A Quality Matters Event
QM Research Online Conference

Active/Applied Research on Online Learning and Quality Assurance

February 17, 2022| Online

Implementing QM:
What We Know,
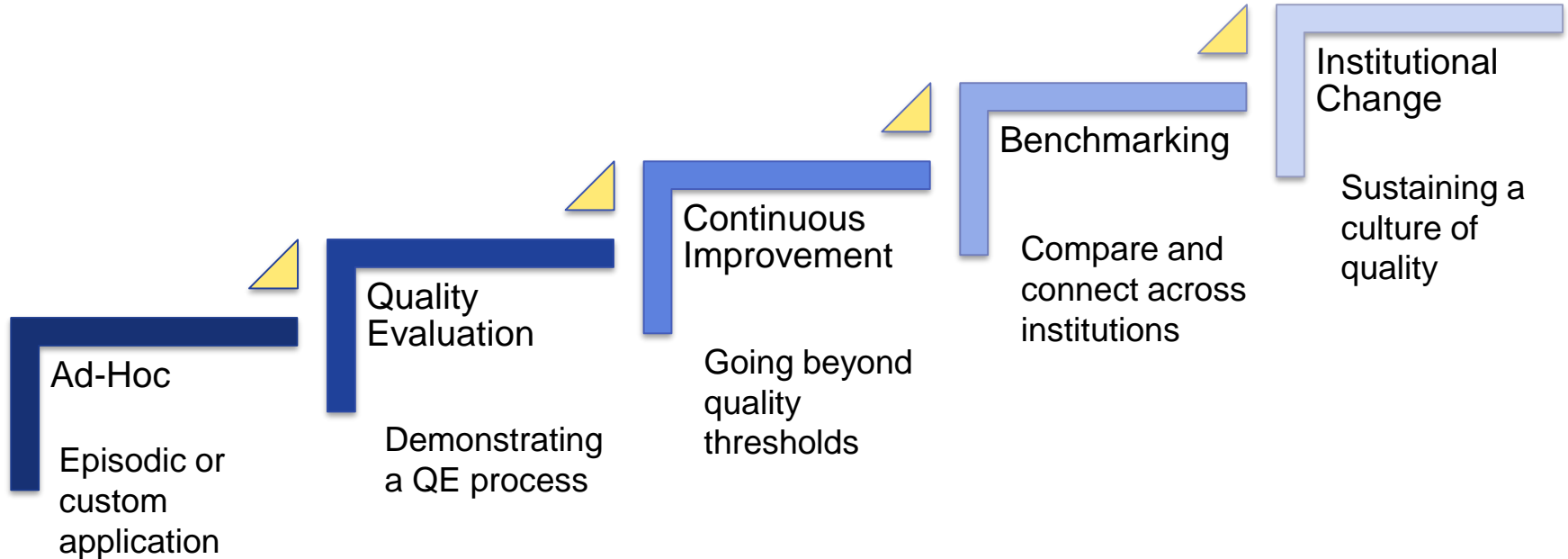# What We're Learning

Dr. Barb Altman - Associate Professor, Texas A&M University – Central Texas & QM Research Colleague

Dr. Bethany Simunich - Director Research/Innovation, Quality Matters

Session Objectives

- Describe the ongoing research at Quality Matters on QM implementation, quality assurance, and change management
- Identify your institutional implementation progress
- Explain ways to overcome barriers and maintain momentum
- Learn how to engage with QM on this research

Continuum of Excellence for Quality Assurance (CEQA)

Ad-Hoc

Episodic or custom application

Quality Evaluation

Demonstrating a QE process

Continuous Improvement

Going beyond quality thresholds

Benchmarking

Compare and connect across institutions

Institutional Change

Sustaining a culture of quality

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More on CEQA

- CEQA is grounded in Change Management theory and Diffusion of Innovation

- We know from related research that there are common issues

- Prior research on QM & CEQA revealed it's not often a linear path, & must be led well

