BARTON COLLEGE
QUALITY ENHANCEMENT PLAN
(QEP)

pathways

BARTON COLLEGE PATHWAYS TO ACHIEVE WRITING SUCCESS

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I. Executive Summary

Pathways to Achieve Writing Success at Barton College

The faculty, administration, and staff of Barton College held a series of meetings from 2005 to 2007 and determined that improving students' communication skills should be a priority at Barton College. Based on the results of the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) and faculty observations, the Quality Enhancement Plan Leadership Team (QEPLT) decided that the most immediate communication need was to improve student writing. To address this concern, Barton College will implement a series of writing-intensive (WI) courses throughout the academic experience.

The QEPLT developed the QEP proposal, and an assembly of Barton College faculty and staff approved the plan in fall 2007. The QEPLT will collect further data on current student writing skills during spring 2008 and academic year 2008-09. Selected faculty will experiment with WI courses and the Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR: pronounced "power") in fall 2008. Training for the WI courses began in April 2008, and all WI faculty will receive training before teaching a designated course. The full program will be implemented in fall 2009, and the QEP Director and the QEPLT will collect data from the QEP designated WI courses each semester thereafter. The first full assessment of the effectiveness of the QEP will be possible in spring 2013 when fall 2009 freshmen begin to graduate. Evaluations will continue annually.

Barton College will use a number of tools to assess the effectiveness of the QEP. Among these tools is the CLA, a national standardized writing and critical thinking test, allowing comparison to peer institutions. Further, at least one assignment from each student in all WI courses will be archived, along with the PoWR scores, in an electronic database. This collection of data will allow comparison among WI courses and student cohorts while also assessing the improvement in writing skills for individual students. Timely student surveys will assist in confirming adherence to course standards.

The QEP Director supported by the QEPLT will use the QEP data to assess achievement of the following student learning outcomes (SLO):

➢ By academic 2012-2013, Barton College seniors will score 10% above the CLA predicted score on the Analytic Writing Task portion of the assessment.

➢ In the Senior Summit, a capstone WI course in each major, 95% of students will score at least 3 (scale of 1-4) on the Pathways of Writing Rubric.

➢ Individual students who have completed the entire QEP format will achieve, on average, a score increase of 0.5 (scale of 1-4) from ENG 102 to the Senior Summit on the Pathways of Writing Rubric.

Faculty teaching the WI courses will be integral to the success of this program, and a number of resources will complement the faculty's efforts. A QEP Director, supported by the QEPLT consisting of faculty and staff, will insure that the QEP is implemented and systematically administered. The Director of Institutional Research will provide expertise in data analysis while the Barton College Senior Staff will continue to subscribe to the CLA. Furthermore, the Senior Staff will maintain its commitment to improving student writing by providing sufficient funding and facilities.

II. AN INTRODUCTION TO BARTON COLLEGE AND HER STUDENTS

Located in Wilson, North Carolina, Barton College is an academic community of approximately 1,200 students and 200 faculty and staff. Nationally recognized for its programs in education, deaf education, nursing and social work and its championship men's basketball team, the school maintains a close-knit atmosphere and emphasizes individual attention and engaged learning. The 65-acre campus is home to Barton Bulldogs varsity athletics and boasts 5 residence halls, the W. N. Hackney Library, the Kennedy Recreation & Intramural Center, and other state-of-the-art facilities. The Lauren Kennedy and Alan Campbell Theatre is currently under construction.

In September 1902 Barton College, under its former name of Atlantic Christian College, was incorporated by the State of North Carolina and opened with a capacity enrollment of 107. In 1923 the College adopted the words *Habebunt Lumen Vitae* -- "They shall have the light of life" -- as its official college motto. In 1955, the College was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. On September 6, 1990, the College changed its name to Barton College.

The College is named for Barton Warren Stone, a founder of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). In addition to Stone's early ministry in eastern North Carolina, he also had roots in private higher education in this state. Born in Maryland and reared in Virginia, Stone used his modest inheritance to attend Caldwell Academy in Greensboro in the late 1700s. He then began a career in law but later took up teaching before his lifelong religious evolution carried him to the frontiers of Kentucky. There, he led a religious movement, which eventually merged with another led by Thomas Campbell in 1832 to form the denomination that, 70 years later, established the College.

Barton College is in its one hundred and seventh year. Throughout its history the College has remained committed to education in its broadest sense. The original statement of purpose declared the following:

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The College is organized to maintain and operate an institution of learning for the education and instruction of qualified students within the framework of the Christian ideals and principles and under the auspices of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in North Carolina.

— The College Charter

Currently, the college mission statement articulates a clear assertion of its commitment to the broad development of students.

MISSION STATEMENT

Barton College is committed to providing programs and opportunities to encourage the intellectual, spiritual, social, and cultural development of its students and to challenge them for future leadership and service to their local and global communities.

The mission of the institution is often reexamined and wording revisited. Each revision continues to improve and more succinctly restate the same dedication Barton College has historically exhibited to the long-term well-being of its students. This mission led in 2006 to the addition of a vision statement centered on the Barton graduate. The evolution of the current statement of vision for the College has been constant and thoughtful. The thrust of this vision has always been to produce Barton graduates prepared to make contributions both as involved citizens and as participants in their chosen fields of study.

VISION STATEMENT

Barton College takes advantage of its smaller size and its historic commitment to students to create a unique undergraduate experience centered on a passionate belief in a community of active learners. Barton graduates will be well-prepared for life and for success in their chosen careers because they will possess a lifelong commitment to learning, service, and achievement. We will gain national recognition for the value of the Barton experience.

Thus, Barton recognizes that it exists for students and its reputation depends on the values it adds to their lives and careers. Change in the educational experience, including the QEP, must be designed to increase the value of that education. Therefore, the

Quality Enhancement Plan Leadership Team (QEPLT) focused on the identity of the Barton student.

Sixty-two percent (62%) of the current student population of approximately 1,200 students come from within a 50-mile radius of Wilson, and another fifteen percent (15%) come from North Carolina beyond the 50-mile radius; the remaining twenty-three percent (23%) come from 29 states and 16 foreign countries. One-third of current students are first-generation college students; about twenty percent (20%) are minority students; and sixty-five percent (65%) are female. As of fall 2007 the average SAT score of current Barton students was 940, with the verbal portion averaging 462. The first-to-second-year retention rate for fall 2006 freshmen was sixty-eight percent.

Twenty-two percent (22%) of Barton's traditional students are active participants in intercollegiate athletics; the College is a member of Division II of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA-II) and is regarded as having one of the best student-athlete programs in Conference Carolinas. Barton's men's basketball team was the NCAA-II 2007 National Champion; the College has three times won the Joby Hawn Cup in recognition of overall excellence in athletics from the Carolinas Virginia Athletic Conference (CVAC), the predecessor of the Carolinas Conference, renamed in 2007.

Approximately half of the students live in campus residence halls. Informal surveys suggest that more than thirty percent (30%) of students commute more than twenty miles to school. Greek life on campus involves sixteen percent (16%) of the students at the College in three sororities and three fraternities. All sororities are housed on campus, and the fraternities live in houses off campus.

Ninety-eight percent (98%) of the student body receive financial aid. Forty-seven percent (47%) perform work-study tasks, and more than twenty-five percent (25%) are engaged in at least thirty hours of off-campus compensated work per week in addition to their academic pursuits.

Members of the College community of learners as a whole and, in particular, the academic faculty, have focused for several years on how well the mission of and vision for the College are being sustained and maintained; this self-study led to the decision by

administrators, faculty, and staff to design a strategic plan for Barton College for the 21st century. After consideration of the characteristics that define the student body and affect the College environment, the College adopted such a plan in 2004; the college is committed to the on-going refinement of this plan. The essence of the College strategy can be found in the statement of core commitments and values. Attention is intentionally drawn to the first item in the list.

