldwide to connect and collaborate. By January 2020, it had grown to 365 members.
- An Instructional Designers' Learning Exchange (IDLE) webinar was held in June 2019: "ID Tokenomics: Taking Project Management to the Bank" by Alex McDaniel, Associate Director of Instructional Design at MSU Denver.
- The first Friday of the month from 12 - 1 p.m. ET, the group holds Twitter chats at #QMIDAchat.

QM Research Graduate Student Forum. This QM-hosted virtual community for graduate students, established in April, is helpful for connecting graduate students with the common interests of online education and QM for support.

This forum uses Basecamp as a go-to place for graduate students to help each other with QM-focused research and connect with the QM Research Department on questions they may have. It's also a resource that those working in post-sec-ondary institutions can recommend to students with whom they work.

K-12 Collaborative Teams. The mission of the #QMK12 Collaborative Teams is to build connections among the QM K-12 community through meaningful facilitated discussions. We have four #QMK12 collaborative teams led by members of our community: Professional Growth, Logistics, Accessibility, and Course Reviews. Starting in 2020, these teams will work to provide the resources and programming our community has requested.

professional development leader in online education…not to mention that it is a staple of so many higher education organizations nationwide. We spent much of 2019 laying the groundwork necessary, and we expect to complete migration to Canvas by mid-year in 2020.

Beginning in December, we began offering "Elements of Quality Matters" on the Canvas Learning Network. The free introductory lesson brings QM to a broader audience and provides our own community with an approachable way to introduce QM to faculty and staff.

Getting Ready for More Digital Credentials

Alternative credentials such as digital credentials (badges) are gaining a foothold by providing professionals with knowledge and skills, verifiable by future employers or verifiable knowledge and skills by future employers or educational organizations. Given that our mission implores us to "Promote and improve the quality of online education and student learning nationally and internationally through recognition of expertise in online education quality assurance and evaluation," we can recognize such expertise by issuing digital credentials to educators who are learning about QM and participating in quality assurance activities through their QM-Certified roles.

To provide our community with visible digital credentials that verify their achievements and QM certifications, QM transitioned to Acclaim as our credential-issuing platform in 2019. Acclaim provides connections to employers and the types of skills and knowledge they are looking for with digital credentials. Earners of the QM Teaching Online Certificate are currently issued digital credentials as they work through each of the seven workshops necessary for completion. In 2020, QM will begin

issuing digital credentials for completion of select professional development and QM-Certified roles.

AURS Now Publicly Available

Across the country, institutions are grappling with how to make education accessible for all learners. That's why

the QM Community came together to contribute to and moderate the Accessibility & Usability Resource Site (AURS). Previously only available to QM members, in 2019 the resource site was opened to the public, as a way to encourage making online learning accessible and usable to all.

MEMBER FOCUS: WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

Though West Chester University had been a member since 2007, the year 2019 saw a ramp up in West Chester's commitment to QM — significantly increasing their use of QM tools and resources. Seeing the success of the program has really helped West Chester go "all in" on QM.

"The Provost's Office is very supportive of the QM initiative. We have secured funding to support QM course certification, program certification, and the QM initiative overall," said Rui Li, Ph.D., Executive Director, Office of Distance Education, Academic Affairs This support helped the university jumpstart their QM activity and focus their efforts.

They are implementing a university-wide effort funded by the Office of Distance Education that aims to promote online course quality and teaching effectiveness. The goal of the initiative is for all WCU online courses to meet Quality Matters Higher Education Standards and carry the QM Certification mark.

And they're seeing the investment payoff.

In 2019 alone, West Chester saw 18 courses from five colleges obtain QM Certification, with 15 more expected in the coming year. They obtained QM Program Certification for Online Teaching Support at the institution level in November, and began offering APPQMR workshops — hosting an on-campus workshop in 2018 and their first subscriber-led workshop in November 2019. Their goal is to offer APPQMR workshops on campus three times each year.

As a heavily unionized campus, West Chester is restricted on the type of course evaluation data they can share, but with the assistance of QM and the review team, they were able to get the time they needed to provide essential evidence for achieving the Program Certification.