A "classic"* Model of Change Management – Phase 1 Research

1. Create a sense of urgency**
2. Build a guiding coalition**
3. Form a strategic vision**
4. Enlist volunteers**
5. Remove barriers
6. Generate and celebrate short term wins**
7. Sustain momentum
8. Institute the change

*Kotter, J. 1996. Leading Change
**QM Research found as critical factors

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Change Management in Higher Education – Phase 2 Research

- Top-down does not work well
- Leaders need emotional intelligence – "commiseration"
- Leadership from below is critical – "bridging staff"
- Faculty members must help shape

Key leverage points:

- o Faculty professional development
- o Designated funding!
- o Rewarding and disseminating exemplary practices

Chat: Share your struggles & successes

What barriers to change have you encountered or overcome, when implementing QM at your institution?

QM Implementation Research - 2021

- Special Issue - Policy, Leadership and Organizational Change
  - Focused on "policy, implementation, & transformation"
  - Study link between policies and institutional culture change

- Case study approach – using the QM Framework to examine course QA implementation
- Opportunity to connect with QMC's who have been on this journey
- Opportunity to inform new audiences about the QM Framework and implementing QM
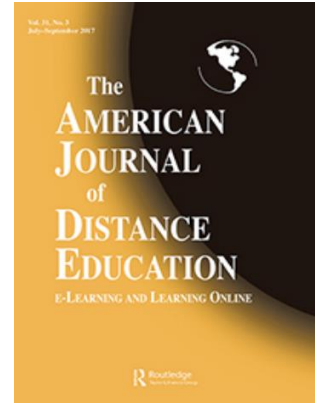
Defining Organizational Culture

- Accumulated shared learning of organization members which creates set of organizational norms
  - Examples – shared language, reward systems

- What is taught to new members:
  - "correct" way to perceive, think, feel, and behave; organizational values.

(Schein and Schein, 2016)

Organizational Culture Challenges

- Changing organizational culture is *extremely* challenging

- In the context of Higher Education, it is even more challenging:

  - Norms include views of faculty autonomy, definitions of teaching quality, online versus face-to-face
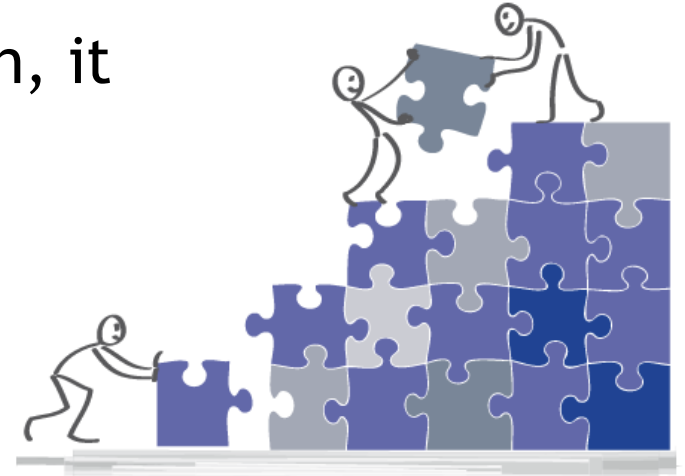
Defining a Culture of *Quality*

Having a significant percentage of institutional faculty, staff, and administration collaboratively work to create guidelines and engage in practices to achieve quality assurance goals, as well as demonstrate and communicate a collective commitment to continuous improvement.

What is an Implementation Plan?

A plan for course design quality assurance and continuous improvement that:

- Is tied to institutional goals
- Includes specific targets, metrics, and data to evaluate progress and efficacy
- Was created in collaboration with institutional stakeholders.

What is an Implementation Plan?