CORE COMMITMENTS/VALUES
1. **LEARNER-CENTERED FOCUS.**
2. **Academic Challenge.**
3. **Community Building.**
4. **Discovery.**
5. **Global Perspective.**
6. **Lifelong Learning.**
7. **Moral and Spiritual Development.**
8. **Service.**

These values, mandated as a part of the long-term educational strategy for Barton, are ambitious.

Important factors demonstrate that Barton College is positioned to identify and address the specific needs of its current student population. These factors as well as some of the challenges requiring timely and creative solutions were highlighted by the Barton College faculty and staff from time to time over a period of approximately three years beginning in 2005. The Quality Enhancement Plan Leadership Team (QEPLT) has reflected on many of these strengths and challenges.

The average class size at Barton is seventeen students. General education core courses are usually larger than major courses. The faculty-to-student ratio is one-to-eleven, facilitating student interaction with a strong and caring faculty. Approximately sixty percent (60%) of the full-time faculty hold a terminal degree, and no course at the College is taught for credit by a full-time faculty person with less than a Master's degree. Faculty interest in and concern for students is confirmed by the fact that sixty-six of the seventy-four full-time faculty (89%) serve as academic advisors to students. All fifty

student organizations (100%) have faculty or staff advisors. Student advisement at Barton is intrusive and effective, including a comprehensive Freshman Year Seminar (FYS) taught by full-time faculty and staff. Major advisors are assigned in the second semester of the freshman year. When concerned about the student's academic performance, faculty alert the student, the advisor, the Director of Student Success, and the Director of NCAA Academic Compliance, if appropriate, through the Early Alert Response System (EARS).

At Barton College, the staff is considered an integral part of the student's learning process; the individuals who manage and work in the various staff divisional offices are dedicated and helpful. The Office of Student Success, the peer tutors under the sponsorship of that office, and the valuable involvement of staff personnel in the FYS program are characteristic illustrations of a pattern of high-quality staff assistance to students.

Barton College successfully integrates the liberal arts and specialized programs. All students are required to complete one hundred and twenty-six semester credit hours for graduation. With the exception of the education, criminal justice, and nursing programs, the number of hours in each program is limited to a maximum of sixty. In addition, the general education core mandates a broad exposure to various disciplines. In 2003, the faculty decided to intentionally emphasize the following student outcomes in core courses: a basic understanding of academic disciplines, critical thinking skills, communication skills, and a global awareness. These four outcomes work hand in hand with the Strategic Planning Task Force identification of a learner-centered focus as the most important core commitment for the College. Formal discussions leading to new general education requirements began in 2004. Plans to integrate communication skills reinforced a preliminary judgment that communication should be the focus of the QEP.

In seeking to create a QEP that complements the Strategic Plan, the College recognized two primary challenges: (1) how to facilitate and chart the achievement of the outcomes articulated for the general education core and (2) how to insure that the four student outcomes adopted for general education continue to be emphasized in the majors. Various sources of preliminary information were helpful in moving from these broad concerns toward a focused and manageable QEP identity. Additional challenges

currently facing the College and potentially impacting the development of the QEP can be found in the previously stated student demographics. Almost all students receive financial aid and a majority work on and/or off campus. The 2007 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) confirms that Barton College seniors, in particular, report a significantly higher incidence of working for pay off campus than their counterparts in colleges offering a general baccalaureate degree (Indiana Center for Postsecondary Research, 2007). A high percentage of Barton College students are first generation college students, SAT/ACT scores of entering freshmen are comparatively low, and retention rates are below desired levels. An additional factor is that the College budget is enrollment driven.

III. THE PROCESS USED TO DEVELOP THE QEP

Beginning in April 2005, Dr. Terry Grimes, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Barton College SACS Liaison, together with Dr. Claudia Duncan, Chair of the Reaffirmation Committee, held educational sessions to explain the nature and purpose of the Quality Enhancement Plan. These sessions involved all faculty on March 29, 2005, and all staff on March 31, 2005. A presentation was also made at the regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees on May 14, 2005, with twenty-four of the thirty-four members in attendance. Members of the Student Government Association received an introduction to the purpose and scope of the QEP on April 14, 2005. Follow-up and feedback discussions occurred at School and Department meetings and routinely at meetings of the Academic Council and the Strategic Planning Committee. Feedback from these constituencies illustrated broad campus interest in the process and spawned curiosity about the eventual QEP topic.

On August 16, 2005, at a Faculty/Administration/Staff (FAST) Week meeting, with 122 persons attending, seventy-five faculty, fifteen staff, and thirty-two administrators brainstormed together to suggest topics for the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). With a directive to explore new strategies that could potentially improve student learning, faculty, staff, and administrators shared ideas in small groups. The broad range of ideas about what topic the QEP should address is evident from the following comprehensive list of suggestions that emerged at this event:

SUGGESTIONS FOR A QEP TOPIC DURING FAST WEEK 2005

Numbers in ( ) indicate the number of individuals selecting that concern.

(Participants were permitted to suggest more than one concern.)

Technology

More (65)

Laptops for all (34)

Links to other schools (11)

Online courses (12); online student portfolio (3)

Increase knowledge of (10)

Integrate technology into classroom (8)

Writing, Communications

Writing across curriculum (14)

Enhance (31)

Communication practice (5)

Service learning/internships

Out of class experiences for upperclassmen (22)

How to think like a_____ (9): chemist, e.g.

Required internships with papers, etc. (31)

Community service (8); community service integrated into classroom

(40); junior/senior community service project (17); partnership

with Wilson for internships and service learning (22)

Service learning (14)

Experiential learning center (4)

Tutoring

Mentoring program (34); second year (6)

Stronger tutoring program (22); more academic support services (10);

campus wide tutorial system: class credit, every dept. with a tutor (25)

Curriculum

Linking disciplines (72); connect critical thinking with integrated learning

(10); emphasize lifelong learning (19); team teaching (3)

Go beyond classroom (10); real world problems (3); hands-on (5)

Travel (16)

Link learning to current events (21); outside world experiences linked to

classes (7); mentors from real world (9); hands on learning (2)

Clubs aligned with academic goals (7)

NC Teaching Fellows (21)

Emphasis on reading and writing (14)

Program to get students to value the arts (22)

Integrate academic and student life learning (9); living and learning
environments (13); learning groups (3)

Revamp whole curriculum, starting with general education (4)

Develop creative/critical thinking environment in classroom (7)

Other

Parent program for 1st generation (30); first generation students (14)

Leadership program (1)

Emphasize retention of faculty/staff/support staff (25)

Adult learners (4)

Multiple teaching strategies (2); faculty development for pedagogy, etc. (8)

Reduced administrative responsibilities for faculty (1)

Faculty roundtables (1)

Improve student engagement (2)

Following these small group discussions, while reviewing all the above suggestions that had been recorded and posted for everyone at the meeting to see, each person placed a mark by every suggestion with which he or she concurred. This exercise identified a few broad areas of concern, namely technology, writing/communications, service learning, tutoring, and curriculum revision.

At the Faculty Assembly on September 26, 2006, the Vice-President for Academic Affairs reviewed the SACS timetable and the attributes of the QEP project, reminding faculty that the QEP must focus on academic quality, must be limited enough to be attainable given the College's human and financial resources, and must be ongoing.

On January 19, 2007, faculty met in an all day workshop, analyzing and ranking the five broad areas identified in August 2005. These five areas had provided the focus of subsequent discussions about the QEP topics over the intervening sixteen months

wherever committees, task forces, and groups of faculty, staff, and administrators assembled. An overview of the workshop a few days earlier was presented at a college-wide assembly of faculty, staff, and administrators on January 23, 2007. Electronic balloting was then held to determine the campus sentiment. At the Faculty Assembly meeting of February 20, 2007, the Vice President for Academic Affairs distributed the results of the January meetings and electronic ballots, clarifying that the consensus was that the QEP should focus on an aspect of communication skills. Faculty ranked the importance of the five QEP topics suggested in August 2005, with **a rating of 1 being "most important" and 5 being "least important."** Of the five topics, a clear majority of faculty considered communication skills to be either first or second in priority. Clearly, communication skills were given the highest priority and became the broad topic of the QEP.