Even though fully invested in QM, West Chester discovered that implementing multiple QM initiatives, activities and applying for program certification all at the same time presented some challenges. However, Dr. Li reports, "Thanks to a very dedicated and hardworking instructional design and online support team we have at WCU, we got it done." Teamwork and project management were also essential, to their success last year with QM.

Not to mention, Dr. Li tells us, a very supportive university administration.

QM ON THE ROAD IN 2019

A mainstay of Quality Matters is our tireless exposition of all things quality at presentations throughout the country and the world. The year 2019 was no exception, as many QM staff were on the scene presenting and evangelizing quality.

Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and the CHEA International Quality Group (CIQG) Annual Conference

Deb Adair attended the CHEA and CIQG conference, which serves to expand our international leadership position in quality assurance. It's imperative that QM is on the scene when important conversations are taking place regarding quality assurance in education.

International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) 2019 Conference (Sri Lanka)

One of many international conferences we attended in 2019, Yaping Gao was invited to facilitate a workshop on "Trusting Technology: Strategies for Assessing Quality, Reliability & Integrity in Online Teaching and Learning", and presented on adopting and adapting a US-based research-supported quality assurance process. Additionally, Dr. Deb Adair, QM's Executive Director, was appointed to their board in 2019, which puts QM front and center in quality assurance for online education at the global stage.

Digital Learning Annual Conference (DLAC)

QM was well-represented at the inaugural event for this conference as both an exhibitor and presenter. Christine Voelker — the face of QM at the K-12 level — presented three sessions: "Growing Quality Online Courses: Joining Forces to Create Better Blooms: Findings from the Field," "Reviewers to the Rescue - Leaping Quality Challenges in a Single Bound" and "The Future of the National Standards for Quality Online Courses." Christine also sits on the Program Advisory Board of this conference, where researchers, leaders, and practitioners from schools and organizations involved in K-12 digital learning were in attendance.

International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) 2019 (Dublin)

Deb Adair delivered two presentations: "If We Knew Then What We Know Now – 15 Years of Data on Improving Online Learning Design for Students;" and "Assuring Quality in Online Learning is a Global Challenge: International Collaboration on Course Quality Creates a Glocal Solution." Deb was also on a panel of authors

on an ICDE report on alternative digital credentials. Yaping Gao delivered a virtual presentation "Considerations and Findings from Glocalizing USA-Based Research Supported Course Design Standards and Practices to Facilitate Student Success."

International Conference on Online Education (ICOE) 2019 (Vietnam)

Invited by our member institution, Ho Chi Minh City Open University in Vietnam, for their very first online education conference in the country, Yaping Gao facilitated a pre-conference workshop on "Adopt, Adapt, and Apply a US-Based Research-Supported Quality Assurance Process to Culturally & Pedagogically Different Education Systems and Environments" and also delivered a keynote on behalf of Dr. Deb Adair, QM's Executive Director.

American Educational Research Association (AERA)

Big in the research field, The American Educational Research Association (AERA) is the premiere association for educators and graduate students who are actively researching ANY education topic, and given that many in the group did not have familiarity with QM, attending the conference provided an opportunity for

QM IMPRESSIONS

4,905
over 12 sessions

**QM SUCCESS STORY
WEBINAR VIEWERS**

2,438
over 4 sessions

**RESEARCH
WEBINAR VIEWERS**

1,758
New Followers

757
New Followers

259
New Page Likes

263
New Subscribers

Continued from previous page

Dr. Kay Shattuck to introduce QM from a research perspective. At AERA's Online Teaching and Learning Special Interest Group (SIG), Kay presented a paper, co-authored with QM Research Colleague Stella Porto regarding the conference theme of research for democratizing education. Everyone expressed excitement about QM's "from research to practice to research" approach.

Association of Institutional Research (AIR)

Barbra Burch was on hand to present with the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) on the experimental question set on online education experience. This provided QM a great opportunity to demonstrate leadership on the role of quality assurance in online education. Many made the connection that the scrutiny online education is receiving is having an impact on how face-to-face education takes place and is improving it.

