

THE  
*Writing*  
CONNECTION



A SCAFFOLDED APPROACH TO IMPROVING  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT WRITING SKILLS

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Gardner-Webb University  
Quality Enhancement Plan 2017

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GARDNER-WEBB  
UNIVERSITY

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## I. Executive Summary

**Process for Topic Selection:** The topic of GWU’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) emerged from a year-long, university-wide process. Ideas were first solicited from faculty regarding the areas of student learning needing the most urgent attention. The most frequently identified areas were shared with faculty, and next, faculty submitted proposals. The top three were presented to faculty and students for feedback. Students strongly advocated for the proposal to improve student writing. This topic also correlates to GWU’s Mission Statement, Strategic Plan, and General Education Learning Goals, and it will contribute to the university’s emphasis on Professional Readiness. The QEP is titled “The Writing Connection.”

**Goals:** GWU’s QEP seeks to create a connection between writing in First-Year Composition (FYC) and writing in content-specific General Education and majors courses. The goal is to create an academic culture of writing that extends across the curriculum so that students are better connected to their education and beyond – career and civic and family life. Focusing on writing should also lead to students becoming deeper thinkers and better communicators, leading to better prepared graduates. The Writing Connection will also seek to help faculty grow in their teaching. In order to accomplish these goals, the QEP Committee designed a new graduation requirement of five Writing Intensive courses structured in Three Tiers, from FYC to senior year. After announcing the WI requirement but before faculty voted on it, the QEP Committee shared all steps of the decision-making process and invited feedback from faculty, staff, and administration.

**Student Learning Outcomes:** The QEP SLOs are: 1) Students will apply a guided writing process; 2) Students will produce writing that reflects an awareness of context and purpose, including the use of appropriate grammar and mechanics; 3) Students will employ discipline-specific terminology and conventions of writing; and 4) Students will evaluate the credibility and relevance of sources, integrate sources with their own ideas, and document their research correctly. These emerged directly from faculty input. The SLOs also correlate with the Council of WPA’s Learning Outcomes which GWU’s FYC SLOs are also aligned with. The QEP SLOs were designed so that writing instruction in Tier Two will build upon instruction in Tier One, and Tier Three will build on instruction in both Tiers One and Two, so that the transfer of writing skills will be facilitated.

### **Capability/Assessment**

The QEP will support faculty with continuous training and professional development in best teaching practices teaching Writing Intensive Courses. Both faculty and students will be supported by a new Writing Fellows program and by expanded services at the Writing Center. Additionally, a new faculty committee will be developed to approve WI courses. All WI courses will be assessed using the QEP Writing Rubric, and results will be used to adjust the curriculum. The CLA+ exam will be used as a longitudinal, external measurement tool. Existing and new indirect assessment tools such as surveys will to be used to monitor the impact of the QEP on students and faculty.

## II. Introduction to Gardner-Webb University

Gardner-Webb University, a private Christian University, Baptist affiliation, is located 50 miles west of Charlotte in the Piedmont area of Western North Carolina. The Main campus of 225 acres is located in Boiling Springs, NC. Enrollment is approximately 4500 students, including the day program, graduate studies, and the Degree Completion Program (DCP) program. Of the students, 68% are female, 32% are male, and they represent 37 states and 21 foreign countries.

Gardner-Webb's full-time faculty numbers more than 160, 75% with a Ph.D. or equivalent; the faculty-to-student ratio is 1:13; and the average Class Size is 25. There are a total of five professional schools, two academic schools, and 13 academic departments that offer nearly 80 undergraduate and graduate major fields of study. Approximately 33% of students major in business fields, 30% in social sciences, and 17% in nursing.

Gardner-Webb University began as a boarding high school. From a movement initiated by the Kings Mountain Baptist Association in 1903, and later joined by the Sandy Run Baptist Association, the Boiling Springs High School was chartered on December 2, 1905.

In response to the changing educational needs of the area, the institution was transformed into Boiling Springs Junior College in 1928. In 1942, Governor O. Max Gardner began devoting his energy, time and wealth to strengthening and guiding the College. So important was his influence that the name of the institution was changed to Gardner-Webb College in honor of the governor, his wife Fay Webb Gardner, and their families. Another major step in the institution's development was its full accreditation as a senior college in 1971. In 1980, the institution began offering a Master of Arts degree in education. The institution officially became known as Gardner-Webb University in January 1993.

Historically, the University has played significant roles in teacher education and ministerial preparation for church-related vocations. Programs of instruction and experiences designed to prepare teachers and ministers continue to be major objectives of the University.

### III. Process Used to Select the QEP Topic

#### A. Topic Selection

GWU's QEP has been under development since February 2014 when the QEP Selection Committee was appointed. That same month, the Call for Proposals for the QEP Topic was first distributed via email from the Provost to the university community. The QEP Selection Committee began discussions with faculty to determine educational needs so that the eventual topic would emerge from shared concerns. From the beginning of the QEP process, the Committee felt strongly that faculty should have an active voice and that the QEP should address a shared need.

Members of the Topic Selection Committee included:

1. Dean Mary Roby, Chair (Library);
2. Dr. Ben Coates (World Languages);
3. Dr. Cheryl Duffus (English);
4. Dr. Paul Etter (Music);
5. Dr. Jim Morgan (Psychology);
6. Dr. Jason Parker (Education); and
7. Dr. Candice Rome (Nursing).

The Associate VP of Institutional Assessment was also an ex-officio member of this committee.

At the August 12-13, 2014 Faculty Retreat, the QEP Selection Committee led two sessions for faculty; the first was a large session for the entire faculty and the second was a breakout session for Q&A.

At the large session, the Committee first reviewed the QEP's purpose and process, then faculty were instructed to sit with colleagues outside their programs so that they could complete a brainstorming project on easel-sized Post-it notes. This was done in order to get direct input from all faculty on student learning needs. Faculty were given prompts in order to generate ideas and to consider what outcomes they were hoping for from the QEP.

Faculty were asked to respond to the following:

- Specific academic skills needing development,
- Gaps in the curriculum,
- How would giving attention to improving these skills facilitate change?
- Which ideas were most important and deserving of time, attention, and resources.



**Student Forum Feedback:**

- Students expressed concern that a peer tutoring QEP would infringe on the Learning Enrichment and Assistance Program (LEAP), a peer tutoring service, and would also place too much responsibility on students.
- While students connected to the values in the first proposal concerning citizenship, cultural awareness, and diversity, they were unsure how the ideas connected and that the topic might replicate already existing university programs.
- Students strongly favored improving student writing, especially research-based writing and writing in the disciplines.

**Faculty Forum Feedback:**

- Although faculty admired the first proposal's ambition and fit with the university's values, faculty expressed concern about its complexity and institutional capability to develop and implement it.

The Selection Committee carefully considered all Forum feedback as well SACSCOC QEP requirements. While all three topics were worthy educational projects, the Selection Committee chose the topic of Improving Student Writing. The Selection Committee felt that the university had the best potential to develop and implement this topic, that it would have the greatest impact on student learning, and that it could be applicable to all majors as well as the General Education curriculum.

In January 2015, the topic selection of Improving Student Writing was shared with faculty, first at the monthly meeting of the Administrative Advisory Committee and second at the general monthly faculty meeting. At that time, the search for a QEP Director was announced. The Selection Committee Chair asked the Committee to serve as the search committee for the Director. In March 2015, interviews were held with applicants, and in April, Dr. Cheryl Duffus accepted the position. This was announced to faculty at the April 2015 Faculty Meeting.

**B. Topic Connection to GWU's Mission Statement, Strategic Plan (including Professional Readiness), and General Education Learning Goals****Mission Statement**

The GWU Mission Statement is as follows:

Gardner-Webb University, a private, Christian, Baptist-related university, provides outstanding undergraduate and graduate education that is strongly grounded in the liberal arts while offering opportunities to prepare for various professions. Fostering meaningful intellectual thought, critical analysis, and spiritual challenge within a diverse community

of learning, Gardner-Webb is dedicated to higher education that integrates scholarship with Christian life. By embracing faith and intellectual freedom, balancing conviction with compassion, and inspiring a love of learning, service, and leadership, Gardner-Webb prepares its graduates to make significant contributions for God and humanity in an ever-changing global community.

Improving writing strongly correlates to the above goal of grounding students' education in the liberal arts and creating scholars. Effective writing skills also contribute to increasing professional opportunities. In addition, "meaningful intellectual thought" and "critical analysis" are directly tied to writing.

### **Strategic Plan**

One of the goals of GWU's Strategic Plan is to advance the academic quality of the university by improving the graduation rate and post-graduation student success. By improving student writing across the curriculum, the QEP Topic should contribute to the goal to "[s]trengthen the key elements that lead to intellectual vitality and academic rigor across all programs." The additional student support and faculty training envisioned by the QEP should also support this goal of increasing academic rigor.

The QEP Topic reinforces the efforts of the new Professional Readiness program described in the Strategic Plan as it will better prepare GWU students to meet the challenges of the workplace by fostering the "essential skills of critical-thinking, problem-solving, and the ability to think broadly and deeply about complex issues."

In a series of reports that further support the connection between the QEP and Professional Readiness, The National Commission on Writing in America's Schools and Colleges has articulated employer demand for improved student writing.

The April 2003 report "The Neglected 'R': The Need for a Writing Revolution," includes the following findings:

- "Writing is how students connect the dots in their knowledge" – the report recommends that all higher education instructors "should be provided with courses in how to teach writing" (p. 3).
- This report also refers to the implications for future employment: "[m]ore than 90 percent of midcareer professionals recently cited the 'need to write effectively' as a skill 'of great importance' in their day-to-day work" (p. 11).

In the September 2004 report "Writing: a Ticket to Work...Or a Ticket Out: A Survey of Business Leaders," the Commission found that:

- “Two-thirds of salaried employees in large American corporations have some writing responsibility”; for this reason, writing is “a threshold skill for hiring and promotion” (p. 3).
- Employers are eager to avoid paying for remedial training in written communication skills and will favor applicants who already have these skills (p. 4).

In 2006, the Conference Board, the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, Corporate Voices for Working Families, and the Society for Human Resource Management completed a study that found that:

- “More than one-quarter of four-year college graduates are perceived to be deficiently prepared in *Written Communication*” (p. 7).
- Of the employers surveyed, “almost 90 percent say these skills are ‘very important’ for college graduates” (p. 14).

In spite of the fact that strong writing skills are valued in the workplace, other research shows that employers are not satisfied with the skills of higher education graduates. In 2009, Hart Research Associates found that:

- Only “one in four employers thinks that two-year and four-year colleges are doing a good job in preparing students for the challenges of the global economy,” and
- 89% of employers surveyed agreed that effective oral and written communication skills were necessary for career success (pp. 1-2).

In 2015, Hart Research also released, through the AAC&U, “Falling Short? College Learning and Career Success,” which also targeted writing as an aspect of student learning needing attention. Employers surveyed in this study indicated they would more likely consider job candidates who have “completed multiple courses that require significant writing assignments” (p. 7). Such a sequence of courses is the focus of GWU’s QEP.

From the above research, it can be seen that the topic of Improving Student Writing will not only improve student learning but will enhance career readiness.

### **General Education Learning Goals**

While eventually specializing in liberal arts, professional, and pre-professional majors, Traditional Undergraduate students at Gardner-Webb all must complete a General Education program. The intent of this curriculum is articulated as such:

Consistent with the best practices of the higher education community, Gardner-Webb University’s general studies curriculum includes a series of broad and intensive learning experiences. These experiences have been carefully designed to meet a diverse set of

learning goals, which in turn have been developed on the basis of the University's mission and heritage.

Of the seven learning goals, the first two are most relevant to the QEP as they apply across the curriculum.

The first goal states that the General Education curriculum will allow students to “[d]emonstrate skill and competency in reasoning critically and creatively. Critical reasoning refers to the ability to evaluate arguments, evidence, and data that results in creative problem-solving. Appropriate use of information resources is an important component in the achievement of this goal.” The skills referred to here are also seen in the writing process and are supported by the QEP's SLOs (see Section IV of this document).

The Gen Ed's second goal is directly tied to the QEP's Topic of Improving Student Writing as it states that students will “[u]tilize skills in clear and effective communication.” These General Education goals are meant to provide students with a foundation for success in their majors. The QEP will improve students' ability to meet these Gen Ed learning goals as well as better prepare them for their majors.

### C. Topic Connection to NSSE, FSSE, SAT, and Exit Survey Results

The Committee's topic selection was also supported by NSSE and SAT scores as well as the 2014 FSSE results and the 2014 Exit Survey for Graduating Seniors.

#### *2010, 2013, and 2016 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)-Writing*

The NSSE, a national survey, is taken by first-year students and graduating seniors near the end of the spring semester. Gardner-Webb's last three participation years were 2010, 2013, and 2016. The NSSE allows Gardner-Webb to compare its results to a pre-selected group of Southeastern independent colleges and universities. The following are responses to questions concerning writing.

NSSE Question:

*To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas? Writing clearly and effectively (2010, 2013, & 2016)*

When Gardner-Webb students were compared to the pre-selected southeastern institutions regarding the perception of how the institution contributed to the development of students “writing clearly and effectively,” Gardner-Webb lagged behind. Gardner-Webb had a negative

effect size (practical significance) for both the seniors and first-year students in both reporting years. Even though there were varying levels of statistical significance across the years and class level, when there is a negative effect size there is a statistical indication that the institution should give attention to the matter. In this case, the matter is student writing.

Fundamentally, effect size is calculated by dividing the mean difference by the pooled standard deviation (Cohen's model).

NSSE Question:

*Wrote more than 4 papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages (2010)*

*How many papers, reports, or other writing products of the following lengths were assigned – up to 5 pages, 6-10 pages, or 11 pages or more (2013, 2016)*

Lengths of papers alone are not a flawless indicator or variable to judge writing competency. Nevertheless, the calculations from the 2010 and 2016 NSSE data file indicated that Gardner-Webb students wrote significantly fewer lengthy papers than all of the selected comparison groups. Some consider the length of papers part of the academic challenge at an institution. Therefore, a lack of lengthy papers on Gardner-Webb's part could be considered, by some, an indicator that the institution is not challenging its students' writing.

As seen in the examples above, the length of papers question was not asked on the 2013 and 2016 NSSE in the same manner as it was in 2010; the 2013 and 2016 surveys divide the question in several parts based on certain lengths of the papers. However, when taken as whole, the data does indicate the same perceived negative output or lack of academic challenge expressed from the 2010 data file. The data implies that Gardner-Webb students are not writing papers of comparable length compared to the southeastern comparison group. This is especially true in comparing Gardner-Webb seniors to seniors in the southeastern comparison group. The 2016 data continues to support the 2013 survey with GWU seniors reporting being assigned fewer pages of writing in both their first years and senior years.

On its own the lack of paper length may be dismissed as a non-factor. One could argue that students are spending more time on things such as perfecting shorter papers. Unfortunately, the lack of paper length cannot be that easily dismissed. The lack of writing lengthy papers also translates into the fact that Gardner-Webb first-year and senior students, according to the 2013 and 2016 NSSE, spend less time preparing for class (which includes writing as a fundamental component) than the southeastern comparison group. In the end, no matter the stance on academic challenge, looking at the combined variables of writing fewer lengthy papers and spending less time preparing for class warrants institutional attention.

2016 NSSE data indicates that time preparing for class increased slightly but not significantly. In addition, 2016 data shows that perceived Course Challenge did not increase but stayed the same. The challenge of writing assignments would be part of the challenge of a course.

*2013 Faculty Survey of Student Engagement (FSSE)-Writing*

The FSSE is designed to complement the NSSE and focuses on instructors’ perceptions of student learning and engagement.

In the 2013 FSSE, 83% of faculty responding felt it was either important or very important for the university to increase learning support services for lower division students in areas such as tutoring and the Writing Center. In addition, 75% of the faculty responding indicated that they required writing assignments in their courses. However, faculty were divided as to whether or not it was important that students write multiple drafts of writing assignments or work on writing-related activities during class, which correlates to the responses of students in the Senior Exit Survey. In responding to the question of how important it is that students learn and develop in the area of writing clearly and effectively, 57% responding said it was quite a bit or very important.

*Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) - Writing SAT Scores*

Percentiles are used as a simplistic way to gauge ranges, giving a slightly better output than a single average. Gardner-Webb students are below the average on both the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile and the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile. This means on average Gardner-Webb students are entering with weaker writing skills, based on the SAT writing score, compared to the NCICU peers who collected and submitted scores.

2013 IPEDS NCICU Peer Comparison Group	Percentile1	Percentile2
Institution Name	SAT Writing 25th percentile score	SAT Writing 75th percentile score
Campbell	390	650
Guilford	450	580
High Point	480	580
Queens	460	560
Warren Wilson	520	610
Wingate	430	530
<b>Gardner-Webb University</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>550</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>580</b>
<b>No scores listed for writing</b>		
Catawba		
Johnson C. Smith		
Lenoir-Rhyne		
Salem		
William Peace		

(IPEDS DATA 13-14; Highest score possible is 800)

Scores supplied in the chart are calculated from the writing portion of the SAT. Scores are derived from first year students (first-time full-time) from academic year 2013-2014 who applied for admission, were accepted, and attended. Not all schools require submission of SAT scores nor do all institutions require all of the scored sections to be submitted.

The impetus in showing the SAT writing scores is not to start a debate on how entering students are not prepared for college level work, nor is it the intention to push for the recruitment of more highly skilled students. Showing the scores, and where the institution is positioned in the NCICU comparison group, allows Gardner-Webb to understand that the institution has an opportunity to provide training that will lead to a substantial increase in the writing competencies of its students. There is great potential to provide a tremendous value added education to Gardner-Webb students in the area of writing that goes beyond English 101 and 102.

#### *2014 Exit Survey for GWU Graduating Seniors*

In an Exit Survey of graduating seniors in 2014, when asked which percentage of classes included papers with multiple drafts, of 215 responding students, 4.65% indicated that none of their classes did, 16.28% indicated 1-20% of their courses did, 16.28% that 21-40% did; 16.74% that 41-60% did; 19.07% that 61-80% did; 26.98% that 81-100% did. This data indicates that while writing might be required in a course, attention to the students' writing process is typically not part of courses.

#### D. Prior history of WAC at GWU

Over a decade ago, WAC efforts were initiated at GWU. Like many early WAC programs, it began as a "top down" approach. Eventually, "Writing Level" designations for courses were developed as a way to designate the teaching of writing in courses, particularly in at least one course in the major. This began as a graduation requirement but eventually fell out of practice. It did, however, lay the foundations for the current QEP.

#### E. GWU's Annual Writing Across the Curriculum Retreat

As part of this prior WAC initiative, GWU established an annual WAC Retreat, taking place one weekend in September, at Wildacres Retreat in Little Switzerland, NC. First-time participants receive professional development in the principles and pedagogy of WAC and are guided in how to apply them to their teaching. Returning participants work on a writing or teaching project. The WAC Retreat has served a vital role for many faculty in assisting them with the teaching of writing as well as with their own work, and it has promoted cross-disciplinary collaboration and sharing of writing strategies and pedagogy. The Retreat is led and organized by the Director of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL).

Currently, the QEP Committee anticipates several options for utilizing this Retreat as a professional development opportunity for faculty interested in teaching Writing-Intensive courses, especially the 2016 Retreat held prior to the Spring 2017 QEP Pilot courses. It might potentially serve as a “low stakes” entry into WAC/WI. The Director of CETL and the QEP Director will continue to dialogue as the QEP develops.

## IV. Process Used to Narrow the Topic and Develop the QEP Plan

After Topic Selection and the hiring of the QEP Director, the next steps in the process were to begin researching the literature and best practices for improving student writing, to select the Design Committee, and to narrow the topic.

Over Summer 2015, the QEP Design Committee was chosen. In addition to Dr. Cheryl Duffus, Director (English), the following agreed to serve:

1. Dr. Elizabeth Amato (Social Sciences);
2. Dr. Tracy Arnold (Nursing);
3. Dr. Nancy Bottoms (English & Visual Arts);
4. Susan Manahan (Natural Sciences);
5. Dr. Iva Naydenova (Psychology);
6. Dean Mary Roby (Library); and
7. Dr. Scott Shauf (Religious Studies and Philosophy).

The Associate VP of Institutional Assessment was also an ex-officio member of the committee. This position was replaced by the VP for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness in July 2016.

### A. Narrowing the Topic

The Design Committee's first task was to narrow the topic of improving student writing. There had been much positive response to the first brainstorming activity at the 2014 Faculty Retreat. In order to build upon this and to continue to involve faculty in the process, another brainstorming activity was planned for the August 2015 Faculty Retreat.

During this session, faculty were again asked to split into small groups with faculty outside their programs and were again given a series of prompts to elicit ideas about which areas of student writing needed the most urgent attention. They wrote their responses on easel-sized Post-it notes that the Committee collected afterwards. Faculty were asked to:

- Consider how improving student writing would impact them,
- Describe the writing they assigned,
- Identify their students' writing strengths and weaknesses, and
- Consider how improving writing would impact students inside and outside the classroom.
- Consider how the university could best support faculty in the teaching of writing.

## B. Developing the SLOs

The Post-its were gathered from all groups and transcribed by an administrative assistant into an organized format so that the Committee could analyze responses question by question. These responses demonstrated that improving student writing is a longstanding concern for faculty. Below are excerpts of faculty feedback:

- Improving student writing would result in “Less time grading poorly written essays.” Repeated comments about the desire to focus on more productive aspects of assessment than correcting grammatical errors.
- Improving student writing would also allow instructors to focus more on the content of the writing and higher order thinking skills.
- Faculty admit that “students have good ideas but do not express them well.” Students struggle to write in a professional, academic style and seem more comfortable with personal narrative.
- Students are adept at social media writing but not at academic writing or even at composing professional emails.
- Faculty also identified a need to improve students’ analytical and argumentative writing.
- Faculty expressed a desire for students to improve grammar, punctuation, and mechanics.
- Faculty also requested improved research skills – how to select and analyze sources and integrate them into student writing. Students also struggle with appropriate documentation.
- Faculty recognized that students often do not know the difference between expressing their own opinion and crafting an argument about an academic topic.
- Faculty also recognized that improving writing would allow students a richer, deeper experience of their education:
  - “Feeling more comfortable with writing allows the student to actually experience the subject matter, writing out thoughts allows students to discover what they know & helps process information.”
  - “Being able to express their knowledge of the content through writing, if they are better writers they are better thinkers. More writing / practice will lead to organized thinking & confidence, retention of knowledge, synthesis of knowledge, depth of research and connecting concepts.”
- Awareness that poorly prepared students are a “negative reflection on university.”
- Faculty universally recognized the benefits post-graduation to improving writing, mainly in increasing students’ professional opportunities.
- Some expressed the idea that learning to voice your opinion in an organized way could allow for students to become better citizens and to “participate in the global conversation.” At minimum, they might write “fewer silly things on social media.”

- Improved writing might also lead to continuing self-education post-graduation, fulfilling GWU’s Mission to create life-long learners.
- At least one faculty group felt that improved writing could lead to “better human relations, greater appreciation of goodness & beauty.”
- Several groups felt that improved communication and expression of thought could lead to “a better family / social life, improved interpersonal relationships, and improved self-image.”

At the end of September, the Committee attended GWU’s annual two-day WAC Retreat in order to process the faculty feedback into QEP Goals and SLOs. The Committee also considered the relevant research and other institutions’ Writing QEPs while developing the SLOs.

The QEP Goals are as follows. GWU’s QEP seeks to create a connection between writing in First-Year Composition (FYC) and writing in content-specific General Education and majors courses. The goal is to create an academic culture of writing that extends across the curriculum so that students are better connected to their education and beyond – career and civic and family life. Focusing on writing should also lead to students becoming deeper thinkers and better communicators, leading to better prepared graduates. The Writing Connection will also seek to help faculty grow in their teaching.

The Goals correlate with the feedback above, specifically the recognition that improving writing would allow students a richer, deeper experience of their education, the awareness that poorly prepared students are a “negative reflection on university,” the potential to increase students’ professional opportunities as well as the aspirational goals of helping students to become better citizens as well as improving “family / social life.”

At the conclusion of the WAC Retreat, the Committee had drafted four SLOs that narrowed the specific areas of writing the QEP would focus on:

1. Students will apply a guided writing process.
2. Students will write effectively for a context and purpose, including the use of appropriate grammar and mechanics.
3. Students will employ discipline-specific terminology and conventions of writing.
4. Students will evaluate the credibility and relevance of sources, integrate sources with their own ideas, and document their research correctly.

Below is an explanation of how the feedback from the 2015 Faculty Retreat affected the Committee’s creation of the SLOs.

1. Students will apply a guided writing process.

While Faculty did not directly focus on a guided writing process, the literature on the teaching of writing overwhelmingly supports the necessity of all writers using a multi-staged process including some form of pre-writing or brainstorming, drafts, and feedback. This is a foundation of FYC, and yet, it is not universally applied in courses post-FYC.

Faculty assume students are brainstorming, outlining, drafting, etc., but a writing process is not necessarily taught or required, resulting in students reverting to writing a draft quickly, close to the deadline. This leads to writing faculty find unacceptable– “final” drafts with poorly developed and shallow ideas, a lack of organization, plagiarism and citation errors, and too many sentence-level errors.

Reinforcing the writing process beyond FYC is critical as most students are not mature and experienced enough to transfer skills from one class or discipline to another. They will participate in the writing process in FYC, because it is a required component of the class, but post-FYC, they will not apply it on their own. In addition, the writing process varies from discipline to discipline and professor to professor, so students need instruction post-FYC in order to adapt their process appropriately and to be held accountable for their learning.

SLO#1 can be tied to Faculty comments equating improved student writing with better edited writing – one benefit of using a writing process is that it allows time for final editing, or as one group responded, to “[t]ake more seriously the importance of proofreading / editing.” It would also allow students to revise their ideas for clarity and development and to revise for organization and logic as well as documentation and plagiarism errors, all areas of concern faculty identified.

2. Students will write effectively for a context and purpose, including the use of appropriate grammar and mechanics.

The first part of SLO #2 concerning context and purpose can be linked to faculty’s observations that students need to improve their abilities in writing analytical and argumentative assignments for an appropriate audience. Faculty recognize that students have good ideas but that they struggle with expressing them in an appropriate way for the discipline and audience. They often do not match their style and approach to the assignment’s purpose, sometimes employing a personal or narrative approach inappropriately.

Faculty expressed a nearly universal desire for students to improve grammar, punctuation, and mechanics, the second part of SLO #2. This was the most repeated criticism of student writing. In part, it stemmed from an awareness that polished writing will help the students in their

professional lives, but it was also linked to pedagogical goals of grading being less focused on writing errors and more focused on assessing the content of the students' writing.

SLO #2 is linked to SLO#1 – unpolished writing sometimes is the result of a student not utilizing the writing process but instead writing one draft quickly in one sitting, perhaps without truly understanding the assignment.

SLO #2's focus on context and purpose includes audience – students should be aware that academic writing, as well as writing in the workplace, is expected to be as error-free as possible. If students are required to use a writing process beyond FYC, then they would work on writing assignments over time, leaving time for final proofreading and editing.

3. Students will employ discipline-specific terminology and conventions of writing.

The QEP Committee linked SLO #3 to faculty's awareness that improved student writing should deepen engagement with content and the discipline and lead to better career opportunities. Improving discipline-specific writing would provide a direct way to influence a student's professional readiness, which was pointed out in the feedback.

With SLO #3 being applied in Tiers Two and Three, students will also learn more about how writing changes from discipline to discipline and what is appropriate for different fields and why. If they are receiving instruction on the standards of disciplinary writing and the rationale behind them, they will also significantly deepen their understanding of and connections to their majors. This instruction will enable students to better understand how the discipline "works." Becoming stronger disciplinary writers might also lead to improved opportunities for graduate school and employment.

4. Students will evaluate the credibility and relevance of sources, integrate sources with their own ideas, and document their research correctly.

Faculty also requested improved research skills – selection and analysis of sources and integrating them into student writing. GWU does have an Information Literacy requirement, taught by Library faculty, which students receive, at minimum, three times in their undergraduate curriculum: during University 111; during English 102; and at least once in a major's class.

As with writing instruction, however, this IL instruction must be reinforced by faculty in courses requiring research. How sources are used varies from discipline to discipline and is also tied to the documentation style. Students need guidance from the instructor who is an expert in the discipline regarding how to evaluate research and appropriately use it as well as the reasons behind why research methodologies differ, depending upon the discipline.

In addition, faculty reported that students struggle with appropriate documentation for the discipline (the differences between MLA vs. APA, for example). The primary documentation style taught in FYC is MLA. Therefore, other documentation styles must be taught.

### **Focus on Traditional Undergraduate Students**

The QEP Committee plans to initially focus on Traditional Undergraduate Students so that the writing pedagogy and curriculum can be tested and refined on one population before the possibility of expansion into other student populations (such as the Degree Completion Program and Graduate Programs). Prior to expansion, any writing pedagogy learned as part of the QEP could be applied to DCP and Graduate courses; this would help lay a foundation for future efforts. In addition, any majors offering courses in both TUG and DCP would need to ensure that any course designated Writing Intensive in TUG should also be in DCP.

### **Alignment with WPA and FYC Outcomes**

Each of the QEP's four SLOs are also aligned with the 2014 Council of Writing Program Administrator (WPA)'s Statement for FYC Learning Outcomes. This Statement "describes the writing knowledge, practices, and attitudes that undergraduate students develop in first-year composition" and "attempts to both represent and regularize writing programs' priorities for first-year composition."

The Outcomes are not a blueprint or rigid set of requirements but rather a flexible set of broad writing goals that are easily adaptable to disciplines beyond FYC. GWU's FYC SLOs are modeled on the WPA's Outcomes. Since the QEP seeks to create connection between FYC and writing across the curriculum, it is logical to extend and adapt these SLOs into the disciplines, as recommended by the WPA.

The first Outcome identified by the WPA is Rhetorical Knowledge, "the ability to analyze contexts and audiences and then to act on that analysis in comprehending and creating texts... Writers develop rhetorical knowledge by negotiating purpose, audience, context, and conventions as they compose a variety of texts for different situations." This correlates directly to QEP SLOs #2 and #3.

The second WPA Outcome is Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing. Critical thinking is defined as "the ability to analyze, synthesize, interpret, and evaluate ideas, information, situations, and texts," which relates to QEP SLOs #2, #3, and #4.

The third WPA Outcome is Processes, or a multi-stage, composing process that varies from writer to writer and discipline to discipline, which is QEP SLO #1.

The final WPA Outcome is Conventions. This includes formal rules of grammar, mechanics, punctuation, citation, etc. as well as the formal and informal rules of genres of writing, including content and style. The WPA acknowledges that conventions vary from discipline to discipline and respond to audience expectations of genre, discipline, and occasion. This correlates to QEP SLOs #2, #3, and #4.

The QEP SLOs are aligned with FYC SLOs, which are based upon WPA Outcomes, as demonstrated in the charts below. This should help facilitate the transfer of learning beyond FYC. Instructors in Tiers Two and Three should be able to build upon FYC SLOs in their disciplinary writing instruction. SLOs #1 and #2 are repeated in each Tier in order to scaffold student learning and enhance transfer.

As can be seen in the second and third charts aligning the QEP SLOs with ENGL 101/102, ENGL 101/102 align most strongly with QEP SLOs #1 and #2, since FYC does not teach disciplinary writing. These last two charts demonstrate the need to teach writing in the disciplines as well as more advanced and specialized research methodologies and documentations styles in addition to MLA.