The implementation plan includes:

- Professional development planned for the next year or more that supports institutional QA goals

- An associated budget & administrative support

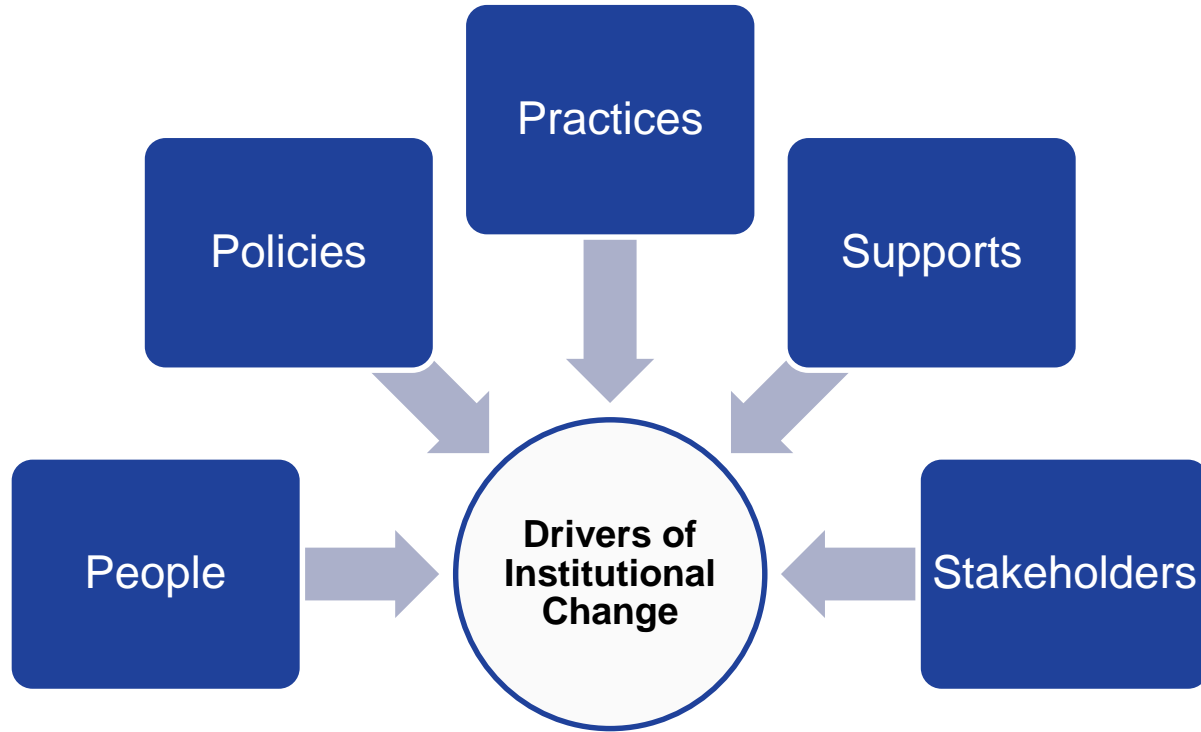- Target goals and metrics for facets such as internal and/or Certified course reviews.

Let's Chat!

Does your institution have an implementation plan for online course quality? *[yes or no]*

If yes, is it tied to institutional goals?

Framing the Research - The Big Question

Mixed Methods Study

Questionnaire

Characteristics of institutions & the QMCs

Interviews

Questions for QMCs

Participant Information

- 109 = population of "high activity" member institutions
- 43 = survey respondents (Response rate = 39%)
- 17 = qualitative interview respondents

"high activity" based on:

1. Number of Internal QM Reviews conducted in QMs Course Review Management System
2. Number of Official QM Reviews
3. QM Professional Development participation

Research Question for Survey

RQ1: *What goals, supports, people, policies, and processes are related to higher implementation activity on QM internal reviews, Official QM reviews, and QM faculty professional development?*