European Distance and E-Learning Network (EDEN) Conference (Belgium)

Well known in Europe and beyond for its work in distance education, e-learning, promotion of policy and practice, the EDEN conference is where leaders in the international educational community meet to share research and best practices. Deb Adair presented "Connecting Educational Technology to Quality Outcomes: The Use of Quality Frameworks for Effective, Technology-Enhanced Digital Learning Environments" and displayed a poster "From Idea to Impact: A Quality Assurance Model for Moving Digital Innovation to Standard Operating Procedure."

Association for the Advancement of Computing in Education (AACE) - EdMedia (Amsterdam)

QM actively participated and contributed to this conference with four presentations. Deb Adair presented "Apply a Research-Supported Quality Assurance Process to Evaluate and Improve e-Learning at Course and Program Levels" and "Adopt and Adapt a Research-Supported Quality Assurance Process to Align with and Support Programmatic and Institutional Accreditation Needs." Yaping Gao presented "Adapt USA-based Quality Standards to Benchmark and Improve Online and Blended Learning for Chinese Higher Education" and "Strategies and Considerations for International Collaborations in Quality Assurance for e-Learning Among Culturally and Pedagogically Different Educational Communities."

Impact and Outreach

As always, our QM Connect and QM Regional Conferences offer us a unique opportunity to truly be in your face…in a good way…about quality in general and Quality Matters in particular. It gives us a chance to step out from behind our desks and discover what's important to you. We hear every year how valuable these conferences are due to the content provided. But participants also value highly the ability to meet with QM staff and contributors, and other QM "believers" throughout the USA and the world.

QM REGIONAL CONFERENCE

For 2019, the QM Regional Conference traveled to the Big Apple, New York City, specifically to Berkeley College, where we convened to learn, share, and network around the topic of "Learner Success Through Quality Initiatives." We had a great turnout, and participants were rewarded with a conference that examined ways to set learners up for success, including creating learner-centered environments and implementing quality assurance plans. Online learning toolkits were also bolstered with innovative ideas, data-driven policies and best practices to remove barriers to online learning and create engaging courses — critical components to learner success.

We received great feedback from attendees:

"I particularly enjoyed that each session was an interactive session. In addition the sessions allowed for networking with presenters and colleagues. Most importantly the multidisciplinary approach is invaluable"

2019 QM REGIONAL CONFERENCE IN NEW YORK

31 sessions

151 participants from **28** U.S. states, DC, Canada and China

"I think the conversations I had with attendees were as helpful as the content presented. Though I learned some things from the presenters, the discussions they provoked were as valuable or more."

"This was an eye-opening workshop, which showed that online courses are a platform by itself just like standard classroom teaching is."

Meg Benke from SUNY Empire State College presented the keynote address "Navigating Institutional Improvement and Accreditation," which discussed how the QM processes ties into accreditation standards — including accountability for the quality of online courses, academic resources and accessibility assessments — and how making your work with QM visible can validate your efforts and need for resources. She also spoke on strategies to improve institutional effectiveness, including ways in which to measure analytics and critical resource issues.

Other highlights included:

Aligning QM Standards with Higher Education Accreditation Hallmarks: A Juxtaposition for Distance Education (DE) Gap Analysis and Action Plan Development: Accreditation hallmarks, QM Standards, and a DE gap analysis resulted in strategic enrollment action plans for institutional improvements. The process of self-study promotes DE growth that fosters student success when QA principles are followed.

Fast-Tracking New Online Instructors: This session shared Stonybook University's process for training and supporting new online faculty within the context of QM's Standards.

Impact of Quality Matters Professional Development on Course Design and Student Evaluations: The presentation shared the findings of an exploratory case study that examined the impact of QM professional development on course design and student evaluations.

Road of Accommodation to Accessibility:
Accessibility is a hot topic in higher education and for good reason — education should embrace and welcome learners of all abilities. College administrators, faculty and staff are responsible for ensuring an inclusive learning environment for all students. What's the difference between accommodation and accessibility? How do you ensure your courses are accessible for all students? Perspectives were shared from a disability services coordinator, faculty and instructional designer.