## QEP SLOs and WPA Outcomes

QEP SLOs	WPA Outcome <i>Rhetorical Knowledge</i>	WPA Outcome <i>Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing</i>	WPA Outcome <i>Processes</i>	WPA Outcome <i>Conventions</i>
1. Students will apply a guided writing process.			<b>X</b>	
2. Students will write effectively for a context and purpose, including the use of appropriate grammar and mechanics.	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>
3. Students will employ discipline-specific terminology and conventions of writing.	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
4. Students will evaluate the credibility and relevance of sources, integrate sources with their own ideas, and document their research correctly.	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>

**Selected SLOs from ENGL 101**

<b>QEP SLOs</b>	<b>ENGL 101</b> <i>Create appropriate writing for a variety of purposes, audiences, and rhetorical situations</i>	<b>ENGL 101</b> <i>Develop effective strategies for moving through and reflecting on prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing processes</i>	<b>ENGL 101</b> <i>Practice employing conventions and stylistics as appropriate to each writing task</i>	<b>ENGL 101</b> <i>Identify appropriate outside sources and incorporate ideas from these sources in student writing</i>
1. Students will apply a guided writing process.		<b>X</b>		
2. Students will write effectively for a context and purpose, including the use of appropriate grammar and mechanics.	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	
3. Students will employ discipline-specific terminology and conventions of writing.				
4. Students will evaluate the credibility and relevance of sources, integrate sources with their own ideas, and document their research correctly.				<b>X</b> – <i>Note that this ENGL 101 SLO is an introductory SLO to the QEP as it has a lower expectation.</i>

**Selected SLOs from ENGL 102**

QEP SLOs	<b>ENGL 102</b> <i>Employ effective writing strategies for various rhetorical situations, purposes, and audiences</i>	<b>ENGL 102</b> <i>Demonstrate evidence of writing as a recursive, collaborative process</i>	<b>ENGL 102</b> <i>Demonstrate effective research skills, such as finding and evaluating sources critically synthesize primary and secondary sources in writing</i>	<b>ENGL 102</b> <i>Demonstrate proficiency in using formal MLA documentation rules and incorporating others' ideas responsibly</i>
1. Students will apply a guided writing process.		<b>X</b>		
2. Students will write effectively for a context and purpose, including the use of appropriate grammar and mechanics.	<b>X</b>			
3. Students will employ discipline-specific terminology and conventions of writing.				
4. Students will evaluate the credibility and relevance of sources, integrate sources with their own ideas, and document their research correctly.			<b>X</b>	<b>X</b> <i>Note that this ENGL 102 SLO is an introductory SLO to the QEP as it has a lower expectation. In addition, MLA is the only documentation style taught.</i>

### C. Curriculum Intervention

After the WAC Retreat, these SLOs were shared with faculty over email and in two Forums for feedback. In October and November 2015, the Committee began working on how the QEP should intervene in the curriculum in order to best implement these SLOs. Early in the process, it had been clear that the QEP would involve ENGL 101/102, the two courses comprising First-Year Composition (FYC).

The Committee also felt that each major should be involved in improving student writing, especially the disciplinary writing important in the post-graduate, professional world.

Due to the research demonstrating the necessity to continually teach writing in different contexts and the importance of GWU's General Education curriculum in the academic culture, the Committee decided that General Education courses, in addition to FYC, should be part of the QEP.

Once this decision was made, the curriculum intervention began taking shape. Guided by the research supporting WAC efforts in Gen Ed classes and by the tiered system of Writing-Intensive courses at the University of Arizona, the QEP Committee created a new graduation requirement of five Writing-Intensive courses planned in three Tiers:

Tier One: ENGL 101/102 (FYC)

Tier Two: One Gen Ed course post-ENGL 102 (ENGL 102 will be a pre-requisite)

Tier Three: Two courses in the major (one introductory, one culminating)

The Tiered system is designed to address the problem of learning transfer between FYC, the Gen Ed curriculum, and the majors. Part of the solution to this problem lies in greater communication among faculty. Repeatedly, the Committee has heard from faculty that they "do not know what is taught in FYC." Faculty assume that FYC prepares students for college-level writing, but what is meant by that is not clear, and faculty do not know if their assumptions match what is taught in FYC. If faculty are unsure of what students are learning in FYC, then it is very difficult for them to help students transfer FYC writing skills.

As part of the training and professional development for the QEP, the Committee recommends building a bridge between Writing-Intensive instructors and FYC so that they can facilitate transfer of learning. This bridge is already apparent in the QEP SLOs which correspond to those used in FYC, as discussed earlier in this section.

### D. Tier Logistics and Feasibility

Once the plan began developing for the WI Graduation Requirement, the QEP Director and the Associate VP for Institutional Assessment also began meeting with the Associate Registrar as well as the Associate Dean of Academic Advising in order to determine the logistics and feasibility of the three Tiered plan, especially Tier Two. It was determined that Banner's registration software could be programmed so that Tier Two classes could have ENGL 102 as a prerequisite for registration.

Advising determined that this new graduation requirement would need to be effectively communicated to advisors and students. Both the Registrar and Academic Advising emphasized the need for non-WI Gen Ed courses to fill students' schedules.

The QEP Director and the Associate VP for Institutional Assessment also met with the Associate Dean of the Honors Program and with the Associate Dean of the NOEL Center for Disability Resources, to gauge the potential impact on Honors and NOEL students. No adverse effects were anticipated.

#### E. Path to Approval

Next, the QEP Committee drafted a short version of a proposal, and in January 2016, the Committee presented the draft to the Provost, the Associate Provosts, the Chair of the Faculty, and the Chair of the General Education Committee with the Associate Registrar and Associate Dean of Academic Advising in attendance. After this group expressed approval, it was determined that the next step should be to present the draft proposal to the Deans and Chairs at the February meetings of the Council of Schools and the Council of Arts and Sciences. After the Council meetings, the Deans and Chairs would facilitate discussion and feedback at their February School and Department meetings. The draft was also distributed to the members of the Provost's Council and the entire faculty via email.

Prior to the Council meetings, four "drop-in" discussion forums were scheduled for Deans and Chairs in the CETL space in Dover Library. This more informal, conversational format in a space designed for faculty collaboration.

After the February School and Department meetings, the QEP Committee held two more discussion sessions open to faculty as well as administration. At the February 2016 faculty meeting, the Committee presented the proposal for discussion.

In March 2016, the draft proposal obtained votes of support from the Council of Schools, the Council of Arts and Sciences, the General Education Committee, the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, and the Educational Policies and Standards Committee. At the March Faculty meeting, the full faculty voted to move forward with the Design Committee's proposal.

At the May 2016 Board of Trustees Meeting, the Board voted to approve the QEP.

#### F. Next Steps: Fall 2016-Spring 2017

During Summer 2016, the Associate VP of Institutional Assessment was replaced by the Vice President for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness. This position will take leadership in the assessment process and will be a member of the QEP Committee.

In August 2016, a draft of the full QEP Proposal was shared with faculty via email one week prior to the Faculty Retreat. At the Faculty Retreat, the QEP Committee presented the proposal at a full-faculty forum for discussion and questions. An additional breakout session was provided for further discussion.

In September, the QEP Director met with the following to gather feedback:

- Director of Creative Services to plan the website design and content and to discuss how to promote the QEP to students.
- Academic Advising staff
- Director of Academic Support for Student Athletes, and
- Assistant Director of International Programs.

Feedback from the above groups will help refine planning for Tiers Two and Three, especially concerning how to incorporate transfer students and any possible impact on international students whose first language might not be English.

In Fall 2016, the QEP Committee also began meeting with students to gather feedback. Groups met with included UNIV 111 and first-year composition courses as well as Honors students and SGA. Feedback indicated that the term “Intensive” was not communicating what the QEP intends, and while the QEP will continue to use “Intensive” to describe Writing-Intensive courses, due to its usage throughout the country, the QEP committee will need to promote understanding that “Writing-Intensive” means “Writing-Instructed.”

During the WAC Retreat September 23-25, 2016 the QEP Committee worked on revising the QEP Writing Rubric and revising the Writing Fellows program and application process. The Outside Evaluator was also selected.

In Fall 2016, Deans/Chairs were asked to provide a schedule of courses for Tiers Two and Three and to designate faculty attending the first Professional Development workshop January 5-6, 2017.

A proposal for a new faculty committee to approve Writing-Intensive Designated Courses was submitted to the Academic Advisory Committee which approved it at the September 2016 meeting. Faculty gave final approval for the new Committee at the November 2016 faculty meeting. This committee will go into effect in Fall 2017. Until then, a sub-committee of the QEP will approve courses.

In Fall 2016, final arrangements were made to begin administering the CLA+ exam in Spring 2017 to 100 seniors.

In Spring 2017, six pilot WI classes will be taught, three from Gen Ed and three from the disciplines. The pilot instructors met with the QEP Director during Fall 2016 to begin preparing for the transition. During this time, they also provided valuable feedback on improving the QEP Writing Rubric. Additional details about the Spring 2017 pilots can be found in Section VI, D, Implementation.

Professional Development for faculty was also planned for January 5-6, 2017. Faculty planning to teach WI courses in 2017-2018 were encouraged to attend. Additional details about Professional Development can be found in Section VI, D, Implementation.

## V. Literature Review

### *Introduction*

First-year composition (FYC) instructors are frequently asked the following questions: Why can't students write? Why is student writing "bad"? And what *are* they learning in English classes? These questions stem from genuine faculty frustration with student writing as well as a lack of communication between FYC instructors and other faculty.

The scholarly research for this QEP was driven, in part, to address these problems and to investigate the larger issues of how to improve student writing. At the core of the answers is the complicated issue of transfer of learning from one context to another, in this case, from FYC to the disciplines. This type of transfer is complex, involving moving from learning general academic writing skills in a content-free course (FYC) to learning both content and discipline-specific writing in a Gen Ed or majors course. In this situation, transfer failures are more common than transfer successes.

Transfer failure from FYC to content-courses is a problem rhetoric and composition scholars and teachers grapple with, and there is a significant amount of research on it. Most scholars conclude that in order for transfer to happen, writing instruction must continue beyond FYC. Much of the impetus behind the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) movement in the 1980's focused on spreading this idea, and WAC programs have continued to emphasize that writing is a skill learned over time and with repetition and support.

In 2014, the International Network of WAC Programs and the Conference on College Composition and Communication Executive Committee agreed upon a Statement of WAC Principles and Practices. In the Introduction, the two groups confirmed that the most effective way to improve student writing was to make it "an integral part of the learning process throughout a student's education" (p. 1).

All too often, faculty believe FYC has "fixed" student writing, but research demonstrates that students cannot become experts after only one or two semesters. In addition, FYC cannot teach students how to write in each discipline. As Lee Ann Carroll states in *Rehearsing New Roles: How College Students Can Develop as Writers* (2002): "[w]hile some college faculty members and administrators cling to the myth that adequately prepared students should be able to write fluently and correctly on any topic, at any time, in any context,...even students who were generally successful in high school are unable to fulfill this fantasy" (p. xi). Just as FYC cannot turn novices into experts, it is ineffective for FYC instructors to teach disciplinary writing. As the Statement of WAC Principles and Practices (2014) explains, disciplinary writing "is most effectively guided by those with expertise in that discipline" (p. 1).

A drawback to past WAC philosophy and practice is that it has often been dependent upon voluntary participation and the energy of a single, dynamic leader. As Deborah H. Holdstein (2001) illustrates, if participation isn't truly across the curriculum and if the energy depends

upon one leader with limited authority, then such programs are not viable long-term. To succeed, there must be sufficient administrative support and the responsibility for teaching writing must be shared by faculty across disciplines. In addition, individual departments/programs must be given control over how to best adapt WAC initiatives into their disciplines.

The goal of Gardner-Webb's QEP is to create a Writing Connection across campus between writing learned in FYC and writing in the disciplines. Integrating writing instruction throughout undergraduate education will not only improve student writing and academic performance but will also better prepare students for their lives beyond graduation.

### ***Transfer of Learning and Writing***

The QEP's focus on transferring and improving writing skills has a real and vital academic purpose. Transfer of learning is, according to Stephanie Boone, et al. (2012), "the very heart of learning – how it occurs and how it is sustained" (p. 1). In the context of writing skills, Boone, et al. ask three critical questions that have guided the QEP's work so far: (1) How do students transfer writing skills? (2) How does the Institution create a coherent curriculum to foster this? (3) How does the Institution carry forward what is learned in first year writing? The answer is that students must be taught how to transfer the general academic skills learned in FYC and how to develop disciplinary writing skills.

The importance of transfer is also addressed by Dana Lynn Driscoll (2011) who defines transfer as "how much knowledge students are able to apply from one context, such as first-year composition, to a new context, such as disciplinary writing" (p. 1). Examples of transfer fails are numerous; however, facilitating transfer is critical for the learning process: "If students are unable to apply practices, skills, and knowledge gained in one context to a new context, they have not truly learned and may continue to struggle in each new learning situation" (Driscoll, 2011, p. 1). Research on writing transfer demonstrates that if students are not assisted by instructors in transferring writing skills from one context to another, then they will "perceive each situation as entirely new and foreign" (Driscoll, 2011, p. 3). This perception impedes students' abilities to improve their writing, as they believe they are starting over with every class rather than learning to adapt and improve their writing skills over time, from course to course.

This belief often leads to students' writing skills deteriorating post-FYC, which contributes to the faculty perception that "students can't write." This pattern has been noted repeatedly over the decades, by McCarthy (1987), Walvoord and McCarthy (1990), Beaufort (2007), Bergmann and Zepernick (2007), and Wardle (2007). In both McCarthy's and Walvoord and McCarthy's studies, they observed first-hand how students, on their own, could not make the connections between FYC and other courses. They became overwhelmed both by new content in disciplinary courses and by the differences between the writing assignments in FYC vs. the disciplines. This combination created cognitive overload that negatively affected the quality of student writing.

In Beaufort's 2007 study, she also describes the problems that occurred when a student applied techniques that were successful in a FYC course to a history course – the student did not understand that the writing context and purpose had changed, nor was he instructed in how to adapt his writing. Beaufort demonstrates that when writing is not taught in classes requiring writing assignments, writing skills are not effectively transferred and, in many cases, atrophy post-FYC. She recommends instructors across the curriculum guide students in learning the necessary “rules” and knowledge of disciplinary discourse communities (the “social context” of writing), genres, rhetorical situations, and writing processes to create “a continuity of writing instruction...across the college curriculum,” including General Education (2007, p. 154).

If this type of curriculum is created, then GWU has the opportunity to develop a complete writing curriculum using a combination of general and discipline-specific approaches. In rhetoric and composition studies, there has been debate over which of these approaches best teaches writing. Julie Foertsch argues that both are necessary. In “Where Cognitive Psychology Applies: How Theories About Memory and Transfer Can Influence Composition Pedagogy” (1995), Foertsch explains how socially-oriented, or discipline-specific, composition scholars believe that the particularities of each academic discourse community are unique to its social context and therefore “general” writing skills are not transferrable since each context is so unique. The second point of view about general skills is espoused by cognitively-oriented researchers who argue that there can be general writing knowledge and commonalities in writing across the disciplines.

Choosing one approach over the other is not effective, according to Foertsch. Too much generalizing does not allow students to effectively transfer from FYC to a specific discipline (Foertsch 1995, p. 364). The pitfall of the socially-oriented point of view is that if all writing “is completely constrained by the social context in which it occurs...then one should expect little transfer of learning from one context to the next” (Foertsch 1995, p. 375). Foertsch's research into cognitive psychology, memory, and transfer demonstrates that “general knowledge and specialized knowledge are intertwined...[and] arise from the same pool of memories, the same set of learning experiences” (1995, p. 364). Both approaches, general and discipline-specific, need to be utilized to improve student writing. Students need a common set of general expectations before being immersed in different discourse communities.

GWU's QEP plan for writing instruction to occur in three Tiers (FYC, General Education, and the majors) will strive to accomplish the above goals. A key component will be giving student writers “instruction on the ways that their knowledge may be transferred and generalized” (Foertsch 1995, p. 370). Transfer rarely happens spontaneously, that is, without the intervention of the instructor. Students, due to a lack of experience, do not perceive similarities in academic writing, either between FYC and the disciplines or between the disciplines. Instead, students become distracted by differences. Student writers must be explicitly told how writing changes and how it remains the same from general to discipline-specific and from one discipline to another. This will enable them to form memories and accumulate experience to aid in future

transfer (Foertsch 1995, pp. 370-371, 373, 377). And, if instructors collaborate on a common set of writing principles, then this also facilitates transfer more smoothly (Foertsch 1995, p. 374). Collaboration is expected to be a key part of GWU's QEP.

