Lawrence Technological University

Quest

Find your passion...

Arts | Leadership | Research
Change the world . . .
If you have a passion for knowledge and a desire to succeed, your Lawrence Technological University Quest begins here!

Quest is a co-curricular experiential learning program for highly motivated College of Arts and Sciences students who wish to participate in unique learning experiences above and beyond the requirements of a course.

What is your passion? Have you discovered a writer, concept, or research problem in a course that you would like to explore on a deeper level and for a longer period of time than a semester? Are you moved to find a solution to a scientific, medical, social, economic, or political problem? Are you a poet, musician, or actor who would like to develop your talent? Are you seeking a career that you will love?

**Quest is your call to action.**

ltu.edu/arts_sciences/quest.asp
You may pursue a Quest project in one or all of three areas of interest: Arts, Leadership, and Research. You can begin your Quest as early as your freshman year. Each project requires a minimum of 50 hours of engagement, and you have one year in which to complete your work.

An important part of Quest is sharing your project(s) with the Lawrence Tech community at the annual Blue Devil Showcase and/or in a formal performance or presentation on campus. You’ll also create a final portfolio, which includes a capstone summary of your entire Quest project.

When you graduate, you’ll receive official recognition for your efforts. In addition to the traditional GPA transcript, you’ll receive a narrative transcript detailing your Quest experiences and a special citation. If you accomplish three Quest projects, you’ll receive a Gold Citation; for two, you’ll receive a Silver Citation; and for one, a Bronze Citation. These distinguished additions to your resume can set you apart with prospective employers and graduate schools.
All students working on a Quest project do so with the help of at least one Quest guide. Your Lawrence Tech guide can be a professor, staff member, alumnus, administrator, and/or an industry professional.

In addition to the support your guide(s) provides, you have the opportunity to apply for funding for materials related to your project and/or for project stipends.

Funding requests are reviewed each semester by the Quest committee. Request deadlines are available on the Quest website (ltu.edu/arts_sciences/quest.asp). Because the funding process is highly selective and competitive, it is important that you complete the Budget Request form (at ltu.edu/arts_sciences/quest.asp) and submit it by the applicable deadline.
“I don’t believe people are looking for the meaning of life as much as they are looking for the experience of being alive.”

– Joseph Campbell, mythologist, author, and speaker
Traced back to its Latin roots, the word “art” implies craftsmanship, artistry, technique, and ingenuity. In its broadest sense, art involves making or doing something skillfully. Perhaps you have artistic abilities you’ve never had the opportunity to develop. A Quest project in the arts gives you a chance to explore your artistic potential.

You might perform on campus; write, design, and circulate a desktop publication, such as a newsletter or brochure; produce and distribute a recording; build a website; or create an art installation. You can do anything that combines theory and practice and that demonstrates an understanding of the current practices in a given cultural field. If, for example, you wish to create a small sculpture garden using leftover industrial materials, you should learn something of the history of minimalist art. If you want to record your band’s first EP, you could study the history of garage rock.

The Quest program also encourages interdisciplinary projects, such as those that combine computer science and art, math and art, or the natural sciences and art. But whatever your Quest project involves – video/multimedia installation, dance, photography, drawing, painting, writing, game development, or participation in a Lawrence Tech student club or organization (such as Prism, the Society of Dramatic Arts, Musicians’ Society, or Artists’ Guild) – it should be original, and you should be able to articulate how it differs from other works in your field. You should also make it available to the University community as an enrichment of the cultural life of Lawrence Tech.

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“We don’t accomplish anything in this world alone.”

– Sandra Day O’Connor, first female US Supreme Court justice
“What does it mean to be a good leader?”
Quest projects in this category should seek to answer this question in creative ways. You can identify and engage in experiences that emphasize character, integrity, and professionalism in various contexts or concentrate on increasing your self-awareness and enhancing your personal development.

Quest projects in leadership can take many forms, and it is possible to apply the hours you spend completing your Quest project toward the curriculum requirements of the University’s Leadership Program. Some possibilities include:

- Service learning, coalition building, activism, or other efforts geared to effecting positive change in your community;

- Coordinating with other individuals or organizations to plan, organize, and host an event for a common purpose;

- Engaging in volunteer abroad programs, international student development, foreign policy education, or diversity awareness projects;

- Participating in an innovative business or service project that involves leadership training for your fellow students, coworkers, or colleagues.
“One must learn by doing ... for though you think you know it, you have no certainty, until you try.”