The Importance of Collaborative Multimedia Learning Objects for Learner Interaction and Success in Online Courses: This presentation demonstrated how to enrich the experience in online courses using collaborative learning objects. This includes promoting active learning via learner interaction, and using materials that allow multiple means of access.

QM CONNECT 2019

97 sessions
17 posters

455 participants from
44 states, DC, Canada, Chile, Fiji and Mexico

Our 11th Annual QM Connect was held this past October in Grapevine Texas. The conference explored "Committing to Excellence for Learners" — what it means and how to make it happen. In addition to the myriad professional development opportunities, the 2019 conference put a spotlight on QM's rigorous approach to quality assurance in online learning. From pre-conference workshops to the keynote to breakout sessions, attendees uncovered workable ideas that attested to the value of our community's knowledge…ideas that can provide a path forward on a quality assurance journey. It was such a joy to see participants from across the USA, North America and beyond.

First-time attendees and new QM-ers told us how valuable it was to learn from and mingle with other like-minded souls. "This was my first time attending QM Connect and I think I am taking with me a lot of inspiring stories of how QM has been successfully implemented nationally and internationally," one participant shared. We also heard how welcoming and embracing of newcomers the QM community is — something we at QM have long known, "I felt very welcome at the conference which helped my ability to learn…. I was lost on my first day but Kay [Shattuck] and Fernando [Senior] showed me where to go, sat with me at breakfast, and greeted me throughout the day. This is a very friendly organization."

George Siemens, in his keynote titled, "Human and Artificial Cognition: What Does it Mean to Learning Designers and Faculty?" discussed what human and artificial learning means for learning designers and faculty. He noted that in the short span of less than a generation, we have experienced a transition from traditional knowledge structures to distributed digital environments, and now, to socio-technical systems where we share cognitive processes with technology. While the promise is evident — ranging from better medical diagnosis to improved guidance on environment actions needed — cognitive technologies also call into question the core of our humanity. Most significantly, what remains the unique domain of humans when artificial intelligence can outperform us on a growing range of tasks that were until recently exclusively ours? The presentation provided an overview of how artificial cognitive systems impact how we learn and build knowledge — as individuals, as companies and as a society. Challenges of ethics and bias were explored. And emphasis was placed on how learning designers and faculty can prepare themselves and learners for a world of human and artificial cognition.

Among the 97 sessions over the four days were subjects about increasing student interaction in discussion boards, trying to encourage civility in digital communications, best practices in meeting QM Standards, and a session bluntly titled, "Does Quality in Online Course Design Matter?".

You can discover more about all the

sessions from QM Connect 2019 in our Resource Center, but here are a few highlights:

Road Trip! Helping Students Reach Their Learning Destinations via Effective Course Design: How do we help students reach their learning goals? This presentation examined strategies for beginning with the end in mind, creating measurable learning objectives, and adding effective content to their learning management system.

The Quality Matters White Paper Series: Academic Rigor - The Quality Matters White Paper Series: Academic rigor is often hailed but rarely — or poorly — defined, leading to assumptions that it exists, but without real evidence. A new definition of rigor distinguishes teacher/student responsibilities, disentangles rigor from curriculum/ learning and leverages evidence to document rigor.

Four Years of CHLOE Survey Findings: Can They Tell Us Where Online Learning is Headed? highlighted significant findings from four years of surveying online learning policies, practices and plans, and discussed with the audience the implications of these findings for longer-range development of the field.

—— 2019 QUALITY —— MATTERS AWARDS

These awards recognize excellence for the impact individuals and institutions have on the lives of their students and the furthering of quality online learning. Congratulations, all!