Teaching writing post-FYC is recommended as well by Bergmann and Zepernick (2007) who found in their study that disciplinary writing might have an even greater impact than FYC on improving student writing. They concluded that writing in the disciplines is "one of the most important factors in shaping students' understanding of writing, learning to write, and the work they do as writers" (p. 129). Bergmann and Zepernick found that this is due to the students' perception that the disciplines have more "authority...to dictate rules for writing" (2007, p. 129). Students also need instruction in what is specific to a discipline, including the genres of writing, research methodologies, and considerations of audience, a finding echoed by Wardle (2007).

This research into learning transfer supports the QEP SLOs and how they have been scaffolded into Three Tiers so that skills are introduced, reinforced, and mastered. This is the reason the first two SLOs are repeated in each Tier.

### ***Teaching Writing in Gen Ed and the Majors***

An important step in improving student writing will be GWU's Tier Two Writing-Intensive Requirement. Since GWU's Gen Ed curriculum occupies such an important place in the students' requirements and in how faculty define a GWU education, the QEP Committee felt it should be part of the WI curriculum as well. For GWU's QEP, students will be required to take one Gen Ed WI course, post-FYC. This means they will learn to transfer from FYC to a content-rich disciplinary course most likely not in their major.

In addition to the research describe here, the QEP Design Committee also examined other QEPs that addressed writing in General Education, including Tennessee State, Auburn University at Montgomery, Albany State University, Palm Beach Atlantic University, Wayland Baptist University as well as the University of Arizona's model of Writing Intensive General Education Courses.

WI Gen Ed, according to Yvonne Merrill at the University of Arizona (2004), will allow students the opportunity to "see how problem solving and the thinking process vary from discipline to discipline," thus increasing their understanding of how different disciplines work and deepening students' analytical and critical thinking skills (p. 4). Christopher Thaiss (2000) also explains that when students are able to participate in several academic discourse communities, they can "realize that there are many such communities and many modes of writing that we can call academic" (p. 70). The Tier Two WI requirement will broaden students' knowledge and enrich their education by allowing them to make writing connections across their curriculum.

Connections such as this, between General Education and the majors, are often not perceived by students, perhaps because institutions do not sufficiently make them apparent. Jan Czechowski (2003) observes that

most current curricular practices and structures include no intentional internal integration within core requirements...and perhaps most importantly, most current practice provides no intentional integration between core requirements and the major. Yet if we are going to educate the whole person, the curriculum had better be organized around some philosophy of holistic learning (p. 5).

Gen Ed is often seen by students in this way, as “haphazard” or as jumping through hoops, and they do not have enough experience to discern the connections that faculty can (Pobywajlo 2001, p. 10). Writing Intensive courses, therefore, have the potential to provide a more readily visible “guiding and unifying principle” for curriculum (Pobywajlo 2001, p. 11).

Students’ lack of experience is also pointed out by Carroll (2011). She describes Gen Ed students as “novices” who “lack the basic disciplinary concepts necessary for developing in-depth critical analysis” (pp. 60, 86). During the first two years of college, students are overwhelmed with many new literacy tasks, and they need instruction in how to accomplish writing assignments. Faculty, however, are often unaware of the need to provide not only content instruction but also disciplinary writing instruction. Thaiss and Zawacki (2006) point out that instructors often perceive Gen Ed writing assignments as “general” or “broad” and not discipline-specific and are often unaware just how discipline-specific the writing might be. Thaiss and Zawacki (2006) also recommend that Gen Ed instructors explain how the writing in their course connects to broader academic writing as well as explain the value of learning different kinds of disciplinary writing.

Instructors who take this type of proactive role in activating students’ prior knowledge can contribute greatly to improving student learning, as Susan A. Ambrose, et al. explain in *How Learning Works: 7 Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching* (2010). Advanced students might be able to make connections between courses, even between courses in different disciplines, but the majority of students need to be reminded and shown how to make these connections. After students acquire key foundational skills in FYC (Introduction), they then need instruction in applying and adapting those skills to a different context and in knowing when to apply what they have learned (Reinforcement). These steps must happen before instructors can expect students to have mastered a skill.

Along with Carroll (2002), Ambrose describes a disconnect between faculty expectations and the reality of what students can do. In the area of writing, especially, students need much “more guidance and structure than we would expect in order to direct their efforts productively” (Ambrose, et al., 2010, p. 124). This is especially important in what is called the writing process: the “planning and revision” stages, or “generating, refining, and elaborating their ideas” as well as “evaluating their own writing, diagnosing problems, and deciding on revisions” (Ambrose, et al., 2010, p. 132). For this reason, the QEP SLO#1 is included in each Tier.

Since faculty have trained so long in their discipline, they have internalized “how their discipline works” and often do not remember how long it took to acquire this knowledge. David Bartholomae (1986) points out that faculty expect students to “learn to speak our language, to

speak as we do” and to “assume privilege without having any” (pp. 4, 10). Often times, as well, instructors do not effectively communicate their writing expectations and how they fit into different types of academic writing (Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006).

### ***Faculty and Student Support – Writing Fellows Program***

The QEP Committee also proposes developing a Writing Fellows program in order to support both Faculty and Students. Writing Fellows are selected and trained undergraduates who tutor students on their writing and liaison with the instructor of the course – they are also described as “mentors” or “curriculum-based peer tutors” embedded in WI courses to provide support for the students and to communicate students’ writing needs to instructors. Unlike tutors at the Writing Center, a Writing Fellow is assigned to one class and one instructor and can provide a more specialized focus. A Writing Fellows program promotes partnership between Fellows and faculty and collaboration between peers.

Writing Fellows programs began in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s at Carleton College in Minnesota and at Brown University, two campuses involved early in the WAC movement. Since then, Fellows have become common at liberal arts colleges, public and private universities, and community colleges alike.

The intent of Writing Fellows programs is to “integrate some best practices of writing instruction into writing-intensive courses across by the curriculum” by utilizing collaborative learning to “stretch out the writing process by building in cycles of drafts, conferences, and revisions in courses where otherwise such a process might not be possible” (Hall and Hughes, 2011, p. 21).

In a study investigating whether or not Writing Fellows made a difference, Dara Rossman Regaignon and Pamela Bromely (2011) found that using Fellows in Writing-Intensive courses did improve student writing more than in WI courses without Fellows. The key difference between using Fellows vs. not using them or relying on other support such as the Writing Center is that Fellows work with students “on more than one assignment, and often on several assignments throughout the term” (Rossman Regaignon & Bromely, 2011, p. 43). It is this “iterative structure” that brings about “a positive and measurable difference in students’ writing” (p. 48). In addition, students in WI courses with Fellows “learned about the importance of writing as a process and writing in the discipline, while students in the section without writing fellows did not” (p. 49).

Rossman Regaignon and Bromely also found that students in Fellows courses demonstrated greater metacognitive awareness “of the relationship between the disciplinary mode of analysis they learned that semester and their writing skills,” leading to gains in critical thinking and analysis (p. 49). They quoted student feedback attesting to an increased skill at developing ideas and constructing a focused, thesis-driven argument (p. 49). Since students meet with Fellows multiple times over the semester, they “gained important insights into their own writing processes and into the relationship between the ‘content’ of the course and discipline-specific

writing skills” (p. 51). Given that this research correlates to the QEP SLOs, a Fellows program would significantly contribute to the QEP’s effectiveness.

In addition to the impact on students, a Writing Fellows program would also have a positive impact on faculty teaching WI courses. In an article exploring faculty resistance to Writing Across the Curriculum efforts, especially those mandated by the university, Judith Halasz and Maria Brincker (2006) found that a Writing Fellows program greatly assisted faculty in making the transition into WI teaching and adapting writing pedagogy to their own teaching style and the course’s goals and content. It is daunting for faculty to be required to change their teaching methods and pedagogy, even in small ways, and this challenge can manifest itself as resistance to WAC/WI courses (Halasz & Brincker, 2006). Rather than ignoring these concerns, Halasz and Brincker recommend acknowledging them and finding ways WAC/WI “can facilitate, not impede faculty’s goals” (p. 5).

At their community college, Halasz and Brincker noted that, as at most institutions, faculty concerns over workload and labor demands were also an impediment to successful implementation of WAC. A Writing Fellows program can address these two legitimate faculty concerns: how to adapt pedagogy and how to manage workload. A Writing Fellow’s main task would be to work with students on their writing process, QEP SLO #1, and this is often the most time-consuming, but necessary, activity in improving student writing.

### ***Impact on Faculty***

In addition to making writing more prominent, the WI requirements along with a common set of WI SLOs and a common QEP Writing Rubric will create an opportunity for greater dialogue and collaboration among faculty and between disciplines. This would provide an occasion for informing faculty outside FYC about what exactly is taught in FYC – and what is not taught – in order to give all faculty common ground to build upon for teaching and to create a community of teaching writing.

An additional benefit for faculty and students is that research supports the connection between focused instruction in writing and learning and critical thinking (Bean, 2011). Writing helps students to understand content in a more significant way because they are required to engage with the content and exercise higher order thinking (Pobywajlo, 2001, p. 13). In a survey of University of New Hampshire faculty, Margaret Pobywajlo (2001) found that “68% of WI faculty...believe students learn more in WI courses than do students in non-WI sections of the same course...One professor commented that...students had begun to make connections between class discussion, lectures, and readings” (15). A writing-intensive curriculum can promote greater learning, critical thinking, and classroom engagement, three outcomes beneficial to both faculty and students.

Richard J. Light (2001) also supports these conclusions in *Making the Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds*. In his research interviewing undergraduates, he found that the most effective classes are those that emphasize writing because these courses encourage students to spend more

time on the class, they intellectually challenge the students, and they create engagement. In fact, Light concluded that writing is the strongest “relationship between students’ engagement and any other course characteristic,” and he found this to be true whether the course was in the student’s major or part of the General Education curriculum (pp. 55-56). In Light’s surveys, students asked for more writing in their courses, a request echoed by GWU students during the Topic Selection phase of the QEP.

Finally, the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U), as part of their Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) initiative (2005), recommends Writing-Intensive Courses as one of several High-Impact Educational Practices that “have been widely tested and have been shown to be beneficial for college students from many backgrounds.” Gardner-Webb is currently utilizing other Practices, including Undergraduate Research, Internships, Service and Community-Based Learning, and, depending upon the major and program, Capstone Courses and Projects. Writing-Intensive Courses would build upon existing efforts, would add additional value to students’ education, and could be used in recruitment.

AAC&U also states that Writing-Intensive Courses have the potential to lead to “parallel efforts” in other areas, such as quantitative reasoning, oral communication, and ethical inquiry. Thus, Writing-Intensive Courses could serve as a model for future teaching and learning innovations.

## VI. Implementation Strategy

This section provides an overview of actions GWU intends to take to achieve the goal of improving student writing and implementing the QEP. In order to successfully implement the QEP's Proposal of a new Graduation Requirement of five Writing-Intensive Courses, the following steps need to be taken.

### A. Establishment of a new Faculty Committee to approve Writing-Intensive Designated Courses

A new, elected faculty committee has been created to approve Writing-Intensive Designated Courses. A similar process is already in place with the Information Literacy Course Designation Committee which approves and assesses Information Literacy Level 3 courses. The purpose and structure of a faculty committee is familiar to GWU faculty, and the process for IL Designated Courses has been in place since 2011, so the new committee will build upon known and proven processes.

*Timeline for development and approval of a Writing-Intensive Designated Course Committee (WIDCC) in the 2016-2017 academic year:*

The QEP Committee submitted a Committee Description for approval to the Academic Advisory Committee's September 2016 meeting. After AAC Approval, it was approved by the general faculty.

*Interim Approval of Writing-Intensive Designated Courses*

The WIDCC will not be able to function with elected faculty members until Fall 2017. In the interim, Writing-Intensive Designated Courses will be approved in order to begin implementation of the Pilot in Fall 2017. Until an elected WIDCC can take over responsibility for this task, a subcommittee of the QEP Committee will temporarily approve Writing-Intensive Designated Courses for Fall 2017. The Subcommittee will be chaired by the QEP Director.

*Writing-Intensive Designated Course Committee Description for the Faculty Constitution*

#### **Writing-Intensive Designated Course Committee**

##### 1. Responsibility

The Writing-Intensive Designated Course Committee's purpose is to receive, evaluate, and take action on requests for Writing-Intensive Designated Courses.

##### 2. Membership

- a. Six faculty members, each elected for a three-year term. At least two faculty will represent Schools and two will represent Arts and Sciences.

- b. Committee Chair: During the QEP, the QEP Director will serve as the seventh faculty member and the Committee Chair. If the QEP Director is unable to serve, the QEP Committee will select another Committee member to serve. After the QEP, the Director of Writing-Intensive Curriculum and Instruction will serve as the Chair.
  - c. Each year the Committee on Committees will nominate two persons for each place to be filled. (In the first year of implementation, six members will be elected to the committee and one-, two-, and three-year terms will be determined by the drawing of straws among members.)
3. Duties
- a. Receives requests and approves courses to be Writing-Intensive based on QEP Writing-Intensive Student Learning Outcomes for the appropriate Tier for the proposed course.
  - b. Reports approved WI courses to the General Education Committee and the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, as appropriate.
  - c. Guidelines for submitting requests to the Writing-Intensive Designated Course Committee are available in the Faculty Handbook and in WebbConnect.

#### *Guidelines to Assist Faculty*

Appendix A contains a table intended to help faculty prepare to submit a course to the WIDCC. The professional development provided by the university will also guide faculty in this process. The QEP Director and Committee are available to assist faculty in preparing to submit their courses for WI approval.

#### *Submission Form*

Appendix A also contains the Submission Form faculty will use when submitting a course to the WIDCC. The QEP Director and Committee are available to assist faculty in preparing to submit this form. This form is modeled on the Information Literacy Course Designation form.

### B. Professional Development for Teaching Writing-Intensive courses and Using the QEP Writing Rubric

Prior to submitting a course to the Writing-Intensive Designated Course Committee for approval, faculty will attend professional development that will focus on adapting courses to meet Writing-Intensive requirements and on implementing the QEP Student Learning Outcomes as well as other Writing Intensive strategies. Training in using the QEP Writing Rubric will also be provided prior to teaching a WI course.

The first university-wide professional development workshop will occur January 5-6, 2017 before classes begin and a second university-wide professional development workshop will be planned for May. The QEP Committee has chosen the UNCC branch of the National Writing

Project (Dr. Cyndi Urbanski and Dr. Meaghan Rand) to conduct the professional development. It includes a two-day hands-on, interactive workshop (15 hours of face-to-face time) and continuing support for a year for WI instructors which includes a Google Communities site with resources and individual support from Drs. Urbanski and Rand (video chat, phone calls). This continuous support should prove to be a valuable resource for faculty.

Additional Professional Development is being planned for 2017-2018. Workshops will include using the QEP Writing Rubric and interrater reliability, understanding what is taught in FYC and how to facilitate transfer of learning, QEP Boot Camp for adjuncts, and full Professional Development provided to faculty unable to attend the NWP workshops in January and May. This Professional Development will be led by the QEP Committee.

#### C. Faculty Stipend for attending Professional Development and teaching two Writing-Intensive courses during QEP Implementation (2017-2022)

Faculty will receive a stipend of \$500 for attending Writing-Intensive professional development and for teaching two Writing Intensive courses during the duration of the QEP. Payment will be made during the first semester of teaching a Writing Intensive course. Faculty are eligible for only one stipend, no matter how many courses are taught. The stipend is intended as compensation for time spent attending professional development and adapting a course to be WI.

#### D. Spring 2017 Pilot of Selected Writing-Intensive Courses

In Spring 2017, the QEP Committee plans to pilot six Writing-Intensive Courses. Instructors of these courses have attended professional development and will submit syllabi for approval. During the pilot, at least one writing assignment must be assessed using the QEP Writing Rubric. Instructors of the pilot courses will also be expected to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their experiences in order to improve Fall 2017 Implementation. In addition, students in these classes will be surveyed for their feedback.