– Sophocles, Greek playwright
Research involves the systematic inquiry or investigation into a subject in order to discover, revise, or interpret facts and theories with the purpose of advancing human knowledge.

Quest projects in research might involve assisting faculty in original research in math, computer science, or in the natural sciences, humanities, or social sciences; working in industry to help develop a green battery; or studying prostheses in a hospital laboratory – your Quest research project goes wherever your interests take you. You are encouraged to present your research at undergraduate conferences and/or publish your work in academic journals. Your Quest research project can help you explore possible career paths and help you decide whether you want to pursue graduate education.

Your senior project can become a Quest project if you present an abstract at a regional or national undergraduate research conference, display your work at the Blue Devil Showcase, or assist a faculty member in teaching his or her course.
Follow the steps below to begin your journey!

Step One
Present your Quest project idea to someone you think would be a potential guide and mentor, such as a professor, staff member, alumnus, administrator, or industry sponsor. If you do not have a guide in mind, present your idea to a professor, the director of the Quest program, the chair of your department, or the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. They will help you find an appropriate guide.

Step Two
Complete a Quest Proposal form (at ltu.edu/arts_sciences/quest.asp) and obtain the signatures of your guide and the Quest program director.

Step Three
If you require funding for your project, complete a Budget Request form (at ltu.edu/arts_sciences/quest.asp) and submit it with your Quest Proposal form. Refer to the Quest website (ltu.edu/arts_sciences/quest.asp) for funding request deadlines.
Step Four
Begin your Quest!

Step Five
Keep a log of the hours you spend on your project and collect materials for your Quest portfolio. Since you are required to write a reflection essay for your portfolio, keep notes and/or a journal about your project. Provide your guide regular updates on your progress. Refer to the Portfolio Requirements (at ltu.edu/arts_sciences/quest.asp) before you start your project – compiling your portfolio will be much easier if you keep track of your hours and save all documents throughout the process.

Step Six
Upon completion of your project and after a presentation to the Lawrence Tech community, submit your Quest portfolio and a Project Release form (at ltu.edu/arts_sciences/quest.asp) to your guide and the Quest director for their signatures.

For more information, contact the Quest director at quest@ltu.edu or 248.204.3520.
The following projects demonstrate the scope and variety of the Quest program. Remember, no two Quest projects are the same — it’s all about your creative spark.
Type: Arts
Guide: Prof. Suzanne Levine

Media communication students Scott Maiale, Courtney Bufalini, and Jeff Wolka developed a series of “webisodes” (short television shows created for the Internet) that document academic, professional, and social activities at Lawrence Technological University. The students procured the equipment necessary for each shoot, scouted locations, arranged and conducted interviews, filmed, edited, and posted the finished webisodes on YouTube.

“I am participating in Quest because it is a way to put everything I learn in class to practical everyday use. My Quest project will further my education through hands-on experiences to compliment what I’ve learned in my textbooks.”

— Jeff Wolka, BS in Media Communication, 2011

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Type: Arts
Guide: Dr. David Huntsperger

Students Timothy Bond (computer science/clinical psychology), Ashley Croft (molecular and cell biology), Rachel Yarbrough (English and communication arts/humanities), and Andrew Yarbrough (biomedical engineering) gained in-depth knowledge of theater by staging, directing, and acting in the Society of Dramatic Arts production of the play “Arsenic and Old Lace.”
Type: Leadership  
Guide: Dr. David Bindschadler

Computer science students Richard Gyer and John Buckenmeyer created their company, Minus 40 Games, to develop, market, and sell the video games they create. Their first game, Operation: Fire Rescue, was designed in a game design class at Lawrence Tech. In their Quest project, Richard and John took the design and developed it into a fully working video game. They hope to release the game for PCs and the Xbox 360 home gaming console.