- **Ron Legon Leadership Award for Quality Assurance in Online Education:** Dr. Roxann Humbert

- **Outstanding Impact by an Individual in Higher Education:** Aamna Nayyar, Santa Fe Community College

- **Outstanding Impact by a Higher Education Organization:** Cal State East Bay Online Campus

- **Outstanding Impact by a K-12 Organization or Individual:** LAUNCH, Springfield Public Schools

- **Recognition: Outstanding Poster:** David Becker, Indiana University Office of Collaborative Academic Programs

- **Directors' Award for Exceptional Service to Quality Matters:** Bethany Simunich, Kent State University and Clay Ham, Virtual SC

*Dr. Roxann Humbert with Ron Legon and Deb Adair after receiving the **Ron Legon Leadership Award for Quality Assurance in Online Education** at QM Connect.*
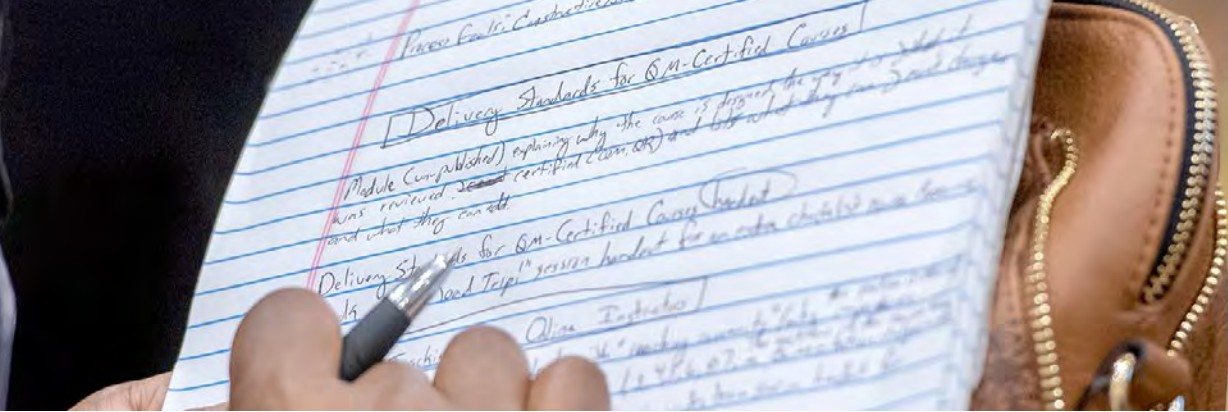
Recharging Through the Journey

The news is being shouted from the hilltops in the education community.

"…we are at the threshold of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which will change the way we live, learn, work, and relate to others." EduTrends, "Alternative Credentials". May 2019 issue.

We are serving an increasingly diverse market of learners — diverse in every way, including age and goals:

"…many of today's students are mature learners who often attend college part time. They also confront a variety of emerging, sometimes unprecedented, and often shifting career paths." Lumina Foundation, "Unlocking the Nation's Potential, A Model to Advance Quality and Equity in Education Beyond High School"

The numbers are clear, and telling us a story. Again from the Lumina Foundation report: 37% of postsecondary students are 25 years or older, 40% work full time, 24% have children or dependents, and 53% live below the poverty line.

These numbers tell the story of a changing educational universe. Of learners who can't afford — financially or logistically — to devote full time, for years at a time, to furthering their education. They tell the story of people who need to learn while they live their lives.

It's sort of like trying to charge the new electric car while you're moving down the road. You can't just stop living to restart or continue learning.

Quality Matters revised our vision statement in 2019 to encompass and clarify this stampeding reality: online learning, and other forms of digitally enhanced education, is what education is now, and will be in the future. And, of course, I'm likely preaching to the choir here. You are a community of digital education professionals, after all.

As educators dedicated to serving these learners, we must meet them where they live. The predominant emerging path is through modular programs and stackable credentials. Courses that can be taken within a learner's time and budget constraints, then stacked one upon the other to result in a certificate or even a degree.

Alternative credentials are being offered by a variety of institutions and organizations. Colleges are working with companies or other entities to help design and offer courses with their attendant credentials. These types of credentials allow learners to work education into their lives in a way that makes sense for them.