Faculty volunteered for Spring 2017 Pilot courses early in Fall 2016. The courses include three in Tier Two and three in Tier Three. Training was provided at the annual WAC Retreat as well as separately during group meetings with the QEP Director in Fall 2016. Pilot faculty will attend the QEP Professional Development January 5-6, 2017.

#### E. Writing-Intensive Curriculum Design and Planning

Below are descriptions of the impact the QEP will have on the university's curriculum.

*UNIV 111/101: Dimensions of University Life in a Global Society*

This course is required of all first-year Traditional Undergraduate Students in their first semester of enrollment, so Fall 2017 will serve as an introduction to the QEP and the QEP's WI Graduation Requirement. UNIV 111/101 is a comprehensive course designed to help first-year students develop an effective balance of academic achievement and personal growth which will contribute to their college success. As part of the course activities, students, with instructor guidance, create four-year plans that map out their curriculum to graduation.

In August 2016 and 2017, the QEP Director will attend UNIV 111/101 Retreat in order to update instructors and to answer questions. Beginning in Fall 2017, the QEP Committee will visit UNIV 111/101 classes in order to explain the goals of the QEP and its importance to student learning. In Fall 2018, the Committee will also go over the WI Graduation Requirement and provide support for UNIV 111/101 instructors to appropriately advise students. UNIV 111/101 instructors and academic advisors will assist students in meeting the WI Graduation Requirement in their four-year plans and during advising appointments each semester.

### ***Tier One***

Tier One of the QEP Writing-Intensive Curriculum consists of ENGL 101 and ENGL 102 (FYC). These courses are already required in the General Education Curriculum, and students are registered for them continuously, beginning their first semester and until successful completion of ENGL 102.

The QEP will not affect this process nor will the QEP require additional sections of FYC. ENGL 102 will be a prerequisite to taking a Tier Two class and so will serve as a "gateway" to Tier Two. ENGL 102 instructors, academic advisors, and students will all be informed about this prerequisite and how it might impact four-year plans.

### ***Tier Two***

Tier Two will require extensive planning and coordination as the courses will vary from semester to semester.

As part of researching the Proposal, the QEP Committee asked departments and schools housing General Education courses to designate which ones would be appropriate for Tier Two. At least three departments (Mathematics, Natural Sciences, and World Languages and Literature) could not participate in Tier Two.

The Deans/Chairs have agreed that the following 20 courses would be appropriate for Tier Two:

ARTS 225: Art Survey

BADM 325: Business Communications Applications

COMM 230: Technology and American Society

ENGL 211: Survey of British Literature I

ENGL 212: Survey of British Literature II  
ENGL 231: Survey of US Literature I  
ENGL 232: Survey of US Literature II  
ENGL 252: Survey of World Literature II  
HIST 101: Western Civilization I  
HIST 102: Western Civilization II  
HIST 245: The American Century  
HLED 221: Dimensions of Personal Health  
MUSC 225: Music Survey  
POLS 202: The American Political Process  
PSYC 201: General Psychology  
RELI 101: Old Testament  
RELI 102: New Testament  
RELI 245: Religion and Culture in a Global Perspective  
SSCI 205: Global Understanding  
THEA 235: Theatre Survey

In Fall 2016, the QEP Committee began working with Deans/Chairs as well as Academic Advising and the Registrar's Office to plan a four-year rotation of Tier Two courses. Academic Advising has suggested the QEP Committee provide advisors with a four-year rotation of WI-courses.

Once Tier Two is planned and courses are approved, the Registrar's Office will need to code Tier Two courses each semester in Banner registration software to prevent students from taking a Tier Two course until after completion of ENGL 102. If Tier Two courses are coded correctly, students will not be able to register for a Tier Two class until they have completed ENGL 102. The Registrar's Office has asked the QEP Director to provide oversight in this pre-requisite coding to ensure courses are coded appropriately prior to registration.

#### *Considerations for Tier Two Planning*

Below are some considerations the QEP Committee will factor into Tier Two Planning.

1. The necessity for leaving enough non-WI Gen Ed courses available for students, in particular for first-year students, to successfully complete their schedules.
2. Small departments/majors staffing capabilities, especially those participating in more than one Tier.
3. Smaller majors needing first-year students in their Gen Ed courses for major/minor recruitment.

### ***Tier Three***

The QEP Committee determined that individual programs should designate which two courses in their majors would be best for WI Designation. Ideally, the first course should be an introductory one and the second a cumulative one. Tier Three courses should be offered on a regular rotation that will allow majors to take them in a planned sequence that allows for disciplinary writing instruction to be scaffolded. In Fall 2016, the QEP Committee began working with Deans/Chairs as well as Academic Advising and the Registrar's Office to plan a four-year rotation of Tier Three courses.

Tiers One-Three will need to be implemented, for the most part, simultaneously in order to accommodate transfer and Early College Students who will place out of Tier One and possibly Tier Two. These students will need both Tier Two and Tier Three classes beginning in Fall 2017. All students will need to be carefully advised so that they meet the WI Graduation Requirements successfully.

### **F. Establishment of a Writing Fellows Program**

An additional faculty incentive as well as an opportunity for undergraduate students to participate in leadership positions is the establishment of a Writing Fellows Program to support faculty and students in WI courses. Writing Fellows are selected and trained undergraduates who tutor students with their writing and liaison with the instructor of the course – they are also described as “mentors” or “curriculum-based peer tutors” embedded in WI courses to provide support for the students and to communicate students’ writing needs to instructors. Unlike tutors at the Writing Center, a Writing Fellow is assigned to one class and one instructor. Since the Fellow is immersed in just that one class, the Fellow can provide a more specialized focus for the disciplinary writing assignments in the class. A Writing Fellows program promotes partnership between Fellows and faculty and collaboration between peers. Prior to the beginning of the fall semester, Writing Fellows meet as a group for training in writing tutoring pedagogy and then meet as a group twice a month each fall and spring semester for additional instruction.

More information about the effectiveness of Writing Fellows programs can be found in the Literature Review, Section V.

*Number of Writing Fellows needed:* 15 each fall and spring semester.

*Compensation:* \$500 stipend per semester. Fellows should be aware that unlike other workplaces, the hours per week will vary, depending upon the timing and nature of the writing assignments in the course they are assigned to. Fellows should anticipate working more hours

some weeks, fewer other weeks. Fellows should have strong organizational and planning skills to accommodate this type of flexible work schedule.

Appendix B provides documents detailing the Application process, the Contract of Responsibilities for both Writing Fellows and Instructors, and the Writing Fellows Recommendation form.

## G. Expansion of Support for the Writing Center

Based upon data for student visits to the Writing Center in the years before QEP implementation, it is predicted that there will be an increase in appointments after implementation of the Writing-Intensive curriculum. More importantly, since the Writing Center's founding in 1992, appointments as well as enrollment in TUG, DCP, and Graduate programs has increased significantly. In 1992-1993, there were 82 appointments; in 2000-2001, 800 appointments, and in 2016-2016, 967 appointments. For those years, enrollment increased from 1852 to 3202 to 4402.

While improvements have been made, such as hiring more tutors and relocating the Writing Center from the bottom floor of an academic building to the second floor of the new Tucker Student Center, the workload demands on the Director of the Writing Center have continued to increase, especially with the introduction of distance tutoring for online students, while the course load reduction has remained the same since 1992. It is recommended, then, that three changes be made to better support the Writing Center and in turn to better support students during the QEP implementation.

### 1. New Writing Center Director

In order to meet the increased demand for writing center services, the director position should be revised and a new Writing Center Director hired to better provide support and leadership for this essential student service. It is recommended that GWU's Writing Center Director position be changed from a full-time, 9-month faculty position with one course release to a full-time, 11 or 12-month faculty or staff position. Minimum requirements would be a Master's degree that reflects a concentration in writing studies and writing center or administrative experience in a similar area. In addition to administrative responsibilities, the new Writing Center Director will teach one composition course for the English department each fall and spring semester.

If this position is allocated as staff, professional development funds will need to be provided so that the Director can attend regional and national conferences and participate in writing center associations and networks. This professional development will help ensure that GWU's Writing Center stays current in its practices in meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse population of

students and can innovatively meet the increasing demand for online tutoring for distance students.

## **2. Additional Space for the Writing Center**

Given the anticipated increase in Writing Center traffic due to the QEP, GWU's Writing Center will need more space. In the current Center, if there are more than two appointments at one time, the noise level becomes distracting, especially for certain students, and there is a lack of privacy in the tutoring sessions. In addition, the new Writing Center Director will need to have office space as they will be based in the Writing Center, not an academic building.

It is recommended that a classroom on the third floor of the Tucker Student Center be renovated for Writing Center use. This classroom is larger than the current Writing Center and is under-utilized for classes. It could be broken up into smaller tutoring areas, and noise distractions could be minimized by sound-dampening partitions and furniture. The current Writing Center space on the second floor should be kept for administrative use and as training space for tutors as well as Writing Fellows. The Writing Center Director's office could be on either the second or the third floor.

## **3. Additional Tutors**

It is also recommended that the Writing Center will need an additional 10-12 hours per week in student tutors. An additional graduate assistant could also meet this demand as GAs work 20 hours per week.

### **H. QEP Director for Implementation and Implementation Committee**

After the SACSCOC on-site visit in March 2017, the university will select a QEP Director for Implementation and a QEP Implementation Committee. The Director will receive two course releases per semester and a stipend in Fall, Spring, and Summer.

### **I. Director of Writing-Intensive Curriculum and Instruction**

This position would be created after the completion of the QEP and would replace the QEP Director for Implementation.

Compensation: Two course-release per semester. Must teach at least one WI-Designated Course per academic year.

Responsibilities:

1. Chair of WI-Designated Course Committee
2. Interviews, trains, and supervises Writing Fellows Program

3. Coordinates WI Professional Development
4. WI Curriculum Assessment
5. WI Curriculum Planning and Monitoring
6. Liaison with Writing Center Director and CETL Director
7. Maintains WI Website and Resources

#### J. Marketing and Promotion

The QEP Committee has established a website for communication with the GWU community. It will also be eventually used for posting information and documents. The QEP Director met with the Director of Creative Services and provided content for the website which launched in Fall 2016: <http://gardner-webb.edu/academic-programs-and-resources/qep/index>

The Director of Creative Services is also working with staff on creating a visual design for the QEP that can be used on all electronic and print documents and that will become a visual identifier for the QEP.

The Director of Creative Services also provided insight into promoting the QEP with students prior to Implementation. It was recommended that recruitment and promotion of the Writing Fellows program would be a good way to introduce students to the QEP and to get them involved. That is planned for 2016-2017. A flyer promoting the QEP and the Writing Fellows program will be created and distributed early in 2017.

#### K. CLA+ Exam and QEP Writing Rubric as Assessment Tools

The QEP Committee intends to utilize two direct forms of assessment, the QEP Writing Rubric (Appendix C) and the CLA+ Exam. The VP for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness and appropriate staff will assist in gathering, processing, and storing Rubric data, and this VP will also be responsible for administering the CLA+ exam each Fall and Spring. More information about these tools can be found in Assessment, Section IX. Indirect assessment tools will include new faculty and student surveys as well as on-going surveys such as the NSSE and FSSE.

## VII. Timeline

Below is a chart detailing each step in the planning, development, and implementation of the QEP, beginning with Topic Selection.

### Timeline of Events for Quality Enhancement Plan

Appointment of QEP Committee	February, 2014	Provost contacted potential QEP Committee members and secured their commitment to serve on the QEP Selection Committee
Initial QEP Selection Committee Mtg	March 26, 2014	Organizational meeting and explanation of process for selecting the QEP topic
Faculty Forum	April 10, 2014	Introduce the SACSCOC reaffirmation process and explain the need for a new QEP as part of reaffirmation, 2017; sent initial email request for QEP proposals to faculty and staff
QEP Selection Committee Mtg	May 7, 2014	Initial planning meeting, discussed duties and timeline
QEP Selection Committee Mtg	Aug. 7, 2014	Discussed plans and duties for faculty retreat presentations
Faculty Retreat breakout session	Aug. 12, 2014	Presentation detailing the SACSCOC requirements for a successful QEP followed by Q & A period
Faculty Retreat large group session with entire faculty	Aug. 13, 2014	Faculty were divided into groups at each table and prompted by specific questions to brainstorm ideas for QEP topics. Faculty were encouraged to think of specific academic needs and/or student deficiencies.
QEP Selection Committee Mtg	Sept. 18, 2014	Sent second email request for QEP proposals to faculty, staff trustees. Distributed results from brainstorming session at the faculty retreat and made plans for next faculty forums.
Faculty Forum	Sept. 24, 2014	Presented the results from the brainstorming session at the faculty retreat in August and encouraged faculty to submit proposals by October 1, followed by Q & A period
Faculty Forum	Sept. 25, 2014	Presented the results from the brainstorming session at the faculty retreat in August and encouraged faculty to submit proposals by October 1, followed by Q & A period
QEP Selection Committee Mtg	Oct. 9, 2014	15 QEP proposal ideas were distributed to the selection committee with the request to come to the next meeting ready to choose the top three proposals

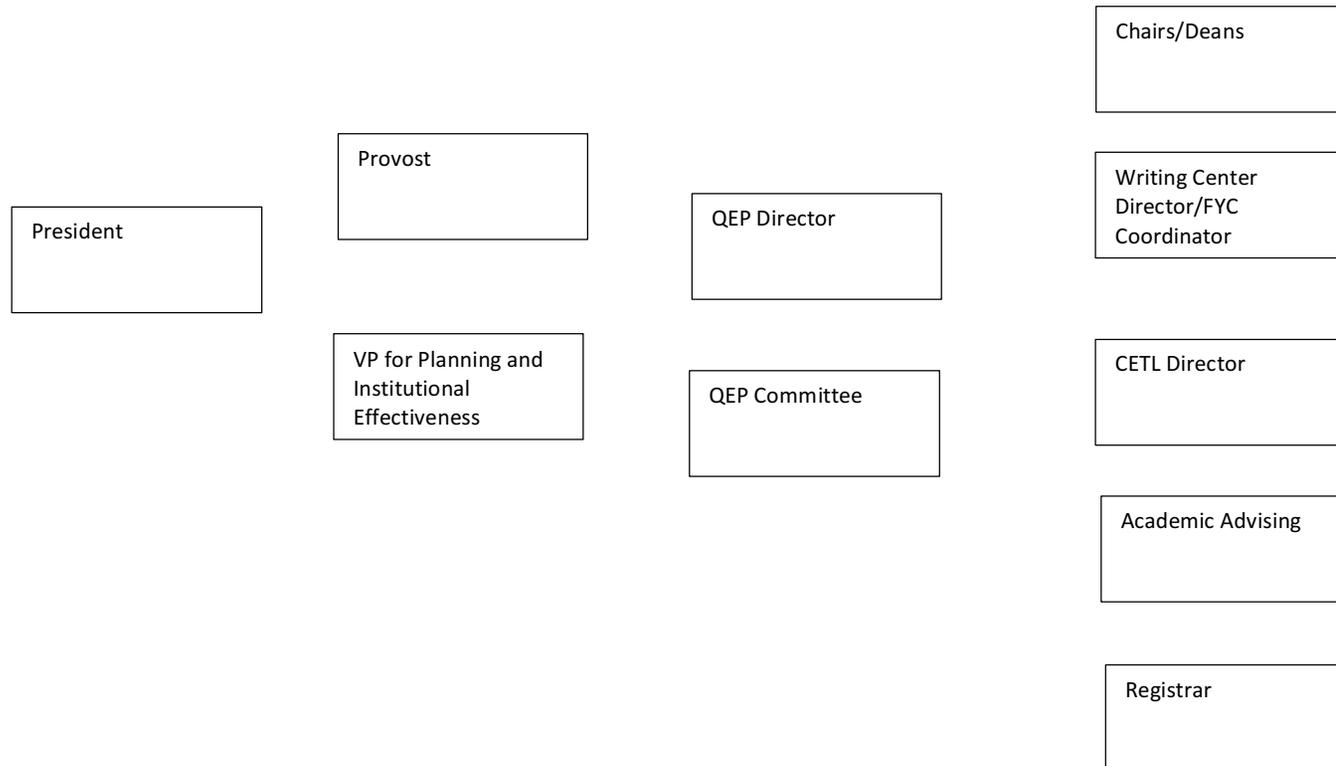
QEP Selection Committee Mtg	Oct. 17, 2014	Top three proposals were selected
Faculty Forum	Oct. 22, 2014	Presentation of three QEP proposals followed by Q & A period
Faculty Forum	Oct. 23, 2014	Presentation of three QEP proposals followed by Q & A period
Trustees Academic Affairs Sub-Committee	Oct, 23, 2014	Presentation of top three QEP proposals followed by Q & A period
SGA Student Forum	Nov. 3, 2014	Overview of the QEP process and presentation of three proposals followed by feedback from students
Email sent to all students	Nov. 6, 2014	Requesting feedback on three QEP proposals (through email or student forums)
Open Student Forum	Nov. 5, 2014	Opportunity for feedback from students
Open Student Forum	Nov. 6, 2014	Opportunity for feedback from students
Honors Student Forum	Nov. 18, 2014 (9:25 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.)	Overview of the QEP process and presentation of three proposals followed by feedback from students
QEP Selection Committee Mtg	Nov. 18, 2014	After consideration of feedback from all constituencies final selection of topic was made
Senior Staff	Dec. 10, 2014	Presentation to senior staff outlining the process to date, the three proposals that were considered, and the final topic selected.
Administrative Advisory Committee	Jan. 16, 2015	Presentation and discussion of selected QEP topic
Faculty Meeting	Jan. 30, 2015	Presentation and discussion of selected QEP topic
Interview and hire QEP Design Director	February-March 2015	QEP Selection Committee will serve as Search Committee
Appoint QEP Design Committee	Summer 2015	This committee will work with the QEP Design Director in creating the QEP proposal.
Faculty Retreat	August 2015	Presentation of QEP proposal to faculty; brainstormed which areas of student writing needed the most urgent attention and how the university could best support them in the teaching of writing
QEP Retreat at Wildacres Retreat Ctr.	Sept 25-27, 2015	Brainstormed and created draft of student learning outcomes
QEP Design Committee	Sept 28, 2015	Prepare for Faculty Forums