Proposed Topic	Average Ranking
Communication skills	2.00
Service learning	2.36
Curriculum revision	2.73
Tutoring	3.45
Technology	4.00

On March 23, 2007, Ms. Patricia N. Burrus, Assistant Professor in the School of Business, was named to lead an institutional QEP Leadership Team (QEPLT). Four additional faculty and one staff person were recruited to serve on the QEPLT. Team members in addition to Ms. Burrus are Dr. Rebecca L. Godwin, Professor of English and Director of the Ragan Writing Center; Dr. Allan Lane, Chair of the Department of History and Social Sciences and Associate Professor of History; Ms. Sheila J. Milne, Registrar; Dr. Kevin N. Pennington, Assistant Professor of Biology; and Mr. Phillip J. Valera, Assistant Professor of Audio Recording Technology. This team received its orientation from the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and the Chair of the Barton College Reaffirmation Committee on April 26, 2007. The QEPLT was charged with the responsibility of narrowing the focus of the QEP within the area of communication skills,

identified by faculty during January 2007, as the most critical area needing improvement to enhance student learning at Barton College.

IV. IDENTIFICATION OF THE QEP TOPIC

Having gained an understanding of important institutional attributes, the Quality Enhancement Plan Leadership Team (QEPLT) centered its attention on the charge to narrow the focus of the QEP within the domain of communication skills. This broad topic was identified by the faculty in January 2007 as the most critical area of academic concern. The faculty provided a mandate to enhance student learning at Barton College by deciding that this issue should be addressed by the Quality Enhancement Plan. In several evidentiary sources, both internal and external, a variety of concerns about the state of student written communication skills became apparent.

A primary external source of feedback about current student writing is the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), a national project sponsored by the Council on Aid to Education and funded by the Rand Foundation. As part of a Council of Independent Colleges consortium, Barton has participated since the fall of 2005 in the CLA. This assessment tool was commended in the Spellings' Report, a commentary by the Commission on Higher Education appointed by Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings to study the state of higher education in the United States and make recommendations. Along with many distinguished educators, college presidents, and government and private sector leaders interested in higher education, former North Carolina governor James B. Hunt participated in the group. The CLA was cited as one of the best measures in the marketplace to provide reliable evidence of students' facility in writing, analytical reasoning, and critical thinking.

Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) data about Barton College students, available for 2005-2006 and 2006-2007, were both reassuring and disheartening. The CLA reported that, based on the average SAT scores of Barton College students sampled, average CLA scores and value-added increments from freshman to senior status were as predicted. In **2005-2006**, the expected Total CLA Score for freshmen at Barton with a mean SAT score of 972 was 1027; the observed score was 1023. In that same year the expected Total CLA Score for seniors with a mean SAT score of 966 was 1115; the observed score was 1125. The resulting expected value-added score was 87, and the

observed equivalent was 102. Somewhat lower results were reported to the College by the CLA in **2006-2007**. In that year, the expected Total CLA Score for freshmen at Barton with a mean SAT score of 976 was 1018; the observed score was 1017. The expected Total CLA Score for seniors with a mean SAT score of 972 was 1098; the observed score was 1085. The resulting expected value added score was 80, and the observed equivalent was 68. A summary of these reported scores for the two years is shown in the table below.

Academic year	CLASS	Mean SAT score	Total CLA Score Expected	Total CLA Score Achieved	Expected Value Added from Fr-Sr yr	Value Added Achieved from Fr-Sr yr
2005-2006	Freshmen	972	1027	1023	----	----
2005-2006	Seniors	966	1115	1125	87	102
2006-2007	Freshmen	976	1018	1017	----	-----
2006-2007	Seniors	972	1098	1085	80	68

Although these results are not statistically alarming, the CLA reports for these two years reveal a subtle problem. The Total CLA Scores upon which the preceding data are based are a melding of scores on both a Performance Task and an Analytic Writing Task; the precise formula is not disclosed. The Performance Task measures performance on "an integrated set of critical thinking, analytical reasoning, problem solving, and written communication skills" (Council for Aid to Education, 2007, p. 6). The Analytic Writing Task, on the other hand, requires each student to "write answers to two types of essay prompts, namely: a 'Make-an Argument' question that asks them to support or reject a position on some issue; and a 'Critique-an-Argument' question that asks them to evaluate the validity of an argument made by someone else. Both these tasks measure a student's ability to articulate complex ideas, examine claims and

evidence, support ideas with relevant reasons and examples, sustain a coherent discussion, and use standard written English" (Council for Aid to Education, 2007, p. 7). A close inspection of the available CLA data for the **Analytic Writing Task** completed by Barton freshmen and seniors in 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 supplies some worrisome insights about the writing skills observed among Barton students on CLA Analytic Writing Tasks. These data are shown below and depicted graphically in Appendices C and D.

ANALYTIC WRITING TASK vs. PERFORMANCE TASK and TOTAL CLA SCORES

Numbers are given in **%** of CLA Schools scoring below Barton College for each task.

	Analytic Writing Tasks	Performance Task	Total CLA Score
Freshmen 05-06	**40**	25	29
Seniors 05-06	**20**	25	25
Freshmen 06-07	**40**	30	36
Seniors 06-07	**20**	25	22

These observations seem to point toward a level of writing preparedness of incoming Barton freshmen that is not sustained currently through four years at the College. There should be, at least, clear maintenance of these skills. Immediate and deliberate steps are needed to provide a plan to reinforce existing entry level skills and build upon that base.

At Barton the CLA is administered online using one of the computer classrooms. Evidence not available directly from the CLA Institutional Report is gathered by administering a similar test, using prompts actually provided by the CLA on its website, to another group of students in the same testing environment. The students themselves do not know whether they were taking the "real" test or this "alternate" test. This

approach permits the reading of actual writing samples by Barton College personnel, the evaluation of sample writings using a simple scale score, and the establishment of a basis from which to draw initial conclusions internally about the writing and thinking skills of our students. Five verbatim student samples of such senior student responses to a CLA test item in the spring of 2006 are presented on the following pages to further illustrate why there is consistent negative faculty feedback asserting the weaknesses of students' written communication skills. Instructions and the prompt that led students to prepare these "Critique-an-Argument" responses are presented here, in advance of the samples.

Directions: *Write a critique of the soundness of the argument presented below, discussing how well reasoned you find the argument. Consider any questionable assumptions underlying the thinking and determine whether the evidence cited supports the conclusion.*

1. *Identify and analyze important features of the argument.*
2. *Organize, develop, and express your ideas.*
3. *Support your ideas with relevant reasons or examples.*
4. *Control the elements of Standard English.*

Item Prompt for "Critique-an-Argument":

The following is from an editorial in the Midvale Observer, a local newspaper. "Ever since the 1950's, when television sets began to appear in the average home, the rate of crimes committed by teenagers in the country of Alta has steadily increased. This increase in teenage crime parallels the increase in violence shown on television. According to several national studies, even very young children who watch a great number of television shows featuring violent scenes display more violent behavior within their home environment than children who do not watch violent shows. Furthermore, in a study conducted by the Observer, over 90 percent of the respondents were parents who indicated that primetime television programs between 7 and 9 p.m. should show less violence. Therefore, in order to lower the rate of teenage crime in Alta, television viewers should demand that television programmers reduce the amount of violence shown during prime time."

<u>CLA Verbatim Senior Writing Samples - Spring 2006</u>

1   "Critique-an-Argument"

I think this is a very sound argument because children imitate what they see. In todays society there are a lot of single-parent homes, and more and more the parents are gone off to work leave the kids at home. A lot of parents use television as a "babysitter" for their child instead of a human being. Children are being brainwashed by all of these television programs and raised by them as well. If all our children see is violence happening over and over again in all of these television shows then they are going to want to imitate it therefore leading to crime. Children need parental involvement to instruct them on what is right and what is wrong. I think it is an excellent idea to have primetime television programs be less violent. We as a society need to think of what an impact things, including tv programs, will have on our youth. I sincerely think that the less violent our television programs are the lower our crime rate will be.