Survey results - Institutional Supports

70% had a course quality implementation plan

63% had a committee of stakeholders invested in online learning

68% reported that all faculty had the opportunity to work with an ID to design their course
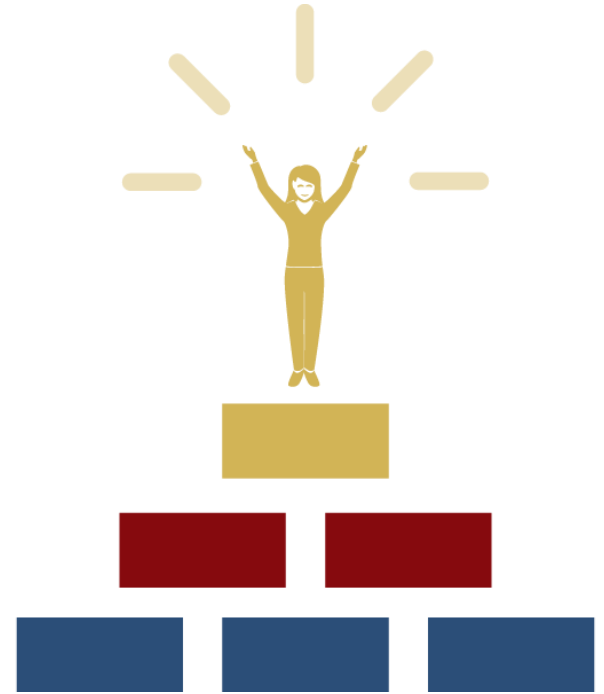
75% offered LMS templates

70% offered syllabus templates

77% had faculty development staff knowledgeable in online pedagogy

Let's Chat!

Does your institution have implementation supports?

1 = LMS template

2 = online syllabus template

3 = Committee of stakeholders

4 = Dedicated staff or PD for online faculty development

Select Internal Review Correlations

- Ensuring that faculty teaching online receive a minimum level of professional development/preparedness for online learning

- Celebrating faculty achievements related to QM

- Recognizing faculty's QM work in RPT

- The availability of online course syllabus templates

- Having clearly articulated minimum quality standards for online learning
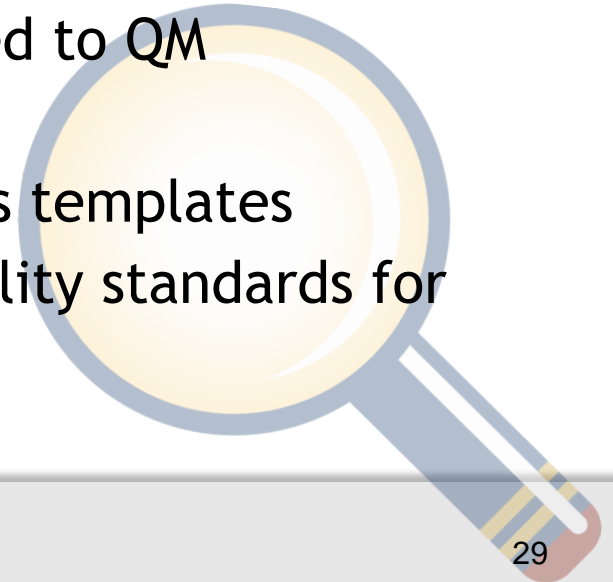
Select QM Certified Correlations

- Full-time faculty are required to attend one or more QM workshops

- Faculty are compensated if their course achieves formal QM certification.

- Faculty being encouraged to design their course to meet quality standards, but not being required to do so