Faculty Forums	Sept 29& 30, 2015	Shared student learning outcomes with faculty and staff
QEP Design Committee	Oct 13, 2015	Working on curriculum interventions
QEP Design Committee	Oct 26, 2015	Continue work on curriculum interventions; consider implications for advising, honors, and disability services
QEP Design Committee	Nov 17, 2015	Continue work on curriculum interventions; consider implications for advising, honors, and disability services
QEP Design Committee	Nov 19, 2015	Continue work on curriculum interventions; consider implications for advising, honors, and disability services
Provost, Assoc. Provosts, Faculty Chair, Representatives from Registrar's Office	Jan 12, 2016	QEP Design Committee presented the QEP proposal draft and answered questions
QEP Design Committee	Jan 21-Feb 1, 2016	Open Q & A session for Deans and Chairs in CETL
Individual meetings	Jan-Mar 2016	QEP Director met with individuals from the Undergraduate Academic Advising Center, NOEL Center for Disability Resources, Honors Program, and the Registrar's Office
Council Meetings	Feb 4, 2016	Presented draft proposal to the Council of Schools (Deans) and the Council of Arts and Sciences (Chairs)
Individual department and school meeting	Feb 5, 2016	Deans and Chairs shared draft proposal with individual schools/departments
QEP Committee	Feb 11, 2016	Discuss continuing process for addressing concerns from departments, schools and individual faculty
Open Q & A	Feb 22, 2016	Q & A for faculty and staff
Individual Dept mtgs	Feb & Mar 2016	QEP Director met with the Math, Science and Social Sciences to address specific concerns
Council Meetings	March 3, 2016	Gained support from Council of Schools and Council of Arts and Sciences
Gen Ed Committee	March 17, 2016	Gained support the General Education Committee
EPSC & Curriculum Committee	March 18, 2016	Gained support from Educational Policies & Standards Committee and the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

Faculty Meeting	April 1, 2016	Approved the current draft of the QEP and the graduation requirement for the Writing Intensive courses
Trustees Meeting	May 26, 2016	Approved the current draft of the QEP and the graduation requirement for the Writing Intensive courses
QEP Committee	June-July 2016	Three members of the committee continued to meet regularly in order to make progress on the process, budget and timeline of proposal.  The VP for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness replaces the Associate VP for Institutional Assessment.
Faculty Retreat	August 2016	Presented draft of the QEP Proposal to entire group; Breakout session for Q & A
Deans/Chairs	Fall 2016	Plan Tier Two and Three course schedules and rotations; Designate faculty for professional development
QEP Committee	Fall 2016	Gained approval of new WI-Designated Course Committee through faculty process (Administrative Advisory Committee and full Faculty vote)
		Designated subcommittee of QEP for approving WI-course syllabi for 2017-2018
		With the Director of Creative Services, developed ideas for promotion of the QEP to the institution
		Planned for administering the CLA+ exam in Spring 2016
		Outside Evaluator selected
		Developed Writing Fellows program and application process. Plan to begin hiring in Spring 2017.
QEP Director	Fall 2016	Met with Academic Advising as well as the advisors for student-athletes and international students to gather feedback.
QEP Retreat at Wildacres Retreat Ctr.	Sept 23-25, 2016	Revised QEP Writing Rubric as well as Writing Fellows program description, requirements, application process, and training.
Pilot Training	Fall 2016	Faculty planning to pilot Writing-Intensive courses in Spring 2017 met for training.
Professional Development for WI Instructors	January 5-6, 2017	Professional Development training for WI instructors; led by UNCC chapter of the National Writing Program
QEP Committee	January 2017	Submit full proposal to SACSCOC On-Site Evaluation Team
Pilot selected writing intensive courses	Spring 2017	Six courses will be Writing-Intensive pilots, three from Tier Two and three from Tier Three. The QEP Writing Rubric will be used for assessment and faculty will receive appropriate training.
QEP Committee	March 7-9, 2017	SACSCOC On-Site Review

## VIII. Organizational Structure

Below is the organizational structure for responsibility for implementing the QEP. This chart indicates the flow of communication and information in coordinating efforts for the QEP. On the following page is a breakdown of the primary responsibilities for the QEP as led by the QEP Director and the VP for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness.



**VP for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness**

Directs Rubric reporting, processing and storing. Manages the CLA+ exam, NSSE and FSSE reporting as well as developing and implementing any surveys necessary. Also a member of the QEP Committee.

**QEP Director/Committee Duties**

Chairs QEP Committee  
Oversees the implementation of the QEP  
Coordinates analyzing and processing Rubric scores and communicating with the institution the results.  
Coordinates faculty professional development  
Coordinates WI Curriculum Planning  
Chairs WI-Designated Course Committee  
Directs the Writing Fellows program, including the hiring, training, and supervision of the Fellows  
Liaison with Writing Center Director/FYC Composition Coordinator, CETL Director, Academic Advising, Registrar, Chairs/Deans.  
Prepares annual reports, including the Impact Report  
Promotes faculty participation  
Promotes student awareness

## IX. Assessment

This section outlines GWU QEP's assessment plans and structures that will ensure the QEP maintains a consistent cycle of assessment and improvement. In July 2016, the Associate VP of Institutional Assessment was replaced by the VP for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness who will hold primary responsibility for conducting QEP Assessment. The VP will serve as an ex-officio member of the QEP Committee in the Associate VP's place.

### A. Direct Assessment

#### **GWU Writing Rubric**

In order to assess the effectiveness of WI curriculum and instruction in reaching the goal of improving student writing, a GWU Writing Rubric has been developed to be used in WI courses in all three Tiers. Instructors will use this rubric to assess at least one writing assignment that implements the QEP SLOs for that Tier. Instructors are not required to use the Rubric for their own grading. The Rubric has been designed using the QEP SLOs and also the AACU's Written Communication VALUE rubric. Permission was obtained from the AACU for use of their rubric.

While all four of the QEP SLOs are represented on the GWU Writing Rubric, not all Tiers are implementing each SLO. For example, Tier One will only implement SLOs #1 and #2. In that case, instructors of Tier One courses will simply not score sections three (SLO #3) and four (SLO #4).

In addition, scoring for SLO #1 is flexible, to accommodate the variety of different writing processes that might be utilized in a course. The score for SLO #1 will be an average score of the different writing processes being measured. This is to avoid limiting instructors to a certain number or type of steps in the writing process.

Two SLOs, #2 and #4 are divided into two to three categories on the rubric. SLO #2 covers both content and purpose as well as grammar and mechanics, so there are two separate scores in that rubric category. Similarly, SLO #4 covers both the credibility and reliability of sources, how well the sources are integrated into the writer's ideas, and the correct use of documentation, so each of those skills is scored separately. In both cases, the two individual scores are averaged for a final score.

The GWU Writing Rubric is included in Appendix C.

#### **Rubric Reporting Process**

The QEP Committee plans to gather data results from these rubrics so that patterns of students' strengths and weaknesses can be determined. Then, appropriate adjustments can be made to curriculum and instruction. Rubric scores should provide semester-by-semester feedback that will enable the QEP Plan to adapt as it progresses. The QEP Committee has set a goal of 75% of students reaching an average score of 3 on the QEP Writing Rubric by their senior year.

#### *Instructors' Responsibility*

Each instructor of a WI course will be responsible for using the GWU Writing Rubric to score at least one writing assignment that implements the QEP SLOs. Prior to teaching a WI course, instructors will be trained in using the GWU Writing Rubric and in inter-rater reliability.

#### *Reporting of Rubric Scores*

Scores for students in each WI course will be submitted in the same manner as final grades, using the institution's Banner software. They will be stored there, and the VP for Planning and Institutional Effectiveness will report the scores in any category the QEP Committee needs – by instructor, by SLO, by Tier, by department, etc.

#### *How Rubric Scores will be Evaluated*

If growth is to be measured, then the impact on student writing must also be measured. In order to determine if the WI instruction is having its intended effect, Rubric scores will be measured at key points in the curriculum: From ENGL 101-102 (within Tier One), from ENGL 102-Tier Two, and from the first Tier Three course to the second. Additionally, scores from ENGL 101 could be compared to those in the second Tier Three course.

The QEP Committee will use the Rubric results to make necessary adjustments to the curriculum and instruction, including the WI training/professional development and adjustments to the Writing Fellows program. It is important that Rubric results be appropriately assessed in order to make decisions about the curriculum based upon the data.

If substantive curricular changes are recommended, these would go through the appropriate approval process via faculty committees and faculty approval.

#### *Communication of Rubric Results*

The QEP Committee is responsible for communicating Rubric assessment results to the larger university community. Results will be provided to the WI course instructors, Chairs/Deans, the Composition Studies Coordinator, the Director of the Writing Center, and appropriate administrative staff. In addition, an interpretation of the results and how they impact individual instructors' teaching as well as the QEP as a whole will be communicated to the university community. The QEP GWU Writing Rubric assessment results will be reviewed and shared each semester and appropriate recommendations will be made for the following semester.



Over the duration of the QEP, this continuous cycle of reporting, evaluating, and communicating Rubric assessment data should both enable the community to see the impact of the QEP and allow the QEP Committee to continually make adjustments.

### **CLA+ Exam**

The CLA+ Exam will be utilized as an external tool of assessment to provide a longitudinal view of the impact of the QEP on student writing. It will first be administered in Spring 2017 to 100 seniors in order to gather baseline data.

During QEP implementation, the CLA+ exam will be administered in Fall semesters to 100 students in their first semester and in Spring semesters to 100 students in their final semester. With the exception of discipline-specific conventions and terminology, the CLA+ measures QEP SLOs #1, 3, and 4. Although a timed, standardized test does not measure the writing process in the same way a semester-long course does, the exam can provide a useful, longitudinal assessment of whether or not student writing is improving from students' first semester to their final one and of how well students are achieving the goals of the QEP SLOs. It will also be a method for evaluating student writing independently from the university.

The CLA+ measures students' abilities in critical thinking, analytical reasoning, problem solving, and clear and effective written communication. It is intended to be one tool institutions can use to measure student growth, to improve SLOs, and to better understand practices and

pedagogy that impact student learning. It is comprised of a 60-minute essay exam that presents students with a problem, provides documents, and asks students to propose a solution using the documents as support. The final 30 minutes are a selected response exam of 25 questions covering scientific and quantitative reasoning, critical reading and evaluation, and critiquing an argument. Results from the CLA+ can also be used in the university's General Education assessment.

## B. Indirect Assessment

New as well as existing surveys will be used to assess the impact of the QEP on faculty and students. Survey data will be analyzed for patterns of strengths and weaknesses so adjustments can be made to pedagogy, course design, training, etc.

### **New Faculty Surveys**

1. *WI professional development.* At the conclusion of WI professional development, faculty will be surveyed to gauge the appropriateness and usefulness of the training.
2. *Experiences teaching WI-courses:* After completion of a WI course, faculty will be surveyed to assess their experiences teaching the course, to solicit recommendations for improvement, and to share how the professional development and support affected their instruction.
3. *Experiences with Writing Fellows.* If faculty use a Writing Fellow, they will be surveyed regarding the experience and will be asked for feedback for improvement.

### **New Writing Fellows Survey**

Fellows will be asked to assess what they have learned from tutoring students and working with faculty, and to evaluate the support from the QEP Director, including pedagogical training. Two open-ended questions will be asked, one asking for suggestions for improvement to the Fellows program, and the second asking about the benefits of being a Fellow.

### **Existing Surveys**

#### *The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)-Writing*

The NSSE, a national survey, is taken by first-year students and graduating seniors near the end of the spring semester. Gardner-Webb's last three participation years were in 2010, 2013, and 2016. The NSSE allows Gardner-Webb to compare its results to a pre-selected group of Southeastern independent colleges and universities. Responses to the questions concerning writing were used in the topic selection process. The following are questions concerning writing used in past NSSEs.

*To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas? Writing clearly and effectively (2010, 2013, & 2016)*

*Wrote more than 4 papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages (2010)*

*How many papers, reports, or other writing products of the following lengths were assigned – up to 5 pages, 6-10 pages, or 11 pages or more (2013, 2016)*

An increase in positive responses to the first question might indicate a positive effect from the QEP. Past scores, in comparison to other institutions, were low. The question about the length of papers written does not correlate to a QEP SLO, but students' prior responses indicate that GWU students wrote fewer lengthy papers than at the comparison institutions, which might indicate less importance given to writing at GWU. It is possible that responses to this question might help the QEP gauge whether or not the emphasis on writing has increased.

The NSSE will next be administered in Spring 2019 and should provide the QEP with data to compare to the earlier years.

#### *2013 FSSE*

The FSSE is designed to complement the NSSE and is designed to focus on instructors' perceptions of student learning and engagement.

The 2013 FSSE question regarding whether or not faculty felt it was either important or very important for the university to increase learning support services for lower division students in areas such as tutoring and the Writing Center. A significant majority of faculty felt that this was important. Once student support has increased due to the QEP, it is possible responses to this question could change and should be monitored. In response to another question, QEP faculty placed far less importance on whether or not students should use a writing process that included multiple drafts and / or spent time in class on writing.

FSSE results should be monitored for any changes in the responses to this question as well, as they might indicate the QEP is having an effect on faculty attitudes towards writing pedagogy. As with the NSSE, the next FSSE given after 2017 Implementation should provide the QEP with data.

#### *Senior Exit Survey*

In a 2014 Exit Survey of graduating seniors in 2014, when asked which percentage of classes included papers with multiple drafts, of 215 responding students, 4.65% indicated that none of their classes did, 16.28% indicated 1-20% of their courses did, 16.28% that 21-40% did; 16.74% that 41-60% did; 19.07% that 61-80% did; 26.98% that 81-100% did. Results from future Exit

Surveys asking this question or other writing questions can give information about the effectiveness of the QEP.

**Following is a chart demonstrating how QEP Initiatives will be assessed:**

QEP Initiative	GWU Writing Rubric	CLA+	Surveys	NSSE	FSSE
WI Curriculum	X	X	X	X	X
Writing Fellows	X		X		X
Faculty training & support	X		X		

Following is a chart demonstrating how each SLOs will be assessed.

