

Point University

Write Away! – A Systemic Approach to Improve Writing

Point's Quality Enhancement Plan seeks to improve student learning outcomes in written communication through writing-emphasis courses with the contextual support of metacognitive and career-readiness strategies. The QEP supports Point's mission to educate students for Christ-centered service and leadership throughout the world by addressing the intellectual development goal which includes "communicate effectively."

Development of the Plan: The 14 members of the QEP Steering Committee represented faculty, administration and administrative support, academic support, student support, students, and the Board of Trustees. The committee reviewed institutional assessment data, researched topics and best practices, gathered input from faculty and students, and recommended the topic and goals for approval by the President and the faculty. The 15-member QEP Strategies and Implementation Committee developed the five-year plan, including its organization with the QEP Committee, timetable, added personnel, and budget. The two primary components of the plan are: (1) Writing Emphasis courses; and (2) QEP training for faculty regarding Writing Emphasis courses and the improvement of writing. Four secondary components support the primary components: (1) QEP training for faculty regarding metacognition in teaching and learning and best practices in career-readiness strategies; (2) A required "Effective Thinking" course regarding metacognition and the expectations of higher education; (3) Promotion of the Writing Center and the Center for Calling & Career; and (4) Promotion of the QEP to internal constituencies. The QEP was approved by the faculty on August 7 and by the administration on August 19, 2015.

Focus of the Plan: In order to improve student learning outcomes in written communication, the QEP has four program goals: (1) Establish a uniform Writing Emphasis (WE) curriculum with specified courses in each/every baccalaureate educational program (major), regardless of program, modality and location; (2) Enhance the ability of faculty to teach Writing Emphasis courses, improve student writing across disciplines, and facilitate career and/or graduate school readiness; (3) Expand the usage of the Writing Center and the Center for Calling & Career in harmony with the QEP; and (4) Expand the use of metacognitive strategies by students and faculty in order to support the improvement of writing.

The student learning outcomes of the QEP are that students will be able to communicate in writing with Correctness, Clarity, Competence, and Cognizance. Those four SLOs are clearly defined and are aligned with a Written Communication Rubric that has been developed for use in WE courses.

Assessment and Evaluation: The Written Communication Rubric and the ETS *Proficiency Profile*'s Writing subscore are the two direct measures which are used to assess the student learning outcomes. Each WE course instructor uses the rubric to assess one of the concluding polished written assignments for all students enrolled in the WE course. The ETS *Proficiency Profile* is administered to graduating baccalaureate students. The assessment data and the results of programmatic evaluations and WE course evaluations are collected and analyzed by the QEP Committee. The findings are used to improve the QEP components and achievement of the SLOs and to determine the success of the QEP at the end of the five-year period.

For more information, contact: Dennis E. Glenn, PhD, Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Dean of Accreditation, dennis.glenn@point.edu