“Ever since I decided to become a game developer, it has been my dream to start my own game development company. Quest helped make my dream a reality. The program provided me with the resources and guidance to start my own business, something I thought would take years to come true.” – Richard Gyer, BS in Computer Science, 2010

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Ze Cheng (math and computer science), Taojie Hua (business management), Weiyi Jiao (business management), and Yang Xu (business management) created a seminar series to introduce traditional Chinese culture to Lawrence Tech students. In four weekly sessions, they provided free Chinese food, taught basic Chinese conversation, and gave short lectures covering such topics as Kung-fu, regional cuisines, and their country’s famous UNESCO World Heritage sites. After the lecture, the students explored and discussed the differences between Chinese and other world cultures in order to promote respect and understanding among students of diverse backgrounds. The students also utilized surveys and other assessment tools to plan and improve their work.

“Quest gave me a great opportunity to develop and improve my leadership skills. I learned how to work as an effective team member, how to take action as a leader, and when to be a follower. Being a leader does not mean taking control of everything all the time. Knowing how to distribute work to everyone fairly and efficiently is a tough task as well. I also learned a lot about how to give a speech in English, which is a second language for me. My Quest project was a great chance to put into practice what I learned from my technical and professional communication courses. It helped me improve my communication skills.” – Weiyi Jiao, BS in Business Management, 2011
Type: Leadership
Guide: Dr. David Huntsperger

Andrea Freile (media communication) and Justin Vail (biomedical engineering) assisted David Huntsperger in his World Masterpieces II course. They completed the course’s required reading, attended classes, provided assistance in writing and reading comprehension to students in the class, lead review sessions, and worked with the students to prepare for exams and papers. Through their Quest project, Andrea and Justin developed skills in leadership and communication along with increasing their knowledge of literature.

“What I love about Quest is that you can choose a project outside your major to have new experiences. Being a classroom assistant confirmed for me that teaching is not a career I would enjoy, but it did reinforce my passion for one-on-one tutoring. Having the opportunity to help teach a course while still in college was great.” – Andrea Freile, BS in Media Communication, 2010

“The Quest project allowed me to experience all of the things that go into being a professor. It showed me that it might be a future career choice for me.” – Justin Vail, BS in Biomedical Engineering, 2012

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Anna Vantsevich (chemistry) developed accessible laboratory experiments that can be imitated easily in a classroom environment to showcase the efficiency of green chemistry while lowering the use and generation of toxins. Anna performed experiments that explore the concepts of molecular modeling, solventless reactions, chemical kinetics, recrystallization, crystal engineering, and photochemistry. She then evaluated and compared these experiments using the 12 principles of green chemistry enumerated by Paul Anastas and John Warner in 1998.

These experiments demonstrated the value of the new field of green chemistry and the opportunity it offers as a career pathway for those who wish to preserve the environment and improve the quality of life.

“My Quest totally changed my choice of career. I now want to pursue green chemistry. My guide, Dr. Shannon Timmons, provided me with professional insights and the project greatly expanded my expertise in the lab.”

– Anna Vantsevich, BS in Chemistry, 2012
Type: Research  
Guide: Dr. Adam Timmons, General Motors

Allie Sowa (environmental chemistry), John Camardese (chemistry), and Alexander Prescott (chemistry) used materials science to develop a better understanding of electrode materials for advanced lithium-ion batteries under the supervision of General Motors researcher Adam Timmons and Lawrence Tech professor Anthony Sky. The students worked six hours a week at the General Motors Technical Center and/or at Lawrence Tech and two hours a week at home. Since the preparation of materials for the lithium-ion batteries and the conditions under which the batteries work affect both the durability and performance of the batteries, other Quest projects, involving electrochemical, structural/compositional, physical and surface characterizations, or any combination thereof, may result.

