QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN
Texas A&M University-Kingsville
March 3-5, 2015
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Executive Summary

The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for Texas A&M University-Kingsville marshals ideas, expertise, physical resources, and campus-wide cooperation for the purpose of rectifying a recognized shortcoming in undergraduate student learning. To address this shortcoming, the primary goal (the student learning outcome goal) of the QEP is *Improved Student Writing Proficiency*. To bring this vision to fruition requires that the University dedicate specific facilities, processes, and individuals to the cause. Thus, the second goal (the process and infrastructure goal) of the QEP is *Increased Support for Student Learning in the Area of Writing Proficiency*. Ultimately, the University hopes to produce student writers confident in using writing as a way of thinking and of communicating effectively in their disciplines, professions, and/or graduate studies, as we improve our writing infrastructure and writing instruction. These plans are expressed in the third goal (the aspirational goal), *A University-Wide Culture of Writing*. The commitment and plan demonstrated in this document affirm to SACS-COC and to the greater University community the institution’s resolve to achieve these goals.

Why writing? Texas A&M-Kingsville admits many students whose scores on nationally calibrated tests of writing proficiency hover far below the national average. Unfortunately, students’ response to the National Survey of Student Engagement indicate relatively few experiences with writing instruction while on campus; thus, predictably, graduating seniors earn writing proficiency scores well below the national average for seniors. These facts, along with the commonly held perception among members of the University community that students enter the University sorely underprepared as writers, spawned the initiative to take significant and meaningful measures to improve writing proficiency. As the faculty, along with student and academic governance bodies, considered options for the QEP, the plan to improve student writing proficiency emerged as the favored plan.

In support of our goals, we have devised three broad strategic objectives. The first objective is to establish a university-wide Undergraduate Writing Center, directed by a qualified faculty member and staffed by trained peer tutors who will supplement the writing instruction students receive in the classroom. The second objective is to bolster the writing experiences of students throughout their academic careers by focusing attention on the number, quality, and efficacy of Writing Intensive Courses across the curriculum. The third objective is to improve the teaching of writing on campus by providing faculty development programs and experiences. One such program is the creation of a cohort of Writing Faculty Fellows (experienced teachers of Writing Intensive Courses) who will serve as mentors to new writing intensive faculty. Other programs and experiences will include individualized support for Writing Intensive Faculty, as well as instructional resources and workshops for all interested faculty—all provided under the auspices of the Undergraduate Writing Center.

To determine the success of these strategic objectives in achieving our three stated goals, the University will rigorously assess outcomes.
from all aspects of the QEP. The first set of assessment activities, already begun, is the collection of baseline data regarding measureable levels of student writing proficiency, and student and faculty perceptions of teaching and learning experiences. The Undergraduate Writing Center will coordinate the continued use of nationally calibrated measures of writing proficiency, as well as national and local surveys of faculty and student perceptions. Additionally, trained quality raters will assess writing from artifacts created in Writing Intensive Courses against pre-selected rubrics. The Undergraduate Writing Center Director will report assessment findings to University stakeholders, and will consult regularly with the QEP Advisory Committee. The University, through the Center Director, will respond to findings swiftly and doggedly to ensure continuous improvement in program effectiveness. In this way the QEP will remain sufficiently agile to adjust expectations, program delivery methods, and/or infrastructure as deemed appropriate and in the best interest of students.
II Planning Process
Planning Texas A&M-Kingsville’s QEP: A Culture of Writing

Texas A&M-Kingsville’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) was developed from analysis of survey and student performance data and from broad-based, inclusive campus discussions with faculty, staff, and students. To support this campus initiative fully, University President Dr. Steven Tallant appointed a Quality Enhancement Task Force in September 2012. Chaired by the Dean of the Honors College, this task force was comprised of faculty and staff from each of the five academic colleges, plus a representative from the Honors College, Student Affairs, and Student Access, and two representatives from the student body.

The process by which the University selected and refined the focus of the QEP had three phases (Figure 1). First, a “foundation” phase which included a review of student performance on standardized tests, student satisfaction survey data, and institutional needs and opportunities to establish an evidentiary groundwork for the topic selection. This was followed by a “topic selection” phase (September 2012-May 2013), during which the University considered possible QEP topics and eventually chose to focus on the improvement of student writing. Finally, the plan underwent a “topic development and implementation” phase (May 2013-December 2014), during which the University refined the chosen topic by identifying learning outcomes and developing a comprehensive implementation and assessment plan.

Phase I: Foundation

Several university initiatives preceded the formal launch of the QEP planning process, providing a framework of survey and student performance data that helped identify student writing proficiency as a fundamental factor influencing student success.

ETS Proficiency Profile

In the fall of 2010, the Texas A&M-Kingsville’s Office of Institutional Research began administering the ETS Proficiency Profile to freshmen during fall semesters and seniors during spring semesters. During this time period, both freshman and seniors scored significantly lower than their peer group in all ETS subject areas, with the lowest scores in writing as demonstrated by data collected in academic year 2013 (Table 1).

National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE)

From 2001, Texas A&M-Kingsville administered the NSSE every other year to freshmen and senior students enrolled in the spring semester. NSSE responses for questions pertaining specifically to writing indicate that Texas A&M-Kingsville students have less intensive and fewer writing experiences than their peers, particularly at the senior level (Table 2).

Writing Intensive Requirement for Graduation

Initially developed by the College of Arts and Sciences in 2011, the University’s Writing Intensive Course Requirement was intended to better prepare students for careers, graduate school, and professional school by engaging them in writing, both to learn about their discipline through writing and to learn how professionals in their disciples are expected to write. Arts and Sciences students were required to successfully complete at least one designated upper level Writing Intensive Course. These courses required students to write a minimum of 5,000 words (approximately 20 pages of double-spaced typed text) in discipline-specific papers and assignments.
Figure 1. Phases of QEP Topic Development

### Phase 1
**ETS Proficiency Profile (2010-Present)**
- Survey of first-time freshmen during fall semesters, seniors during spring semesters
- Both freshmen and seniors scored significantly lower than peers at other doctoral/research universities, with the lowest scores in writing subject area

**NSSE (2001-Present)**
- Survey of freshman and senior students, alternating years
- Responses for questions pertaining to writing indicate that students have less intensive and fewer writing experiences than their peers, particularly at the senior level

**Writing Intensive Requirement (2012-Present)**
- University adopted a writing intensive course requirement for graduation to address student writing needs
- Faculty began the development of discipline-specific writing intensive courses

### Phase 2
**QEP Topic Selection**
- Campus-wide task force created to develop potential topics for QEP. Focus was on institutional mission and strategic plan, student success data, general education changes, and the specific needs of each college.
- Broad stakeholder input on proposed topics during spring of 2013

**Response to ETS Scores**
- Adhoc committee created to analyze data and issues related to student success on the ETS Proficiency Profile. Focus on the identification of barriers to student success and to suggest programs to eliminate these barriers.

### Phase 3
**Refine Student Writing QEP**
- Select appropriate student learning outcomes
- Identify support services to offer and prepare implementation plans
- Develop assessment plan
- Planning:
  - budget
  - facilities
  - faculty/staff development
  - administration

**Student Writing Proficiency**
selected as QEP topic, Summer 2013
### Table 1. ETS Writing Assessment Mean Sub-scores, Fall 2012 and Spring 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Freshmen Fall 2012</th>
<th>Seniors Spring 2013</th>
<th>Percent of Schools with Lower Scores</th>
<th>Percent of Schools with Lower Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kingsville Mean Sub-score</strong></td>
<td><strong>National Mean Sub-score</strong></td>
<td><strong>Kingsville Mean Sub-score</strong></td>
<td><strong>National Mean Sub-score</strong></td>
<td><strong>Kingsville Mean Sub-score</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>107.5</td>
<td>109.9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>109.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>112.7</td>
<td>115.7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>115.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>110.8</td>
<td>113.0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>112.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>109.9</td>
<td>111.9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>112.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2. NSSE Results, Freshmen and Seniors, Spring 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Freshmen</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
<th>NSSE 2013</th>
<th>Freshmen</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
<th>NSSE 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Estimated number of papers, reports, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many papers, reports, or other writing tasks of the following length have you been assigned?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to 5 pages</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 6 and 10 pages</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 pages or more</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated number of assigned pages of student writing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much did your experience at this institution contribute to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the area of writing and speaking clearly?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instructors were required to provide feedback on the students’ writing through the processes of drafting and revising. (Writing Intensive Curriculum requirements and examples are available in Appendix A and B).

Soon after its initial proposal, this initiative was adopted by all other academic colleges and began to be phased in as a university-wide graduation requirement in fall of 2012. Departments were encouraged to develop program-specific Writing Intensive Courses within their major that utilize a combination of formal and informal writing assignments. To facilitate the designation of courses as Writing Intensive, the University established a faculty committee to review applications and syllabi for the proposed courses.

Phase II: Topic Selection (October 2012-May 2013)

The University’s formal selection of student writing proficiency as the QEP topic was the result of a convergence between the formal process for choosing a QEP topic and a parallel effort engaged in institutional analysis and planning to improve student success by addressing student skill deficiencies highlighted by student scores on the ETS Proficiency Profile. This hybrid approach combined the benefits of a broad consultative process that sought input from across the institution with the benefits of a more centralized process in which initiatives emerged out of the analysis of data.

Formal QEP Topic Selection

The Quality Enhancement Task Force, with representation from across campus, began the formal topic selection process for the QEP topic in October of 2012. Monthly discussions included consideration of the University’s Mission and Strategic Plan, recent student performance on the ETS Proficiency Profile, how the QEP might relate to the University’s first year experience and the new general education curriculum (under development at that time), and the specific needs of each academic college. By December of 2012, these discussions had produced two possible QEP topics: 1) curricular/co-curricular service learning specifically targeting second-year students in order to enhance their engagement on campus and in their major discipline; and 2) development of a writing improvement initiative to include the formation of a writing center to support student writing improvement.

During the 2013 spring semester, the Task Force opened the discussion to a wide range of campus stakeholders including administrative councils (Academic Deans Council and Council of Chairs), faculty in each of the academic colleges, and students. In January of 2013, the Task Force presented these topics at each academic college’s spring meeting, soliciting feedback and additional ideas. These topics were also presented to the Student Government Association (SGA), who canvassed their constituents to determine the importance of, potential relevance to, and overall interest in to the topics to the student body. Throughout the process the two topics were refined and expanded, and the option of considering a third topic was available. By March of 2013, a clear consensus favoring the writing improvement initiative had emerged—with the caveat that the SGA would prefer both a writing and a service-learning QEP. (This intent was accomplished when the University decided to continue the service-learning component of the 2005 Student Engagement QEP.)
II. PLANNING PROCESS

Institutional Response to ETS Proficiency Profile Data

The data provided by the ETS Proficiency Exams showed that Texas A&M-Kingsville students lag behind their peers in all categories of student knowledge, suggesting the need for a more intensive effort to identify barriers to student success and to develop and implement programs to eliminate these barriers. As a result, the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs formed an ad hoc committee to consider possible responses to the ETS data. Consisting of the Associate Vice-president of Academic Affairs, representatives of academic colleges, Chair of the General Education Committee, and the Director of the Office of Institutional Research and Office of Assessment, this committee met during the spring of 2013.

In its discussions, the committee examined a variety of data including the ETS Proficiency scores, NSSE data, and the University’s core curriculum and degree requirements. Among its findings, the committee noted that although ETS scores showed that Texas A&M-Kingsville students lag behind their peers in all categories of student knowledge, the disparity is especially noticeable in the areas of reading and writing. The committee observed that NSSE scores for questions pertaining specifically to writing indicated that Texas A&M-Kingsville students have fewer and less intensive writing experiences than their peers, particularly as reported at the senior level.

By June of 2013, the committee had arrived at the conclusion that the University needed to embark on a major effort to foster student learning with particular emphasis on writing, reading, and critical thinking skills. Many of the subcommittee’s recommendations aligned and supported the selection of writing improvement as the QEP topic. These included:

- Development of additional Writing Intensive Courses for each degree program
- Optimim utilization of the new core curriculum (implemented during the fall of 2014) to provide additional learning experiences related to writing and critical thinking
- Development of a writing center to facilitate the improvement of writing skills across the curriculum
Phase III: Topic Development and Implementation  
(May 2013-December 2014)

With the QEP topic selected, the University began the process of refining the topic and developing an implementation plan in the fall of 2013. To accomplish this work, the original Quality Enhancement Taskforce was reorganized and enlarged to become the QEP Implementation Committee. New members included faculty and staff with expertise in writing, the Developmental Writing Coordinator, administrative faculty from the Learning Assistance Center and the Center for Teaching Effectiveness, along with representatives from Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Student Success, Marketing and Communications, and Institutional Research and Assessment. The QEP Implementation Committee identified the essential steps for developing and implementing the plan. Projects included:

- Budget planning
- Undergraduate Writing Center Director position development
- Undergraduate Writing Center program development, location, and staffing
- Writing Faculty Fellows program development
- Assessment program development
- Designation of additional Writing Intensive Courses

Recognizing that academic programs in the University’s five academic colleges have different curricular needs, the QEP Implementation Committee organized a series of focus groups during the spring of 2014 to identify the immediate services to implement for the pilot program scheduled to begin in the fall semester. Designed to solicit feedback specifically from Writing Intensive Course participants, these events provided excellent feedback regarding the specific needs of the faculty and students participating in existing Writing Intensive Courses. Discussions generated several important considerations: recognition that writing—which includes reasoning and research—is an iterative, recursive process, not a linear one; the need for feedback throughout the writing process; the need to help faculty learn to use more writing in their classes; and the need to recognize and reward this development process. The team was particularly interested in feedback about faculty and project development to identify strategies to improve upper-division students’ disciplinary writing skills. Next, the QEP Implementation Committee conducted an additional survey in the fall of 2014, soliciting similar information from a broader, university-wide faculty base. The results of this survey were similar to the information obtained in the smaller focus groups, with faculty demonstrating interest in faculty development opportunities related to the grading and evaluation of student writing, responding to student writing, and the design of writing assignments. (See Appendix C for a summary of the survey results.)

During its final stages, the implementation planning process benefited from insights generated by two small pilot QEP efforts that were undertaken in the fall of 2014, designed to field test the two most significant aspects of the QEP: 1) the writing faculty fellows program (faculty development program and workshops), and 2) the undergraduate writing center (one-on-one peer tutoring and classroom-based workshops/review sessions). Perhaps most importantly, the pilot programs have brought the insight of both students and faculty into the planning process—insights and experiences that, once reviewed, will be used to enhance the development of services needed to support the faculty and students participating in the Writing Intensive Curriculum as well as a renewed development of the curriculum itself.
QEP Outcomes

Desired student learning outcomes to be derived from the *Culture of Writing* QEP were identified through a multiplicity of processes involving many groups and individuals. First, the general topic of writing proficiency was identified, ratified, and approved as explained in Section II. The general direction of travel was thereby determined, but the precise destination, the tentative route to the destination, and what to do once we arrive all remained to be determined.

The desired student learning outcomes are the destination. Emerging first and foremost from the collective mind of the University was the desire for undergraduate students to be better writers. From this concept sprang what would become the primary student learning outcome goal, **Goal 1: Improved Student Writing Proficiency**.

To accompany Goal 1, the QEP Implementation Committee immediately recognized the need for selecting the preferred route to our destination. We would need processes to facilitate the attainment of improved student writing proficiency; to focus resources on the preferred processes and determine how faithfully and expertly we had followed them would require an articulated process goal. This process goal is stated as **Goal 2: Increased Support for Student Learning in the Area of Writing Proficiency**.

Completing the process of mapping out the destination (Goal 1) and the preferred route (Goal 2) begged the question, now what? Once the University had envisioned improved writers and improved support infrastructure, the leap to the vision of a more literate campus community was easy. This vision evolved into the rather ambitious and far-reaching **Goal 3: A University-Wide Culture of Writing**.

**Goal 1: Improved Student Writing Proficiency**

Through an iterative process performed mainly by the QEP Implementation Committee, the concept of better writers was explored. Questions to be answered included:

- In what ways could or should writers be better?
- Can the quality of writing be measured; and if so, how?
- How much better would be sufficiently better?