— RIGOROUS —
ASSESSMENTS,
ROBUST
FACILITATION

18,072

NUMBER THAT PARTICIPATED IN FACILITATED AND ASSESSED QM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN 2019

QM is one of the largest providers of assessed professional development for online faculty. While many organizations offer "sit and get" webinars or issue certificates of completion for lightly-facilitated workshops, QM courses and workshops feature rigorous assessments and robust facilitation.

But as discussed in our 2016 Community in Review Report, how does a downstream educator or employer know that a credential is sound, whether it means anything? How is the quality of this credential assured? That's an area where Quality Matters can have an influence, one we've been taking a leadership position on.

And we can learn from this growing trend.

Just as with the learners we serve, we know that advancing our skills through professional development can be a challenge. With everything on our plates, taking the time for courses can mean less time with students, less time designing courses...less time doing whatever it is we all do.

Just as educators worldwide are doing, Quality Matters in 2020 and beyond will be working to convert many of our courses to a modular format, and issue stackable credentials for successful completion. What's good for your learners, is good for our learners.

Take, for example, our QM-Certified Peer Reviewer course, one of the most important courses and certifications we offer. It's a 22-day online course with a prerequisite, intensive work and firm deadlines, and not always the easiest thing to squeeze into a busy work schedule.

So what if we broke the pathway for becoming a Peer Reviewer into pieces? Rather than having to dedicate three straight weeks to the course, maybe it could be broken down into pieces comprised of short courses and demonstrated competencies.

