



Bluefield College seeks to develop students' potential through academic excellence and the intentional integration of faith in liberal arts and professional studies. One of the greatest challenges at Bluefield College has been student retention. Our four-year graduation rate is approximately 35%. A large number of students enroll in Bluefield College with substandard writing skills as evidenced by the College Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) tests and other assessment/placement tools. We believe that students who struggle with written communication routinely leave the college in two years or fewer. Evidence suggests that if students could raise the level of their writing skills as sophomores and juniors, they would be more academically successful and be more likely to stay at Bluefield College for four years. Students who do continue to graduation demonstrate a basic competence in writing skills based on scores on the CAAP test.

A Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), "The Confident Communicator," has been developed not only to prepare more effective graduates for the workforce or further education, but to help students succeed while matriculating at Bluefield College, thus boosting retention and enrollment. Thus, this QEP is foundational and fundamental to student learning; upon its success rests the financial sustainability of this tuition-driven institution. The hallmarks of the Confident Communicator QEP include intentional assessment of writing skills from incoming students to graduating seniors, enhanced sophomore- or junior-level courses in each department to model for and instruct students in the fundamental components of writing in the discipline of the students' major, and multiple opportunities for faculty development in the teaching of writing such as workshops during the academic year and off-campus summer training opportunities.

The QEP director, Crystal White Kieloch, is an instructor of English and Director of Academic Support Services. She may be contacted by phone (276.326.4606) or by email ([ckieloch@bluefield.edu](mailto:ckieloch@bluefield.edu)).