The struggle with these questions led to the formulation of specific objectives. The first concept to take shape was a knowledge-based concept regarding the processes a student might implement in creating a written product. The intended student learning outcome reflecting this concept is articulated as Objective 1.1. This outcome is considered to be measureable, but more indirectly (as from survey data) than from the collection of direct solid data.

**Objective 1.1: Students will demonstrate awareness of writing as a process (from pre-writing through multiple revisions to final editing)**

The knowledge-based concept represented by Objective 1.1 would of necessity be teamed with a jointly knowledge-based and skill-based concept addressing two questions. Can the student perform writing functions? If so, can the effectiveness of that writing demonstrate improvement in relation to
some stated criteria? The University concluded that writing effectiveness can be measured both directly (using reliable testing instruments) and indirectly (using perception surveys). Criteria by which the effectiveness of writing would be measured were defined. Thus emerges Objective 1.2.

**Objective 1.2:** Students will write effectively in their disciplines using rhetorical strategies for focusing, developing, supporting, and organizing ideas and for addressing subject, audience, and purpose as appropriate to individual writing tasks.

One intended student learning outcome remained to be developed. The Faculty, in focus groups and surveys, collectively voiced a desire that students improve their adherence to writing conventions. This concept is mostly skill-based, the level of which is probably the most readily measurable of any concept expressed in the QEP. Objective 1.3 addresses the desire for students to demonstrate improved writing skills in relation to discipline-specific conventions.

**Objective 1.3:** Students will produce texts that demonstrate awareness of academic discourse conventions via control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, diction, citations, and other surface and stylistic concerns.

### How Much is Enough?

As noted above, one key question to be answered is: How much better would be sufficiently better? Regarding this elusive concept, the University leans on one of the inherent traits of a QEP, i.e., that “a substantial amount of ambiguity is to be expected during the creative phase of the development process” (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges 42).

Long-term (five-year) levels of sufficiency for results from the various assessment measures aligned with each QEP Objective will be determined from analyses of baseline data, with input from the QEP Advisory Committee. Until long-term sufficiency levels are identified, any improvement above baseline will be considered short-term (one to two years) sufficiency. This standard of sufficiency applies both to the Student Learning Outcomes described as Objectives in support of Goal 1, and also to the Objectives for Goals 2 and 3, described below.

### Goal 2: Increased Support for Student Learning in the Area of Writing Proficiency

Developing this process-based goal required far less reinvention or customization than required for Student Learning Outcomes. The various means by which the University would accomplish its student learning objectives would flow from the best practices as described in the literature. The assessment of objectives aligned with this goal will rely lightly on binary data (i.e., did it happen?) and heavily on data from perception surveys.

First identified was the need for an entity with staffing and leadership housed in a physical location to which undergraduate students could come when seeking assistance with writing in general, or with writing in their Writing Intensive Courses in particular. The successful creation of this entity is Objective 2.1.

**Objective 2.1:** The University will dedicate, furnish, and staff an undergraduate writing center in a setting desirable for students.

The Undergraduate Writing Center must be staffed with trained tutors having the time, skill,
and knowledge to deal with student writers seeking assistance as reflected in Objective 2.2.

**Objective 2.2: The Undergraduate Writing Center will provide supplementary writing assistance to students via trained tutors in a supportive learning environment.**

Training tutors would not be enough to accomplish the student learning objectives of the QEP. Faculty members could also benefit from training in dealing with student writing, especially in Writing Intensive Courses. Objective 2.3 was developed to focus attention on a select group of faculty (Writing Faculty Fellows) who would receive intensive training and who could then mentor other faculty members.

**Objective 2.3: The Undergraduate Writing Center and Writing Faculty Fellows Program will collaborate with faculty in the development of Writing Intensive Courses as well as writing assignments and assessment tools.**

The Undergraduate Writing Center would be much more than a physical facility. Like many academic centers, it would be a home base for services and programs. In this case the programs would be faculty development programs, and the services would be writing-related support services. Objective 2.4 reflects this home-base aspect of the Center.

**Objective 2.4: The Undergraduate Writing Center will serve as a faculty resource center.**

**Goal 3: A University-Wide Culture of Writing**

The QEP Implementation Committee believes that improved writing enriches the University and serves the greater good. The Committee further believes that improved writing will likely lead to more confident writing, and that writing will assume a more central and prominent role at the University. This visionary future is expressed as Objective 3.1. The assessment of this objective can be accomplished indirectly with surveys and directly with actual numbers of activities or participants.

**Objective 3.1: The University will become a place where faculty, students, and visitors confidently write and share writing.**

In many universities, and certainly in Texas public universities, a college education’s primary purpose is career preparation. Students should be confidently ready to communicate in their career fields. Students can be surveyed to determine their perception of readiness. Those results will assess progress towards Objective 3.2.

**Objective 3.2: Students will feel equipped to communicate effectively in their field of study.**

The first steps of the QEP were taken based on the premise that students should learn to write. Our best intellectual moments remind us that writing is much larger than a process for putting words together. Rather, writing is a way of thinking, exploring, and learning. A desire to achieve the greater good that can be had from writing is expressed as Objective 3.3. This objective can only be evaluated subjectively; nevertheless, the QEP Implementation Committee believes it is still worth pursuing.

**Objective 3.3: Students will recognize the value of writing as a way of thinking, exploring, and learning.**
IV LITERATURE REVIEW
The Centrality of Writing to Thinking and Learning

Writing is at the heart of the university and “ways of knowing” which actively engage students in thinking and learning. As many composition theorists have recognized, writing is at the center of general education and of every disciplinary major higher education offers (Townsend 56; McLeod and Miraglia 3). Through writing, students not only invent themselves as members of a specific discipline, but also reinvent the university as they “try on the peculiar ways of knowing, selecting, evaluating, reporting, concluding, and arguing” in ways which “define the discourse of our community” (Bartholomae 134). Thus, teaching students “the ability to carry on in...writing the normal discourse of the field in question” is central to any college curriculum (Bruffee 9).

The Council of Writing Program Administrators has outlined the expected outcomes for first-year composition in areas that include rhetorical knowledge; critical thinking, reading, and composing; use of composing processes; and knowledge of conventions of writing. They also note that writing instruction must not be confined to the first-year composition classroom, because as students move beyond first-year composition, their writing abilities diversify along disciplinary, professional, and civic lines (2014).

As the following sections will demonstrate, a review of the literature shows that students have historically come to the university underprepared to engage in college-level writing; student writers lack the ability to discuss and evaluate abstract ideas, characterized by “a willingness to evaluate ideas and issues carefully...; the ability to shape and organize material effectively; the ability to integrate some of the material from the reading skillfully; [and] the ability to follow the standard rules of grammar, punctuation, and spelling” for an academic audience (Sullivan 16-17). Remediation is necessary for those students who are academically underprepared to engage in college-level writing, and writing centers can provide this remediation, in an ad hoc rather than programmatic capacity, which, as the following sections will demonstrate, is often more beneficial to students than remedial writing courses alone. Furthermore, in achieving the university-wide goal of preparing students to diversify along disciplinary, professional, and civic lines, writing instruction in the disciplines, grounded in strategy-based, process-oriented pedagogy, and supported and supplemented by the one-to-one, individualized instruction of the writing center, becomes crucial.

Writing Centers and Individualized Learning in the University

Although one may be tempted to assume students at one time entered college prepared for college-level writing, in truth the majority of students have always needed some remediation in this area. Thus, tutoring—ad hoc or individualized remediation—has been an integral part of college support strategies since Harvard College was established in 1636. As higher education became more accessible to a wider population with the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890 (which created land-grant universities), as well as the creation of historically black universities and the first junior college in 1901, colleges and universities
began to shift attention from an emphasis on classical languages to English composition, and moreover to see the need for more formalized support systems for underprepared academic writers. Beginning in the 1960s, colleges and universities began to receive government aid to provide higher education to lower-income or minority groups. In response to this changing student population, in 1972 California State University-Long Beach created a Learning Assistance Support System. Stanford University would follow with its own support system later that year. Thus the tutoring system in higher education began, and has continued to the present day. A 2011 survey indicates that nearly one-third (31%) of all entering first-year college students indicate they need tutoring in specific courses (Sheets 4).

Colleges and universities throughout the twentieth century had increasingly focused on retention as well as access, striving to put into place systems that help students succeed in their pursuit of higher education, now that a more diverse student body than ever before had the opportunity to pursue that education. Fitting into this model of student support, writing centers have been part of American higher education since the 1930s and have undergone numerous redefinitions in response to changing paradigms of writing instruction; or, to put it more simply, writing centers have gone from the remedial fix-it shops popular under the text-centered paradigm of Current Traditional Rhetoric to writer-centered sites of collaboration between a peer tutor and a writing student (Murphy and Law xi). Writing Centers focus now on knowledge transfer, higher-order thinking, and strategy regulation, rather than on product-based instruction (Carino 38). Since the 1970s, writing centers have been heavily influenced by Lev Vygotsky’s theories of learning as social and collaborative, and Paolo Friere’s critique of the “banking method” of education, along with his advocacy of dialogue as a tool for teaching (Friere 72). Today, writing centers have become nurturing sites which rely on process-oriented, collaborative learning strategies to help student writers grow, mature, and become independent within the university, and beyond (Harris, “What’s Up and What’s In,” 32).

What, then, is a writing center? Answering this question within the literature seems at first to plunge one into the binary debate between those who value the mastery of skills—specifically, grammar, mechanics, vocabulary, and sentence complexity and variety; and those who value the bond established between tutor and student that facilitates learning in an apprenticeship model of mastery-oriented learning, such as what one might see in a studio-based art classroom. From the latter point of view, as student populations within higher education have continued to diversify, writing centers have been called upon to serve as advocates for multiple literacies (Murphy 118-21; Grimm 31) and to become agents of institutional change by questioning the hegemonic ways knowledge is made and communicated (Schendel and Macauley 63).

Most theorists and practitioners within the modern writing center align their practice with “The Idea of a Writing Center” as outlined by Stephen North in his seminal essay of that title. North exposed the misunderstandings of what happens in a writing center: namely, that it is a place to get papers cleaned up, which focuses on skills, grammar, and special problems; a fix-it-shop; or a first-aid station for bad writing (North 433-37). Rather, North argues, the writing center is a student-centered place whose object is to make sure that writers, and not necessarily
their texts, are what gets changed by instruction
(North 438). This happens, North maintains, through
the collaborative dialogue between student and tutor:
“The essence of the writing center method, then, is
talking,” North says (443). Andrea Lunsford and Lisa
Ede concur, noting from their extensive research into
collaborative learning in the composition classroom
that writing centers are sites of collaboration that
challenge hierarchies and traditional ways of
producing knowledge (Lunsford and Ede 12; Cooper
136) which may be more effective for mastery-
oriented learning.

As we seek to create a culture of writing at Texas
A&M-Kingsville, the literature to date tells us that we
must steer clear of the text-based Current Traditional
Rhetoric model which would have tutors and
teachers working primarily with and correcting texts,
especially grammar, and instead orient ourselves to
the process paradigm introduced by composition
theorists Linda Flower and her co-researcher,
cognitive psychologist John Hayes. Under the Current
Traditional Rhetoric model, writing is assigned, but is
not taught; this model mystifies writing as something
one either has talent for or does not, and encourages
student dependence upon a teacher, tutor, or editor
to correct one’s texts. By contrast, under the process
paradigm, writers are taught strategies for managing
the complex cognitive processes involved in writing,
which include generating, organizing, and drafting
ideas, as well as revising and editing written texts.

Flower and Hayes’ groundbreaking research
also pointed composition theorists to the importance
of higher-order thinking, sometimes called
metacognition (or thinking about thinking), in
managing the complex, discursive, meaning-making
processes involved in writing and reading (365-87).
Since the process paradigm was introduced in 1980,
composition theorists have begun to explore:
• how writers transfer writing knowledge
from one writing situation to another (such
as applying what is learned in first-year
composition to composing a senior thesis in a
content-based course);
how affective factors such as self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation may impact the application of knowledge, strategies, and skills the student writer already possesses; and

how the regulation and application of writing strategies such as brainstorming, outlining, annotating, and proofreading can help students become independent writers (see Hawkins; Hidi and Harackiewicz; Martinez, Kock, and Cass; Pajares; and White and Bruning).

Current writing center research indicates that writing centers, by providing one-to-one, individualized writing instruction that involves reflection on writing processes; modeling of writing strategies; and discussion of ideas, discourse conventions, and reader expectations, may facilitate student writers’ abilities to transfer knowledge, manage affective factors, and regulate the application of appropriate writing strategies. Again, the interventionist dialog between peer tutor and writing student—the sitting-down-together in a one-to-one, individualized, collaborative learning environment unlike the environment of the classroom, which by necessity must focus on all students rather than on this student—allows for a rich understanding of writing as a process, and the connection of that process to thinking and learning, to develop (North 433). Thus the purpose of Texas A&M-Kingsville’s Undergraduate Writing Center can be summarized by Muriel Harris’ definition of writing centers: “Here is a place where writers write, where they talk, where there is institutional commitment to writing, where it is apparent that writing is a very real activity for students all over campus” (Harris “WC and WAC,” 157-58).

Writing Across the Curriculum, Writing Intensive Courses, and Writing Centers

With the growth of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) programs, writing centers have expanded their roles of support as they open new lines of communication to faculty who become interested in WAC and Writing In the Disciplines (WID) (Harris, “WC and WAC,” 158). At Texas A&M-Kingsville the Undergraduate Writing Center will collaborate with the Writing Intensive program by working with faculty who teach Writing Intensive Courses in these disciplines. In line with Michel Foucault, the university understands that one of the primary goals of education is appropriation of a discourse, with the knowledge and power it carries with it (qtd. in Waldo 416).

According to George Kuh, WAC programs encourage interdisciplinary efforts between faculty and challenge students to think critically and holistically about their assignments (qtd. in Townsend 54). WAC programs make the following assumptions about student and their writing: (a) that their writing skills will diminish if not reinforced and practiced between freshman composition and graduation; (b) that their writing improves most markedly while engaged by the major subject; and (c) that writing in the discipline helps students understand what it means to become members of that discipline’s intellectual community (Farris and Smith 71-72). Finally, knowing what readers expect initiates students into their discipline’s discourse community (Solday 14; Anson 3; Melzer 12, 15).

Understandably, the WAC movement also has an impact on instructors, as Melzer’s study of more than two thousand writing assignments across the country reveals. According to Melzer, instructors in WAC programs: 1) assign the widest variety of
IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

purposes, audiences, and genres; 2) consistently provide students with interesting and complex rhetorical situations; and 3) teach writing as a process through peer response or commenting on rough drafts (71-72). The sort of writing promoted by WAC programs has a positive effect not only on writing skills, but also on student engagement—one of those affective factors previously alluded to. According to Richard Light, the relationship between the amount of writing for a course and the students’ level of engagement with that course is stronger than the relationship between students’ engagement and any other course characteristic (cited in Bean 1). Moreover, the design of the assignments is an important factor in student engagement. Good assignments provide students opportunities to receive early feedback on their work, and clearly explain the instructor’s expectations and purpose (Bean 1). In fact, feedback from professors, often a characteristic of WAC and WID courses, seems to be crucial to students’ engagement with writing in these courses. Two-thirds of the WAC/WID students surveyed by Soliday agreed that, compared to their other courses, they received more feedback from professors, improved their writing, and learned course content more thoroughly in the writing intensive courses (31).

From the literature on the purposes and varying effectiveness of writing, Texas A&M-Kingsville concludes that it should provide faculty development resources to help faculty:
• incorporate writing effectively into their courses;
• compose writing assignments that lead to engaged student writing; and
• provide student-centered feedback that improves writing, thinking, and learning in their courses.