2   "Critique-an-Argument"

I could not agree more to the statement that the television is a way of promoting violence. Some of the shows are television already push the limit for most adults. In just over the past few years, more vulgar words are being allowed on televisions. The graphic nature of shows are becoming more realistic. These shows are being shown during prime time and a lot of teenagers see them. However, most teenagers watch television until 10 or 11 p.m. at night. Even if the television programmers reduce the amout of violence during that time, it does not mean that it will stop teenagers from seeing violence. If people from the 1960s had a glimpsed into the present day, then the "I Love Lucy" show bed sharing would look so innocent. I think it would be great to reduce the violence on television shows, but I do not feel we should stop there.

      There are children who video games are so graphic that even I do not want to watch them. Movies and music promote violence. I am sure that if programers reduce violence, the percentages would not change as much. This is due to the fact that other things in a teenagers life affects their behaviors. It is hard to point to one thing. Yes something needs to be done, but lets not limit it just to television shows.

3   "Critique-an-Argument"

> I agree with what the article says. I believe that television is really the major cause why the rate of crimes committed by teenagers has steadily increased. Kids who do watch those kinds of programs do get violent in their own home and also out in the streets. However, television is not the only reason why teenage crime rates have gone up.
>
> I also believe that violent video games and rap music also cause teenagers to committ crimes across America. Kids who play those sort of games or listen to that trashy music get real violent tendencies and also get sadistic pleasure in what they're doing. For example, watching Harry Potter or CSI show many horrific scenes of crime and parents should have the ability to change the channel and watch more family orriented programming so that teenagers would not have any of those violent tendencies in order to commit a crime.

4   "Critique-an-Argument"

> The argument that the article pressents is a very good article. The argument could use more facts and cite more sources that would make the argument more sound. The article cited another newspaper to support it's argument. A scholary journal may be more helpful to use than a newspaper article.
>
> The article talks about violence and television. The article states that violent scenes in television have had a negative effect on the youth of a small town. The study looks at the crime rate of the 1950's, the results of this research has shown a increase in the crime rate. I agree with the article. I feel that the crime rate has been on the rise for a long time since the introduction of the television..
>
> I do not entirely agree with the article. The last part of the article states that in order to have a decrease in the crime rate the citizens of Alta should demand less violent televsion programs. This idea or concept may not have the large impact that the citizens of Alta are hoping for. A great deal of the younger population has already been exposed to the violent scences on television. A program or campaign should began to help the youth of the Alta community realize that everything seen on television is not real. The concept that violence is not th answer needs to be stress to the community that involves youth spending more time with their families and less time in front of the television watching violent programs. The community should also take into consideration that they are letting the youth of their wonderful community be influenced by the violent programs that appear on television. The television programmers play a part in a bigger picture, sole blame should not be place entirely on the television programmers.

5   "Critique-an-Argument"

Crime Increase Among Alta's Teens

Since the 1950's television shows have begun to show more inappropriate behavior and inappropriate conversations. In the beginning, Elvis Pressley was not even shown from waist down because of the way he moved his body. Today, there is a lot of cuss words, body parts revealed, and inappropriate behaviors shown on television and believe it or not accepted. It used to be a cuss word would be beeped out; however, today many words are allowed. Currently, you have such a wide variety of channels and not as much supervision required to prevent these children from viewing shows that children/teens should not be exposed to. Many americans today watch television instead of spending time with their families. It used to be many families worked together on the firm building a future for their family; however, now many families have both parents working to make ends met and no supervision over what the children watch. I do agree that the violence and inappropriate behaviors should not be on prime television; however, I can not just place the blame on the television programmers. The blame is also on those who let the children watch such programs. There are many ways to prevent the children/teens from watching such programs. Families can place a security measure on their televisions, which would prevent the children/teens from seeing such shows. The family can also do other things during the times these violent shows are being shown such as taking walks, talking, and playing games. Also, families can eb cmore aware of movies their children are watching or renting. It appears as technology gets better, the more advanced access the public has, and the more exposure children/teens have access to. However, the one person that can put a stop to viewing such shows is the adult. Utimately, the adult has the upper hand in these types of situations. If the television programmers will not reduce the amount of violent shows during the prime time, then the parent/adult must intervene and stop the child/teen from viewing such shows. In today's society, this type of television programming seems to be the trend. It has been made public how these type of programs contribute to violence and the shows still continue to be produced and made; therefore, the adult has no choice in this matter, but to take action upon themselves and prevent the child/teen from being exposed to such violence. The adult can become moiré viglant. The adult can monitor all programs, put security measures in place, do away with cable television or satellite – where the child/teen has greater access, and cut the amount of time spent watching television programs. In our society today with all of the health issues such as obesity, the families should spend more active times and less television times. I just think our society today has become to acceptive of inappropriate behavior and is willing to over look many aspects of our personal lives that contribute to these increases of violence among teens. We must look at our own family life before we just place blame on the television programmers because in many situations the families allows this to occur.

The CLA samples of student writing and reported results and faculty observations seem to run counter to the opinions of the students themselves as documented in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). When questioned within the NSSE, students ranked their writing experiences and ability at or above benchmark levels among students seeking a general baccalaureate degree. A table of certain attributes of student writing from the NSSE 2007 report is presented in Appendix B. These data show how Barton students rank themselves on these attributes as compared to students at Selected Peer schools and students at all NSSE schools for 2007. Data for a single key writing attribute is shown here; seniors have statistically significant greater confidence in their ability to write clearly and effectively than other seniors in the NSSE 2007 sample.

National Survey of Student Engagement NSSE 2007 Mean Comparisons for Barton College						
Student Attributes	**Barton College**		**Selected Peers**		**NSSE 2007**	
	Freshmen	**Senior**	**Freshmen**	**Senior**	**Freshmen**	**Senior**
To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skill, and personal development in the following areas? *1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much*						
Writing clearly and effectively	3.12		3.11		2.95	
		3.30		3.21		3.06**

*p<.05,   **p<.01,   ***p<.001   (2-tailed).*
(Indiana Center for Postsecondary Research, 2007)

Writing deficiencies, evident from the quasi-CLA writing samples of seniors, but not acknowledged by students responding to NSSE queries, gave additional impetus to the fledgling plan to provide a setting within which each student will see his/her writing skills improve measurably and significantly. Commonly observed writing errors within students' writing samples included, but are not limited to, the following:

- inadequate evidence for conclusions
- lack of logical connections
- poor sentence construction
- inadequate writing resulting from weak critical thinking
- misspellings
- inadequate or wrong use of punctuation

Convinced that preliminary evidence revealed a need to address writing issues, the QEPLT, in May and early June 2007, defined the QEP focus as improving writing proficiency among Barton College students. Continuing to meet throughout summer 2007, the QEPLT set the following goals:

- To assemble evidence that writing proficiency must be improved at the College,
- To document a consensus that the chosen focus could be productive,
- To research Best Practices in teaching written communication skills, and
- To articulate a declaration of mission and associated goals and outcomes both academic and administrative.

Developing improved writing skills will certainly set a stage for improved student learning at all levels of curricula, will allow for more depth of learning as improvements in writing skills result in better analytical thinkers, and will allow students to express their understanding of the breadth and interconnectedness of various disciplines. The QEP will set forth a blueprint and timetable for a plan to identify and utilize a sample group of freshman composition students. For this sample group, writings and related evaluation scores will be collected and analyzed over a four-year period. After completing a series of writing-intensive (WI) courses culminating in a senior Summit, Barton College students will (1) organize and structure their writing, (2) provide content containing evidence from different points of view, (3) use Standard English grammar while avoiding syntactical errors, and (4) report and document research findings properly.

The positive effects these desired improvements in writing can have upon the learning environment within the classroom, the achievement level of students at the institution, and the professional lives of Barton graduates cannot be overstated. In addition, because faculty can expect better thinking and consistent improvement from good writers, the College's reputation as a quality educational institution will be enhanced.

