



Quality Enhancement Plan: *Literacy: Promoting Excellence in Learning*
Texas Southern University
2011-2016

Texas Southern University (TSU) is a metropolitan university in the Houston urban area with a commitment to excellence in achievement and a tradition of providing quality higher education. The University committed itself to improving student achievement in its 2009-2015 Strategic Plan. The University Quality Enhancement Plan flows from that commitment.

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), *Literacy: Promoting Excellence in Learning*, offers TSU a unique opportunity to provide an enhanced academic component to the freshman experience by focusing on core competencies of information literacy and communication literacy. A major outcome of implementation of the QEP will be the improvement of reading, writing speaking, and research skills of our students beginning with the freshman class. The planned QEP represents a broad institutional commitment by the university to improve the first-year academic experience in meaningful and measurable ways.

The goal of the QEP is to improve freshman academic achievement by enhancing information literacy and communication skills. The QEP first-year student learning outcomes (SLOs) combine elements of information literacy and of the first TSU core curricular goal, communication literacy. By the end of the freshman year,

- Students will identify, access, evaluate, and use appropriately and ethically various forms of information.
- Students will define and research a topic using relevant information.
- Students will analyze and respond to a written or mediated text, such as a speech, a film, or a web site.
- Students will demonstrate their ability to communicate effectively by composing and delivering a well-organized oral argument and by writing a critical essay using standard documentation and research appropriate to the topic.

The QEP is an academic immersion program, an intervention with enriched activities in information literacy and communication skills, interjected in the various formal instructional components within the freshman year: Freshman Orientation, Freshman Seminar (FS 102), Freshman English I (ENG 131), Speech Communication (SC 135), and Freshman English II (ENG 132). Students will accomplish the QEP student learning objectives by intensive reading, critical analysis, library research, active discussion, frequent guided writing, and oral and written presentations. The literacy QEP is faculty driven and student centered. The QEP will pilot the various components in the 2011-2012 academic year to a cohort of 400 students with full implementation of best practices planned for Fall 2012.

The intended consequences of the literacy QEP are improved knowledge and skills in information and communication skills, improved academic achievement in freshman year, and improved retention and progress to graduation.

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