

ALLEN UNIVERSITY
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Executive Summary
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QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN

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Program Overview

Quality Enhancement Plan Title: *Using Technology to Improve Composition Skills in First-year Students*

Allen University is a private, four-year college that provides students with a baccalaureate education comprised of core Humanities, Business and the Natural and Social Sciences. University programs and services provide an accessible high-quality post-secondary education that prepares traditional and non-traditional students to enter the job market and assists them in achieving their professional and personal goals. The University structures its curriculum and support services to accommodate the unique needs of its students. The school is an open enrollment institution and students who enter under-prepared to meet the academic challenges are mentored into programs and services designed to address those deficiencies. -It is in this tradition of meeting student needs that the University has chosen a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) of “*Using Technology to Improve Composition Skills in First-year Students.*”

The goal of the Allen QEP is to strengthen first year students’ learning throughout the University by improving their written communication skills. Allen University faculty across disciplines have often reported evidence about the frequency of poor composition skills and its effect on student achievement and success in upper level courses. The approach is on enhancing skills through new uses of current on-site technology.

The development of this Quality Enhancement Plan evolved from the results of a 5-year review of English competency test scores and English placement scores of first year students, and observations made by faculty and staff. The twenty-member QEP committee, which represented of all areas of the University, formulated and produced the plan. The QEP Leadership Team met several times to discuss the formulation of the QEP to improve education

at Allen University. The focus, “*Using Technology to Improve Composition Skills in First-year Student*,” was chosen because instructors across disciplines consistently encountered teaching challenges related to students’ underdeveloped composition skills. Information provided by the faculty and staff on retention, failure and low COMPASS (Computer-Adaptive Placement Assessment and Support System) placement test scores, failure trends of the PRAXIS I exam, and low English proficiency exam, provided an impetus to the team and formed the foundation for the plan that evolved. After approval of the QEP focus by the campus community, working committees were formed to draft a multi-year plan to address the identified needs.

The QEP involves three major components: the Writing Institute, a two-week long intensive writing course that will take place during the first year Orientation session; a Writing Laboratory, which serves as an extension to the English composition courses for skills building and application; and one-on-one tutoring, which will provide student additional support in learning composition skills. All three will utilize Skillsbank 5, a CD-Rom program, to allow students to practice and drill skills and will focus on the application of learned skills.

To measure the success of this program, first year students will be administered several assessments, including pre/post COMPASS placement test, pre/post COMPASS e-Write 2-12, and the English proficiency exam. Data analysis will include univariate/descriptive statistics, t-tests and analysis of variance to determine changes in learning.