QEP SLOs	GWU Writing Rubric	CLA+	Surveys	NSSE	FSSE
1. Students will apply a guided writing process.	X	X	X	X	X
2. Students will produce writing that reflects an awareness of context and purpose, including the use of appropriate grammar and mechanics.	X	X			
3. Students will employ discipline-specific terminology and conventions of writing.	X				
4. Students will evaluate the credibility and relevance of sources, integrate sources with their own ideas, and document their research correctly.	X	X			

## X. Institutional Capability

Gardner-Webb University is committed to providing the necessary support and resources to support the QEP.

### A. Adequate Staffing for Instructors of Writing-Intensive Courses

During the QEP development process, Deans/Chairs were asked to evaluate the impact of the Writing-Intensive requirements on their staffing and budgets. The Registrar's Office and Academic Advising were also consulted on this issue. The QEP does not require the development of new classes; current classes are being adapted into Writing-Intensive ones. However, the 20-student cap on WI courses, especially those in Tier Two General Education courses might affect the number of sections offered and could create additional staffing needs (adjuncts or overloads for full-time faculty). Overall, at the current time, the impact on staffing is anticipated to be minimal. If additional staffing is needed, it will be mainly for Tier Two courses and possibly Tier Three, depending upon the size of the major.

**Tier One, ENGL 101/102:** English 101/102 have traditionally been capped at 20 students, and so the QEP will not change the number of sections offered each semester or the number of instructors needed.

**Tier Two, One General Education course, excluding ENGL 101/102.** The enrollment caps for these courses are not consistent. Some are capped at 25, others at 30. Actual enrollment is, in many sections, lower than the cap, which might reduce the need for additional staffing. The key to Tier Two will be planning efficiently so that the number of WI courses does not cause a significant increase in the number of non-WI courses needed. The QEP Committee, Deans/Chairs, and Academic Advising also must plan for an adequate number of WI and non-WI Gen Ed courses so that students can complete their schedules.

**Tier Three, Two courses in the majors.** The WI enrollment cap is not anticipated to increase the number of sections offered. Programs were asked to identify courses already required of their majors so that no new courses or sections would need to be created and staffed. The enrollment cap for these courses will be 20 students. For large majors, exceptions to the cap might be made in order to avoid impeding students' progress to graduation.

## B. Professional Development for Instructors of Writing-Intensive Courses

In January 2017 and again in May 2017, professional development by experts in leading faculty workshops will be provided for faculty intending to teach WI courses. Professional development will be required as a prerequisite to submitting a syllabus for WI approval and to teaching a WI course. The QEP Committee has chosen the UNCC branch of the National Writing Project (Dr. Cyndi Urbanski and Dr. Meaghan Rand) to conduct the professional development. The cost is \$7500 for a three-day workshop (15 hours of face-to-face time) and follow up support for a year for WI instructors which includes a Google Communities site with resources and individual support from Drs. Urbanski and Rand (via video chat, phone calls, email, etc.).

## C. Instructor Stipends

One \$500 stipend will be paid to instructors who participate in professional development, have their course WI approved, and teach at least two WI courses during the duration of the QEP. The stipend will be paid during the first semester teaching a WI course, after the completion of professional development and syllabus approval. Instructors are eligible for only one WI stipend, no matter how many WI courses they teach. It is anticipated that the number of stipends each year will be large at first but will taper over time. Stipends will be needed each year of the QEP, for new hires as well as current faculty who join the QEP.

**Tier One Stipends:** Currently, an average of ten-fifteen instructors teach English 101/102 each semester. The peak number needing stipends will occur in 2017-2018; however, there is, typically, a yearly overturn in adjunct faculty. New adjuncts will require professional development and stipends. Estimated cost of \$5,000 to \$7,000 in 2017-2018 and \$1,000-\$2,000 a year thereafter for instructors new to WI.

**Tier Two Stipends:** Beginning Fall 2017-Spring 2018, sections will need to be offered to accommodate transfer students as well as students who complete ENGL 102 in the Fall. This number is estimated to be 200 students, and so at least ten sections will need to be offered, three in the Fall and seven in the Spring. This gives an estimated cost of \$5,000 in stipends in 2017-2018. This same model can be repeated for 2018-2019, the first year the graduation requirement is implemented for an estimated stipend cost of \$5,000. An estimated cost of \$1,000-\$2,000 a year thereafter for instructors new to Tier Two.

**Tier Three Stipends:** The estimated total number of Tier Three WI courses for all majors is 48. Due to transfer students, as many of these courses as possible will need to be offered immediately in the pilot year of 2017-2018. However, since the first course is intended to come early in the major's course of student, it can be estimated that in 2017-2018, half of the Tier Three Stipends will go into effect and half over the next two years, 2018-2019 and 2019-

2020. As program plan their WI course rotations, these estimates can be revised. Estimate for 2017-2018 is \$12,000 and \$1,000-\$2,000 thereafter. Estimate for 2018-2019 is \$12,000 and \$1,000-\$2,000 thereafter for instructors new to WI.

**\*\*\*Note about stipends:** Instructors in majors whose schools/departments also house Gen Ed will teach WI courses in more than one Tier. Instructors are only eligible for one stipend, no matter how many WI courses they teach. Therefore, this is another variable that will affect costs. “Double-dipping,” or faculty teaching more than one WI-course, will result in fewer stipends, in some cases.

#### D. Writing Fellows Program Stipends

A \$500 semester stipend will be paid to Writing Fellows. Fifteen tutors are anticipated for fall and spring semesters for a total of 30 stipends per year, at \$15,000 per year.

#### E. Additional support for the Writing Center

The current Director of the Writing Center was asked to provide information about the impact of the QEP WI requirement on the Writing Center. The Director made the following recommendations:

- 1. Revised Writing Center Director Position:** the current Director’s contract carries only a one-course release per semester. It is recommended that the position be revised for a three-course release per semester, in keeping with how the Writing Center has grown as well as with best practices for Writing Centers. In addition, the increasing difficulty in finding appropriate graduate assistants to help with administrative work requires more time from the Director. Minimum requirements for the position would be a Master’s degree in an appropriate field. Administrative experience would be helpful. In addition, the Writing Center Director will teach one composition course for the English Department each fall and spring semester.
- 2. Additional Space for Writing Center Tutoring:** It is recommended that additional space be acquired for expanded services. A room in the Tucker Student Center be renovated to provide additional space for the Writing Center. This will require noise-dampening partitions and furniture. Another location such as Dover Memorial Library is also a possibility.
- 3. Additional Tutors:** It is also recommended that the Writing Center will need an additional 20-24 hours per week in TUG student tutors. An additional graduate assistant could also meet this demand as GAs work 20 hours per week. Estimated cost for

additional TUG student tutoring: 20-24 hours per week for 13.5 weeks of the semester at \$9.50 an hour is an increase of \$2,565 to \$3,078 each semester and \$5,130 to \$6,156 each year.

#### F. Stipend and course releases for the QEP Director

This position is a full-time faculty member given two course releases for QEP duties and a \$2000 stipend in Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters. This would last for the duration of the QEP. Estimate cost of a two-course load reduction per semester/4 per year, at \$2100 a course, is \$8,400/year. Stipend cost is \$6,000/year.

#### G. Support for Assessment

The Vice President for Institutional Planning and Effectiveness and appropriate staff will fill this role. This position is anticipated to be essential to the assessment of the QEP, in particular how the Rubric scores are processed so that the data can be used to make curriculum decisions.

#### H. CLA+ Standardized Testing

GWU would like to use an external assessment tool as an additional measure of improvement in student writing and to assess pedagogical practices. The QEP Committee recommends the Collegiate Learning Assessment+ exam as it best correlates to the QEP SLOs. GWU can also use the results from the CLA+ to assess how the university is meeting its General Education Learning Goals.

GWU plans to test students in their first and then in their final semester with the CLA+. The cost for each student tested is \$35.00 and includes any additional follow up services or needs. In addition, since the test is 90 minutes, computer lab space must be reserved and faculty/staff must proctor the exams.

Incentives for students must also be considered. In fall semesters, the test could be a requirement or extra credit for a course such as UNIV 111/101 or ENGL 101/102. In spring semesters, students could be provided with a \$50 credit towards their graduation cap and gown as an incentive.

**Anticipated costs:** 100 students tested each fall and spring semester: \$7,000 per year of the QEP. The Spring 2016 baseline testing of 100 seniors represents a cost of \$3500. The cap and gown incentive will cost \$5,000 each Spring, 2016-2022, for \$3,500 total for the QEP.

## I. Marketing and Promotion

The Director of Creative Services will provide staff to create a website, create a visual design/identity for the QEP, and create electronic and print documents. Costs might include printing fliers for mailings to students and creating signs.

**Below are two charts. One details the budget for the QEP Implementation phrase; the other details the budget needed prior to Implementation (Fall 2017).**

### Budget for 2016-2017 QEP Needs Prior to Fall 2017 Full Pilot

Item (letter corresponds to narrative above)	Cost
B. Professional Development, Jan and May	\$7,500 each, \$15,000 total
F. QEP Director Course Releases and Stipend  Four course releases: \$8,400 Stipends for Fall, Spring, Summer: \$6,000	\$14,400
H. CLA+ for 100 graduating seniors in Spring 2016.	\$3,500  \$5,000 student incentive (\$50/student credit towards cap and gown for 100 students)
I. Marketing and Promotion	Costs unknown at this time; still under development.
QEP Director and one Committee member attending SACSCOC December 2016 Meeting	\$1050 registration fee for two \$312 est. for hotel \$120 est. Travel/food
Estimated total for 2016-2017	\$39,382

**Budget for QEP Pilot (2017-2018) and Implementation (2018-2022)**

Item (letter corresponds to narrative above)	Cost
A. Additional Staffing Needs – adjuncts or overloads	Impact is hoped to be minimal. Some cost is expected.
<p>C. Instructor WI Stipends</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Tier One</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Tier Two</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Tier Three</p>	<p>These are estimates. Also, please note that stipends are “one time only” (faculty can receive a stipend only once, no matter how many WI courses they teach) and will be front loaded into the first two-three years.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">\$5,000-\$7,000 (2017-2018); \$1,000-\$2,000/year thereafter</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">\$5,000 (2017-2018); \$5,000 (2018-2019); \$1,000-\$2,000/year thereafter</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">\$12,000 (2017-2018); \$12,000 (2018-2020); \$1,000-\$2,000/year thereafter</p>
D. Writing Fellows Stipends	\$15,000/year, 2017-2022
<p>E. Additional Support for the Writing Center</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Revised Writing Center Director Position</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Additional Student Tutors</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Proposed additional space</p>	<p>Estimated \$42,000</p> <p>\$5,130 to \$6,156 per year;</p> <p>Need estimate for any renovations including noise-dampening partitions and furniture.</p>

F.QEP Director 2 course load reduction per semester/4 per year, \$2100 a course	\$8,400/year, 2017-2022
Semester stipend	\$6,000/year, 2017-2022
H. CLA+ exam	\$7,000/year for the exam. 2017-2022  \$5,000/year for senior student incentives (\$50 credit/student towards cap and gown fees)
I. Marketing and Promotion	Costs still unknown/under development
Estimated total for 2017-2018	\$110,530-\$113,556
Estimated total for 2018-2019	\$106,530-\$108,556
Estimated total for 2019-2020	\$91,530-\$95,556
Estimated total for 2020-2021	\$91,530-\$95,556
Estimated total for 2021-2022	\$91,530-\$95,556

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3. List WI Designated Assignment(s) within the proposed course: Indicate how the WI SLOs for the appropriate Tier are addressed within the assignment(s). (Attach additional information if needed.)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Explain the methods of course instruction that will help students achieve the Writing-Intensive Student Learning Outcomes for the appropriate Tier.

**The QEP Rubric must be used to assess at least one assignment in the WI Designated Course. The Rubric will be available for assessment throughout the semester. The deadline for submitting the Rubric is the day and time final grades are due that semester.**

**Also, the instructor is requested to submit an evaluation of how Writing-Intensive Instruction impacted the course. This information will be used for assessment purposes to improve WI training and instruction.**

**All assessment information can be made available to the appropriate School or Department for its own needs.**

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**ROUTING:** Please submit a copy of this form and a course syllabus to the WI Designated Course Committee for review. The WIDCC will report approved WI courses to the General

Education Committee or the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, as appropriate, for information and communication.

Approved by **QEP Committee**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Chair Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Reported to **Course Instructor**

Date reported: \_\_\_\_\_

Reported to **General Education Committee (Tier Two only)**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Chair Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Reported to **Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (Tier Three only)**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Chair Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Reported to appropriate **Associate Provost**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Assoc. Provost Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Reported to **Registrar's Office**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Received by \_\_\_\_\_

Returned to **QEP Director**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Returned to the **appropriate Dean/Chair** of the School/Department of the WI Course

Date sent to Dean/Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please submit all Forms and syllabi to the QEP Director for presentation to the Writing-Intensive Course-Designation Committee.**

**SLOs Further Defined – This information is intended to help instructors prepare for submitting courses for WI approval and to help instructors prepare to teach WI courses. It is not intended as a supplement or guide to the QEP Writing Rubric.**

<p>The QEP SLOs are further defined below in alignment with WPA Outcomes, which are based on decades of research and experience in writing pedagogy. All quoted material is from the 2014 Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA) Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition (FYC). These Outcomes also include recommendations for instructors in the disciplines to align writing instruction across the curriculum and to encourage transfer of writing skills from ENGL 101/102.  <a href="http://wpacouncil.org/positions/outcomes.html">http://wpacouncil.org/positions/outcomes.html</a></p>	<p>How does the course implement the SLOs associated with its Tier?</p> <p>Evidence can be shown in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course SLOs</li> <li>• Instructional plans/materials, and</li> <li>• Writing assignments.</li> </ul> <p><i>At least one writing assignment must be used for QEP assessment.</i></p>			
<p><b>QEP SLOs</b></p>	<p><b>Tier One ENGL 101/102</b></p>	<p><b>Tier Two 1 Gen Ed post- ENGL 102</b></p>	<p><b>Tier Three, First Course</b></p>	<p><b>Tier Three, Second Course</b></p>
<p><b>1. Students will apply a guided writing process</b>          The WPA defines a guided writing process as working on a writing project in multiple steps or stages. A writing process is flexible and adaptable, and what it looks like depends upon the writer, project, instructor, and / or discipline. Feedback before submission of a final draft is an important step in a writing process, so that ideas can be developed and refined before final editing and proofreading.</p> <p>Students need guided support in their writing process and accountability for utilizing a process. Instructors will need to assess if the writing process has been applied.</p> <p>A writing process <i>might</i> include the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prewriting such as brainstorming</li> <li>• Scientific methodology such as lab/field experiments or data collection</li> <li>• Topic or project proposals</li> <li>• Research questions</li> <li>• Research and results shared in a bibliography or other format</li> <li>• Planning and outlining</li> </ul>	<p><b>X</b></p>	<p><b>X</b></p>	<p><b>X</b></p>	<p><b>X</b></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drafting</li> <li>• Feedback and collaboration with others</li> <li>• Revision</li> <li>• Editing for stylistic conventions and proofreading for errors.</li> <li>• Reflection upon the writing process (metacognition)</li> </ul>				
	<b>Tier One ENGL 101/102</b>	<b>Tier Two 1 Gen Ed post- ENGL 102</b>	<b>Tier Three First Course</b>	<b>Tier Three Second Course</b>
<p><b>2. Students will write effectively for a context and purpose, including the use of appropriate grammar and mechanics</b></p> <p>The WPA defines this SLO as Rhetorical Knowledge, or, “the basis of composing. Writers develop rhetorical knowledge by negotiating purpose, audience, context...as they compose a variety of texts for different situations.” Rhetorical Knowledge gives students “the ability to analyze contexts and audiences and then to act on that analysis in comprehending and creating texts.” This means that students should develop the ability to analyze their audience and the context for writing in order to create more effective written works, both academically and professionally. This SLO is also implemented in all three Tiers as students need instruction as to how context and purpose varies from Tier to Tier, discipline to discipline, and assignment to assignment.</p> <p>Students need instruction on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who they are writing for and what that audience’s expectations are</li> <li>• The purpose of the writing assignment</li> <li>• What form or genre their writing should take and the “rules” of that form (the “type” of writing assignment).</li> <li>• What type of language should be used (appropriate grammar and mechanics as well as voice, tone, and level of formality)</li> <li>• “The kinds of critical thinking important to” the writing assignment (can include disciplinary audience expectations)</li> <li>• “The kinds of questions, problems, and evidence” expected in the assignment (can include disciplinary audience expectations)</li> </ul>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>

