



Mississippi State University Maroon and Write Executive Summary



Mississippi State University (MSU) has implemented its quality enhancement plan, entitled Maroon and Write. Building on a foundation of the institution's mission and strategic plan "...to offer excellent programs of teaching, research, and service," the Maroon and Write initiative will enhance the existing academic structure, which requires writing courses at the freshman and senior levels, by integrating writing-to-learn (WTL) strategies and formal writing instruction into all academic disciplines. Ultimately, MSU's mission is to produce graduates who are prepared to be leaders in their professions and communities and who are equipped with skills in communication and critical thinking.

Maroon and Write focuses on a single goal: Improve undergraduate student writing. The QEP will not transform all courses into writing courses nor all faculty into writing instructors. Rather, Maroon and Write will train faculty to adopt some of the writing pedagogies to (1) implement formal writing instruction and activities to enhance the quality of writing and (2) utilize writing-to-learn strategies and informal writing assignments to increase students' writing frequency.

To accomplish its goal, Maroon and Write must develop faculty who adopt writing instruction and WTL strategies in their classes. One approach, Maroon Institute for Writing Excellence (MIWE) includes an intensive faculty training program that occurs during the summer. In addition, Maroon and Write will sponsor ongoing training, workshops, seminars, and other events to educate faculty on incorporating writing pedagogies into the classroom. Maroon and Write offers writing coordinators to support faculty in developing and evaluating writing assignments, as well as graduate assistants to collect and evaluate data and writing samples.

Maroon and Write has developed or identified instruments for measuring the project's impact on student learning: the Maroon and Write Rubric, ETS Proficiency Profile, NSSE survey, and focus groups. To evaluate progress, Maroon and Write will utilize both direct and indirect instruments to measure the plan through three layers of assessment: (1) MSU courses, (2) the institution, and (3) peer comparisons.

MSU has designated resources for this endeavor. Maroon and Write has a budget of \$2,644,754 for the period 2013 through 2018; this includes expenses related to salaries, faculty training, travel, marketing, equipment, and assessment. The program utilizes existing campus facilities for faculty training, workshops, and seminars; in addition, the university has provided dedicated space for the Maroon and Write co-directors and staff in a central location on campus. Maroon and Write will coordinate with MSU's eight colleges and schools, Writing Center, MSU Libraries, Center for Teaching and Learning, Institutional Research and Effectiveness, the offices within Student Affairs, Career Center, MSU Athletics, Public Affairs, and Information Technology Services, among others, to generate support and enthusiasm for participating in the program. More information is available at qep.msstate.edu.

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