Throughout summer 2007, the QEPLT agreed upon a mission statement and goals, performed rudimentary research in the Best Practices of teaching written communication skills, and gathered preliminary evidence that **student writing** at Barton College must be improved. On August 20, 2007, the QEPLT presented the proposed QEP focus and the associated mission and goals to the College community at the Opening-of-School

College Assembly; one-hundred and forty faculty, staff, and administrators were present. In advance of the QEPLT presentation and as if to reinforce and validate the chosen QEP focus, the assembled and concerned faculty, staff, and administrators generated a list of possible actions to improve the writing and thinking skills of seniors at the College; this extensive list is presented in Appendix F. Within the few weeks between this QEPLT presentation to the Barton College community and the Faculty Assembly meeting on September 18, 2007, the QEPLT detailed a subcommittee structure; individual subcommittees were organized around six primary component areas that would combine to provide voice and direction to the Barton College QEP. Each subcommittee was made up of five or six participants, who were primarily faculty, but each had at least one staff member in its makeup, and one subcommittee had an active student member. One member of the QEPLT served as leader to each subcommittee. The specific areas to be addressed by the subcommittees included **(1) Research: Best Practices, (2) Rubric Development and Faculty Training, (3) Technology Issues, (4) Writing Fellows, (5) Student Assessment, and (6) QEP Budget**. For the initial composition and duties ascribed to each of the subcommittees, see Appendix A. Currently the Writing Fellows subcommittee is inactive and not a part of the QEP project. As the focus of the QEP narrowed, it was apparent that the training and use of Writing Fellows did not come within the five-year scope of the QEP.

A slogan and logo were needed to give the QEP project identity. Community input was solicited and various suggestions were forthcoming. From the group of original suggestions and drawing on the historical use of the Barton College mascot, the bulldog, a slogan --- "**Pa**thways to **W**riting **S**kills" --- and a logo --- "Barton Bulldog **PAWS** "--- emerged. Subsequently, at a QEPLT meeting on April 25, 2008, a group of three student leaders, Will Cobb, Rose Copper, and Princena Simpkins, and the campus Manager of Web Services, Mr. Ken Dozier, were introduced to the anticipated slogan and logo and asked to help in marketing the QEP on campus. One of the students made the following observation: "There needs to be action; change the slogan to 'Pathways to Achieve Writing Success." The QEPLT immediately appreciated the connection of this wording to outcomes and after later discussions, influenced by the public relations arm of the College staff, adopted the suggested new slogan and planned to highlight the connection of the QEP to the current marketing thrust for the institution, "Inspiring Futures." **Pathways to Achieve Writing Success** became the new slogan for the QEP,

and the Pathways logo, displayed on this report's cover page, was created by Mr. Keith Tew, graphic artist and Director of Publications at the College.

Pathways to Achieve Writing Success, the QEP at Barton College, has a mission to improve the writing ability of all of its students. The QEP complements several of the stated core commitments described in the Strategic Plan but fits most precisely with one educational core commitment/value the strategic planners deemed most important --- education with a Learner-Centered Focus. On December 6, 2007, one hundred and twenty-five members of the Barton College Assembly (sixty-eight faculty, thirty-two staff, and twenty-five administrators) voted unanimously to approve the QEP topic, tentative startup procedures, and provisional QEP components. Subsequently, the Curriculum Committee of the Barton College Faculty Assembly reviewed the plan on March 12, 2008, and voted to incorporate the two key QEP components, writing-intensive (WI) courses and a minimum grade requirement for those courses, into graduation requirements upon full implementation of the QEP in fall 2009, initially impacting May 2013 graduates. The Faculty Assembly affirmed this action by voice vote at a regularly scheduled meeting on April 15, 2008.

Summaries of significant QEPLT presentations to constituencies of the College community are preserved on a Blackboard site, to which all employees of the College have access. The QEPLT is responsible for the content and maintenance of this site.

V. DESIRED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES and ADMINISTRATIVE OBJECTIVES

The QEP Mission was deliberated and defined soon after the QEP Leadership Team (QEPLT) was charged with the responsibility to narrow the QEP focus within the Communication Skills mandate from the community. Evidence from the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), mock CLA grading on campus, and faculty experiences all highlighted the obvious need to focus on writing skills improvement. In an effort to provide a platform from which to articulate both academic and administrative goals and expected outcomes, the QEPLT formulated a framework based on the following Mission Statement:

THE QEP MUST ADVANCE STUDENTS' WRITTEN COMMUNICATION SKILLS.

Approaches to be used in accomplishing the stated mission grew out of a preliminary and somewhat cursory research endeavor during the summer of 2007. Although not in the necessary depth of the later work of the Research: Best Practices Subcommittee, this work did suggest the working outline from which ultimately grew project goals and measureable academic and administration outcomes. Presented below is the outline that evolved from this process and that allowed for the development of the concrete Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) and Administrative Objectives (AO) that form the QEP blueprint.

A description of the MEANS, METHODS, and MEASUREMENTS, outlined here and envisioned as the triangulation of the QEP, was the tentative mechanism that led eventually to a careful statement of Student Learning Outcomes on page 25 and Administrative Objectives on pages 30-32.

A. MEANS: Enable each student to raise his/her level of writing proficiency through writing-intensive (WI) courses.
   1. Require that each student successfully* complete, for the general education core,
      a. Two composition courses
      b. Two additional WI courses.
   2. Require that each student successfully* complete, for the major,
      a. A WI Gateway course, at approximately the beginning of the junior year
      b. A WI Summit course in the senior year.

*Successful completion is defined to mean a grade of C- or better in each of six (6) WI courses.

B. METHODS: Prepare to Launch the Plan
   1. Design and implement a Faculty Training Program to provide additional tools and enhance the confidence of instructors to improve students' writing proficiency.
      a. Prepare writing faculty to design effective writing assignments.

        b. Prepare writing faculty to apply standards and use a common rubric.

        c. Complete initial training of Writing Faculty by August 2009.

2. Establish a tentative timeline for launching the Plan

        a. Approve the QEP in Fall 2007

        b. Create a rubric by December 2007

        c. Establish, by the joint efforts of the QEP Best Practices Subcommittee and the General Education Committee of the Faculty Assembly, standards for WI courses by February 1, 2008.

        d. Select courses and writing faculty and begin thorough training of faculty by May 2009.

3. Hire a QEP Director to manage the project.

4. Use Writing Fellows to facilitate the implementation of writing strategies for students.

C.   MEASUREMENTS: Assessment of the Components of the QEP

1. Create and retain a portfolio of writing samples from writing-intensive courses. Investigate software packages that can be used to archive students' writing portfolios and use portfolio submissions as a tool to measure the effectiveness of the QEP. Seek a software product whose provider is able to maintain portfolios off-campus.

2. Monitor, analyze, and document the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) results for each year beginning in its first year of use at Barton College (2005-2006). Fall 2009 freshmen will serve as the initial QEP class.

3. The QEP Leadership Team and Student Assessment Subcommittee will develop a third measurement criterion addressing student writing proficiency and confidence, preliminarily expected to be one or more student surveys to be administered within the WI courses to verify the integrity of course experiences and content.

Pathways to Achieve Writing Success, the Quality Enhancement Plan at Barton College has two basic goals; one is academic and the other administrative in nature. Following are these goals and the associated student learning outcomes (SLO) and administrative objectives (AO).

From the initial Means, Methods, and Measurement structure, more intensive research into Best Practices and work with student outcomes led to a final more specific description of the QEP. The three student learning outcomes were determined and made specific as described below. The standards for writing-intensive courses were set and a rubric was created. The creation of a Writing Fellows program was deemed to be beyond the scope of the start-up phase of the QEP.

The academic goal of the Barton College QEP is to improve student writing. Achievement of this goal relies in part on the use of assessment tools such as a common writing rubric and the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA). In WI courses professors will evaluate students' ability to write by assessing the students' application of the characteristics of effective writing, as outlined on page 27. Research shows that reading critically and synthesizing concepts are foundations of learning and effective written communication. Because the CLA assesses students' ability not only to critically analyze information but also to write clear and grammatically correct sentences, the Barton QEP recognizes the CLA as a valid external measurement of writing ability.

