

Communities of Practice: Writing Across the Curriculum

Bauder College Atlanta, Georgia QEP Executive Summary

Bauder College is a career-focused institution offering academic programs that integrate general education, professional skills and career-focused education. The College aims to ensure that its graduates are prepared to meet the complex challenges of today's professional workplace environments. To accomplish its mission, the College has established the QEP, "Communities of Practice: Writing Across the Curriculum," to focus and engage the entire campus community on improving written communication in the context of learning and academic success, career applications and professional development.

As a result of the statistical analysis of various assessments on student writing from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research, the College determined that improving writing competencies was a critical priority. The College formed a multidisciplinary QEP Leadership Team comprised of faculty, staff, administrators and students to design a comprehensive, college-wide writing across the curriculum initiative that includes three major components: 1) the training of faculty in methods of teaching and assessing writing competencies; 2) the designation of courses within each major as writing intensive courses (WIC) with the purpose of focusing instruction and student learning outcomes on writing; and 3) the creation of a Writing Center to advance writing competencies across the College.

Faculty training and development will be offered to facilitate the successful integration of the writing outcomes across the curriculum. Common writing learning outcomes will be incorporated into each degree program's curriculum. Writing intensive courses will be distributed within all academic majors. In the writing intensive courses, students will substantially increase their writing practice and ultimately their skill level. Instruction for these courses will combine writing practice focused on major course concepts. Written assignments will be evaluated with a common rubric. Students will be continuously evaluated on those learning outcomes for levels of proficiency throughout their programs.

The Writing Center will facilitate student understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement in their writing. Through the Writing Center, students will receive intensive one-on-one tutoring in developing writing skills as well as focusing and revising already drafted materials. The Center will offer students the opportunity to brainstorm their projects with trained writing assistants in a computer-equipped, software rich environment expressly designed for writing.

Ongoing assessments will guide continuing faculty development and curriculum improvements to achieve the purpose of the QEP. Practice and feedback will be available to those students who perform poorly on the writing outcomes and need supplemental instruction through the Writing Center and tutors. Bauder College expects that the assessment of the outcomes will produce evidence of an improved learning environment for the development of writing skills and that this comprehensive plan will help fulfill the College's mission of empowering students to develop and achieve their personal and career potentials.

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