

**Wayland Baptist University Quality Enhancement Plan
Write On: Developing and Refining the Writing Skills of
Plainview Campus Students in the General Education Core**

Executive Summary

Wayland Baptist University's Quality Enhancement Plan is designed to improve the writing skills of Plainview Campus students in the general education core. The QEP theme, Write On, was chosen to convey the importance of writing throughout the collegiate experience and beyond. The plan consists of a one-year pilot phase, followed by a broader implementation of QEP strategies in 14 general education core courses. By focusing on interventions in the general education core, the QEP will help students develop the foundational skills necessary for their continued academic and career success. The goals of the Wayland QEP are to: 1) increase student and faculty understanding of the importance of writing throughout the collegiate experience; 2) increase student knowledge and use of best practices in writing; 3) increase faculty knowledge and use of instructional best practices in writing; 4) increase resources for students in writing by establishing a writing center with a significant online component; and 5) improve writing ability of undergraduate students in the general education core on the Plainview Campus.

The expected outcomes of the Wayland QEP are: 1) The writing skills of undergraduate students having completed 60 semester hours will positively reflect the Wayland Baptist University Standards for Writing. Specific expectations are that: students will write content which is clearly purposeful, demonstrating depth, insight, and critical thinking; student writing will exhibit structure and organization which are effective, coherent, and logically developed; students will conscientiously observe conventions in their writing; student writing will exhibit effective style; and e) student writing will include resources which are quoted and cited correctly, exhibiting quality, breadth, and the absence of plagiarism. 2) Undergraduate students completing 60 semester hours will demonstrate writing ability commensurate with their peers at other comprehensive institutions. 3) Undergraduate students will demonstrate an increased understanding of the importance of writing to their collegiate and career success. 4) Undergraduate students will understand and demonstrate the use of best practices in writing. 5) Faculty will understand and demonstrate the use of instructional best practices in writing. 6) Qualified writing consultants staffing the Wayland Writing Center will provide effective consultation and assistance for students, faculty, and staff.

The pilot phase will be conducted during the 2008-2009 academic year. Using a quasi-experimental design, a projected group of 250 full-time, first-year students will be randomly selected for enrollment in a series of six experimental and control courses in the general education core. Students in the experimental group will receive enhanced writing instruction taught by faculty trained in the use of best practices as defined in the QEP research, while students in the control group will receive traditional instruction. Upon conclusion of the pilot phase, the achievement of students in the two groups will be compared to inform improvement of the QEP process prior to its broader implementation in all sections of 14 required general education courses during the 2009-2010 academic year.

In each of these courses, which span seven academic areas, students will receive enhanced writing instruction and complete QEP-related writing assignments. These assignments and related rubric scores will be submitted to a central Blackboard site to build an electronic writing portfolio. Students will also complete ETS Criterion writing assignments in seven courses.

The QEP process has already led to many improvements in Wayland policy and practice. The writing ability of all new students will now be evaluated upon their arrival at Wayland. All students will be required to enroll in English composition classes in the first 30 semester hours or two semesters of attendance, and in the technology class required for their degree program within the first 60 hours or four semesters. A formal set of writing standards and corresponding grading rubric have been developed and adopted for use across the curriculum. Professional development training and resources for faculty have been enhanced, and Wayland will open a Writing Center with a significant online component to serve students on all campuses.

Contact Person: Elane K. Seebo, Ph.D., SACS Accreditation Liaison (seeboe@wbu.edu; 806-291-3418)