Internally, student portfolios will be archived using an electronic database. Student writing samples collected from WI courses will serve as evidence of written communication skills. WI faculty will monitor improvement in writing using the Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR). This rubric incorporates characteristics of good writing as presented on pages 27 and 28.

GOAL #1: <u>TO IMPROVE STUDENT WRITING</u>

WI = Writing-Intensive   PoWR = Pathways of Writing Rubric

Student Learning Outcomes	Assessment Tool	Evidence	Person/Entity Responsible for Documentation
By academic year 2012-2013, Barton College seniors will score 10% above the CLA predicted score on the Analytic Writing Task portion of the assessment.	Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) administered annually in fall to freshmen and in spring to seniors	Annual report of the CLA to the College upon the Analytic Writing Task scores for freshmen and seniors	The Senior Staff of the College for the continued subscription to the CLA, the Director of Institutional Research for administration, the VPAA, QEPLT, and the QEP Director for data appraisal and dissemination.
By 2012-2013, 95% of students in the senior Summit will score at least 3 (scale of 1-4*) on the PoWR.	The last writing assignment within this senior level WI course in the major.	PoWR ranking of student writing skills.	Teaching faculty and the QEP Director.
Individual students who have completed the entire QEP format will achieve, on average, a score increase of 0.5 (scale of 1-4*) from ENG 102 to the senior Summit on the PoWR.	LiveText™ and/or other statistical software package for data gathering and writing sample archiving.	Comparison of the PoWR scores for writing samples from at or near the end of ENG 102 and the Summit.	The QEP Director, Director of Institutional Research, Technology Liaison

* The score on the 1-4 scale is determined by averaging the scores on all evaluated categories of the PoWR.

STANDARDS FOR WRITING-INTENSIVE (WI) COURSES

These Standards were derived by a coalition of the QEP Leadership Team and the General Education Committee members. They represent a consolidation of significant criteria identified by reviewing WI courses characteristics at other institutions and the Writing-Across-the-Curriculum-related literature. Reflection and consideration by Barton faculty and staff in the Research: Best Practices Subcommittee, in an open forum, and during Faculty/Administration/Staff (FAST) Week exercises also played an important role in developing a statement of WI course Standards, by providing confirmation of the importance of the benchmarks that follow.

1. Limited enrollment in WI courses, with 20 to 25 students per class being optimal.
2. Incorporation of guided revisions for at least one assignment, based upon instructor feedback.
3. A handbook or instructor-generated guide, with discipline-specific writing styles modeled for students.
4. Emphasis on content specific to individual disciplines and on writing instruction within the course, such as modeling organization, framing, and using evidence in a discipline-specific manner.
5. A minimum of 15 to 20 pages of writing (4000 to 5000 words), including written examinations as well as more than one paper.
6. A significant portion (≥ 50%) of the final class grade derived from writing assignments, which may include essay-based tests.
7. Integration of document-based research in at least one of the writing-intensive courses in the major.
8. Syllabus inclusion of the rubric along with specific guidelines reflecting instructor expectations of the writing-intensive nature of the course and the assignments, with writing-to-learn class assignments such as journals or one-minute papers identified in the syllabus.

The Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR), shown on page 28, incorporates the specific behavioral objectives expected of a good writer. A score of 4 on each category demonstrates that a student has completely met the objectives within the category.

Lower scores reflect incomplete mastery of objectives. The consistent and rigorous use of the PoWR will identify and evaluate students' writing attributes within each of a series of WI courses. The minimum Standards for the composition of these courses were described on the preceding page; the clear steps for implementation are enumerated within this document in **Section VII: Actions to be Implemented**. Any reference in this document to the PoWR will, by definition, be a reference to the scoring device to follow on page 28. This rubric is to be used <u>after</u> the reader has determined that the paper is not plagiarized and meets minimum requirements for the assignment. By writing often and having their writing evaluated with the PoWR in WI courses, students will learn to apply the characteristics of effective writing:

<u>Organization and Structure of Writing</u>
1. Engaging introductory paragraphs.
2. Clear thesis sentence establishing a purpose for writing.
3. Logical and effective organization, revealed through topic sentences that guide readers through the body of essays as well as through transitions connecting ideas.
4. Satisfying conclusions that adequately summarize, show insights, or suggest implications for further study.

<u>Content</u>
1. Ample evidence for the thesis, linked to it explicitly.
2. Meaningful exploration of the context and implications of the evidence.
3. Cogent description, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information.
4. Fair and unbiased consideration of different points of view.

<u>Mechanics</u>
1. Varied sentence structures that make writing compelling.
2. Appropriate, exact words that express the intended meaning.
3. Correct Standard English grammar, avoiding distracting major syntactical errors such as fragments, fused sentences, and comma splices as well as errors in subject-verb agreement or spelling.

<u>Research (if required)</u>
1. Thorough research, demonstrated through the incorporation of appropriate, diverse and reliable evidence from printed books and journals as well as from electronic sources.
2. Substantial analysis of sources' arguments, avoiding reliance on undigested quotations.
3. Smooth integration of quotations and paraphrases into the writer's prose.

<u>Documentation (if required)</u>
1. Internal citation of all summarized, paraphrased, and quoted information in the required documentation style.
2. Correct bibliographical entries.

(**PoWR**) **P**ATHWAYS of **W**RITING **R**UBRIC

	1 Unsatisfactory	2 Developing	3 Satisfactory	4 Exemplary
Mechanics (#s per page)	More than 3 major errors in grammar and/or unclear sentences per page; common, repetitive spelling errors	More than 3 awkward sentences; more than 3 grammatical or spelling errors; inappropriate word choice (e.g., slang, abbreviations, contractions); lack of clarity	Clear sentence structure; no more than 3 minor errors in grammar and spelling; appropriate word choice	Clear and varied sentence structure; almost no errors in grammar and spelling; effective, appropriate word choice
Organization/Structure	Unclear or absent thesis; lacks clear organization or paragraphing; weak transitions between ideas; lacks introduction and/or conclusion	Basic thesis and organization; most paragraphs have topic sentences; some transitions; weak introduction and/or conclusion	Interesting thesis; clear, logical organization; good transitions; paragraphs support topic sentences; introduction foreshadows arguments and conclusion reviews	Intelligent thesis; smooth, effective organization and transitions; well-designed paragraphs; introduction indicates understanding of topic; conclusion suggests questions or implications.
Content	Only surface descriptive and/or faulty logic or analysis; overlooks major parts of the topic; evidence missing or unconnected to the argument	Mainly descriptive with some analysis and connections; one-sided or biased; evidence is linked to the argument; covers the topic	Analyzes and evaluates logically; effective use of evidence; treats different points of view fairly; generally convincing	Synthesizes, analyzes and evaluates logically; ample evidence; extends and explores context and/or implications; persuasive
Archival/internet/library research (if required)	Uses incorrect or only general or basic information; depends on unreliable sources; shows little understanding that sources have a point of view; misquotes and/or almost copies	Uses one-sided or too few sources; most information is accurate; some understanding of sources' arguments; overuse of long quotations; inadequate paraphrasing.	Uses several sufficient, reliable sources; uses accurate information; understands and analyzes at least one source's argument; quotes, paraphrases accurately	Uses diverse sources demonstrating thorough research; analyzes and synthesizes sources' arguments; smooth, correct integration of quotes and paraphrases
Documentation (if required)	Major errors in documentation	Some errors in documentation	Minor problems in documentation	Correct documentation

