



Quality Enhancement Plan Executive Summary

Focus on Feedback: Multiplying Strategies for Excellence in First-Year Writing

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The Millsaps College QEP focuses on improving students' perceptions of confidence (self-efficacy) in written communication during their first two years through feedback strategies that focus on metacognitive awareness. Metacognitive awareness includes knowledge and regulation, specifically self-knowledge and the ability to deploy strategies for development and interpret the effectiveness of chosen strategies. Metacognition is closely tied to self-efficacy, the sense students have of their own capabilities for learning, growth, and, specifically in this case, writing success.

Steps taken to improve students' metacognitive awareness related to written communication will be concentrated in two areas: 1) having increased faculty adoption of formative feedback and revision processes that involve metacognition in courses that have large numbers of first-year students; and 2) including peer consultants in writing and academic content areas as co-participants in faculty-development opportunities associated with the QEP.

The QEP leadership team, which has members from all three divisions of the College (the Else School of Business, the division of the Sciences, and the Division of the Arts and Humanities) will facilitate learning communities that bring together faculty teaching first-year courses and student peer consultants to support each other during professional-development experiences and during the process of implementation of metacognitive strategies.

Our expectation of success in the QEP plan is to see measurable improvement between the first and second inventory assessment points. We have developed these benchmarks for success:

- Upward trends in students' perceptions of confidence in their abilities as writers (self-efficacy) within individual cohorts.
- Upward trends in perceptions of confidence across cohorts, such that the final cohort reports higher overall confidence in their self-efficacy in the 2nd assessment point than was reported by the first cohort in the 2nd assessment point.
- Specific attribution by students of feedback on writing from faculty and/or writing consultants (peer mentors) as a reason for their improved self-efficacy.