- The institution communicating their QA metrics and goals to students

- QM workshops and certifications are recognized in RPT.
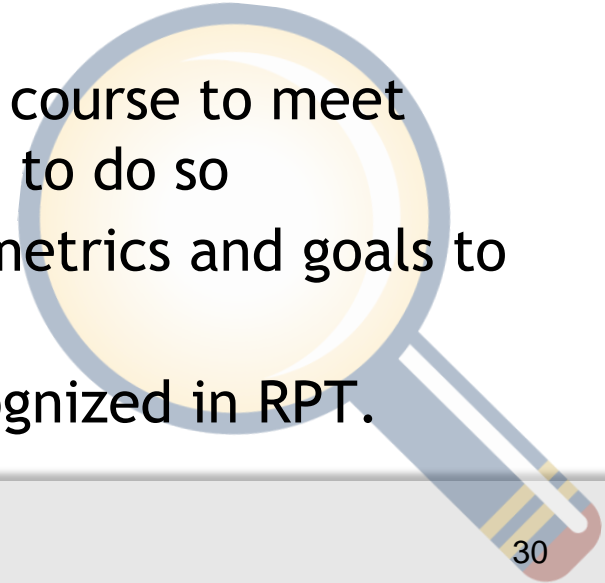
Select PD Correlations

- Acceptance and use of quality standards for online learning
- The institution has a way to track and formally reward or recognize successful completion of workshops and required professional development
- QM workshops and certifications are recognized in reappointment, promotion, and tenure
- Demonstrating to stakeholders a commitment to an external and unbiased evaluation of online quality
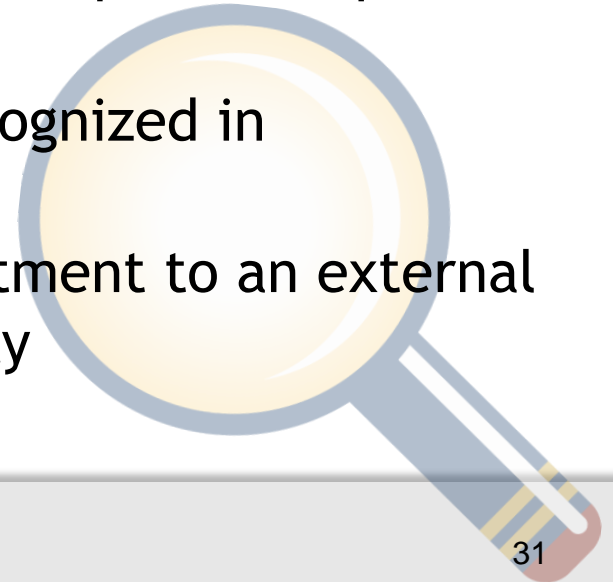
Qualitative Interview Questions

- **RQ2:** *What supports, people, policies, and practices were key drivers for QM quality assurance implementation at your institution?*

- **RQ3:** *What effect did QM implementation have on your institutional culture?*

- **RQ4:** *What barriers to QM implementation did you experience, and how did you address them?*

Interview Themes

- People
- Policies and Practices
- Culture Shift
- Barriers and Disruptors

Theme #1: People

Champions and cheerleaders

Faculty voices matter, especially to other faculty

Friends in high places/ Support from multiple stakeholders

Theme #2: Policies and Practices

Templates, reviews, and streamlined processes

QM as a "means to an end"

Friendly competition can be leveraged/ Celebration of successes

Theme #2: Policies and Practices

Tailoring the message

Relationships and trust

Accreditation, strategic planning, and budgets

Theme #3: Culture Shift

The pace of change

Shifting the perspective

Changing conversations

Theme #4: Barriers and Disruptors

Gaining and losing momentum

Barriers to implementation are common

Disruptive events

Recommendations

- Choose the right person to lead the effort; include stakeholders via collaborative efforts

- Center faculty-inclusive practices & approach

- Administrative and financial support is crucial

Recommendations

- Support faculty with templates, good design process, IDs, compensation
- Multiple stakeholders + Institutional strategy spurs the creation of a Culture of Quality
- Recognize the effort (RPT) & Celebrate successes

Next Steps for QM Implementation Research & Support

- Gaining feedback from a broader cross section of QM members than those included in original survey

- Interviews and focus groups with OL administrators

- Strengthening our commitment to assisting QMC's and their colleagues in implementation using research-founded principles and strategies

Thank you for attending!

For further information, questions, or to receive a copy of the ADJE article: research@qualitymatters.org