Clearly, writing centers and WAC/WID programs should enjoy a symbiotic relationship, as envisioned for the Texas A&M-Kingsville Undergraduate Writing Center, which will include faculty development as part of its mission. Moreover, the Texas A&M-Kingsville Undergraduate Writing Center will support Writing Intensive Courses by including in its one-to-one, individualized learning environment an emphasis on genre awareness, as tutors discuss with student writers the conventions of a discipline-specific genre, such as the lab report or business letter (Clark 10). Not all writing assignments in the University fit the model of the traditional academic essay commonly taught in first-year composition courses; thus, developing the ability to analyze and respond to genres is a crucial skill for twenty-first century writers, who are increasingly expected to write in multiple and multimodal genres in the digital, global workplace (Dana, Hancock and Philips 57). As Clark notes, “attention to genre has particularly important implications for assisting the marginalized student populations” that writing centers have traditionally served (14), who may be least exposed to writing beyond that which is required for school. Writing centers can work with faculty to develop resources such as the Discipline-and Assignment-specific Tutoring Tools (DATT) Heather Robinson and Jonathan Hall describe. DATTs purpose is to help students produce writing that conforms to the requirements of the field and to help students interpret the assignment and terminology of a discipline or course (29).
Creating a Student-Centered, Process-Oriented Culture of Writing at Texas A&M-Kingsville

This review of the literature tells us is that to succeed in fostering a culture of writing and helping students improve as writers, the Quality Enhancement Plan should:

A. **Focus on providing student writers with strategies for generating, focusing, developing, and organizing their ideas, and for globally revising and independently editing and proofreading their own texts.** As opposed to correcting texts, then, tutors and instructors must present and model strategies for invention, drafting, organization, revision, and editing; discuss the logic and utility of these strategies (that is, what strategies, such as outlining, help writers to do); allow students opportunities to practice these strategies in the context of their own writing (rather than taking tests on grammar, for instance); encourage students to reflect on how using these strategies helps them manage their own unique writing processes; and, importantly, cue self-regulation of strategy application by helping student writers connect failures in a text, such as numerous spelling or mechanical mistakes, to a failure in process, such as insufficient proofreading strategies. In this way, student writers come to independently manage their own processes, without the aid of a tutor or instructor, as they must learn to do by the time they leave the university (see Barksdale-Ladd and Thomas; Borkowski; Brown and Palincsar; Cary and Reder; Cornoldi; Davidson, Deuser, and Sternberg; Erdos and Roberts; Fisher; Flavell; Hawkins; Kuhn; and Massey);

B. **Connect evaluations of good quality writing to discipline-, genre-, and audience-specific criteria, and make these connections explicit to student writers.** In providing
feedback on student writing, tutors and instructors must articulate the expectations of academic readers in this discipline, for writing in this genre, so that student writers may demystify generic, misleading notions of good writing and instead learn to evaluate their writing (and potentially, the writing of others) in terms of how it does or does not satisfy the expectations of their readers. Furthermore, instructors must design writing assignments with clearly-articulated audiences and purposes, and tutors must help student writers analyze these audiences and purposes, as well as provide supplemental instruction in the rhetorical knowledge of genre and discourse conventions (see Flower, “Cognition, Context, and Theory Building”; “The Construction”; and “Writer-Based”);

C. Facilitate the transfer of knowledge between writing situations and writing tasks, so that student writers apply rhetorical knowledge and writing strategies beyond the context in which that knowledge and those strategies were learned. A transfer-focused curriculum helps students use what they know. Such a curriculum must provide instruction in writing throughout a student’s academic career (rather than concentrating that instruction in first-year composition courses alone); engage faculty across disciplines in conversations about the teaching of writing, rather than merely requiring faculty to assign writing; and incorporate a collaborative-based model of peer tutoring to provide ad hoc remediation and supplemental instruction for student writers, able to meet the needs of those writers as they progress through their academic careers (see Gombert; Nelson and Narens; Pintrich and DeGroot; Spiro et al.); and finally,

D. Foster the critical thinking, higher-order learning, and current literacies necessary for student writers to be successful citizens and professionals in a participatory democracy and a global workforce. Each Writing Intensive Course must immerse student writers in writing-to-learn and learning-to-write activities that engage students with their disciplines, communities, and professions, facilitating their growth as readers, writers, thinkers, and learners in complex environments. Given the challenges of such a curriculum for faculty and students, the Writing Center must be on hand to support instructors as they design and implement these activities, and to support student writers as they encounter new and different writing challenges (see McMurray and Sanft; Schunk; and Zimmerman, Bandura, and Martinez-Pons).

Human Resources and Training

This review of the literature also points to the following human resource considerations.

Peer Tutoring

Tutor training is vital to the success of a peer tutoring program. A number of models for training peer tutors to successfully negotiate the individualized learning environment can be found in the literature. These models include pre-semester tutor workshops, credit-bearing practicum courses, weekly in-service staff meetings, assigned readings, training-by-doing, and emphasis on WAC/WID principles.
(Cobb and Elledge 127; Bannister-Willis 133-140; Robinson and Hall 42). Training also involves the evaluation of tutors by the Writing Center Director (Cobb and Elledge 127). All of these methods will be incorporated into tutor training at Texas A&M-Kingsville, to develop tutors’ knowledge, give insight, make the tutor aware of various tutoring styles, and provide practice in the interpersonal aspects of tutoring (Cobb and Elledge 124). Training and professional development opportunities, furthermore, enhance tutors’ understanding of the learning processes, their interpersonal skills, their awareness of writing processes, and their marketability (Harris, “What’s Up, 33). The ultimate goal of tutor training at Texas A&M-Kingsville will be to create what the authors of The Everyday Writing Center term a “community of practice” that guides ethical, situation-based responses to the needs of student writers.

Faculty Development

Faculty development is an important means of supporting Writing Intensive Courses. A variety of faculty development initiatives can support a culture of writing on a university campus. Among these are workshops which encourage instructors to think about their discourse communities (a construct that may remain invisible to faculty until they are asked to articulate it, in collaboration with faculty from differing discourse communities; see Nelms and Dively, 214-45), their assignments, and their rubrics for assessing student writing (Melzer 124). Constructing effective assignments, again, is a crucial component to engaging students in writing in the discipline. Some institutions, such as CUNY, pair WAC faculty fellows with new WAC faculty to revise and support their writing assignments (Soliday 23), while other may attach tutors to specific WAC courses (Harris 163; Farris and Smith 78-82). Monthly meetings and writing groups may also help build a community of writers and writing teachers among faculty (Mullin 187).

Support for faculty teaching in the WAC/WID program—Townsend points out—is crucial and includes a reward structure that values teaching, low
IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

student-to-instructor ratios, and institutional support in terms of budget and personnel. Stipends, teaching support, and access to resources constitute some of the other means of support commonly mentioned in the literature (Farris and Smith 73-81).

Administrative Duties of the Writing Center Director

Muriel Harris sums up the duties of the Writing Center Director thusly: “The director must set the goals and operating philosophy, hire and train staff, purchase or develop instructional materials, publicize the facility, handle the budget, act as liaison with faculty, meet with administrators, write reports, develop new services, plan for future growth and development, and cope with the daily crisis management” (WC and Tutoring in WAC, 160). Additionally, the director should participate fully in all aspects of the larger writing program (Olson and Ashton-Jones 52).

Another important task of the director is to assess the effectiveness of the Writing Center on improving student writing (Mullin 192). In 1982, Janice Neulieb pointed out that there is no established method for performing these evaluations (cited in Schendel and Macauley 1). Even so, William Macauley’s review of the literature on building assessments reveals a number of assessment methods, both quantitative and qualitative, as well as growing research on the subject. Building on the literature and his and Ellen Schendel’s experiences with assessing the work of writing centers, Macauley lays out the following principles for writing center assessment:

- Good assessment is a kind of inquiry research
- Good assessment is rhetorically sensitive to internal and external conversations about our work
- Good assessment is collaborative
- Good assessment drives positive change

Macauley further advises using mission statements, vision statements, institutional goals and objectives, and strategic plans to formulate the goals that will be assessed (Schendel and Macauley 59)—all of which the QEP at Texas A&M-Kingsville has taken into account in devising a triangulated approach to its Writing Center assessment. Barbara Walvoord’s advice is to choose a small number of goals you want to assess, develop direct and/or indirect measures of your success in meeting those goals, assess your progress, and integrate what you have learned into your program, thus completing the feedback loop (cited in Schendel and Macauley 31-32). Additionally, Brian Huot reminds us that writing assessment must be site-based, locally controlled, context-sensitive, rhetorically based, and accessible (Schendel and Macauley 35).

Schendel and Macauley outline some of the methods of assessment which Texas A&M-Kingsville intends to employ: (1) end-of-session questions for students and tutors about what they covered in the session and the student’s plans for revision (94); (2) collecting data about demographics and center use; (3) satisfaction surveys (118); (4) NSSE data and the Consortium for the Study of Writing in College (96); and (5) focus groups, observations, interviews, and textual analysis (123-24). The University of Missouri-Columbia combined ethnographic thick description of WI courses, interviews with sample students before and after taking a WI course, and their papers written in the course (Farris and Smith 83). Texas A&M-Kingsville will take such an ethnographic approach to its Writing Center assessment.
Implementation of the QEP

Texas A&M-Kingsville’s *Culture of Writing* QEP is intended to improve the overall writing proficiency of students. To this end it will provide writing support and develop strategies to engage primarily upper-class undergraduate students in discipline-specific writing. A core component of this project is the University’s Writing Intensive Curriculum, consisting of upper-level courses that utilize intensive writing exercises both to improve writing within the discipline and to deepen thinking about the course’s subject matter (See Appendices A and B for requirements and sample course syllabi and assignments). The University recognizes that accomplishing the goals of the *Culture of Writing* QEP requires a significant faculty development effort both in terms of expanding the curriculum and ensuring its ongoing vitality and relevance.

However, the University also recognizes the need for an array of services designed to support not only the students and faculty members participating in Writing Intensive Courses, but all other student writers and faculty members teaching writing as well. It proposes to meet these needs through the development of an Undergraduate Writing Center.

The Undergraduate Writing Center is both a physical location where students receive tutoring and an array of support services for student learning and faculty development (See Figure 2). As described below, these will include:

- Writing Faculty Fellows Program
- Faculty Development Workshops
- Peer Tutoring
- Culture of Writing Events

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**Figure 2. Components of the *Culture of Writing* QEP**
Writing Faculty Fellows

The Undergraduate Writing Center will be home to the Writing Faculty Fellows program, the *Culture of Writing* QEP’s faculty-led faculty development initiative. The goal of the Writing Faculty Fellows program is two-fold: (1) to facilitate the development of effective practices for the teaching of writing in the disciplines and (2) to establish a community of like-minded faculty engaged in teaching and assessing writing across the curriculum. To this end, participants will meet monthly to receive mentoring by more experienced Writing Intensive Course instructors, participate in developmental workshops, and to collaborate with their peers to develop discipline-specific practices for teaching and evaluating student writing.

Selected annually from a pool of faculty members involved in teaching the University’s Writing Intensive Courses, each Writing Faculty Fellow assumes a two-year commitment to the program. During their first semester, incoming fellows will be placed with a faculty mentor—i.e., an experienced fellow from a previous year. Mentors will be available to incoming fellows between workshops to answer questions or offer suggestions for the teaching of writing, with the QEP Director regularly checking in with individual mentors to offer support and guidance for these faculty leaders. During their second semester, Writing Faculty Fellows will begin creating their own teaching demonstrations to present at workshops in the forthcoming academic year. At this time, faculty mentors help incoming fellows discover worthwhile presentation ideas and tailor presentations to faculty across the curriculum. In their second year, Writing Faculty Fellows become mentors and presenters, as well as participants in workshop sessions.

Faculty members who participate in the Writing Faculty Fellows will receive a research travel award upon completion of all associated requirements (as outlined below). Compensation for participation in the fellows program demonstrates the value that the University places on this endeavor. Learning new practices is costly in terms of both time and effort; the QEP’s compensation program recognizes the value of investing in the development of new teaching practices. Faculty participating in the Writing Faculty Fellows program will be expected to:

- Participate in all workshop sessions offered during their 2-year fellowship
- Collect and submit student writing artifacts from Writing Intensive Courses to the QEP Director for use in assessment
- Continue to participate in Writing Faculty Fellows meetings in future academic years, beyond their 2-year fellowship commitment, as desired

Faculty Development Workshops

As part of the University’s commitment to strengthening the overall writing curriculum throughout campus, the Undergraduate Writing Center will offer faculty development workshops designed to help faculty teach and evaluate writing in the disciplines. Some of these workshops will be designed and led by the Writing Faculty Fellows as they develop confidence in, and innovative techniques for, working with student writers. While it will be expected that Writing Faculty Fellows participate in all faculty development workshop sessions, the Undergraduate Writing Center will advertise and open all workshops to all University faculty in order to make a greater impact on the teaching of writing on campus.
During workshop sessions, participants will not be sitting through lectures or seminars. Faculty members will experience writing activities designed by colleagues experienced in the teaching of writing, with emphasis placed on the presenter’s ability to reflect on pedagogical rationale for teaching writing in her/his discipline. Faculty participants will have opportunities to discuss how the presented activity could be extended or adapted to their classrooms. This model of “teachers teaching teachers” was devised by the National Writing Project; its bottom-up approach encourages faculty to become leaders in the teaching of writing in their colleges and departments, which will further our goal of creating a culture of writing on campus (www.nwp.org).

Workshops sessions will be offered at least three times per semester. (See Table 3 for a proposed program of development activities.) Topics may include:

- Rationale for Writing Intensive Courses and criteria for official designation of Writing Intensive Courses
- Best practices in the grading and responding to student writing
- Principles for the construction of writing assignments designed to facilitate student learning and initiation into the discourse of their discipline
- Techniques for incorporating digital and visual literacy into writing in the disciplines
- Strategies for teaching researched writing in the disciplines; critical reading skills; critical thinking skills; collaborative writing projects; community-based and service learning writing projects; grammar and mechanics; citation and documentation; etc.

Additional topics will vary to ensure that the program is fresh, engaging to faculty, and responsive to issues that emerge as new courses are introduced and assessment is conducted.

**Peer Tutoring**

In direct support of student writing, the Culture of Writing QEP proposes to offer both one-on-one and group tutoring to assist undergraduate students writers, including those students participating in Writing Intensive Courses as well as any others seeking writing assistance. (A writing help station for graduate students already exists elsewhere on campus.) These services will be offered through the Undergraduate Writing Center by trained undergraduate and graduate student peer tutors, under the direct supervision of the QEP Director.

One-on-one tutoring services will be offered in the highly collaborative environment of the Undergraduate Writing Center. Trained peer tutors will work with student writers on issues that instructors find difficult to cover in a whole-class setting, such as focus (i.e., thesis statements), organization, citations, documentation, grammar, mechanics, and spelling. Designed to be more than a proof reading service, peer tutors will work with students, coaching them to identify areas of writing that are particularly challenging and to develop strategies for building on existing strengths while improving areas of deficiency. Always, the overall goal of improved student writing proficiency provides the guiding philosophy for tutorial sessions.

Classroom-based assistance will also be available for student writers in specific classes, as requested by the course instructor. The QEP Director will work directly with faculty members interested in bringing a writing center tutor, or
Table 3. Annual Program of Faculty Development Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Description of Activities</th>
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| August     | Half-day pre-semester workshop  
• Introduction to Writing Intensive Course Objectives and QEP assessment procedures  
• Overview of writing in the disciplines and writing across the curriculum  
• Practice with strategies for teaching writing-to-learn and learning-to-write activities; teaching demonstrations from experienced Writing Faculty Fellows, addressing particular area of concern or innovation for teaching writing in the disciplines  
• Small-group sessions to introduce incoming fellows to their faculty mentor and discuss issues and concerns for teaching writing |
| September-November | 3 workshops  
• Teaching demonstration from experienced Writing Faculty Fellow or Undergraduate Writing Center Director  
• Discussion of teaching demonstration, with focus on extension and adaptation of lesson to other courses  
• Small-group sessions for faculty mentor to discuss issues and concerns in Writing Intensive Courses |
| January    | Half-day pre-semester refresher workshop  
• Reminder of QEP assessment procedures  
• Discussion of prior semester’s teaching experience; focus on improving practices for the spring semester  
• Practice with strategies for teaching writing-to-learn and learning-to-write activities; teaching demonstrations from experienced Writing Faculty Fellows, addressing particular area of concern or innovation for teaching writing in the disciplines  
• Small-group breakout sessions for faculty mentor to discuss issues and concerns in Writing Intensive Courses and to coach new fellows in developing teaching demonstrations for future workshops |
| February-April | 3 workshops  
• Teaching demonstration from experienced Writing Faculty Fellow  
• Discussion of teaching demonstration, with focus on extension and adaptation of lesson to other courses  
• Small-group breakout sessions for faculty mentor to discuss issues and concerns in Writing Intensive Courses |
the QEP Director, to the classroom to assist with peer review; to provide a customized mini-lesson on grammar issues, research and documentation, or other writing-related topics; and/or to talk with students about strategies for getting started on essays, proofreading, revising, etcetera.

