

The Write Attitude: Enhancing Student Learning by Fostering Positive Attitudes toward Writing

A Quality Enhancement Plan for Savannah State University Savannah, GA 2012

SSU's QEP project addresses a general challenge facing universities nationwide and reflects particular needs of SSU students. It reflects SSU's commitment to ensuring that students are prepared for rigors of the classroom, success in the workplace, and an orientation toward life-long learning. SSU's QEP focuses both on learning outcomes and also on environmental factors to create a culture of writing that will have a positive impact on student, faculty, and staff attitudes about as well as practices in writing.

SSU's Write Attitude project seeks to enhance student learning by providing: 1) cross-curricular requirements and initiatives for increased writing opportunities and 2) co-curricular activities to emphasize training in writing skills and competencies. Moreover, these interventions are expected to have a corollary impact on improving critical thinking and reading comprehension, as a writing-to-learn approach holistically integrates these important aptitudes. As a result, in turn, rates of retention and graduation are expected to be positively impacted.

For the project, a variety of curricular and co-curricular activities, programs, and services will reinforce and enhance positive writing attitudes and skills across campus. Among these activities are:

- a. Establishing minimum writing requirements for core General Education courses.
- b. Introducing and assessing the effectiveness of low-stakes writing.
- c. Faculty and Staff Writing Seminars, Workshops, and Best Practices Symposia.
- d. Annual conferences showcasing/honoring student writing in each college.
- e. Community/alumni Brown Bag Luncheons emphasizing writing in "the real world."
- f. Programs to establish both Student and Faculty Writing Fellows.
- g. Community programs linking SSU students with K-12 students' writing initiatives.
- h. Continuous advocacy and sponsorship for writing initiatives by the QEP Director.

While some curricular changes will be mandated, most will be generated through a participatory, collegial process. The project is designed to encourage faculty, programs, departments, and colleges to initiate curricular innovations focused on writing-intensive pedagogies and co-curricular activities to promote a positive regard for writing. The project is administered by a QEP Director, reporting to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

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