

THE WRITE STUFF-A Plan for Enhancing the Written Communication Skills of Students at The Baptist College of Florida

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This is a five-year improvement program designed to enhance student learning. In our case, the college community including student groups, reviewed the learning needs of the college and concluded that we all needed to become better writers. The program contains the following goals and objectives: (1) to increase awareness among the faculty and student population that writing is a problem that needs addressing. (2) To enhance faculty involvement in the development of student written communication skills. (3) To enhance the mechanics and writing skills of the students. Goal three contains the following outcomes—at least eighty percent of students will improve mechanical skills of writing, at least eighty percent of students will write coherent sentences and paragraphs, and at least eighty percent of students will be able to organize their thoughts to write an essay that communicates to a particular audience.

Our QEP provides for three major interventions to address the writing problem. First the college will fund a writing center staffed by a director whose primary task is to give students help with their writing skills. Second the institution plans to employ and train peer tutors to assist the director in aiding those seeking improvement of their writing. Third, the college intends to train its faculty in “writing in the discipline.” The faculty will attend workshops addressing such topics as creating and grading writing assignments that will enhance writing skills and also promote learning the subject matter. Faculty will not only learn how to use a writing center, but when to refer the student to the center.

The evaluative process of the QEP centers first on English 151 and then upper level courses in all disciplines. Each student in 151 will be pre and post tested with CAAP, a beginning essay and a final essay, and a record of the final grade. Each set of 151 grades will be compared with the fall 2008 151 grades to determine whether the treatments in the writing center have improved the overall scores. Papers assigned in other professors’ classes will be collected and analyzed in an attempt to determine whether students have bettered their writing.