**Tutor Training**

As an important component of the *Culture of Writing* QEP’s overall effort to support student writing proficiency, the Undergraduate Writing Center’s peer writing tutors will receive significant training similar to their faculty counterparts. Although strong writing proficiency is requisite for all Writing Center staff, incoming peer tutors will not be expected to be experts in the field of one-on-one teaching of writing. To elevate tutor performance, all peer tutors will receive training when beginning and throughout their employment with the Writing Center and will be paid for their training.

The goal of tutor training is to professionalize the graduate and undergraduate peer tutors, introducing the peer tutors to the scholarship of and best practices within the field of writing center tutoring. The one-on-one teaching of writing is a complex field supported by three scholarly publications (*Praxis: A Writing Center Journal*; *The Writing Lab Newsletter*; and *The Writing Center Journal*); an extensive and growing body of peer-reviewed scholarship; one international professional organization (the International Writing Center Association) with numerous regional associations; and one major international academic conference,
# Table 4. Annual Program of Tutor Development Activities

<table>
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<th>Month</th>
<th>Description of Activities</th>
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| **August** | Half-day training workshop  
  - Introduction to writing center policies and procedures, i.e., session summary forms; student confidentiality; tutor professionalism  
  - Overview of the writing process and the stages of a writing tutorial (pre-text; text; post-text)  
  - Practice with individualized, one-to-one teaching strategies |
| **September** | Two 60-minute training workshops per month  
  - Discussion of issues and concerns in the writing center  
  - Discussion of required readings (provided by the QEP Director)  
  - Focus on one-to-one teaching and tutor responsiveness |
| **October** | Two 60-minute training workshops  
  - Discussion of issues and concerns in the writing center  
  - Discussion of required readings (provided by the QEP Director)  
  - Focus on research and writing in the disciplines and interdisciplinary tutoring |
| **November** | Two 60-minute training workshops  
  - Discussion of issues and concerns in the writing center  
  - Discussion of required readings (provided by the QEP Director)  
  - Focus on analysis of recorded tutoring session (one session per tutor) and development of “tutoring philosophy”  
  - Planning for next semester’s training sessions, led by returning tutors |
| **January** | Half-day training and refresher workshop  
  - Introduction to writing center policies and procedures, with special emphasis on any changes since fall semester (for returning tutors)  
  - Practice with individualized, one-to-one teaching strategies  
  - Mentor assignments (experienced tutors paired with inexperienced tutors) |
| **February** | Two 60-minute training workshops  
  - Small-group mentor meetings  
  - Discussion of issues and concerns in the writing center  
  - Discussion of required readings (chosen by returning tutors; provided by the QEP Director)  
  - Focus on specialized issues in writing center tutoring, i.e., working with ESL writers; digital literacy; multimodal writing; working with writers with disabilities |
supplemented by various regional conferences, every year. Tutor training introduces peer tutors to the scholarship of and best practices within the field of writing center tutoring, and furthermore encourages peer tutors to develop their own, individualized tutoring philosophy, similar to a teaching philosophy, which will guide their interaction with student writers in every writing center session. Peer tutors are required to articulate this philosophy in writing and to submit their philosophy to the QEP Director as a condition of their continued employment with the Undergraduate Writing Center. Tutor training will be designed and conducted by the QEP Director, with assistance from experienced tutors (who will also serve as mentors to incoming tutors). Training sessions will be required during the first week of classes every semester—a time when the Undergraduate Writing Center will not be open, as few students would yet be seeking writing assistance at this point in the semester, and all tutors, whether incoming or experienced, need to be either introduced to or reminded of important writing center policies and best writing center practices.

Each cadre of incoming peer tutors will receive significant training during their first semester of employment in the Undergraduate Writing Center. This training will take the form of twice monthly training sessions that will emphasize collaborative techniques for engaging student writers in discussions of their writing processes; modeling strategies for generating and organizing ideas, revising drafts, editing and proofreading, citing and documenting sources, etc.; and communicating with faculty about student writers. (See Table 4 for an annual program of development activities for the student tutors.) Tutors will be prepared for these training sessions via readings in writing center theory and practice, and each incoming tutor will,

<table>
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<th>Month</th>
<th>Description of Activities</th>
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| March | Two 60-minute training workshops  
• Small-group mentor meetings  
• Discussion of issues and concerns in the Writing Center  
• Discussion of required readings (chosen by returning tutors; provided by the QEP Director)  
• Focus on specialized issues in writing center tutoring |
| April | Two 60-minute training workshops  
• Small-group mentor meetings  
• Discussion of issues and concerns in the Writing Center  
• Discussion of required readings (chosen by returning tutors; provided by the QEP Director)  
• Focus on analysis of recorded tutoring session (one session per tutor) and development/revision of tutoring philosophy |
with a student writer’s permission, audio or video record one tutoring session during the semester and compose an analysis of the tutor’s strengths and weaknesses during the session to submit to and discuss with the QEP Director. The goal of the tutorial analysis assignment, and of the training sessions more generally, will be to lead peer tutors to the development of a tutoring philosophy based on accepted writing center theory and practice which will guide their interactions with all student writers in the Undergraduate Writing Center.

In following semesters, tutors will continue to receive specialized training in areas such as working with writers for whom English is a second language; writers with learning disabilities; writers with physical disabilities; writers in the disciplines; writers in online environments; etc.

As tutors gain experience in the writing center, the QEP Director will assign them to mentor incoming tutors and to assume leadership roles in training workshops, thereby continuing the professional development of peer tutors as they become tutor-leaders.

**Culture of Writing Events**

Finally, Texas A&M-Kingsville recognizes the value of writing as a way of thinking. The Undergraduate Writing Center will support an environment in which the university community can celebrate our writing experiences by hosting two *Culture of Writing* events per year. These events serve to:

- promote and advertise the programs and services of the Undergraduate Writing Center to the greater university community;
- engage faculty and students in writing by hosting readings, talks, and discussions with authors and other individuals who regularly incorporate writing into their work; and
- celebrate writing through creative activities and contests.
QEP Implementation Timeline

Implementation to Date

In the fall of 2014, the Undergraduate Writing Center opened and began offering one-on-one peer tutoring and classroom-based review sessions, as well as support to the general faculty in the development of writing assignments. The Office of Institutional Research conducted a survey of the faculty to determine interest/demand for writing-related services. Following the assessment of the writing center and a review of the survey results, the Undergraduate Writing Center’s service offerings will be refined as necessary to better meet the QEP goals. The University appointed an interim QEP director and conducted a successful search for a permanent QEP Director (a title synonymous with Undergraduate Writing Center Director). Also the first cohort of the Writing Faculty Fellows participated in a series of training workshops.

During the spring of 2015, the first faculty workshop (open to Writing Faculty Fellows and general faculty) will be piloted. Additionally, the QEP director will begin collecting student writing samples from Writing Intensive Courses and the Office of Institutional Research will administer the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and ETS Proficiency Profile to seniors.

Timeline

Tables 5 and 6 identify the activities to be completed in the Years 0-5 of the proposed QEP, that is, during the academic years 2015-2020, with 2015 being the pilot year. The timeline is presented in accordance with Texas A&M-Kingsville’s academic years that run fall, spring, summer. The schedule includes actions regarding:

- QEP Administration (includes advisory board meetings)
- Undergraduate Writing Center operation
- Peer Writing Tutors
- Faculty development and support
- Culture of Writing events
- Assessment of all activities

The QEP Director/ Undergraduate Writing Center Director, Advisory Board, and the Office for Institutional Research are responsible for all activities related to the implementation and assessment of the QEP.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall 2014</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Administrative | - Appoint Interim QEP Director  
|               | - Conduct search for QEP Director/Undergraduate Writing Center Director  
|               | - QEP Implementation Committee meets monthly  
| Undergraduate Writing Center | - Launch Undergraduate Writing Center  
|               | - Survey general faculty to determine services to be developed for the writing center  
|               | - Select online appointment scheduling software  
|               | - Plan and host Culture of Writing event: National Day of Writing Celebration/Writing Center Grand Opening  
| Peer Writing Tutors | - Hire and provide training to tutors  
| Faculty Development and Support | - Pilot test Writing Faculty Fellows program/monthly workshops  
|               | - Interim QEP Director visits courses and provides in-class services  
|               | - Develop/market faculty development workshops  
| Assessment    | - Develop assessment rubric for Writing Intensive Courses  
|               | - Administer ETS Proficiency Profile to freshmen  
| **Spring 2015**|            |
| Administrative | - QEP Director/ Undergraduate Writing Center Director is hired and assumes a leadership role  
|               | - QEP implementation committee transitions into an advisory board (meets monthly)  
| Undergraduate Writing Center | - Implement appointment scheduling software  
|               | - Purchase additional furniture and equipment for the center  
|               | - Develop and host a spring Culture of Writing event  
|               | - Develop advertising materials/visit classrooms to promote services  
| Peer Writing Tutors | - Hire replacement peer writing tutors  
|               | - Develop second semester training program for peer writing tutors  

Table 5. Year 0: AY 2015
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Spring 2015** | Faculty Development and Support  
- Conduct first faculty development workshop (open to general faculty)  
- Develop mentoring strategies for the development of Writing Intensive Course assignments  
- Visit courses and provide in-class services  
- Develop new Writing Intensive Courses for submission to curriculum committee for implementation in fall semester  |
| Assessment     |  
- Collect Spring 2015 student written artifacts for assessment  
- Collect and analyze Spring 2015 student evaluations of Writing Center visits  
- Collect and analyze Spring 2015 faculty evaluations of Writing Center effectiveness and professional development programs  
- Administer National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)  
- Administer ETS Proficiency Profile to seniors  
- Draft assessment report  |
| **Summer 2015**| Administrative  
- Explore partnerships with student, faculty, and staff entities  
- Plan and implement changes to facilities, budgets, programs, and staffing as deemed appropriate  |
| Undergraduate Writing Center |  
- Begin Planning Fall and Spring Culture of Writing events  |
| Peer Writing Tutors |  
- Continue to work on a reduced summer schedule  |
| Faculty Development and Support |  
- Provide as needed  |
| Assessment     |  
- Share assessment report with University administrators, QEP Advisory Committee, and Writing Faculty Fellows  
- Finalize faculty development workshops for fall and spring semesters  |
## Table 6. Years 1-5: AY 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall</strong></td>
<td><strong>Administrative</strong>&lt;br&gt;- QEP Advisory Board meets in alternating months&lt;br&gt;- Present annual institutional effectiveness report for QEP (November)&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Undergraduate Writing Center</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Host Fall Culture of Writing event&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Peer Writing Tutors</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Hire replacement peer writing consultants&lt;br&gt;- Writing Faculty Fellows and Intensive Writing Course Instructors provide discipline-specific training to for peer writing tutors&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Faculty Development and Support</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Conduct Fall faculty development workshops (open to general faculty)&lt;br&gt;- Mentor the development of Writing Intensive Course assignments&lt;br&gt;- Visit courses and provide in-class services&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Assessment</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Collect Fall student written artifacts for assessment&lt;br&gt;- Collect and analyze Fall student evaluations of writing center visits&lt;br&gt;- Collect and analyze faculty evaluations of writing center effectiveness and professional development programs&lt;br&gt;- Administer ETS Proficiency Profile to freshmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring</strong></td>
<td><strong>Administrative</strong>&lt;br&gt;- QEP Advisory Board meets in alternating months&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Undergraduate Writing Center</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Host Spring Culture of Writing event&lt;br&gt;- Develop advertising materials/visit classrooms to promote services&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Peer Writing Tutors</strong>&lt;br&gt;- Hire replacement peer writing tutors&lt;br&gt;- Writing Faculty Fellows and Intensive Writing Course Instructors provide discipline-specific training to peer writing tutors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Spring (cont.) | Faculty Development and Support  
| | • Conduct faculty development workshops (open to general faculty)  
| | • Mentor the development of Writing Intensive Course assignments  
| | • Visit courses and provide in-class services  
| | • Develop new Writing Intensive Courses for submission to curriculum committee for implementation in fall semester  
| | Assessment  
| | • Collect student written artifacts for assessment  
| | • Recruit and train raters for Writing Intensive Course assessment  
| | • Assess all student writing examples from summer, spring, and fall semesters  
| | • Collect and analyze student evaluations of writing center visits  
| | • Collect and analyze faculty evaluations of the writing center effectiveness and professional development programs  
| | • Administer National Survey of Student Engagement (odd years only)  
| | • Administer ETS Proficiency Profile to seniors  
| | • Draft assessment report  
| Summer | Administrative  
| | • Plan and implement changes to facilities, budgets, programs, and staffing as deemed appropriate  
| Undergraduate Writing Center | • Begin Planning Fall and Spring Culture of Writing events  
| Peer Writing Tutors | • Continue to work on a reduced summer schedule  
| Faculty Development and Support | • Share assessment report with University administrators, QEP Advisory Committee, and Writing Faculty Fellows  
| Assessment | • Finalize faculty development workshops for fall and spring semesters |
Administering the QEP: Director, Office, and Advisory Board

During the Fall of 2014, Texas A&M-Kingsville conducted a search to fill the position of Undergraduate Writing Center Director. The Director will establish and administer the Undergraduate Writing Center and lead and manage the day-to-day QEP implementation efforts. To accomplish marketing, faculty outreach, and assessment, the Director will work with offices on campus such as Marketing and Communications, the Center for Teaching Excellence, and the Office of Institutional Research. The Office of Institutional Research will provide ongoing assessment of the student learning outcomes and evaluation of program implementation and effectiveness.

The Director’s routine reporting line will be directly to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. The QEP Implementation Committee—comprised of faculty and staff from each of the five academic colleges, additional subject specialists from the Department of Language and Literature, together with administrators and staff from related areas across campus—will transition into a QEP Advisory Board. The Advisory Board will provide support and advice to the Director and oversee the implementation of the QEP. Figure 3 presents an organizational chart that shows how the Director fits into the Office of Academic Affairs and the Department of Language and Literature at Texas A&M-Kingsville.

The Director will compile an Annual QEP Assessment Report as part of the Texas A&M-Kingsville’s Institutional Effectiveness reporting process. This report will analyze the assessment data collected and make recommendations for improvements in future years. The Annual Report will be developed in concert with the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, the QEP Advisory Board, the Office of Institutional Research, and the Writing Faculty Fellows. Recommendations from the Annual QEP Assessment Report will be used to enhance the workshops and Action Projects and increase their effectiveness to improve student writing. This level of administrative support will continue as the QEP is implemented and matures and is incorporated into regular institutional effectiveness processes.
Figure 3. QEP Organizational Chart
Quality Enhancement Plan Budget

The QEP Budget, presented in Table 7, demonstrates Texas A&M-Kingsville’s commitment to improving the writing proficiency of undergraduate students through a writing center that is both a physical location and an array of support services for student learning and faculty development. All financial resources are budget-based. The budget identifies three major areas.

Salary and Wage allocations include salaries and benefits for the Undergraduate Writing Center Director, a part-time Administrative Assistant, and approximately 10 student workers (tutors). For the fall 2014 semester, the Assistant Dean of Arts and Sciences served as the Interim QEP Director. Beginning in spring semester 2015, the salary of the permanent director (a tenured associate professor) will be partitioned such that ¼ of her time and salary is allocated to faculty functions and ¾ allocated to the QEP, which carries with it a director’s stipend and summer pay. A part-time administrative assistant has been budgeted, but not yet hired. Student workers are budgeted at $10 an hour for undergraduate students and $12 an hour for graduate students for approximately 10 hours a week. Additional funds are identified for the training of student workers.

Faculty support budget lines include travel stipends for Writing Faculty Fellows, supplies/materials for faculty workshops, and honoraria for faculty participating in the institutional assessment of student coursework from Writing Intensive courses.

Supplies and operating funds include furniture and computers for the Director’s office and the Undergraduate Writing Center, as well as a one-time purchase of appointment scheduling and performance assessment software.