“I really like to see how things that we are learning in our classes can be applied to solving real-world problems. In my Quest project at GM, I tested out a possible career and learned what it is like to work in a corporate environment, which a lot of students don’t experience until they graduate.” – Allie Sowa, BS in Environmental Chemistry, 2011

“Quest is a unique opportunity for undergraduates to work on projects at a level of independence generally available only to graduate students. I gained experience performing research under real-world conditions at the General Motors Technical Center. Quest helped me make career decisions and prepared me for that career.” – Alexander Prescott, BS in Chemistry, 2010

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Tristan Maerz (biomedical engineering) worked on an injectable, environmentally responsive hydrogel for the localized and sustained delivery of proteins aimed at encouraging the regeneration of fibrocartilagenous tissues. This work was performed in collaboration with the Orthopedic Research Laboratories and Department of Orthopedic Surgery at Beaumont Hospitals. The long-term goal of the research is the repair of soft tissues such as cartilage. The project entailed the submission of a research proposal, extensive research on the use of hydrogels as drug-delivery media, vast project management, the chemistry-intensive synthesis of the hydrogel, and the analysis of its effectiveness in an in vitro cell culture and an in vivo animal model.

“My Quest project gave me the opportunity to apply classroom and laboratory experience in a research setting. The combination of solitary and collaborative work provided valuable insight into how research is conducted, and it properly prepared me for the beginning of my career.” – Tristan Maerz, BS in Biomedical Engineering, 2009, now a research engineer, Sports Medicine Research, Department of Orthopedic Research, William Beaumont Hospital
Who Can Participate?
All College of Arts and Sciences students, including those taking double majors and minors and students in joint programs (Bachelor of Science in Information Technology, Bachelor of Science in Business Management, or Bachelor of Science in Biomedical Engineering), are eligible to participate in Quest. Students not in the College of Arts and Sciences may participate if their guide is a College of Arts and Sciences faculty member or if they are part of a Quest team with other Arts and Sciences students. Students can be recommended by faculty or choose to participate.

What Is Expected of You?
To successfully participate in Quest, you must:
• Contribute a minimum of 50 hours engagement for each project, which you have one year to finish
• Complete a minimum of one and a maximum of three projects
• Choose a project that falls within one of the three Quest areas of interest: Arts, Leadership, and Research
• Present your project(s) at the annual Blue Devil Showcase and/or in a formal performance or presentation on campus
• Complete a final portfolio, which includes a capstone summary of your Quest experience

What Kind of Projects Qualify?
• Projects that enhance the experience of learning for all students at Lawrence Tech through performance, presentation, display, publication, demonstration, or instruction
• Projects that involve original problem-solving with both theoretical and practical components

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Your Quest Guides
A list of the College of Arts and Sciences faculty, staff, and administrators who currently serve or have served as Quest guides can be found at ltu.edu/arts_sciences/quest.asp.

Your Quest Benefits
- The opportunity to explore a special interest or career with the guidance of a knowledgeable professional
- Opportunity to apply for project funding
- A narrative transcript in addition to your traditional GPA transcript
- Special recognition at Commencement:
  - Gold Citation: three projects
  - Silver Citation: two projects
  - Bronze Citation: one project
- A portfolio of accomplishments to show prospective employers and graduate schools

Developing Your Portfolio
Your portfolio is one of the most important components of your Quest project. Through its creation, you have the opportunity to reflect on not only the end result of your project, but also on the steps you took to get there. In your portfolio, you tell the story of your project: what your initial goal was, how you planned to reach it, whether your goal changed along the way, and how you feel about the subject you explored.

The portfolio is something that you can use to illustrate your accomplishments and abilities to prospective employers and graduate schools; for that reason, it is important that you take the time to carefully prepare the components. You will find the portfolio process easier if you gather the materials and keep brief notes throughout the creation and completion of your project.
A few other tips for creating a successful portfolio are:

- Set up a timeline with due dates for each piece of the project and portfolio.
- Make time to meet with your guide to review and discuss your progress.
- Keep your Project Log up-to-date and detailed.
- Practice writing reflective statements for each portfolio entry.
- Keep everything as you complete your Quest project. You can later select from those items to include in your portfolio. Don’t throw anything away!

More specific portfolio guidelines are provided at ltu.edu/arts_sciences/quest.asp.

Getting Started
To begin your Quest, visit the Quest website at ltu.edu/arts_sciences/quest.asp for the specific information, dates, and forms you will need. If you have questions, contact the Quest director at 248.204.3520 or quest@ltu.edu.
“Success is a journey, not a destination. The doing is often more important than the outcome.”

– Arthur Ashe, tennis champion, humanitarian, and educator
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