

Miami International University of Art & Design
QEP: Writing Across the Professional Disciplines, Executive Summary

Miami International University of Art & Design has launched a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) designed to help students produce purpose-driven written work that follows the conventions of the professional writing genres. During the University's institutional effectiveness process, we learned that student performance in writing was below our expectations. This finding, in conjunction with the results of a survey of University stakeholders (faculty and staff, primarily), made it clear that "Writing across the Professional Disciplines" should be the focus and title of the University's QEP.

As part of its QEP, the University has introduced several writing initiatives based on pedagogies of active engagement. These initiatives include the implementation of student-centered writing workshops, increased availability of full-time faculty for walk-in tutoring in the University Learning Center, and the development of new writing-intensive curricula in courses that previously required little, if any, written work. These programs are administered by or developed in close consultation with the QEP Director, a full-time University staff member. Faculty work closely with the QEP Director to ensure in-class writing instruction and assignments are tailored to the particular needs of each major. In addition, the University has begun requiring newly-enrolled students who fail to demonstrate writing proficiency to take two courses in developmental writing.

During an initial one-year pilot period, QEP writing initiatives have been introduced into select classes in seven baccalaureate majors across the university's three branches. A QEP assessment committee will evaluate the results of the pilot by comparing written work from two sections of each pilot class: one that has received new QEP writing initiatives and one that has not. These comparisons are to be done according to a proprietary writing rubric based on the four QEP learning objectives, which states that in written work students will:

1. Include a clear thesis/main point/purpose.
2. Use evidence that is introduced, analyzed, and connected to the argument.
3. Follow the expectations of the writing genre (business reports/proposals, advertising copy, screenplays, academic essays of various types, etc.).
4. Conform to standard grammatical, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation rules.

Following a review of the assessment committee's findings by the QEP Director and University stakeholders, the QEP will be implemented across all baccalaureate majors beginning with the Fall 2013 academic quarter. All faculty will be required to attend a QEP professional development seminar prior to universal implementation of the QEP. The University will continue to monitor the success of the QEP through ongoing assessment of written work. It will also employ faculty and student perception surveys as indirect measures of the QEP. These surveys and assessments will indicate whether the University has successfully met its goals for the QEP: to dramatically increase written work assigned by instructors, to ensure a significant amount of that work includes discipline-appropriate research and adheres to discipline-appropriate writing genres, and to increase the number of instructors using a writing rubric for purposes of assessment.

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