The success of the QEP will depend upon the systematic administration of PoWR-based assessments and the CLA, as well as maintaining minimum standards for the QEP designated WI courses. Accordingly, PoWR-based assessments must be performed in a consistent manner, with minimal variation among instructors. Further, application of WI course standards must be maintained across all QEP designated WI courses. Meeting these goals requires a system of focused faculty training with a plan for monitoring the effectiveness of training and evaluation of nascent QEP results. **To insure the mechanisms necessary for successful implementation of the QEP and to monitor and evaluate institutional progress, the QEP will incorporate the administrative objectives (AO) beginning on page 30.**

GOAL #2: <u>TO EFFECTIVELY IMPLEMENT THE QEP</u>

WI=Writing Intensive   PoWR=Pathways of Writing Rubric

Administrative Objectives (AO):	Process	Evidence	Person or Entity Responsible
Hire a QEP Director by August 2008.	Define responsibilities, salary and benefits and advertise internally by June 2008.	Advertisement placed, interviews conducted, Director hired and on the job.	<u>The President of the College</u> and <u>the VPAA</u>
Provide adequate and meaningful training for WI course faculty and guarantee 100% participation by such faculty.	Develop the PoWR…………… Present PoWR to faculty........ Plan for feedback and reflection and revision………… Develop a syllabus for writing faculty …………………………… Plan for continual improvement of the training…. Document participation……….	PoWR Minutes of Faculty Assembly Writing samples used and PoWR scoring results from faculty training sessions Instrument reflects faculty needs & results of pre- and post training survey Meaningful agenda revisions Attendance records	<u>Rubric Subcommittee</u> and <u>the Secretary to the VPAA</u> <u>The QEP Director</u> and <u>the Director of the Ragan Writing Center</u> <u>The Director of the Ragan Writing Center</u> <u>A designee of the QEP Director</u>

Administrative Objectives (AO):	Process	Evidence	Person or Entity Responsible
Insure through a well-defined approval system that 100% of WI courses are designed around the course Standards and that PoWR scores are reliable, timely, and complete.	**General Education Committee approves course content and syllabi for WI courses in the General Education Core**	**Course content and syllabi are approved and these actions documented**	**The QEPLT, the QEP Director and the Chair, General Education Committee**
	QEPLT approves course content and syllabi for Gateway and Summit courses in the majors	**Course content and syllabi are approved and these actions documented**	**The QEPLT and the QEP Director**
	Data card inspection and data entry	**Maintain data cards until the subject graduates or leaves the College**	**The QEP Director, the Director of Institutional Research, and the Technology Liaison**

Administrative Objectives (AO):	Process	Evidence	Person or Entity Responsible
Collect and analyze data at critical points: • beginning and end of ENG 101 • end of ENG 102 • end of each of two additional General Education Core courses designated as QEP WI • end of Gateway to the major WI course • end of senior Summit WI course in the major	3-5 PoWR scores for each of the seven QEP writing samples per student are collected, entered into a database, and analyzed	Seven data cards per student over a 4-year period, read by an optical mark reader with the capability to provide assessment statistics and to download data into spreadsheet format for further data analysis Course-to-course, and cohort-to-cohort comparisons Individual student progressive tracking	The QEP Director, the Director of Institutional Research, and the Technology Liaison

VI. LITERATURE REVIEW AND BEST PRACTICES

The faculty and staff of Barton College began exploring possible topics for the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) in fall of 2006. At that time, the Barton College Community initiated a series of discussions and workshops to identify issues that could be addressed by the QEP. Potential topics would have to align with the College mission statement, the Strategic Plan, be a demonstrated area of need, and be agreed upon by the entire faculty and staff. These discussions led the Barton Community to identify communication skills as a potential focus for the QEP. This focus aligns with the Mission Statement of the College, which states, "Barton College is committed to providing programs and opportunities to encourage the intellectual, spiritual, social, and cultural development of its students and to challenge them for future leadership and service to their local and global communities." Strong communication skills are important to achieving the College's goals of encouraging the intellectual growth of students and preparing students to succeed.

A core belief of the Barton College Strategic Plan is that education is learner focused. In line with a learner-focused education is that the goal of higher education should not be simply to impart knowledge. Rather, the goal of higher learning is to develop critical thinking and learning skills in students (Bransford and Cocking, 2000). These higher order skills will create life-long learners who are independent thinkers capable of examining, interpreting, and utilizing content knowledge. One method to develop critical thinking skills is the use of written assignments in content courses (Laufer and Crosser, 1990). Further, strong written communication skills are traits desired by employers and correlate strongly to job success and advancement (Bazennan, 2005; Curtis et al, 1989; Dicks and Buzzard, 1997). Increasingly, employers are demanding strong communication skills of employees (Rubin and Graham, 1988). Therefore, to better develop critical thinking skills and to prepare students for post-graduate employment, colleges should emphasize writing assignments. Despite the importance of communication skills to potential employers, many colleges decrease emphasis on written communication such as student writing following freshman English courses.

Not all students display sufficiently strong written communication skills (AAC&U., 2002); however, a number of advantages can be conferred to students by increasing the

emphasis on written communication skills. First, emphasizing writing in the curriculum leads to improvements in critical thinking skills (Farris et al., 1990). Second, writing to learn improves the ability of students to grasp key concepts (Emig, 1983). Third, an emphasis on written assignments in a course improves student learning of course content (Quitadamo and Kurtz, 2007). For these reasons, colleges should refocus curricula to develop writing skills by increasing writing assignments and incorporate writing-to-learn tasks.

Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) is an approach to emphasizing writing to learn and improving writing skills. A central tenet of this methodology is that writing assists student learning. Writing across the curriculum encourages the student to "think on paper" and "(write) to learn" (Lester et al, 2003; Elbow, 2000). Writing across the curriculum has a long history, providing insight into the benefits of emphasizing writing in the curriculum. A number of studies have documented the positive impact that WAC has made on student learning, such as improvement of critical thinking skills. Importantly, learning in a variety of different disciplines is greatly improved through the use of writing-intensive courses (Carnes et al, 2001; Faigley and Hansen, 1985; Herrington, 1985; Elbow, 2000; Bazerman et al, 2005). Further, writing-intensive courses such as those in a WAC curriculum improve student learning as well as writing skills. Students in core courses with a writing-intensive aspect score higher on writing assessments than cohort students not enrolled in a writing-intensive course (Quesenberry et al, 2000). As a liberal arts school, Barton College places an emphasis on breadth of study and therefore must consider the advantages offered in general education courses with a writing-intensive aspect.

The WAC approach has been in place for over twenty years, and during that time, higher-learning institutions have had the opportunity to implement and assess various WAC methodologies. These methodologies all have in common the use of writing-intensive (WI) courses. In line with the goal of improving student writing skills, the Barton College QEPLT investigated a variety of WI course guidelines in use by other similar institutions. While each institution employs a definition of "writing intensive" with subtle differences, common themes define WI courses (see Appendix I for links to sample programs). These common themes include the use of directed revisions, a set minimum of written work per class, and the use of class time for writing instruction. Based on a

survey of common themes in WI courses at other institutions, as well as a survey of WAC literature, the QEP Research: Best Practices Subcommittee presented to the QEPLT suggested attributes for a Barton College writing-intensive course. These suggestions were considered by the QEPLT and the General Education Committee, as well as other Barton College faculty during an open forum. Further, the Barton College faculty considered the teaching environment currently in place at Barton College. Writing-intensive courses should take advantage of Barton College's small size and high faculty-to-student ratio by limiting enrollment in WI courses and providing more opportunities for guided revisions (Townsend, 2001). Based on feedback from these discussions and Best Practices findings, **Barton College has defined a writing-intensive course as one having the essential traits enumerated in Section IV on page 26 under the heading STANDARDS FOR WRITING-INTENSIVE (WI) COURSES**.