In addition to the direct cash outlays for the QEP as described in Table 7, the QEP will receive substantial in-kind support including (1) physical facilities for the Writing Center and the Director, (2) administrative support through Academic Affairs and other offices, (3) institutional research support from ongoing surveys (to including the NSSE) and tests (to include the ETS Proficiency Profile), and (4) marketing support from the Office of Marketing and Communication.
Table 7. Quality Enhancement Plan Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salary and Wages</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutors/Student Workers</td>
<td>$33,000</td>
<td>$51,700</td>
<td>$51,700</td>
<td>$53,900</td>
<td>$53,900</td>
<td>$53,900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Admin. Assistant (part-time)</td>
<td>$9,200</td>
<td>$13,800</td>
<td>$14,375</td>
<td>$14,950</td>
<td>$15,525</td>
<td>$16,100</td>
<td>$83,950</td>
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<tr>
<td>Director† (3/4 time)</td>
<td>$69,000</td>
<td>$63,020</td>
<td>$65,320</td>
<td>$67,850</td>
<td>$70,150</td>
<td>$72,450</td>
<td>$407,790</td>
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<td><strong>Sub-Total: Salaries and Wages</strong></td>
<td>$111,200</td>
<td>$128,520</td>
<td>$131,395</td>
<td>$136,700</td>
<td>$139,575</td>
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<td><strong>Non-Salary</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutor Training</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
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<td>$3000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty Support</strong></td>
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<td>Stipends (Faculty Fellows)</td>
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<td>$3600</td>
<td>$3600</td>
<td>$3600</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
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<td>Workshops</td>
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<td>$2000</td>
<td>$2000</td>
<td>$2000</td>
<td>$2000</td>
<td>$11,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honoraria for readers/raters</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$5000</td>
<td>$5000</td>
<td>$5000</td>
<td>$5000</td>
<td>$5000</td>
<td>$27,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Supplies and Operating</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director’s Office</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
<td>$1000</td>
<td>$1000</td>
<td>$1000</td>
<td>$1000</td>
<td>$1000</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing Center</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2000</td>
<td>$2000</td>
<td>$2000</td>
<td>$2000</td>
<td>$2000</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Software</td>
<td>$3,700</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$3,700</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Memberships</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conferences</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$3000</td>
<td>$3000</td>
<td>$3000</td>
<td>$3000</td>
<td>$3000</td>
<td>$17,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutors</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$3000</td>
<td>$3000</td>
<td>$3000</td>
<td>$3000</td>
<td>$3000</td>
<td>$17,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Library Resources</strong></td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-Total: Non-Salary</strong></td>
<td>$22,900</td>
<td>$20,500</td>
<td>$20,500</td>
<td>$20,500</td>
<td>$20,500</td>
<td>$20,500</td>
<td>$125,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Annual Budget</strong></td>
<td>$134,100</td>
<td>$149,020</td>
<td>$151,895</td>
<td>$157,200</td>
<td>$160,075</td>
<td>$162,950</td>
<td>$915,240</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Plus fringe benefits (10% for student workers, 15% for Administrative Assistant and Director)
† Director Salary: $4800 stipend + .75($60,000) for spring & fall + $5000 for summer. Incremental raises added in subsequent years. Interim Director for fall 2014 was Assistant Dean of Arts and Sciences.
Assessing the *Culture of Writing* QEP

Texas A&M-Kingsville will assess the effectiveness of the *Culture of Writing* QEP using three complementary approaches (Tables 8-10).

1. A comprehensive process of monitoring student learning outcomes based on (a) institutional assessment of student coursework, and (b) assessment of student scores on the writing component of the nationally normed ETS Proficiency Profile Exam. Taken together, this data will allow us to determine whether students are achieving expected competencies in Texas A&M-Kingsville’s Writing Intensive Courses (as defined in Appendix A), and national standards for college-level writing.

2. Student learning outcomes will also be assessed by indirect means, using data from surveys administered to students participating in the *Culture of Writing* QEP curriculum (i.e., Writing Intensive Courses), to peer tutors working in the Undergraduate Writing Center, and to faculty involved in Writing Intensive Courses and QEP support programs (e.g., the peer tutoring, faculty development workshops, and Writing Faculty Fellows).

3. Program outcomes will be assessed through (a) usage statistics of the Undergraduate Writing Center and Writing Faculty Fellows workshops; (b) tutoring session summaries, composed by writing center tutors; and (c) data from student and faculty surveys regarding the role of the Undergraduate Writing Center in improving students as writers and the role of Writing Faculty Fellows workshops in preparing faculty to teach writing in the disciplines.

Simply put, our assessment goal is to gauge what impact the *Culture of Writing* QEP is having on both students and faculty.

As indicated by the assessment timeline in Tables 8-10 and Figure 4, data collection and analysis for assessment will be ongoing throughout each academic year. The Undergraduate Writing Center Director will coordinate assessments. Furthermore, all three aspects of the assessment plan will be evaluated on an annual basis as part of the annual institutional effectiveness reporting process, to document that all facets of the *Culture of Writing* QEP are implemented and that improvements, if necessary, take place. All aspects of this assessment plan are designed to ensure that the institution will close the assessment loop, and that it will do so in a manner that provides opportunities for conversation and collaboration among faculty members as they reflect on the QEP and make programmatic adjustment to refine its effectiveness.
### Table 8. Assessment Measures for Goal 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment Measures</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 1.1: Students will demonstrate awareness of writing as a process (from prewriting through multiple revisions to final editing).</strong></td>
<td>Course Assessments for Writing Intensive Courses</td>
<td>Fall and spring semesters (beginning spring 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ETS Proficiency Profile Writing Assessment</td>
<td>Fall semester for freshmen; spring semester for seniors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Selected variables from NSSE and the NSSE Experiences with Writing topical module</td>
<td>Annually- freshmen and seniors (NSSE baseline taken in spring 2013, topical module to begin 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty Survey</td>
<td>Fall semester (piloted fall 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey of Student Experience in Writing Intensive Courses</td>
<td>Fall and spring semesters (beginning spring 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 1.2: Students will write effectively in their disciplines using rhetorical strategies for focusing, developing, supporting, and organizing ideas and for addressing subject, audience, and purpose as appropriate to individual writing tasks.</strong></td>
<td>Course Assessments for Writing Intensive Courses</td>
<td>Fall and spring semesters (beginning spring 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ETS Proficiency Profile Writing Assessment</td>
<td>Fall semester for freshmen; spring semester for seniors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Selected variables from NSSE and the NSSE Experiences with Writing topical module</td>
<td>Annually- freshmen and seniors (NSSE baseline taken in spring 2013, topical module to begin 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty Survey</td>
<td>Fall semester (piloted fall 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey of Student Experience in Writing Intensive Courses</td>
<td>Fall and spring semesters (beginning spring 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 1.3: Students will produce texts that demonstrate awareness of academic discourse conventions via control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, diction, citations, and other surface and stylistic concerns.</strong></td>
<td>Course Assessments for Writing Intensive Courses</td>
<td>Fall, spring and summer semesters (beginning spring 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ETS Proficiency Profile Writing Assessment</td>
<td>Fall semester for freshmen; spring semester for seniors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Selected variables from NSSE and the NSSE Experiences with Writing topical module</td>
<td>Annually- freshmen and seniors (NSSE baseline taken in spring 2013, topical module to begin 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty Survey</td>
<td>Fall semester (piloted fall 2014)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: for all assessment measures, the Undergraduate Writing Center Director is responsible for coordinating the collection of data, conducting the analysis, and reporting the results.
### IX. ASSESSMENT PLAN

#### Table 9. Assessment Measures for Goal 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment Measures</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 2.1:</strong> The Undergraduate Writing Center will provide supplementary writing assistance to students via trained tutors in a supportive learning environment.</td>
<td>Usage statistics and visitor demographics</td>
<td>Daily via AccuTrack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey of Student Experience in Writing Intensive Courses</td>
<td>Fall and spring semesters (beginning spring 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutoring Session Summary Forms</td>
<td>Daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Selected variables from NSSE and the NSSE Experiences with Writing topical module</td>
<td>Annually- freshmen and seniors (NSSE baseline taken in spring 2013, topical module to begin 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 2.2:</strong> The Undergraduate Writing Center and Writing Faculty Fellows Program will collaborate with faculty in the development of Writing Intensive Courses as well as writing assignments and assessment tools.</td>
<td>Usage statistics pertaining to workshops, seminars, and meetings with Writing Faculty Fellows</td>
<td>Fall and spring semesters (begun fall 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Usage statistics pertaining to classroom visitations and consultations with other faculty</td>
<td>Fall and spring semesters (pilot spring 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty Survey</td>
<td>Pilot spring 2015; continued with half the colleges surveyed in the fall and half in the spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective 2.3:</strong> The Undergraduate Writing Center will serve as a faculty resource center.</td>
<td>Usage statistics pertaining to workshops, seminars, and meetings with Writing Faculty Fellows</td>
<td>Fall and spring semesters (begun fall 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Usage statistics pertaining to classrooms visitations and consultations with other faculty</td>
<td>Fall and spring semesters (pilot spring 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Writing Intensive Courses developed and taught per year</td>
<td>Fall and spring semesters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty Survey</td>
<td>Pilot spring 2015; then continued with half the colleges surveyed in the fall and half in the spring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: for all assessment measures, the Undergraduate Writing Center Director is responsible for coordinating the collection of data, conducting the analysis, and reporting the results.
Table 10. Assessment Measures for Goal 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessment Measures</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3.1: The University will become a place where faculty, students, and visitors confidently write and share writing.</td>
<td>Number and description of activities sponsored by or located in the Undergraduate Writing Center</td>
<td>Fall, spring and summer semesters (begun fall 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty Survey</td>
<td>Pilot spring 2015; then continued with half the colleges surveyed in the fall and half in the spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey of Student Experience in Writing Intensive Courses</td>
<td>Fall and spring semesters (pilot spring 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3.2: Students will feel equipped to communicate effectively in their field of study.</td>
<td>Survey of Student Experience in Writing Intensive Courses</td>
<td>Fall and spring semesters (pilot spring 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Selected variables from NSSE and the NSSE Experiences with Writing topical module</td>
<td>Annually- freshmen and seniors (NSSE baseline taken in spring 2013, topical module to begin 2016)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutoring Session Summary Forms</td>
<td>Daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3.3: Students will recognize the value of writing as a way of thinking, exploring, and learning.</td>
<td>Faculty Survey</td>
<td>Fall and spring semesters (pilot spring 2015)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey of Student Experience in Writing Intensive Courses</td>
<td>Fall and spring semesters (pilot spring 2015)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: for all assessment measures, the Undergraduate Writing Center Director is responsible for coordinating the collection of data, conducting the analysis, and reporting the results.
Direct Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

To assess student learning outcomes (SLO), assessment artifacts will be obtained directly from Writing Intensive Course Instructors. Assessment artifacts will include:

- Instructor’s Syllabi and course learning objectives
- Instructor’s written description of the formal writing assignment under assessment
- Students’ written responses to the formal writing assignment

Independent raters, trained and normed by the Undergraduate Writing Center Director, will be hired to undertake assessment of student writing from Writing Intensive Courses, based on the Writing Intensive Course Rubric, which assesses student writing for the attainment of student learning outcomes. (See Appendix A for the Writing Intensive Course SLOs and Assessment Rubrics). The compiled results will be analyzed by the Center Director, QEP Advisory Committee, Writing Faculty Fellows, and other appropriate individuals to determine appropriate changes to the program. Figure 4 shows an overview of this annual SLO assessment cycle.

Figure 4. Overview of the Annual Assessment Cycle

**NOVEMBER**
- Institutional Effectiveness Reports due
- Conduct Faculty Survey*
- Collect Fall WI Course Artifacts

**FEBRUARY**
- Train Assessment Raters
- Assess Prior Year’s WI Course Artifacts

**MARCH**
- Analyze Assessment Data and Draft Annual Assessment Report
- Conduct QEP Advisory Committee Meetings
- Conduct Faculty Survey*
- Administer NSSE and ETS (Seniors)
- Collect Spring WI Course Artifacts
- Collect Student and Faculty Evaluations of WI Courses
- Collect WFF Evaluations of Fellows Program

**APRIL**
- Share Assessment Report with QEP Advisory Committee
- Conduct Faculty Survey*
- Administer ETS (Freshmen)

**JUNE & JULY**
- Collect Summer WI Course Artifacts

**AUGUST & SEPTEMBER**
- Implement Program Changes
- Administer ETS (Freshmen)

**MAY**
- Finalize Program Changes for Fall

WI- Writing Intensive
WFF- Writing Faculty Fellows
*Faculty surveys will be conducted twice a year, with half the colleges surveyed in the spring and the other half in the fall.

Not shown:
- Tutoring session summaries and Writing Center usage statistics will be collected year round.
**Schedule**

- Student and instructor artifacts will be collected by the end of each fall and spring semester (beginning spring of 2015).
- Raters will be recruited and trained at the beginning of each spring semester (beginning spring of 2015).
- Student artifacts will be assessed by raters at the end of each spring semester for the previous calendar year (beginning spring of 2016).

**Indirect Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes**

In addition to direct assessment of student’s mastery of the student learning outcomes, the University will assess the impact that the QEP is having campus-wide. Texas A&M-Kingsville plans to use the following instruments.

- The ETS Proficiency Profile is a nationally normed exam that assesses a student’s college-level skills in critical thinking, reading, writing, and mathematics, enabling institutions to measure and demonstrate the outcomes of general education programs. The writing portion of the exam specifically measures the student’s ability to recognize the most grammatically correct version of a clause, sentence, or group of sentences; organize units of language for coherence and rhetorical effect; recognize and reword figurative language; and organize elements of writing into larger units of meaning. By comparing the writing subscores from subsequent administrations of the ETS Proficiency Profile, the institution can gauge any improvements in writing scores, both absolute and relative to the results from other universities with the same Carnegie Classification.
- The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) assesses the extent to which students engage in educational practices associate with high levels of learning and development. Selected questions drawn from the annual administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement and the Experiences with Writing topical module at Texas A&M-Kingsville map to the Culture of Writing QEP outcomes as shown in Appendix A. By comparing results on these questions from successive NSSE administrations in comparison to the results from other universities with the same Carnegie Classification, the institution can gauge students’ perceptions of the frequency and intensity of their writing experiences.

**Schedule**

- The ETS Proficiency Profile was administered in the 2013 academic year (fall of 2012 to freshmen and spring of 2013 to seniors) to establish baseline data. No improvement was seen for the 2014 academic year. The Office of Institutional Research will continue to administer this exam annually.
- NSSE data was collected in 2013 to establish baseline data on students’ writing experiences. NSSE administration takes place annually and is coordinated by the Office of Institutional Research and
Office of Assessment. Starting in 2016, the administration of the NSSE will also include the Experiences with Writing topical module. The Director will report and lead discussions on NSSE results as they relate to QEP Outcomes.

Operational Assessment

To assess the university-wide efficacy of the Culture of Writing QEP, data will be collected regarding the writing support services offered through the Undergraduate Writing Center (e.g., Writing Faculty Fellows, Faculty Development Workshops, Peer Tutoring, etc.). These initiatives are intended to serve students and faculty across the university, as we seek to improve student writing in all colleges, majors, and disciplines.

Usage and process data collected from the Undergraduate Writing Center will include:

- Usage statistics for the writing center, such as the student writer’s major/minor and year in school; course for which the student is seeking help with her/his writing; number of visits the student has made to the Writing Center; and total number of student writers utilizing the writing center per semester, with a breakdown of courses for which students seek assistance, and profiles of student writers seeking assistance. AccuTrack software will be used to collect this data.
- Summaries of tutoring sessions, composed by writing center tutors. Session summaries describe the content of tutoring sessions and indicate for which area(s) of the writing process (i.e., invention or revision) the student writer sought assistance.
- Student surveys will be administered to student writers visiting the writing
center, and will indicate indirectly how, or whether, the writing center has helped students improve as writers.

- Faculty surveys will be administered to all faculty members and will indirectly assess how, or whether, the writing center has helped improve students’ writing and how, or whether, the writing center has supported faculty efforts at teaching writing.
- Usage statistics for the faculty development workshops, such as faculty participants’ college, department, and rank; Writing Intensive Courses taught and/or developed; and total number of faculty participating in writing and teaching workshops. Attendance cards distributed at each workshop will be used to collect this data.
- Survey data indicating perceptions of how, or whether, workshops have supported faculty efforts at teaching writing.

