

Writing Matters

Executive Summary for the Quality Enhancement Plan of Frank Phillips College

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The selection of a topic for Frank Phillips College's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) began with a self-study through the Foundations of Excellence. After months of review and reflection during this process, we discovered we are a college with many strengths, including our success in working one-on-one with students. Because our students should continue to benefit from this important aspect of the FPC experience, we want to keep this concept in mind when writing our QEP. Based on information from the self-study and from research nationwide, we have chosen to focus our efforts for campus-wide improvement toward enhancing students' written communication skills.

Our QEP topic, ***Writing Matters***, will focus on one major goal. This goal is to improve students' written communication skills. To reach this goal, our objective will be to assess existing programs and using the data we find, quantitatively improve students' writing scores using a standard rubric. Evidence indicates that strong writers view writing positively and are influenced to do so by the positive attitudes of their instructors. Therefore, we must create an institutional paradigm shift so faculty and staff model effective writing skills and, in turn, produce students who possess an accurate, positive, and optimistic appraisal of their writing skills.

In order to meet this goal the college will hire a Writing Coach and add a lab component to ENGL 0311, ENGL 0312, and ENGL 1301. In addition, the adoption of Writer's Workbench software in the Academic Readiness Center as well as the availability of online writing tutoring will further assist in achieving student learning outcomes. In addition, we hope to improve students' attitudes concerning writing by implementing writing assignments in all academic transfer classes offered on campus.

The primary means of assessment will be a representative sample of a longitudinal comparison of student performance on a standardized writing task from the first year seminar course to the student's capstone course. A random selection of ten writing samples will be sent for evaluation to another institution to verify effectiveness of use of the writing rubric. The utilization of the writing coach and writing software will be monitored by tracking usage of the Academic Readiness Center.

Writing Matters will enhance student learning through a focused process that will have an influence on FPC for many years. Our QEP concept's effectiveness relies on a changed environment which places an emphasis on writing skills in all areas of instruction. As a result, we will see an improvement in the confidence of our faculty to evaluate writing assignments, and in turn, an increase in the number and type of writing assignments students are required to complete. Numerous writing assignments, enhanced quality of instructor feedback, and an increase in the number of students who seek one-on-one writing assistance will improve student writing. ***Writing Matters*** will enhance the nature of teaching and learning at FPC and will have a positive academic impact on all students.