

## Faculty Senate Meeting

February 21, 2012

### The QEP at ECU: Write Where You Belong!

ECU's Quality Enhancement Plan--"Write Where You Belong!"--is a multi-faceted, multi-year project to integrate, align, and reinforce writing instruction for students from the day that they begin their first classes at ECU to the day that they complete their degrees and transition into the workplace or advanced study.

During the fall of 2011, the QEP Council, a group of over 35 faculty, staff, and students from across the ECU campus, reviewed best practices in college writing instruction, investigated the current writing abilities of our students, and gathered information from faculty, staff, alumni, and local professionals about the kinds of writing students need to do to succeed at ECU and beyond. From this research, the Council has drafted a set of student learning outcomes for the QEP and identified four initiative areas for further consideration.

Working groups, composed of members of the QEP Council and additional resource people as needed, are now investigating these initiative areas and, as part of our work, we would like additional feedback from the university community.

Your input is crucial to making ECU's QEP successful. Please share your ideas and feedback about the following student learning outcomes and initiative areas with Dr. Wendy Sharer ([sharerw@ecu.edu](mailto:sharerw@ecu.edu)), QEP Director, or pass your feedback and ideas along to a member of the QEP Council (roster attached).

### QEP Student Learning Outcomes—January 2012 DRAFT

At the conclusion of their education at ECU, students will be able to

- Use writing to investigate complex topics, address new questions, and enhance critical thinking.
- Demonstrate that they understand writing as a process that can be made more effective through drafting and revision.
- Proofread and edit their own writing, avoiding grammatical and mechanical errors.
- Assess and explain the major choices that they make in their writing.
- Identify differences and similarities across genres of writing (including how writing is integrated with visuals, audio and other multi-modal components).
- Produce writing that reflects an awareness of context, purpose, and audience, particularly within the written genres of their major disciplines and/or career fields.
- Employ different writing processes in response to the scope, context, audience, purpose, and time constraints of different writing situations.

## QEP Initiative Areas

- 1. Writing Mentors Initiative.** At many universities, writing mentors (also commonly called "writing fellows") are high-achieving juniors, seniors, or graduate students who are linked to specific classes. Mentors help the course instructor plan effective means of teaching writing, and they provide feedback and tutoring to students in the course. Mentors are trained (often through a substantial seminar/retreat or, in the case of undergraduate students, through a semester-long course) in best practices in teaching/tutoring writing.
- 2. Writing Instruction Network (WIN) Initiative.** This initiative is envisioned as a professional development program that would bring together some or all of the following: instructors of the Writing Foundations (English 1100 and 1200) courses, Writing Intensive course faculty from across the university, community college and local high school writing instructors, community members, and area employers. The goals of the network would be to study and discuss writing across the college curriculum, writing in the disciplines, and writing in the community and professions. Through workshops and professional development programs, this initiative might provide additional training and support for faculty, with a focus on instructional practices that can help students build on what they learn about writing from one context to another.
- 3. Sophomore Writing Course Initiative.** This initiative aims to address the gap between the writing that students do in their Writing Foundations courses (English 1100 & 1200) and the writing that they do in other courses. According to student survey results from this past fall, students believe that what they learn in English 1100 and 1200 helps them in other courses, but they also do not always see a clear connection between the kinds of writing that they do in 1100/1200 and the writing that they do for their other courses. To address this disconnect, members of the QEP Council are exploring options for writing instruction at the sophomore level, with the goal of creating a course that make more robust and obvious the connections between Writing Foundations instruction and learning to write in advanced courses in the disciplines/majors. The course would likely replace English 1200 as a requirement but would retain its status as a Foundations course, aimed at helping students achieve the "Writing Competence" goals of the Foundations Curriculum.
- 4. Writing Center Enhancement Initiative.** ECU has an established University Writing Center that does much good work. This initiative focuses on how to expand that work in two key areas. First, members of the QEP Council are considering the needs of unique student populations that encounter writing instruction at ECU in non-traditional contexts. How might the center enhance services for graduate students, distance education students, and students who are not native English speakers/writers, for instance? Second, the Council is exploring ways to connect the work of the center to the region, particularly through work with area high schools and community colleges, to help strengthen the writing abilities of students who may enter ECU in the future.

## QEP Council Roster

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