**Schedule**

- Usage statistics were collected in fall of 2014 and will continue to be collected every fall and spring semester.
- Student surveys will be piloted in spring of 2015 and will continue to be collected every fall, spring, and summer semester.
- Faculty surveys were piloted in fall of 2014 and will continue to be collected every fall and spring semester, with half the colleges surveyed one semester, the other half the next.
- Writing Faculty Fellows surveys will be piloted in spring of 2015 and will continue to be collected every fall and spring semester.

**Reporting**

To ensure that the *Culture of Writing* QEP is implemented according to plan and that improvements are made on the basis of assessment data, the Undergraduate Writing Center Director will prepare an annual report that covers the following.

- evaluations of all QEP program activities
- implementation schedule and process due dates
- faculty involvement in Writing Intensive Courses
- results of student learning and program outcomes assessment along with recommendations for improvement based on those results

**Schedule**

- The QEP assessment results will be prepared annually and will be reviewed as part of the University’s institutional effectiveness reporting processes.
- At the end of the spring semester, the Director will analyze the assessment data and create a preliminary assessment report to be shared with the QEP Advisory Committee and the Writing Faculty Fellows. These groups will comment and propose changes to the QEP Program based upon the data collected.
- In November of each year, the Undergraduate Writing Center Director will present the assessment results as well as the program revisions to the university administration as part of the university-wide institutional effectiveness planning and reporting process.


Harris, Muriel. “A Writing Center without a WAC Program: The De Facto WAC Center/Writing Center.” *The Longman Guide to Writing Center Theory and Practice*. Ed. Robert W.


Journal of Adolescent and Young Adult Literacy 54.4 (Feb. 2011): 351-360.


White, Mary Jane and Roger Bruning. “Implicit Writing Beliefs and Their Relation to Writing Quality.” Contemporary Educational Psychology 30 (2005): 166-89.

Appendix A: Writing Intensive Course Requirement Guidelines, Student Learning Outcomes, and Assessment Rubric

I. Writing Intensive Course Requirement Guidelines

Catalog Description: [from p.81 of the 2014-2016 Undergraduate Catalog]

Writing Intensive Requirement

Candidates for all bachelor’s degrees must complete at least one course designated as Writing Intensive, preferably in their major field. Candidates must earn a grade of C or better in such a course. The designation of a writing intensive course is [WI] following the title of the approved course.

Alignment with University Mission:

The mission of Texas A&M University-Kingsville is to develop well-rounded leaders and critical thinkers who can solve problems in an increasingly complex, dynamic and global society. Writing Intensive courses are intended for students to:

- Analyze/think critically and articulate ideas about discipline-specific subjects and
- Communicate effectively in their professions and/or graduate studies

Criteria for a Course to be Designated as Writing Intensive (WI)

- Only 3XXX or 4XXX level courses may be designated as WI.
- Specific learning objectives for the course should include an objective for students to demonstrate through a writing assignment, the ability to critically develop and articulate concepts in the academic discipline.
- The writing assignment(s) must relate clearly to the course content and learning objectives.
- The writing assignment(s) must count toward at least 10%-25% of the overall course grade.
- At least one writing assignment must include revision of a preliminary draft subsequent to feedback from the instructor regarding development and organization of the concept(s), writing style, and format (in accordance with the rules of the documentation style typically used in the discipline).

WI Course Approval Committee Members

Dr. Kathleen Rees, College of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Human Sciences
Dr. Susan Roberson, College of Arts and Sciences
Dr. Rick Aukerman, College of Business Administration
Dr. Jaya Goswami, College of Education and Human Performance
Dr. Breanna Bailey, College of Engineering
Figure 5. Procedure for Faculty Applying for a WI Designation for an Existing Course

Faculty member submits proposed syllabus and WI Approval Form to Department Chair

Department Chair reviews and approves application; forwards materials to College member on WI Committee

College member on the WI Committee reviews and approves application; forwards materials to College UCC

College UCC reviews and approves application; forwards materials to the Provost

Provost reviews and approves application; forwards approval to Registrar; course appears in undergraduate catalog and Banner with WI designation

(UCC: Undergraduate Curriculum Committee)

University schedules and deadlines for college and university curriculum committees apply.

Figure 6. Procedure for Faculty Applying for a WI Designation for a New Course

Faculty member submits proposed syllabus, WI Approval Form, and undergraduate curriculum proposal approval form to Dept. UCC; Dept. UCC reviews, approves, and forwards materials to Department Chair

Department Chair reviews and approves application; forwards materials to College member on WI Committee

College member on the WI Committee reviews and approves application; forwards materials to College UCC

College UCC reviews and approves application; forwards materials to the College Dean; Dean reviews and approves application; forwards materials to the University UCC

Provost reviews and approves application; forwards approval to Registrar; course appears in undergraduate catalog and Banner with WI designation

(UCC: Undergraduate Curriculum Committee)

University schedules and deadlines for college and university curriculum committees apply.
Suggested Assignments for WI Courses

- Several 1-3 page writing assignments (lab reports, position papers, etc.) requiring peer feedback and evaluated by instructor prior to writing next assignment
- One long paper requiring multiple sections, with instructor’s written feedback/conference regarding the draft
- Several short graded papers (literature review, critiques of scholarly work, etc.) leading to the composition of a long paper
- Models (suggestions taken from U of Wisconsin-Madison)
  ◊ two 3-page papers, revised; one 12-15 page paper with proposal, draft, revision
  ◊ two 2-page papers, one revised; two 8-page papers, one revised
  ◊ two 10-page papers, revised
  ◊ ten 1-page response papers; one 10-page paper, revised
  ◊ two 5-page papers; one 5-page paper, revised; one 5-page take home exam

II. Student Learning Outcomes for Writing Intensive Courses

A. Critical Thinking: Through a writing assignment, students will:
   a. Demonstrate the ability to critically develop and articulate concepts in the academic discipline;
   b. Demonstrate the ability to comprehend, evaluate, and synthesize knowledge obtained from existing sources.

B. Focus and Development: Through a writing assignment, students will:
   a. Demonstrate the ability to focus writing around a primary argument, controlling idea, or thesis;
   b. Demonstrate an understanding of the various discipline-specific strategies used to convey ideas and/or arguments;
   c. Demonstrate the ability to develop main ideas using support and evidence appropriate for the academic discipline.

C. Organization: Through a writing assignment, students will demonstrate an understanding of the various discipline-specific strategies to organize and develop ideas

D. Research and Documentation: Through a writing assignment, students will:
   a. Demonstrate the ability to integrate existing sources with their own words and ideas;
   b. Demonstrate the ability to cite and document research according to discipline-specific conventions.

E. Rhetorical Awareness: Through a writing assignment, students will:
   a. Demonstrate an understanding of the role audience, subject, and purpose play in determining rhetorical strategies;
   b. Demonstrate an understanding of the style (i.e., language and tone) expected of an academic writer in this discipline;
   c. Demonstrate control of grammar, mechanics, and spelling when writing for an academic audience in this discipline.
### III. Writing Intensive Course Assessment Rubric

#### Table 11. Writing Intensive Course Assessment Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>3: High Proficiency</th>
<th>2: Average Proficiency</th>
<th>1: Limited Proficiency</th>
<th>0: Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus</strong></td>
<td>Main idea or argument <em>critically</em> develops and articulates concepts in the academic discipline, via synthesis of knowledge obtained from existing sources; presentation of idea is clear and concise</td>
<td>Main idea or argument demonstrates understanding of concepts in the academic discipline, based on satisfactory sources; presentation of idea is clear and concise</td>
<td>Main idea or argument demonstrates minimal understanding of concepts in the academic discipline; presentation of idea may be minimal, vague, or unsubstantiated</td>
<td>No evidence of primary argument or controlling idea; or, argument or controlling idea demonstrates a <em>misunderstanding</em> of concepts in the academic discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development</strong></td>
<td>Main idea is <em>skillfully</em> developed, supported by evidence appropriate to the academic discipline</td>
<td>Main idea is adequately developed, supported by evidence appropriate to the academic discipline</td>
<td>Some support wanders from and/or is not relevant to the main idea; evidence is insufficient to support claims</td>
<td>Little to no substantiation of ideas and/or arguments; lacks references, and/or relies on inappropriate sources for support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Ideas “flow”: easy to follow from beginning to end, with individual paragraphs internally coherent</td>
<td>Ideas are logically connected, with transitions made between paragraphs and an obvious internal structure</td>
<td>Ideas are readable, but would benefit from restructuring and/or stronger transitions between ideas</td>
<td>Difficult to follow; fails to logically connect ideas; may begin or end abruptly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research</strong></td>
<td>Effectively integrates words and ideas from existing sources with the writer’s words and ideas</td>
<td>Correctly integrates words and ideas from existing sources with the writer’s words and ideas</td>
<td>Ineffectively integrates words and ideas from existing sources, i.e., relies too heavily on direct quotation</td>
<td>Fails to meet research requirements, and/or shows no little or no ability to integrate sources correctly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Documentation</strong></td>
<td>Accurately employs discipline-specific conventions for citing and documenting sources</td>
<td>Has minor errors in citation or documentation, but citations are consistent, and all bibliographic information is provided</td>
<td>Includes in-text citations and bibliography, yet these are either inconsistent and/or incomplete</td>
<td>Fails to provide either or both in-text citations or bibliography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style</strong></td>
<td>Uses language and tone to <em>skillfully</em> address audience subject, and purpose</td>
<td>Uses language and tone appropriate to audience, subject, and purpose</td>
<td>Uses language and tone that may be too informal for audience, subject, and purpose</td>
<td>Relies on slang; colloquial language; profanity; and/or otherwise adopts a tone inappropriate to the rhetorical situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Correctness</strong></td>
<td>Constructs complex, varied sentences, with few or no errors in grammar mechanics, or spelling</td>
<td>Follows conventions for grammar, mechanics, and spelling, with a few errors throughout the text</td>
<td>Struggles to vary sentence patterns; errors in grammar, mechanics, and/or spelling distract from the writer’s meaning</td>
<td>Little or no evidence of editing or proofreading; frequent, numerous, and significant errors in grammar, mechanics, or spelling, such as interfere with meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Satisfactory: 14-21; Unsatisfactory: 0-13*
Appendix B: Sample Syllabi from Courses Designated as Writing Intensive

Texas A&M University-Kingsville
College of Education & Human
Performance Department of Health &
Kinesiology Updated: 8/14

Course Title & Number: EDKN 3355-Sport and the
Law
Credit Hours: Three
Course Meetings: MWF, 11:00-11:50am, SPEC 122
Final; Dec. 10th at 8:00

Instructor: Dr. Daniel J. Burt
Office: SPEC#109
Phone: 361-593-4580
daniel.burt@tamuk.edu
Office hours: MWF: 9-10, 12-1, 3-4, or by appointment
TR: 11-1, or by appointment

Graduation requirements for majors in Kinesiology (All Level-Teacher Certification), Kinesiology (Exercise Science), Recreation and Leisure, and Sport Business: In addition to the graduation requirements set forth by the University and the College of Education, the Department of Health and Kinesiology requires a grade of “C” or higher in all major or teaching field courses. Grades of “D” or “F” in these courses will not apply towards the Bachelor of Science degrees offered in the Department of Health and Kinesiology. NOTE: This requirement applies to students who entered Texas A&M-Kingsville, either as a freshman or a transfer, in Fall, 2006 or later.

Writing Intensive Requirement

Candidates for all bachelor's degrees must complete at least one course designated as Writing Intensive (WI) on the transcript in their major field. Candidates must earn a grade of C or better in these courses. Assignment(s) in a WI course will require a total of approximately 5000 words (approximately 20 typed, double-spaced pages). Prerequisites: English 1301 and English 1302.

Required Texts:

Optional Texts:
APA Publication Manual by the American Psychology Association, 6th ed., 2010

- Additional court cases will be handed out for reading in class.

We will also be using APA, 6th edition. You are responsible for knowing the format, and can buy copies at the university bookstore, or use the Purdue OWL website.

Philosophy of Grading: Grades are earned, not given freely. They are based on course mastery, and not just the amount of time spent on the subject. An excellent homework assignment on one day will not compensate a poor test grade. Please pay attention to all instructions and be aware of all the points in the class (via overall rubric and specific assignment rubrics). Some assignments will be straight forward in answering; others will require you to operate higher on Bloom’s Taxonomy. This means answering as best as you can and seeing if you can capture the main point thoroughly and also convey it with clarity.
**Blooms Taxonomy and the Level of Learning (Revised):**
Creating (highest level, level 6)
Evaluating
Analyzing
Applying
Understanding
Remembering (lowest level, level 1)

**Course Requirement:** Students might be asked to dress in appropriate casual business attire. Students may also have potential to go on observations and meet guest speakers. Students failing to dress appropriately or participate in the experiences will **not** be allowed to turn in related assignments unless arrangements have been made in advance with the instructor. Students absent or tardy from experiences will **not** be allowed to turn in the assignment. Medical or Physical difficulties should be brought to the attention of the instructor at the earliest possible time.

**Catalog Description:** Legal and ethical dilemmas facing those in sport. Legal principles and judicial opinions in cases involving organized sport.

Prerequisites: EDKN 1300, 1301, & 2330

**Rationale for Course:** Legal laws, cases, and concepts are integral parts of sport business. Evaluation of a program’s capability to handle and protect itself from legal situations is essential for its success. This course is designed to transition the student from the managerial concepts they have learned in classes, and apply them to the legal environment that will surround their job, the decision making process will also be enhanced with legal case studies.

**Intended Audience:** upper level undergraduates

**Course Philosophy:** This junior-level course is designed to introduce the student to current business practices related to legal issues and court cases. Proper analysis of legal documents and a clear understanding of their ramifications should be used by sport managers to prepare, evaluate, and defend their programs and businesses. Students will learn to use basic and complex legal concepts to design and develop their own liability programs, as well as assessment for evaluating the effectiveness of their legal business methodology.

**Student Learner Outcomes:** Given lectures, demonstrations, laboratory experiences, in-class interactions, out of class assignments, computer assignments, observation opportunities, the students will be able to:

1. Understand the background, need, and ethics, surrounding legal environment in Sport Business.
2. Demonstrate knowledge and application of litigation issues and defense.
3. Understand and explain the complications that arise in human resource legalities.
4. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the legal function in strategic management and crises situations.
5. Demonstrate the ability to create and evaluate preventative measures in specific sport issues, e.g. violence.
6. Understand the legal concepts surrounding intellectual property laws and unique operation issues that arise in sport marketing.
7. Explain and locate where additional resources can be found for legal changes and needed updates.
8. Demonstrate the ability to think critically and reason analytically potential ramifications of the legal cases presented to them.
10. Demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly their thoughts and considerations for policy creation through the use of the written word.

COURSE CONTENT

1. Introduction to Law and Sport
   a. Managerial Approach to Law
   b. Managerial Strategies to Minimize Liability
   c. U.S. Legal System and Legal Research

2. Human Resource Management Legalities
   a. Employment Relations Issues (Contract Law)
   b. Employer Liability
   c. Hiring, Promotion, Termination
   d. Harassment and Employee Expression
   e. Working Conditions
   f. Labor Relations/Collective Bargaining
   g. Law of Agency and Athlete Agents

3. Strategic Management-Governance
   b. Governance Issues in Olympic Sport
   c. Governance Issues in High School/College
   d. Regulation of Participation in Private Clubs, High School, and College Athletics

4. Operations Management
   a. Participant Liability
   b. Premises Liability and Facility/Event Issues
   c. Use of Waivers and Exculpatory Clauses
   d. Participant Violence in Sport

5. Marketing Management
   a. Development and Protection of Intellectual Property
   b. Promotional and Operational Legal Issues in Marketing

Work Expectation: That all assigned work will be completed. It has traditionally been expected that a college student will spend 2 hours per hour of actual class time on the subject matter.

Grading: The numbers below are grade percentages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 and up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 to 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 to 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 to 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 and below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Assignment** | **Worth** | **You Received**
--- | --- | ---
3 Tests | 300 (50%) |  |
10 Writing Assignments | 200 (32%) |  |
Case Study Analysis | 50 (8%) |  |
Legal Research Paper | 75 (12%) |  |
Total | 625 (100%) |  |

***All assignments will be submitted to turnitin.com unless otherwise stated.***

**Evaluation:** There will be three(3) exams and an assignment grade. The tests will count 50%, the research paper is worth 12%, and the assignments are worth 32% of your total. Assignments are collected at the beginning of the class for which it is due. Students are expected to attend class and exams are not to be missed. There are no excused absences. Students are not allowed access to cell phones during exams.