	Tier One ENGL 101/102	Tier Two 1 Gen Ed post- ENGL 102	Tier Three First Course	Tier Three Second Course
<p><b>3. Students will employ discipline-specific terminology and conventions of writing</b></p> <p>The WPA defines conventions as including not only the formal rules of grammar, mechanics, punctuation, etc., but also the formal and informal rules of genres of writing (types of writing assignments) – that is, the “rules” that govern the content and form of writing.</p> <p>Conventions are the result of “a history of use and common expectations between writers and readers.” Conventions vary from discipline to discipline and respond to differing expectations of genre, discipline, and the occasion for writing. Even the conventions for a writing genre such as “thesis-driven argument” can vary, depending upon the discipline.</p> <p>In order to become successful writers, the WPA recommends that students receive instruction across the curriculum in how to “understand, analyze, and negotiate conventions for purpose, audience, and genre.” This includes everything from appropriate design and format to structure, paragraphing, tone, and mechanics.</p> <p>Students need instruction on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discipline-specific <i>approaches</i> to writing and discipline-specific <i>forms</i> of writing</li> <li>• The vocabulary, terms, and concepts of a discipline that are expected to be used in writing as well as the style, tone, and structure of discipline-specific writing</li> <li>• “The reasons behind conventions of usage, specialized vocabulary, format, and citation systems in fields or disciplines”</li> <li>• “Strategies for controlling conventions in their fields or disciplines”</li> <li>• “Factors that influence the ways work is designed, documented, and disseminated in a field”</li> </ul>		X	X	X

	Tier One ENGL 101/102	Tier Two 1 Gen Ed post- ENGL 102	Tier Three First Course	Tier Three Second Course
<p><b>4. Students will evaluate the credibility and relevance of sources, integrate sources with their own ideas, and document their research correctly.</b></p> <p>This SLO correlates with GWU Information Literacy Level Three Learning Outcomes. It also correlates to the WPA Outcome of Critical Thinking, Reading, and Composing. Critical thinking is defined as “the ability to analyze, synthesize, interpret, and evaluate ideas, information, situations, and texts.” This skill is integral to evaluating sources and integrating research into a student’s ideas.</p> <p>Students need instruction on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Strategies for reading a range of texts in a field”</li> <li>• “Ways to make informed decisions about intellectual property issues” appropriate to the discipline</li> <li>• Discipline-specific research methods</li> <li>• Discipline-specific citation styles and formats</li> <li>• Evaluating sources</li> <li>• Effective use of sources in their own writing, as appropriate for the form of writing (genre) and the discipline</li> </ul>		X	X	X

# Appendix B: Writing Fellows Application and Recommendation Forms and Contract

## Writing Fellows Application for Fall 2017

Completed applications should be submitted to Dr. Cheryl Duffus, [cduffus@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:cduffus@gardner-webb.edu). Once a completed application is received, a confirmation email will be sent to the applicant. A complete application will consist of the following three components. Each component should be sent as attachments in an email. Attachments should be either MS Word or PDFs. Attachments should be named in the following way: Last name First initial Application component. For example: Duffus C Writing Assignment.

1. This application. Please use your computer to complete this application.
2. You must also submit a sample of a writing assignment done for a GWU course.
  - The sample writing assignment must be accompanied by an explanation of your writing process for that writing assignment – the writing choices you made from beginning the assignment to the end as well as an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the writing sample.
  - The sample writing assignment should not contain the professor’s grade or comments.
3. You must also complete a peer edit of a sample student writing assignment provided to you.
  - The peer edit should point out the strengths and weaknesses of the writing. Complete the peer edit using the highlight/comment functions in MS Word. Consider the following:
    - organization and structure;
    - logical flow of ideas;
    - communication of a central point or message;
    - use of details and examples to illustrate main points;
    - writing style appropriate for an academic assignment;
    - correctness of grammar and mechanics.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_ cell phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

GWU email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic standing as of **Fall 2017**:

Freshman \_\_\_\_\_

Sophomore \_\_\_\_\_

Junior \_\_\_\_\_

Senior \_\_\_\_\_

Who were your ENGL 101/102 professors? \_\_\_\_\_. If you did not take ENGL 101/102 at GWU, please list another GWU professor(s) who is familiar with your writing.

Declared or intended major \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a student athlete? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, what sport?

Are you currently receiving work study funds? \_\_\_\_\_

If so, where do you work? \_\_\_\_\_

Time commitment per week:

1. List all organizations/clubs that you are an active member of. Please indicate if you hold an officer position in the organizations/clubs.

1.

2.

3.

2. Will you hold a Resident Assistant (RA) position next fall? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Will you hold a Teaching Assistant (TA) position next fall?

1. Department: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Department: \_\_\_\_\_

4. List other jobs you have on campus.

1.

2.

3.

5. List jobs you have off campus.

1.

2.

6. List all service/volunteer projects that you participate in on a regular basis.

1.

2.

Please list **any other** activities that you will be involved in either on or off campus next fall – be as specific as possible.

7. What is your current GPA? \_\_\_\_\_

If you are not satisfied with your current GPA, please explain problems you had in courses that contributed to your GPA.

What steps do you intend to take to raise your GPA during the next two semesters?

8. Please explain why you would like to be a Writing Fellow. You may include a discussion of your own writing experiences, leadership and mentoring experiences, knowledge of particular disciplines (majors/minors), and future career goals.

# Writing Fellows Recommendation Form – Gardner-Webb University

## Fall 2017

**Each Writing Fellows applicant must submit two recommendations.**

1. The first recommendation must be from a GWU faculty member who can attest to the student’s writing and academic performance as well as the student’s work ethic, maturity, communication skills, organization skills, ability to work with a diverse group of peers, and ability to work one-on-one with a faculty member.
2. The second recommendation can be from a GWU faculty or staff member and can attest to the student’s work ethic, maturity, communication skills, organization skills, ability to work with a diverse group of peers, and ability to work one-on-one with a faculty member.
3. After an application is received, a confirmation email will be sent to both the recommender and the applicant.

Below to be filled out by Applicant:

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Recommender’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Recommender’s Position/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Parts I and II below to be completed by Recommender:

**Part I:**

Length of time you have known the applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
 In what capacity: \_\_\_\_\_

Rate the candidate in the following areas using the scale below. Please remember that both 5 (excellent) and 1 (poor) are extreme ratings and should only be used sparingly.

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| 1-Poor          | 4-Above Average                        |
| 2-Below Average | 5-Excellent                            |
| 3-Average       | N/A-Not Applicable – Unable to Observe |

Leadership	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Motivation	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Independence	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Initiative	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Oral Communication	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Written Communication	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Computer/Technology Competency	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Organizational	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Personal Integrity	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Maturity	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Dependability	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
Ability to work with a diverse group of peers	1	2	3	4	5	N/A

Please select all that apply.

- \_\_\_\_\_ - I approached the student regarding applying for a Writing Fellows position.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ - The student approached me for a recommendation.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ - I highly recommend this student to be a Writing Fellow.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ - I recommend this student to be a Writing Fellow.

- \_\_\_\_\_ - I am hesitant to recommend this student to be a Writing Fellow.
- \_\_\_\_\_ - I do not recommend this student to be a Writing Fellow.

Comments for above selection: (optional)

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**Part II: Written Evaluation. Please select either A or B below.**

- A. If you are a faculty member familiar with the student’s writing abilities and academic performance, please include your written evaluation of those skills. You may also evaluate the student’s abilities in the following areas: work ethic, maturity, communication skills, organization skills, ability to work with a diverse group of peers, and ability to work one-on-one with a faculty member.
  
- B. If you are a faculty or staff member not familiar with the student’s writing abilities and academic performance, please include your written evaluation of that student’s abilities in the following areas: work ethic, maturity, communication skills, organization skills, ability to work with a diverse group of peers, and ability to work one-on-one with a faculty member.

Please return the form to the address below in a sealed envelope with your signature across the flap after sealing.

Dr. Cheryl Duffus  
QEP Director  
Gardner-Webb University  
Box 7275  
Boiling Springs, NC 28017

## **Contract between Writing Fellows and Instructors of WI Course**

The following contract is to establish appropriate expectations and responsibilities for both the Fellow and the Instructor in order to create a productive, professional relationship.

1. Writing Fellows are paired with instructors the semester prior to working together. At that time, both Fellows and Instructors will attend a group orientation meeting.
2. Prior to the beginning of the semester, the Fellow and the Instructor will meet to:
  - Provide the Fellow with the same course information students receive (adding Fellows to Bb is the instructor's choice).
  - Establish a meeting schedule for the semester. This is to facilitate on-going discussion and feedback.
3. At mid-semester, the Fellow and the Instructor will complete a check-in evaluation survey for the QEP Director.
4. At the end of the semester, the Fellow and the Instructor will complete a self-assessment evaluating the role and effectiveness of the Fellows experience and to provide feedback for improvement.

### *Fellow Responsibilities and Expectations*

- Provide writing advice and support for one course of no more than 20 students per semester.
- The course must have at least two writing assignments Fellows can work with students on (semester-long projects scaffolded in smaller assignments also would work).
- Fellows will read drafts, make comments, and conduct individual conferences with students to discuss writing strategies, especially revision, and to address any needs in the students' writing process.
- Fellows will communicate student writing needs to the course instructor.
- Fellows are to work with the instructor and students on student writing; Fellows are not to perform other duties for instructors or students such as administrative support, grading, performing research, teaching course content, substituting in an instructor's absence, filling out the QEP Writing Rubric, submitting grades or progress reports. Fellows must inform the QEP Director immediately if these rules are violated.
- Fellows will strictly abide by Academic Honesty policies.
- Fellows will also receive university-training in Title IX as well as guidelines for behavior and communication to create professional boundaries between Fellows and students and Fellows and instructors.

### *Instructor Responsibilities and Expectations*

- Instructors will provide the Writing Fellow with all course materials to enable the Fellow to be effective.

- Instructors will support the Writing Fellow as a professional tutor.
- Instructors will be available for questions and will establish a regular meeting schedule with the Fellow.
- Instructors will not require the Fellow to perform duties outside of writing tutoring. This includes administrative support, grading, performing research, teaching course content, substituting in an instructor's absence, filling out the QEP Writing Rubric, submitting grades or progress reports. Instructors who do not abide by these rules will be disqualified from the Writing Fellows program permanently.
- Instructors will also receive Title IX training as well as training on the role of a Writing Fellow and maintaining professional boundaries with Fellows and between Fellows and students in the course.

# Appendix C: QEP Writing Rubric

## GWU Writing Rubric The Writing Connection: A Scaffolded Approach to Improving Undergraduate Student Writing Skills

TUG Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Classification: \_\_\_\_\_  
Assignment: \_\_\_\_\_

SLO & Description	Not Evident (0 Points)	Needs Substantial Improvement (1 Point)	Needs Some Improvement (2 Points)	Meets Expectation (3 Points)	Exceeds Expectations (4 Points)	Final Student Score
<p><b>1. Guided Writing Process: How well the steps in the process are completed (SLO 1)</b></p> <p><b>Examples of possible steps:</b>                      Pre-writing                      Organizing                      Drafting                      Revising/Editing                      Publish/Final</p>	Outcome not evident at all.	Inconsistent or inappropriate participation in a guided writing process.	Demonstrates an awareness of a guided writing process.  (only cosmetic or superficial participation, correcting only surface errors, for example)	Consistent in completing the steps of a guided writing process.  (greater level of participation, revises beyond surface errors but does not grapple with greater issues of critical thinking and complexity)	Mastery in utilizing a guided writing process to improve writing.  (student actively participates in revision of writing to achieve more effective organization and engages in deeper critical thinking as re-examines ideas)	

SLO & Description	Not Evident (0 Points)	Needs Substantial Improvement (1 Point)	Needs Some Improvement (2 Points)	Meets Expectation (3 Points)	Exceeds Expectations (4 Points)	Final Student Score
<p><b>2A. Context and Purpose (includes awareness of Audience) (SLO 2)</b></p> <p><b>Context: The occasion or situation for writing. Formal, semi-formal, informal? Work / school / other? Addresses audience appropriately.</b></p> <p><b>What media is used to create the text?</b></p> <p><b>Is there anything going on in the discipline or “the world outside the classroom (politics, social issues, cultural events, natural disasters, etc.)” that will affect readers?</b></p> <p><b>Purpose: analysis, argument, report, etc. The type of writing.</b></p>	Outcome not evident at all.	Inconsistent or inappropriate attention to context and purpose, and/or to the assigned task(s) (e.g., expectations of instructor or self as audience).	<p>Demonstrates an awareness of context and purpose, and to the assigned task(s) (begins to show awareness of audience’s perceptions and assumptions).</p> <p>(attempts to address required context and purpose, but gets off track into a different context and/or purpose)</p>	<p>Consistent awareness of context and purpose, and to the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with audience, purpose, and context).</p> <p>(consistent focus on context and purpose throughout)</p>	<p>Mastery in understanding context and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.</p> <p>(professionally incorporates context and purpose within the expectations of the assignment – of publishable quality)</p>	

SLO & Description	Not Evident (0 Points)	Needs Substantial Improvement (1 Point)	Needs Some Improvement (2 Points)	Meets Expectation (3 Points)	Exceeds Expectations (4 Points)	Final Student Score
<b>2B. Grammar/Mechanics (SLO 2)</b> Covers grammar as well as punctuation and mechanics (spelling, capitalization, use of abbreviations)	Excessive, unacceptable errors.	Multiple errors.	Some errors.	Minimal errors.	Virtually error-free.	
<b>3. Conventions of Writing in the Discipline (SLO 3)</b>	Outcome not evident at all.	Inconsistent or inappropriate system for basic organization and style.	Demonstrates an awareness of expectations appropriate to the specific discipline for basic organization, content, and style.	Consistent use of appropriate conventions particular to the specific discipline, including organization, content, and style.	Mastery of conventions particular to the specific discipline, including organization, content, and style.	
<b>4A. Evaluates the Credibility and Relevance of Sources (SLO 4)</b>	Outcome not evident at all.	Inappropriate selection of sources. Either not credible and / or not relevant to the purpose.	Demonstrates the ability to select credible and relevant sources but only on a superficial level.	Consistent selection of credible and relevant sources. . Has some depth and breadth of research.	Mastery in selecting credible and relevant sources that demonstrate depth and breadth of research.	

SLO & Description	Not Evident (0 Points)	Needs Substantial Improvement (1 Point)	Needs Some Improvement (2 Points)	Meets Expectation (3 Points)	Exceeds Expectations (4 Points)	Final Student Score
<b>4B. Integrates Sources With Their Own Ideas (SLO 4)</b>	Outcome not evident at all	Inconsistent or inappropriate integration of sources with their own ideas.	Demonstrates the ability to integrate sources with their own ideas but lacks #1-#3 under Exceeds Expectations.	Consistent integration of sources with their own ideas. Meets some but not all of #1-#3 under Exceeds Expectations.	Mastery in integrating sources with their own ideas on a professional, publishable level. 1) Smooth flow in progression of thought throughout. 2) Sources engaged so that the student becomes a voice of authority on the topic. 3) Engages with ideas in addition to their own. Uses sources to foster new ideas.	
<b>4C. Documents Research Correctly (SLO 4)</b>	Outcome not evident at all.	Inconsistent or inappropriate documentation of research (e.g., multiple errors).	Demonstrates the ability to document research correctly (e.g., some errors).	Consistent in documenting research correctly (e.g., minimal errors).	Mastery in documenting research correctly (e.g., virtually error free).	