

Executive Summary: Quality Enhancement Plan, 2015 Texas A&M University-Kingsville

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Culture of Writing

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for Texas A&M University-Kingsville marshals ideas, expertise, physical resources, and campus-wide cooperation to rectify a shortcoming in undergraduate student writing. To address this shortcoming, the primary goal (the student learning outcome goal) of the QEP is *Improved Student Writing Proficiency*. The second goal (the process and infrastructure goal) of the QEP is *Increased Support for Student Learning in the Area of Writing Proficiency*. The third goal (the aspirational goal) is *A University-Wide Culture of Writing*. Through the QEP the University affirms its resolve to achieve these goals.

Why writing? Texas A&M-Kingsville admits many students whose scores on nationally calibrated tests of writing proficiency hover far below the national average. This fact, along with the commonly held perception that students enter the University sorely underprepared as writers, spawned the initiative to take significant and meaningful measures to improve writing proficiency. As the faculty, students, and governance bodies considered options for the QEP, the plan to improve student writing proficiency emerged as the favored plan.

In support of our three goals, we devised three broad strategic objectives. The first objective is to establish a university-wide Undergraduate Writing Center, directed by a qualified faculty member and staffed by trained peer tutors to supplement the writing instruction students receive in the classroom. The second objective is to bolster students' writing experiences by focusing attention on the number, quality, and efficacy of Writing Intensive Courses across the curriculum. The third objective is to improve the teaching of writing on campus by providing faculty development programs and experiences. Programs and experiences will include individualized support for Writing Intensive Faculty, as well as instructional resources and workshops for all interested faculty—all provided under the auspices of the Undergraduate Writing Center.

To determine the success of these strategic objectives in achieving our three stated goals, the University will rigorously assess outcomes from all aspects of the QEP. The Undergraduate Writing Center Director (serving also as QEP Director) will coordinate the continued use of nationally calibrated measures of writing proficiency, as well as national and local surveys of faculty and student perceptions. Additionally, trained quality raters will assess writing from artifacts created in Writing Intensive Courses against pre-selected rubrics. The Undergraduate Writing Center Director will report assessment findings to University stakeholders, and will consult regularly with the QEP Advisory Committee. The University, through the Center Director, will respond to findings swiftly and doggedly to ensure continuous improvement in program effectiveness. In this way the QEP will remain sufficiently agile to adjust expectations, program delivery methods, and/or infrastructure as deemed appropriate and in the best interest of students.