**Case Study Analysis Debate:** In groups, Students will be assigned a legal opinion, without the final court’s decision, and must decide which party to favor. They will need to complete a two page report to demonstrate appropriate written communication. Students will also have to present a PowerPoint presentation that demonstrates analytic reasoning and critical thinking, included must be the potential policies and program development that might occur due to the case.

**Writing Assignments:** Students will have ten opportunities to demonstrate critical thinking and analysis by completing a 10 question, 1 page reflection on Court Opinions provided in class, after covering the relevant subject matter. After demonstrating the ability to analysis and identify requested information from the document, the students will be required to look at it from a managerial perspective and discuss policies and methods to reduce potential liability. An understanding of APA format will be used. A sample is provided at the end of the syllabus.

**Research Paper:** Students will demonstrate their ability to expand their skills learned on the smaller research paper by expanding it to a 10 page research paper and perform research on a legal topic related to sport of their choosing. Students will be expected to garner data from the internet, library, and cases that have set precedence through the LexisNexis database. Students will clarify federal laws, state laws, and case precedence that play a role in the legal issues. Students will then summarize their findings on the major points, and then discuss from a managerial standpoint on policies and precautions that should be taken to mitigate liability.

**Additional Work:** Assignments will also be given throughout the semester depending on activities that take place during the semester. Examples may be reflection papers, worksheets, and minor research assignments.

**Educational Access:** Students with disabilities, including learning disabilities, who wish to request accommodations in this class should notify the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office early in the semester so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide documentation of his/her disability to the SSD coordinator. For more information, call 593-3024 or visit Life Services and Wellness at 1210 Retama Drive.

**Attendance and Due Dates:**
Be here… If there is a situation that warrants you missing class then inform me as soon as possible, preferably before the absence. This is one of those classes that it is next to impossible to keep up with many absences. Things will be due when they are assigned as due, please pay careful attention to instructions when they are
given. After 4 unexplained absences you will lose 11% of your final grade, dropping a letter grade permanently. If there is 6 unexplained absences you will fail the course.

**Communications:**
For any questions you might have for me when not in class you can call the office, email me, or visit my office during the mornings or during office hours. Email is usually the fastest guarantee since I check my email several times between 8am-5pm, and a response can be expected within 24 hours on the weekdays, and 48 hours on the weekends. Please note who you are and make the message understandable and coherent. If class does end up being cancelled, you will be notified by your tamuk email so please check it often.

**Dropping the Course:**
Students are responsible for dropping courses they do not intend to complete. The university employs an automatic Q grade (no grade) for students who drop a course prior to the mid-point (Q date) in the semester. Students are responsible for knowing the "Q date" since it is posted in the university catalog. Students who are failing this course after the Q date and decide to drop will be issued a Grade of F for the course. Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to the Professor in the beginning of the semester and not after the "Q date".

**University Policies**

**Disability statement:**
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disability. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as early as possible in the term at (361) 593-2904. DRC is located in the Life Service and Wellness building at 1210 Retama Drive.

**Six-drop policy:**
The following provision does not apply to students with Texas public college or university credits prior to Fall 2007. The Texas Senate Bill 1231 specifies the number of course drops allowed to a student without penalty. After a student has dropped six courses, a grade of QF will normally be recorded for each subsequent drop. Additional information on Senate Bill 1231 is available at the Registrar’s Office at (361) 593-2811 and at http://www.tamuk.edu/registrar/drop_policy.html.

**Academic misconduct statement:**
You are expected to adhere to the highest academic standards of behavior and personal conduct in this course and all other courses. Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to university disciplinary procedures. Make sure you are familiar with your Student Handbook, especially the section on academic misconduct, which discusses conduct expectations and academic dishonesty rules.

**Forms of academic dishonesty:**
1) Cheating: Using unauthorized notes or study aids, allowing another party to do one’s work/exam and turning in that work/exam as one’s own; submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from the course instructors; deception in which a student misrepresents that he/she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not mastered; giving or receiving aid unauthorized by the instructor on assignments or examinations.
2) Aid of academic dishonesty: Intentionally facilitating any act of academic dishonesty. Tampering with grades or taking part in obtaining or distributing any part of a scheduled test.
3) Fabrication: Falsification or creation of data, research or resources, or altering a graded work without the prior consent of the course instructor.
4) Plagiarism: Portrayal of another’s work or ideas as one’s own. Examples include unacknowledged quotation and/or paraphrase of someone else’s words, ideas, or data as one’s own in work submitted for credit. Failure to identify information or essays from the Internet and submitting them as one’s own work also constitutes plagiarism.
5) Lying: Deliberate falsification with the intent to deceive in written or verbal form as it applies to an academic submission.
pregnant or is planning to become pregnant, the university strongly recommends that students do provide notification, so appropriate and to determine if additional modifications are necessary. While the university cannot mandate that the student notify it that she is additional precautions are needed, based on their individual situation. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate their needs to the faculty member or Office of Compliance as soon as possible in order for risk-reduction to begin when it can be most effective, based on their individual situation. When a student has been notified to the Dean of Students and if it is not received, an instructor has the authority to ask the student to leave the classroom. If the student fails to leave after being directed to do so, assistance may be obtained from other university personnel, including University Police Department. An individual engaging in such disruptive behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Such incidents will be adjudicated by the Dean of Students under non-academic procedures.

Non-academic misconduct:
The university respects the rights of instructors to teach and of students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires campus conditions that do not impede their exercise. Campus behavior that interferes with these rights will not be tolerated; examples include

1) interfering with the instructor's ability to conduct the class,
2) causing inability of other students to profit from the instructional program, or
3) any interference with the rights of others.

An individual engaging in such disruptive behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Such incidents will be adjudicated by the Dean of Students under non-academic procedures.

Texas A&M University-Kingsville does not tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation (or any other illegal basis) and will investigate all complaints that indicate sexual harassment, harassment, or discrimination may have occurred. Sexual harassment and sexual assault are types of sex discrimination. Such sexual misconduct is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any member of the university community violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. A person who believes he/she has been the victim of sexual misconduct harassment, discrimination, or harassment may pursue either the informal or the formal complaint resolution procedure. A complaint may be initially made to the Office of Compliance at (361) 593-4758, complainant’s immediate supervisor, a department head, a supervisory employee, or the Dean of Students at (361)-593-3606 or the Office of Compliance at (361) 593-4758. Regardless of who the complaint is filed with, the Compliance Office will be notified of the complaint so it can be investigated.

The following needs to be added ONLY on syllabi for classes that may involve a circumstance that could be harmful to an unborn child.

Any pregnant students, or students planning to become pregnant, should consult their health care provider to determine what, if any, Ongoing behaviors or single behaviors considered distracting (e.g., coming late to class, performing a repetitive act that is annoying, sleeping or reading a newspaper in class, etc.) will be addressed by the faculty member initially either generally or individually. Cases in which such annoying behavior becomes excessive and the student refuses to respond to the faculty member’s efforts can be referred to the Dean of Students. In the case of serious disruptive behavior in a classroom the instructor may first request compliance from the student and if it is not received, an instructor has the authority to ask the student to leave the classroom. If the student fails to leave after being directed to do so, assistance may be obtained from other university personnel, including University Police Department. An individual engaging in such disruptive behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Such incidents will be adjudicated by the Dean of Students under non-academic procedures to determine if the student should be allowed to return to the classroom.

6) Bribery: Providing, offering or taking rewards in exchange for a grade, an assignment, or the aid of academic dishonesty.
7) Threat: An attempt to intimidate a student, staff or faculty member for the purpose of receiving an unearned grade or in an effort to prevent reporting of an Honor Code violation.

Please be aware that the University subscribes to the Turnitin plagiarism detection service. Your paper may be submitted to this service at the discretion of the instructor.

Other Forms of Academic Misconduct:

1) Failure to follow published departmental guidelines, professor’s syllabi, and other posted academic policies in place for the orderly and efficient instruction of classes, including laboratories, and use of academic resources or equipment.
2) Unauthorized possession of examinations, reserved library materials, laboratory materials or other course related materials.
3) Failure to follow the instructor or proctor's test-taking instructions, including but not limited to not setting aside notes, books or study guides while the test is in progress, failing to sit in designated locations and/or leaving the classroom/ test site without permission during a test.
4) Prevention of the convening, continuation or orderly conduct of any class, lab or class activity. Engaging in conduct that interferes with or disrupts university teaching, research or class activities such as making loud and distracting noises, repeatedly answering cell phones/text messaging or allowing pagers to beep, exhibiting erratic or irrational behavior, persisting in speaking without being recognized, repeatedly leaving and entering the classroom or test site without authorization, and making physical threats or verbal insults to the faculty member, or other students and staff.
5) Falsification of student transcript or other academic records; or unauthorized access to academic computer records.
6) Nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other university records.
7) Any action which may be deemed as unprofessional or inappropriate in the professional community of the discipline being studied.

The university respects the rights of instructors to teach and of students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires campus conditions that do not impede their exercise. Campus behavior that interferes with these rights will not be tolerated; examples include 1) interfering with the instructor's ability to conduct the class, 2) causing inability of other students to profit from the instructional program, or 3) any interference with the rights of others.

An individual engaging in such disruptive behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Such incidents will be adjudicated by the Dean of Students under non-academic procedures.

Texas A&M University-Kingsville does not tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation (or any other illegal basis) and will investigate all complaints that indicate sexual harassment, harassment, or discrimination may have occurred. Sexual harassment and sexual assault are types of sex discrimination. Such sexual misconduct is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any member of the university community violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. A person who believes he/she has been the victim of sexual misconduct harassment, discrimination, or harassment may pursue either the informal or the formal complaint resolution procedure. A complaint may be initially made to the Office of Compliance at (361) 593-4758, complainant’s immediate supervisor, a department head, a supervisory employee, or the Dean of Students at (361)-593-3606 or the Office of Compliance at (361) 593-4758. Regardless of who the complaint is filed with, the Compliance Office will be notified of the complaint so it can be investigated.

The following needs to be added ONLY on syllabi for classes that may involve a circumstance that could be harmful to an unborn child.

Any pregnant students, or students planning to become pregnant, should consult their health care provider to determine what, if any, additional precautions are needed, based on their individual situation. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate their needs to the faculty member or Office of Compliance as soon as possible in order for risk-reduction to begin when it can be most effective, and to determine if additional modifications are necessary. While the university cannot mandate that the student notify it that she is pregnant or is planning to become pregnant, the university strongly recommends that students do provide notification, so appropriate
steps can be taken to ensure the health of both parent and child. To communicate health circumstances or to request additional information, please contact Karen Royal, Director of Compliance at (361) 593-4758 or karen.royal@tamuk.edu.

**Disruptive Behavior:** 1st occurrence during class=verbal warning, 2nd occurrence during class=class dismissal (no credit for that day). If requiring a second dismissal will result in a full letter grade being taken off of your possible final grade, in addition to any other points lost. If a third dismissal is required will result in an automatic “F” in the course. Blatant disrespect of others, refusal to take part in an activity, a large quantity of foul language, showing up to class while under the influence of any banned substance, and any form of sexual harassment may result in automatic dismissal from the class that day, or permanently.

**Hand Washing:** Due to numerous illnesses going around the country this past year, students are asked to wash their hands before and after classes, especially if using equipment, since exercise and activity classes are physically oriented.

**Hostile Environment:** Any form of disruptive, lewd, or upsetting behavior that makes an individual uncomfortable will not be tolerated. This includes racial, sexual, foul language, or other sensitive issues that may come up. The first time is a verbal warning, and continued behavioral issues will result in being excused from the class. If it continues a drop will be requested. If the instructor has made you feel uncomfortable due to discussing those issues in a form of academia, please notify him/her so that a resolution can be made.

**CLASS RULES**

*Phones will not be used in class or any disrespectful behavior (including talking to each other) ...or you will be asked to leave for the day.

*I do not drop students...you receive an F. I also do not give out QI’s

*No extensions

*Keep showing up late (individually or as a class), I lock the door

*Assignments are due in the location as specified (which is turnitin.com unless otherwise noted), if for some reason you cannot get it on turnitin.com, I will accept it via email as long as it is done before the required time frame (due at 12...meaning time stamped 12:01 will not be accepted).

*Instructions on assignments or rubrics are to be followed specifically; failure to do so will result in an automatic zero for the grade. If you do not understand something then you need ask well in advance.

*You need to inform me as soon as you know you will miss class, and that will be handled on a case by case basis (and must relate to a personal emergency...work does not count).

*Group work is graded as a group, and then effected by the peer or supervising review...which means your grade could be higher or lower than your groups.

*Any form of sharing work or copying (including yourself...known as self-plagiarism) will result in a minimum zero for a grade and may include being written up, or thrown out of the class. This includes the person the work was copied off of; regardless if they were aware or not.

*No grade rounding unless there is an extraordinary circumstance (meaning 89.99 is still a B).

*There is no extra credit.
Tentative Schedule: Reading schedule is being developed and will be handed out the first day of class, we will be the book often, and additional handouts will be provided as well. Warning: There will be readings required by the second day of class.

Day 1: Syllabus Day and Group Work
Day 2: Law and Management
Day 3: Understanding Liability
Day 4: Policies and Minimalizing Liability
Day 5: Understanding the U.S. Legal System
Day 6: History of Sport and the Law
Day 7: History Con’t
Day 8: Legal Research and its importance
Day 9: How to perform legal research with the library/ Using LexisNexis
Day 10: Analyzing and Reflection on a Court Opinion
Day 11: Contract Law
Day 12: Contract Con’t
Day 13: Contract Con’t
Day 14: Employer Liability
Day 15: Hiring and Supervision Negligence
Day 16: Laws involved with Hiring
Day 17: Laws Governing Promotion and Firing
Day 18: Harassment, Sexual or Otherwise
Day 19: Employee Expression at Work
Day 20: Working Conditions
Day 21: Labor Relations
Day 22: Collective Bargaining
Day 23: Collective Bargaining Con’t
Day 24: Agency and Sport Agent Law
Day 25: Movie on Sport Agency “The Bottom Line”
Day 26: Review for Midterm
Day 27: Midterm
Day 28: How Professional Sports are Governed
Day 29: How the Olympics are Governed
Day 30: How High School is Governed
Day 31: How College is Governed
Day 32: Participation and Eligibility
Day 33: Concepts in Negligence and Negligence Defenses
Day 34: Business Types and Formations
Day 35: Sherman Antitrust Act and Monopolies
Day 36: Movie on NFL lawsuit over Monopoly “Small Potatoes
Day 37: Participant Liability/Draft of Research Paper Due
Day 38: Premise/Event Liability
Day 39: Thanksgiving…free day
Day 40: Waiver and Release Forms
Day 41: Sport Violence and Mitigation
Day 42: Intellectual Property and Trademark Day
43: Legal Issue and Concerns in Marketing Day
44: Review for the Final/Research Paper Due

*Please note that the other chapters in the book that we may not read are excellent on how to assess specific content, and make a great reference if you enter the exercise sciences or pedagogical fields. NOTE:

**Sport and the Law Research Paper**

You are required to pick a legal topic (i.e. Stadiums and Negligence). You are then required to find court cases and current laws that may dictate the standing or current precedence on that topic. This paper is to be 10 pages of CONTENT, meaning that the title page and references are to be included and are required, but are not part of the grade. If you do not have a title page, table of content, or a reference page then the paper will be an automatic zero. The paper will be worth a total 12% of your final grade. It is expected to be written in APA format from beginning to end.