Would that make it easier for those in the QM community to complete the Peer Reviewer pathway? To invest the time into becoming QM-Certified Peer Reviewers? And to create space for reflection? We believe so. The result is net positives for participants, for the QM Community and for the education community in general.
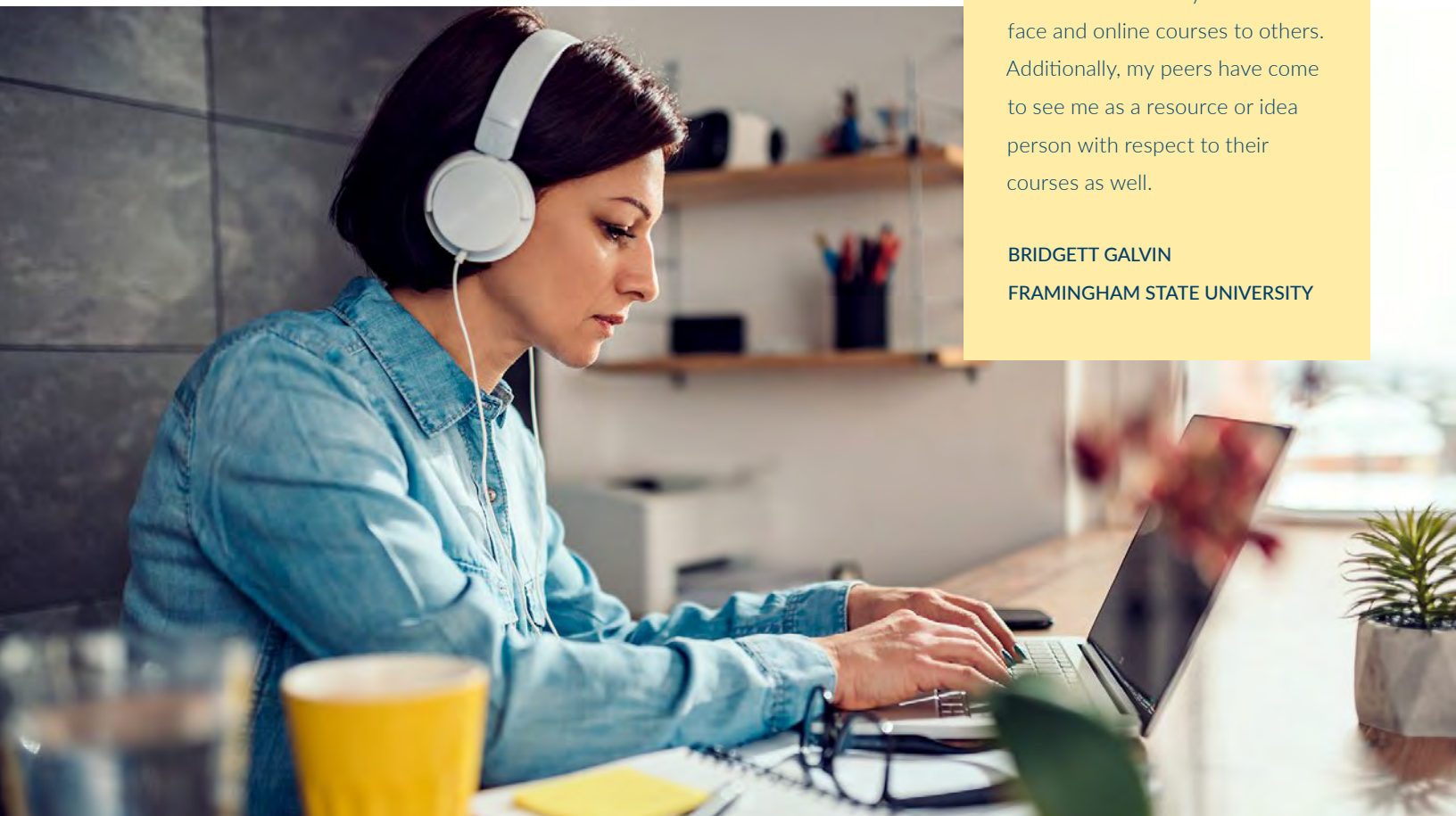
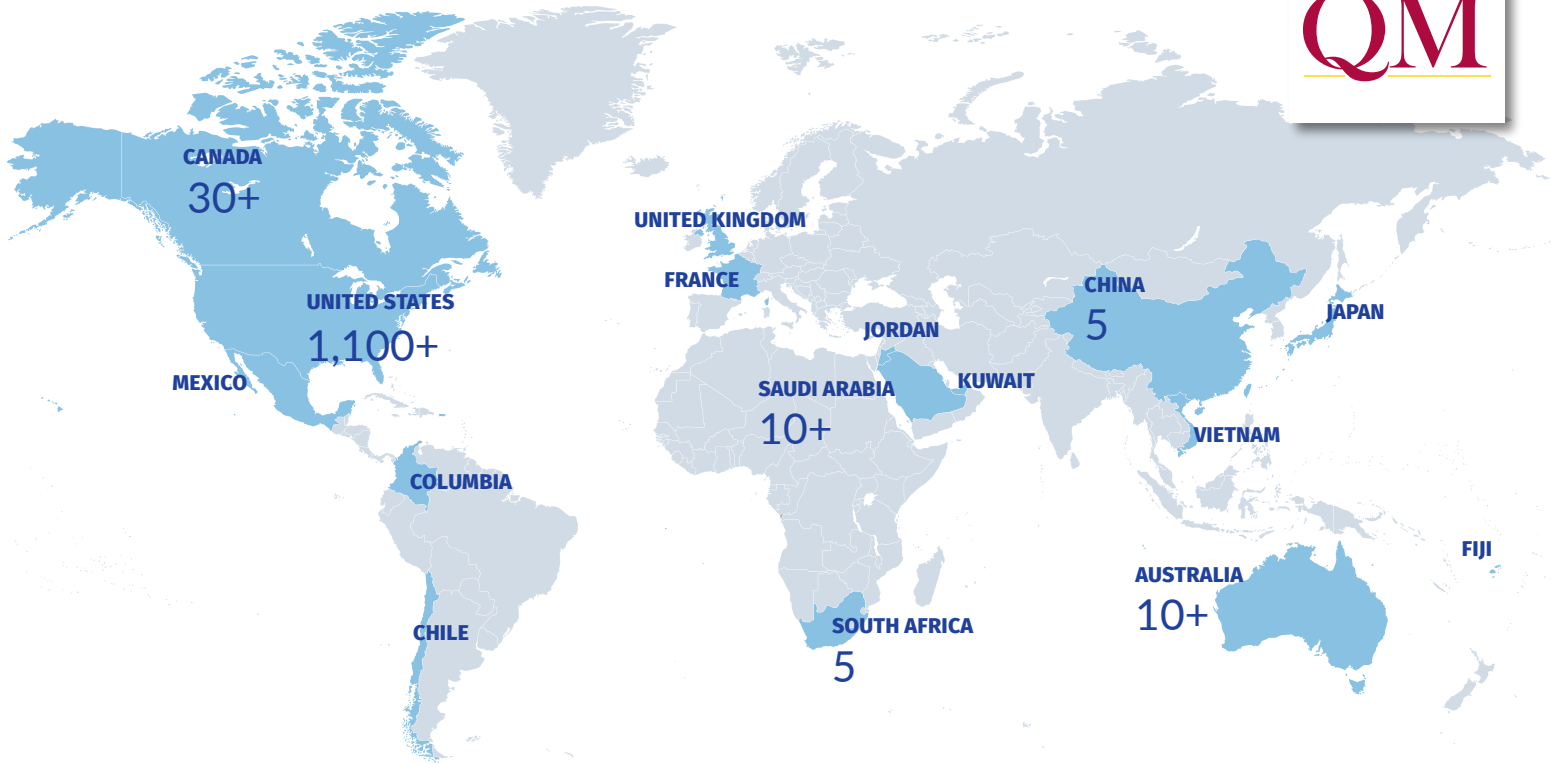And most importantly, this modularized approach to learning could help the people who matter most:

Your learners, the ones who are working by day and learning by night to make their dreams come true.

> Since becoming a reviewer and submitting my own courses for review my teaching has drastically improved! ...Since beginning the QM journey my teaching has evolved to even higher standards. I believe it is because using QM Standards for all of my courses has helped to make the learning process for learners even more transparent. My student evaluations are even more positive and students highly recommend both my face-to-face and online courses to others. Additionally, my peers have come to see me as a resource or idea person with respect to their courses as well.
>
> **BRIDGETT GALVIN**
> **FRAMINGHAM STATE UNIVERSITY**

QUALITY MATTERS
QM

CANADA
30+

UNITED KINGDOM

FRANCE

CHINA
5

JAPAN

UNITED STATES
1,100+

JORDAN

KUWAIT

MEXICO

SAUDI ARABIA
10+

VIETNAM

COLUMBIA

SOUTH AFRICA
5

FIJI

CHILE

AUSTRALIA
10+

—— QM STAFF ACROSS THE USA ——

Quality Matters is a non-profit organization based in Maryland whose employees work virtually from points across the United States.

West	**Midwest**	**East**
Nevada 👤	Illinois 👤👤	Connecticut 👤👤
New Mexico 👤👤	Indiana 👤	Florida 👤👤👤
Oregon 👤	Kansas 👤	Maryland 👤👤👤👤
Texas 👤	Michigan 👤👤	👤👤👤👤👤
Washington 👤👤	Missouri 👤	Pennsylvania 👤
	Ohio 👤👤👤👤👤	South Carolina 👤
	👤👤	

QM's Board of Directors is dedicated to providing the guidance and support that will stimulate the further expansion of services from Quality Matters, its reach and influence. In partnership with QM staff, its aim is to build a world-class organization.

The Quality Matters Academic Advisory Council (QMAAC), a standing committee, includes representatives of QM-member organizations, QM senior staff and online and blended learning leaders who provide a national perspective, as well as guidance to and oversight of the programmatic directions and initiatives of Quality Matters.

—— CONTACT US ——

PHONE

Toll Free: 866-851-4984
Maryland Local: 301-358-2621

ADDRESS

1997 Annapolis Exchange Parkway, Suite 300
Annapolis, MD 21401

EMAIL

General: info@qualitymatters.org
Prof. Development: registrar@qualitymatters.org
Course Reviews: qmcoursereviews@qualitymatters.org

🐦 in f ▶

Quality Matters (QM) is the global organization leading quality assurance in online and innovative digital teaching and learning environments. It provides a scalable quality assurance system for online and blended learning used within and across organizations. When you see QM Certification Marks on courses or programs, it means they have met QM Course Design Standards or QM Program Review criteria in a rigorous review process.