



The Quality Enhancement Plan at Bethune-Cookman University Wildcats Write: Strengthening Writing Among B-CU Students

Bethune-Cookman University's QEP is improving the writing skills of its students by making writing a fundamental value and tool for matriculating students to enhance their overall academic development of basic writing skills, self-esteem, and confidence.

The official launch of the QEP began with the fall 2010 semester, following a pilot program in the spring. Refinements to the initial QEP, as outlined in the proposal, were made as a result of data and feedback from the spring pilot. QEP goals are to: 1) strengthen writing skills among B-CU students, 2) use peer mentoring and peer tutoring to raise confidence and self-esteem levels associated with effective writing skills and successful academic performance, and 3) infuse writing across the curriculum and thus create a culture of writing at Bethune-Cookman University.

Through the Wildcats Write Center, the hub of the QEP, initiatives are focused on three key components:

- 1) Writing intensive activities and receiving immediate feedback
Wildcats Write Center English courses focus on building writing skills and developing the function and practical application of grammar within the context of writing. Students must write! They are engaged in expressive, quality writing that culminates in the production of service writing projects. To achieve authentic and valid assessment of the Wildcats Write initiative, students use electronic portfolios.
- 2) Mentorship and peer tutoring to promote self-esteem and positive attitudes toward writing.
The mentorship component continues to be tested. It will have a broad impact on writing performance at B-CU. Freshman students selected to participate in the QEP are paired with accomplished and mature upperclassmen who possess the academic background and nurturing skills to contribute to the positive overall academic development, self-esteem, and confidence of our developing writers. Assessment of this impact is measured through perception surveys.
- 3) Portal for faculty development with a focus on best practices in teaching, motivating, and innovative pedagogy needs for pre-college English students who are enrolled in the QEP Wildcats Write Center English courses. Through research supported faculty development opportunities, B-CU instructors in every discipline are motivated to take a vested interest in writing in their classrooms. Wildcats Write strategies have heightened faculty awareness of when and how writing enhances student learning and how to incorporate writing-focused concepts into courses thus creating a culture of writing across the curriculum.

QEP Wildcats Write student learning outcomes:

1. Students compose texts which are appropriate for purpose and audience.
2. Students compose texts in which ideas are supported in well developed and logical paragraphs.
3. Students compose texts that demonstrate unity and coherence.
4. Students compose grammatically and mechanically correct sentences that convey the writer's message in a clear and precise manner.
5. Students use writing-to-learn and writing process activities with their mentor and WWC instructor & staff to explore and articulate ideas.
6. Students perceive themselves as "improved writers" as a result of their QEP WWC experience.
7. Students express confidence in their ability to write effectively.
8. Students demonstrate proficiency in using email, Internet, Microsoft Office applications and web-based resources, such as Blackboard and discipline specific software in order to complete projects and assignments at an appropriate level.
9. Students recognize and describe the contributions of people in a diverse, global society through readings, oral presentations, and class discussions at an acceptable level.

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