**Needed in the paper:**

| Title Page | 1 pg. |
| Table of Content | 1 pg. |
| Introduction | 1 pg. |
| Body of paper with headings | 7-8 pgs. |
| Summary | 1 pg. |
| Ramifications | 1 pg. |
| References | 1 pg. or more if needed |
| **Total (when including everything)** | **13 pgs. Minimum** |

**Grading Rubric:**

| Adequate coverage and research of laws and cases | 10 pts. |
| Writing style, grammar, punctuation, mechanics, and spelling | 5 pts. |
| Proper understanding of the precedence set by the courts seen in the summary | 10 pts. |
| Appropriate Format throughout (APA) | 10 pts. |
| Clear Transition between topics | 5 pts. |
| Ramifications demonstrate a strong application of the materials researched | 15 pts. |
| Body and overall content of the material used to support the key topic | 20 pts. |
| **Total** | **75 pts.** |
Texas A&M University—Kingsville, Department of History, Political Science, and Philosophy

History 4301, Fall, 2014
Methods of Historical Research, 3 Credit Hours
12:30-1:45 PM, TR
323 Rhode Hall

The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there.   L. P. Hartley

You should know better Than to think that you Can return to the past.       Bruce Springsteen

Dr. Roger Tuller
Office: 300 Rhode Hall
Office Hours:
M-F 11:00AM-11:50 AM; MWF, 9:00-10:00AM; TR, 2:00-3:00 PM;
or by appointment.
Office Phone: 593-3601
FAX (361) 593 4083
E-mail: roger.tuller@tamuk.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION
According to the TAMUK Course Catalog, History 4301 concerns “Procedures and methods of historical research. Introduction to types of historical data, analysis of sources, the use of computer techniques in historical research and the methods of historical writing. Prerequisite: 6 semester hours of History.”

History 4301 is an upper-level course that offers students the opportunity to “do” history. The focus is on the procedures and methods of historical research, as well as the nature and philosophy of history and a basic introduction to historiography.

This syllabus outlines course procedures and requirements; test and writing assignment due dates; as well as grading policies. This syllabus serves as a contract between the graduate student and the professor; it is therefore critical that you FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE SYLLABUS.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNER OUTCOMES
1. Students will acquire a working knowledge of historical methods. This knowledge will include, but not be limited to, the nature and philosophy of history; historiography; research methods; and historical writing.

Successful students will demonstrate this knowledge by passing two written, short answer/essay exams; writing an analytical book review, a document analysis, a short paper analyzing “historical” evidence from the film, Rashomon, and a capstone term paper of not less than fifteen (15) typed, double-spaced pages; successfully completing an introductory oral history project; participation in peer editing exercises; and through frequent participation in class discussions.

2. Students will enhance their analytical skills, including their ability to analyze sources, to demonstrate understanding of cause and effect, to interpret historical events, and to compare and contrast differing interpretations and situations.

Successful students will demonstrate these skills by their performance on the exams, writing assignments, and in class discussions.
COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNER OUTCOMES (continued)
3. Students will enhance their written and oral communication skills.

Successful students will demonstrate these skills on the exams, in their writing assignments, and during class discussions.

4. Students will gain a working knowledge of the Turabian (CMS) Reference Note/Bibliography citation style.

Successful students will demonstrate these skills through the use of correct citation format on all written assignments and in peer editing exercises.

TEXTS
You will need four books for this course, all of which should be available at the TAMUK Barnes & Noble Bookstore (or—usually at significantly lower prices—from various online sources, such as AMAZON.com). Please purchase the following books ASAP (prices are publishers’ list price for new books):

Robert C. Williams, The Historian’s Toolbox: A Student’s Guide to the Theory and Craft of History, 3rd. ed. (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2012); ISBN: 9780765633279; 27.95. This will serve as one of our primary texts, with weekly readings assigned; readings are to be completed before the associated lectures.

Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 8th. ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013); ISBN: 0226816389; $18.00. Our other primary text, this condensation of The Chicago Manual of Style is the history writer’s Bible. This is our authoritative source on questions of style, format, and citation, and will serve as the basis for one of your exams.

Chip Colwell-Chanthaphonh, Massacre at Camp Grant: Forgetting and Remembering Apache History (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 2007); ISBN: 0816525854; 17.95. This study of a nearly-forgotten frontier incident will illuminate our discussions on the nature and philosophy of history and serve as the basis for an analytical book review.


In addition, students are URGED to obtain both a good (which means probably not electronic) dictionary and thesaurus.
EXAMINATIONS
Students will write two, 100-point examinations. The first exam will be a mixed-format “practical” covering basic research and writing skills, as well as all related readings and discussions. The second will cover all assigned lectures, readings, and discussions related to the nature and philosophy of history and historiography. It will consist of 5 of 7 short-essay identification questions worth 10 points each and 1 of 2 major essays valued at 50 points, for a total of 100 points.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS
All writing assignments for this course are to be written with attention to the correct use of English style, grammar, and Turabian CMS-format citation. Each assignment will receive 3 scores: a style score, based on grammar, punctuation, spelling, and citation; a content score based on the quality of thought and argumentation contained in the paper; and a final score, averaged from the first two. The third, final score is the one recorded for determining the course grade.

Complete, detailed instructions for each assignment will be distributed in class well in advance of the due dates.

Rashomon Paper: Students will write a brief (2-3 typed, double-spaced pages) paper based on viewing the film Rashomon. This first assignment is valued at 50 points.

Oral History Report: After conducting an interview of a living human being (or, with instructor permission) listening to a digitized Oral History interview at the South Texas Archives), students will write a brief report analyzing their interview, valued at 50 points.

Analytical Book Review: Students will complete a brief (3-4 typed, double-spaced pages), analytical review covering Massacre at Camp Grant. The review is worth 100 points.

Document Analysis: Students will complete a formal, written analysis (3-5 typed, double-spaced pages) of a primary document related to their term paper topic and/or from the South Texas Archives. The document analysis is worth 100 points.

Term Paper: Each student will write a term paper of not less than 15 typed, double-spaced pages on a topic of her/his choice, subject to instructor approval. The term paper must be based both on primary and secondary sources and must prove a clearly-defined thesis. This term paper satisfies the writing requirement for History majors and is valued at 400 points, 40% of the course grade, subdivided a follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timely Topic Submission in Required Format</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in 2 In-Class Peer Editing Exercises: (25 points each x 2):</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timely Term Paper Draft Submission</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Term Paper</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>400</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ATTENDANCE
Your prompt and regular attendance at all class meetings is required. Material from lectures and discussions may not be available in the readings; moreover, in-class activities comprise a significant portion of the course content. It is therefore essential that you attend all class meetings. Attendance will be taken at each class meeting, and excessive (more than 2) unexcused absences will almost certainly lower your grade.

Of course, illnesses and emergencies arise. In the case of excused absences (confining illness; serious illness or death in the family; participation in sanctioned intercollegiate competition or approved class activity), students will be permitted to make up missed work upon presentation of justification for the absence. Students absent for other reasons may be permitted to make up missed work at the discretion of the professor.

CLASS PARTICIPATION
Your class participation score (100 points) will be based on the quantity and quality of your contributions to class discussions and peer editing sessions.

GRADING
Course grades will be determined based on a percentage of the total points accumulated during the semester, weighted as follows; there is neither a “curve” nor “extra credit.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Course Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Exams</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>900-1000 = A (90%+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rashomon paper</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>800-899 = B (80%+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytical Book Review</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>700-799 = C (70%+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral History Report</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>600-699 = D (60%+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document Analysis</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>0-599 = F (&lt; 60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Paper (total)</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT (Please refer to p. 23 of the Student Handbook.)
Cheating and plagiarism have no place in a college classroom, and they SHALL NOT BE TOLERATED. Review your Student Handbook for specific behaviors defined as academic misconduct and possible penalties.

Academic misconduct statement:
You are expected to adhere to the highest academic standards of behavior and personal conduct in this course and all other courses. Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to university disciplinary procedures. Make sure you are familiar with your Student Handbook, especially the section on academic misconduct, which discusses conduct expectations and academic dishonesty rules.

Forms of academic dishonesty:
1) Cheating: Using unauthorized notes or study aids, allowing another party to do one’s work/exam and turning in that work/exam as one’s own; submitting the same or similar work in more than one course without permission from the course instructors; deception in which a student misrepresents that he/she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not mastered; giving or receiving aid unauthorized by the instructor on assignments or examinations.
2) Aid of academic dishonesty: Intentionally facilitating any act of academic dishonesty. Tampering with grades or taking part in obtaining or distributing any part of a scheduled test.
3) Fabrication: Falsification or creation of data, research or resources, or altering a graded work without the prior consent of the course instructor.

4) Plagiarism: Portrayal of another’s work or ideas as one’s own. Examples include unacknowledged quotation and/or paraphrase of someone else’s words, ideas, or data as one’s own in work submitted for credit. Failure to identify information or essays from the Internet and submitting them as one’s own work also constitutes plagiarism.

5) Lying: Deliberate falsification with the intent to deceive in written or verbal form as it applies to an academic submission.

6) Bribery: Providing, offering or taking rewards in exchange for a grade, an assignment, or the aid of academic dishonesty.

7) Threat: An attempt to intimidate a student, staff or faculty member for the purpose of receiving an unearned grade or in an effort to prevent reporting of an Honor Code violation.

Please be aware that the University subscribes to the Turnitin plagiarism detection service. Your paper may be submitted to this service at the discretion of the instructor.

Other Forms of Academic Misconduct:

1) Failure to follow published departmental guidelines, professor’s syllabi, and other posted academic policies in place for the orderly and efficient instruction of classes, including laboratories, and use of academic resources or equipment.

2) Unauthorized possession of examinations, reserved library materials, laboratory materials or other course related materials.

3) Failure to follow the instructor or proctor’s test-taking instructions, including but not limited to not setting aside notes, books or study guides while the test is in progress, failing to sit in designated locations and/or leaving the classroom/test site without permission during a test.

4) Prevention of the convening, continuation or orderly conduct of any class, lab or class activity. Engaging in conduct that interferes with or disrupts university teaching, research or class activities such as making loud and distracting noises, repeatedly answering cell phones/text messaging or allowing pagers to beep, exhibiting erratic or irrational behavior, persisting in speaking without being recognized, repeatedly leaving and entering the classroom or test site without authorization, and making physical threats or verbal insults to the faculty member, or other students and staff.

5) Falsification of student transcript or other academic records; or unauthorized access to academic computer records.

6) Nondisclosure or misrepresentation in filling out applications or other university records.

7) Any action which may be deemed as unprofessional or inappropriate in the professional community of the discipline being studied.

Please note also that ALL cases of Academic Misconduct in this class will be forwarded to the Dean of Students for additional disciplinary action beyond the usual grade penalties.

Classroom Conduct (Please refer to p.23, Sec. 200 of the Student Handbook or view online).

Students are considered to be adults and are expected to behave accordingly. Courtesy toward the instructor and other students is expected. Please:

· Set cellular phones to their “off” or “silent” positions during class unless there is some pressing family/work situation that requires you be available; please inform the instructor in advance if this is the case.

· DO NOT SEND OR RECEIVE TEXTS DURING CLASS!!!

· Arrive for class on time and do not pack up to leave until class has been dismissed

· Students may not tape record lectures without certification of a physical or learning disability.
Appendix C: Summary of Results from the Faculty Writing Survey

In Fall 2014, a survey, adapted from writing across the curriculum materials developed by Drs. Gerald Nelms and Rhonda Dively, was distributed to Texas A&M-Kingsville faculty (214-45). The survey asked faculty to identify the most common writing assignments given to students in their courses, in which areas they felt students were best prepared for writing, on what skills a Writing Intensive Course in their discipline would focus, how the new Undergraduate Writing Center could best assist student writers, and what types of workshops they would like to see for faculty in support of the Writing Intensive Requirements.

A total of 70 faculty members responded to the survey in November 2014. Of respondents, the majority (58.6%) taught in the College of Arts and Sciences. Fewer returns were seen from the Colleges of Education and Human Performance (12.9%); Business Administration (10.0%); Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Human Sciences (8.6%); and Engineering (8.6%). Faculty of all ranks, from professor to adjunct, were invited to respond.

Ninety-four percent of respondents indicated they assign writing in courses they teach. The most common writing assignments across disciplines are research papers (60%), closely followed by reports (49%) and summaries (43%), with scant attention (1%) paid to creative writing such as short fiction. These findings were consistent with faculty’s remarks indicating concern for how well students are prepared for writing in the disciplines, particularly in the areas of research, citation, and documentation. Overall, students’ writing abilities were viewed as very poor: 9.3% of respondents felt students were prepared to formulate main ideas, while remarks indicated skills to also be lacking in grammar, mechanics, spelling, organization, citation, documentation, and research strategies. In comments regarding the role of the Undergraduate Writing Center, most respondents indicated that student writers need extra support in these areas, with some respondents taking a developmental view of students’ writing abilities. One respondent recognizes the potential for students to improve as writers with instruction, practice, and support: “A writing center could help students continue to improve the writing skills learned in first-year composition courses. Students enter college with little to no understanding of how to write. One course will not improve their writing proficiency. One-on-one tutorials could identify the individual weaknesses.”

Another respondent states the following: “I find many students (not just our TAMUK students) are poorly prepared to write well when they enter college. I feel unprepared to teach them the basics they are missing…We are prevented from requiring them to take additional classes [beyond first-year composition], but practice is probably what they need. The Writing Center can provide this practice only if we instructors incorporate writing into our courses and require them to use this service.”

Knowing what faculty members consider discipline-appropriate skills for the focus of a Writing Intensive Course and what workshop topics they would like to see offered in support of teaching a Writing Intensive Course is invaluable. Areas for which the greatest number of
respondents would welcome assistance were:

- Grading and evaluating student writing (41%),
- Responding to student writing (39%),
- Teaching writing in the digital age (37%),
- Designing formal assignments (33%), and
- Designing informal, writing-to-learn assignments (33%).

When prompted to state in their own words what should be the responsibilities of a writing center, remarkably 64 of the 70 faculty members completing the survey responded with ideas. Responses included: “Helping faculty integrate writing assignments in their courses”; “Improving the flow of the document”; and “Helping students organize their thoughts into a cohesive writing structure.”

Regarding the writing skills on which a Writing Intensive Course would focus, one-third or more of respondents identified:

- Organizing ideas (71%),
- Citing and documenting sources (69%),
- Controlling grammar, spelling and mechanics (69%),
- Conducting library-based research (57%),
- Evaluating sources (57%),
- Focusing ideas (57%),
- Understanding writing as a process (57%),
- Understanding purpose and identifying audience (46%), and
- Conducting field-based research (41%).

Encouragingly, faculty members seem to take an inclusive view of writing skills appropriate for a Writing Intensive course, and express an interest in teaching writing rather than just assigning writing. Similarly encouraging is the expressed support for the services that could be provided by an Undergraduate Writing Center.
Appendix D: National Survey of Student Engagement Writing Questions

NSSE Core Survey Writing Questions

1. During the current school year, about how often have you done the following?
   [Very often, Often, Sometimes, Never]
   1A. Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in

2. During the school year, to what extent have your instructors done the following?
   [Very much, Quite a bit, Some, Very Little]
   2A. Provided feedback on a draft or work in progress

3. During the current school year, about how many papers, reports, or other writing tasks of the following length have you been assigned?
   [None, 1-2, 3-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, More than 20 papers, etc.]
   3A. Up to 5 pages
   3B. Between 6 and 10 pages
   3C. 11 pages or more

4. How much has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?
   [Very much, Quite a bit, Some, Very little]
   4A. Writing clearly and effectively

Supplemental Topical Module Questions

1. During the current school year, for how many writing assignments have you done the following?
   [All writing assignments, Most writing assignments, Some writing assignments, Few writing assignments, No writing assignments]
   1A. Talked with a classmate, friend, or family member to develop your ideas before starting your assignment
   1B. Received feedback from a classmate, friend, or family member about a draft before turning in your final assignment
   1C. Given feedback to a classmate about a draft or outline he or she had written
   1D. Summarized material you read such as articles, books, or online publications
   1E. Analyzed or evaluated something your read, researched, or observed
   1F. Described your methods or findings related to data you collected in lab or fieldwork, a survey project, etc.
   1G. Argued a position using evidence and reasoning
   1H. Explained in writing the meaning of numerical or statistical data
   1I. Written in the style and format of a specific field (engineering, history, psychology, etc.
   1J. Addressed a real or imagined audience such as your classmates, a politician, non-experts, etc.
2. During the current school year, for how many of your writing assignments has your instructor done the following?
   [All writing assignments, Most writing assignments, Some writing assignments, Few writing assignments, No writing assignments]

   2A. Provided clear instructions describing what he or she wanted you to do
   2B. Explained in advance what he or she wanted you to learn
   2C. Explained in advance the criteria he or she would use to grade your assignment

The *Experiences with Writing* NSSE topical module can be found at: