

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) at Erskine College

Phase I: Review of Erskine College General Education Curriculum

- March 2009
- Core Curriculum Review Committee found that revising general education curriculum “too big for a successful QEP.”
 - Faculty Interviews revealed the following:
 - “Common dissatisfaction” with Erskine Seminar (ES 101)
 - Ten of thirteen departmental interviews expressed concern about EC 101, **student writing** in general, or student critical thinking skills.

Phase II: Specifically Identified and Developed QEP

May 2010 - First QEP Committee was appointed

- August 2010 - Faculty Forum – The following topics (related to writing) were presented for consideration:
- Enhancing **writing** and critical thinking skills
 - Enhancing students’ use of **writing** as a means of clarifying thinking
 - “Enhanced learning groups” to develop **writing**, critical thinking, and global awareness

November 2010- Faculty Survey Results

- “How important do you think **writing skills** are for Erskine students?”
 - 89.3% indicated “very important” (26/31 respondents)
- “How well do you think the Erskine faculty does at **providing opportunities for improving writing skills** of Erskine students?”
 - 66.7% indicated “average” (20/30)
 - 10% indicated “poor” (3/30)
- “How confident are you in your **students’ writing skills** at the...
 - freshman level?” 63% indicated “not at all”
 - sophomore level?” 30% indicated “not at all”

February 2011 - Faculty Forum – “Rather than eliminate the Erskine Seminar altogether, faculty now indicated a greater desire to revise and improve the course” (*Charting the Write Course: Piloting the Issues through Writing*).

- April 2011 - English Department Proposal
- EN 102 as “**foundational writing course**”
 - Reduce class size to 12-15 students. (Increases number of sections taught by English Department faculty. Fifty percent of the teaching load in English is devoted to freshman composition. Each English professor usually teaches two sections of freshman composition, one sophomore survey of literature, and one upper level course.)
 - Only English Department faculty will teach EN 102, while “non-English faculty” will teach Erskine Seminar.

- April 2011 - QEP Proposal to Faculty
- “Majority of faculty chose a **writing** course without a specific topic” (*Charting the Write Course: Piloting the Issues through Writing*).

- Sophomore placement of the new **writing** course
- New **writing** course taught by all departments
- “The majority of the faculty chose the fall semester sophomore **writing** course”
(*Charting the Write Course: Piloting the Issues through Writing*).

October 2011

- Faculty Survey Results

- “Do you favor a **sophomore writing seminar** focused on contemporary issues within your discipline?”
 - 11.5% indicated “strongly disagree” (3/26 respondents)
 - 15.4% indicated “no opinion” (4/26)
 - 3.8% indicated “somewhat agree” (1/26)
 - 46.2% indicated “agree” (12/26)
 - 23.1% indicated “strongly agree” (6/26)
 - Summary: 73.1% (19/26) of faculty favored sophomore-level writing course

March 2012

- SACS On-Site Visit

Spring 2012

- SACS Comments for Strengthening the QEP: 1) Make learning outcomes more defined, manageable. 2) Put into place “appropriate and sufficient” assessment measures.
3) Hire a writing director.

Phase III: Development (2012-2013)

February 2013

- QEP Committee Proposal of **The Write Course** to Curriculum Committee

March 2013

- Curriculum Committee Proposal of **The Write Course** Approved by Faculty

- QEP Director hired

- The Write Course (WC 201) Handbook created

April 2013

- WC 201 faculty workshops/training begin

Phase IV: Implementation (2013-2015)

April 2013

- All second-year and transfer students scheduled for a section of The Write Course.

August 2013

- Write Here Center (WHC) relocated to Watkins Student Center.

2013-2015

- The QEP/Writing Program Director continued to plan and provide spring and fall workshops for faculty teaching The Write Course.

August 2013-2015

- Faculty members teaching The Write Course assigned to the QEP Committee.

June 2014

- An annual “assessment day” in June was established to complete yearly assessment of The Write Course.

August 2014

- Grammar handbooks purchased for WC 201 faculty trial.

August 2015

- WC 201 Faculty read Stanley Fish’s *How to Write a Sentence* (2005)

Phase V: Institutionalization (2015-2017)

- An emphasis on academic writing becomes a part of the culture at Erskine College.
 - All second-year and transfer students enroll in a section of The Write Course taught by a faculty member representing various academic disciplines.
 - Faculty members from various disciplines continue to participate in spring and fall QEP/WC 201 workshops.
 - The Erskine College Theological Seminary adopts a version of the Common Assessment Writing Rubric.
 - The Write Here Center, now located in Watkins Student Center, expands days and hours of operation to meet the growing needs of students, faculty, and staff as indicated by student surveys.
 - Both The Write Course and the Write Here Center increase visibility through promotional events, workshops, electronic media advertising (i.e., Facebook, college message board, college Web site), and campus-wide print advertisements; and both internal and external assessments continue.
 - The Write Here Center sees substantial annual increases in student visits, and more student readers are identified, trained, and hired to better meet this growing demand.
 - Increased emphasis on addressing academic dishonesty and plagiarism. “Did I Plagiarize” posters (*TheVisualCommunicationGuy.com*) purchased and distributed.
- 2015-2016

- I. **The Write Course** helps Erskine remain in compliance with SACS Core requirements 2.12 (QEP) and 3.3.2 (*Institutional Effectiveness – QEP*).
- II. **The Write Course** will have more structure than ES 101.
- III. Each section of **The Write Course** will teach the same rhetorical patterns:
 - A. Illustration/Description
 - B. Process Analysis
 - C. Definition
 - D. Argument/Research
- IV. All instructors of **The Write Course** will receive training.
- V. A handbook will be available to all instructors and students to provide consistency and structure to **The Write Course**.
- VI. The Erskine College QEP has to affect as much of the entire institution as possible, not only a single department; therefore, **The Write Course** cannot be an English Department only course.
- VII. In November 2010, 76.7% of faculty respondents indicated that Erskine does a “poor” or “average” job providing “opportunities for improving writing skills of Erskine students.”
- VIII. In October 2011, 73.1% of faculty respondents favored a sophomore-level writing course.