

IMPROVING RESEARCH SKILLS AND WRITING
THROUGH INFORMATION LITERACY

The Quality Enhancement Plan for Southwestern Adventist University

Acknowledging that education integrates philosophy and applications to create life-long learners, Southwestern Adventist University adopts Improving Research Skills and Writing through Information Literacy as the subject for the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).

To achieve this integration, the university will adopt the following goals for students:

1. Equip the students with the skills and conceptual knowledge to use technology for learning.
2. Develop the intellectual capabilities of research, enabling the student to access, to synthesize and to present information according to the methodology of a discipline.
3. Develop the skills and concepts of writing, enabling the student to present information in structured, coherent, and clear prose.
4. Develop the intellectual tools of critical thinking, enabling the student to evaluate and to analyze information.

To achieve these goals, the university has developed a matrix of classes to enable the student to develop these skills and concepts over a four-year tenure. Freshmen will be introduced to the plan in Principles of Active Learning, a computer skills class, and Freshman Composition. In the sophomore year, the student will be introduced to discipline-specific research in a class called Information Literacy, as well as developing and refining research skills and writing in Research and Professional Writing. During the junior year, the student will be registered for two upper-division classes which will, in both content and methodology, emphasize the goals of the QEP. Finally, during the senior year, the student will complete a capstone class and a portfolio which will demonstrate proficiency and accomplishment in research, writing, critical thinking, and the use of technology.

The academic year 2006-2007 has been used as a year of training for faculty in the goals and procedures of Southwestern's QEP. Seminars on critical thinking, writing, technology, and library research resources were organized and directed by the QEP director and members of the QEP committee. Additionally, the university has sought to provide adequate equipment and support services to help the faculty use technology effectively throughout their teaching. The QEP director, Andrew Woolley, Ph.D., is a professor of English (Woolleya@swau.edu) and is involved in the integration of the QEP

concepts and goals throughout the curriculum. In addition, the university has assigned two faculty members as Technology Research Director and as Writing Consultant.