

QEP Title: *Write from the Start*: NSU's Quality Enhancement Plan
Institution: Nova Southeastern University
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Write from the Start
Writing and Communication Center

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nova Southeastern University's Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Committee used institutional research and results from focus group interviews with faculty members and students to determine that the focus of the university's second QEP would be enhancing student writing. The committee learned that faculty members and students considered writing to be a critical component to student success, both during and after college, and that writing support across campus was not adequately available to students at all levels and in all formats. Thus, the committee recommended that the university focus the QEP on enhancing student writing through the creation of a unified writing center that offers writing assistance to students at all learning levels in all delivery formats and provides faculty members with support for teaching writing in the disciplines. The name of the QEP would be *Write from the Start*.

The QEP Proposal Team researched best practices in the fields of writing, rhetoric and composition, and writing centers and determined five student learning outcomes that address student writing at all levels.

1. Produce academic writing that demonstrates an awareness of context, purpose, and audience that is appropriate to the specific discipline.
2. Locate, evaluate, and properly integrate primary and secondary research sources.
3. Demonstrate writing as a process that includes invention, drafting, revision, and editing.
4. Present writing that is free of serious grammatical and mechanical errors.
5. Assess and explain the major rhetorical choices students make in their writing.

In order to achieve the five student learning outcomes, the QEP Committee developed strategies that focus specifically on student learning, as well as faculty development. All writers need multiple levels of support. For students, this support begins in the classroom with faculty members who have been trained to teach writing in the disciplines. The university will offer a variety of writing support programs to students and faculty members through a centralized NSU Write from the Start Writing and Communication Center. Specifically, the center will

1. offer general writing assistance to all NSU students,
2. facilitate an expanded undergraduate writing fellows program,
3. provide graduate student writing workshops and events,
4. offer faculty member support for teaching discipline-specific writing,
5. develop online writing resources.

Each of these strategies, along with faculty resources, focuses on helping students become better writers who understand and work carefully through the writing process. The QEP chairs will work with the NSU Write from the Start Writing and Communication Center staff on the on-going assessment of these activities, implementing a series of direct and indirect measures of student learning, including the use of a common rubric to assess student writing. Assessment results will be used to improve the QEP throughout the course of its implementation.

The QEP Committee developed a marketing strategy to inform all students, faculty and staff members about the QEP. This includes developing a timeline that shows how on-site and online resources and services will be delivered to all students, regardless of modality. The QEP Committee also developed a new organizational chart to demonstrate project leadership and a budget that will fund the QEP from its initial stages through completion.