A common writing rubric will be used to assess student performance on writing assignments in designated WI courses. Other institutions with a WAC focus use common assessment rubrics to assess writing assignments within individual courses. This rubric provides not only a shared assessment but also a teaching tool (Andrade, 2001; Spandel, 2006). Rubric scores will provide feedback to students as to their current level of writing skills and how that level relates to expectations. Colleges utilizing WAC methodologies maintain student portfolios to assess writing skills and to provide a longitudinal record of improvements in student writing (Larson, 1991). These portfolios provide tangible documentation to students, reinforcing progression in written communication skills. Institutions further monitor the overall effectiveness of WAC programs using standard tools such as the CLA (Klein et al., 2007). A survey of current Best Practices supports Barton College's plan to utilize 1) a common writing rubric, 2) maintenance of student portfolios, and 3) the CLA assessment of writing to monitor the effectiveness of WI courses in improving student written communication skills.

Successful WAC programs emphasize the writing process rather than limiting analysis to assessment of the final product. Assessment tools such as rubric-based feedback from the instructor are used to guide students through revisions. Further, different disciplines require different styles of writing. A scientific lab report, for example, will emphasize precision and succinct statements while history assignments may allow for more

complex and interesting sentence structures. Therefore, to properly emphasize writing skills in content courses, instructors should model expected writing and provide in-class writing instruction (U.S. Department of Education, 2000; Elbow, 2000). To better enable the student to write on-task, the instructor must incorporate clear assignment expectations and model for the students those expectations (Bazerman et al, 2005). For these reasons, and in line with current Best Practices, Barton College WI courses will incorporate guided revisions, in-class writing instruction, and discussions of writing expectations.

Barton College is not alone in focusing on improving the written communication skills of students. A review of current Best Practices reveals a number of colleges that incorporate writing-intensive courses as a means of addressing perceived student writing deficiencies. Similar to the proposed QEP at Barton College, these institutions use rubrics as a teaching and assessment tool, limit the number of students in WI courses, mandate a minimum amount of writing, and employ guided revisions. A partial list of links to writing-intensive course characteristics at other colleges is presented in Appendix I.

VII. ACTIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED

Following the outline of the Administrative Objectives presented in Section V of this document, principal implementation actions that will promote the successful accomplishment of the Student Learning Outcomes specified for the QEP (also Section V) are described below.

HIRE A QEP DIRECTOR

The QEPLT and the Administration of the College will fill the position of QEP Director, with that individual on place in that position no later than August 2008. A reporting structure, job description and list of primary responsibilities are displayed in Section IX of this document. A recent update has been inserted at the end of Section IX stating that the described position has been filled.

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING TRAINING SYLLABUS

Faculty Training is outlined as four two-hour sessions totaling eight hours. The first full sessions will be held in March and April 2009. All faculty teaching writing-intensive courses in 2009-2010 will be expected to attend. Sessions will be repeated each spring as additional faculty enters the program. These meetings will focus on making faculty comfortable with the language of composition so they can intentionally and consistently guide students through writing assignments and evaluate students' work with confidence. Specifically, faculty development shall address the following topics:

> ➢ Designing the writing-intensive (WI) course/writing assignments.
> ➢ Using the Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR) to grade writing assignments.
> ➢ Overviewing archiving of student portfolios in LiveText™ software medium.
> ➢ Identifying common grammatical and syntactical errors.

One session will focus on grammatical and syntactical errors commonly found in students' writing. A part of this session will refresh faculty knowledge about sentence boundary problems: fragments, comma splices, and fused sentences. Faculty will practice identifying these concerns in sample student essays and using consistent terminology to explain the problems to students. The sample papers also will illustrate errors in subject-verb agreement and pronoun-antecedent agreement. In this meeting, faculty will have a chance to engage in the correction of punctuation in sentence structure as they examine the role of commas, apostrophes, and semicolons in showing the relationships of words and sentence parts.

Another training session will involve discussion of incorporating writing into content-specific courses. Writing should be seen as part of the content-learning process rather than as an additional assignment beyond the content. Sample syllabi for WI courses in various disciplines will allow faculty to see possibilities for including the writing process in class activities, for instance, through specific pre-writing strategies that will help students to discover topics and plan a paper's tentative development. At this session, WI faculty will share methods of meeting the requirements of the WI courses as defined above. Effective and ineffective sample writing assignments will show faculty how to craft

prompts that give students specific tasks, audiences, and ways of thinking as they fulfill various writing assignments.

Two training sessions will be centered on evaluating student writing. Faculty will practice using the PoWR with samples of student work. Faculty will grade sample essays, some with research and some without, assigning a number for each of the rubric's components. The goals of these sessions will be to advance the faculty members' familiarity with the rubric, to develop comfort with interpretation and application of the rubric, and to achieve an acceptable level of evaluation consistency among the faculty. Inter-rater reliability will help students to understand that clear written communication matters in all contexts and all classes.

During the final training session, WI faculty will gain familiarity with archiving methodology to be used as a part of the QEP for students' individual writing portfolios. All students in the QEP sample group beginning with the fall 2009 cohort will own software allowing easy storage of their work housed in external servers maintained by LiveText™ software management. This venue can be quickly accessed by WI faculty if it is their desire to have student work submitted to them electronically. Technical support will be available to individual purchasers of the software. Details about the process surrounding this archived student work are provided later in this section in **The Plan to Archive Student Portfolios Electronically** segment.

A refresher workshop dealing with the understanding and use of the Pathways of Writing Rubric will be incorporated into Opening-of School faculty activities and the January faculty workshop schedule. A generalized syllabus, addressing the topic(s), the objective(s), and the procedures for each session of faculty workshops begins on page 39.

Generalized Workshop Syllabus

Writing-Intensive Courses Faculty Training:
August 2008, January and March/April 2009
Barton College

<u>Facilitator</u>:   Dr. Rebecca Godwin, Professor of English and Director of the
Ragan Writing Center
Telephone: 399-6364   E-mail: <u>rlgodwin@barton.edu</u>

<u>Purpose and Overall Objectives</u>: To prepare faculty teaching writing-intensive (WI) courses to understand the requirements of WI courses; to design clear writing-to-learn assignments; to integrate the writing process smoothly into their classes; to become comfortable with the basic language of composition, grammar, and documentation styles; and to use the Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR) to confidently and consistently evaluate student writing so that the WI program evidences inter-rater reliability in the evaluation of student work.

<u>August 2008</u> (2-hour session)
Topic: Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR) review
Objective: Faculty teaching WI courses in fall 2008 will gain confidence and work toward inter-rater reliability in scoring student papers using the PoWR.
Procedure: Participating faculty will review the components of the PoWR, apply the rubric to 2-4 student papers from various disciplines (papers with and without research), and then report and discuss their individual rationale for scores.

<u>January 2009</u> (2-hour session)
Topic: Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR) review
Objective: Faculty teaching WI courses in spring 2009 will work toward inter-rater reliability in scoring student papers using the PoWR.
Procedure: Participating faculty will review the components of the PoWR, apply the rubric to 2-4 student papers from various disciplines (papers with and without research), and then report and discuss their individual rationale for scores.

<u>March 2009</u> (2-hour session)

Topic: Integrating Writing into Content Courses—Preparing Syllabi, Designing Effective Writing Assignments, and Guiding Student Writers

Objective: Faculty teaching WI courses in fall 2009 will understand how to design writing-intensive courses, will understand the components of effective writing assignments, and will explore procedures for guiding students through the stages of the writing process.

Procedure: Faculty will review Barton College WI course guidelines, peruse sample syllabi, work on designing their Fall 2009 WI courses, judge effective and ineffective writing assignments, review the stages of the writing process, and explore possibilities for intervening in that process during class sessions. Specific topics include course grade components; incorporating writing-to-learn activities such as quick writes, exit slips, and admit slips; discourse forms; audience; role, audience, format, topic (RAFT) assignments; incorporating pre-writing activities; peer response to drafts; revision.

<u>March 2009</u> (2-hour session)

Topic: Grammar and Responding to Student Writing at the Sentence Level

Objective: Faculty teaching WI courses in fall 2009 will gain confidence in explaining frequently occurring and major problems in syntax and grammar, agree to use common language to identify those problems, and explore effective methods of responding to student writing.

Procedure: Faculty will read sample essays and grammatical exercises to identify and discuss the following sentence-level concerns, with practice in posing questions to help students recognize problems:

- Sentence boundaries (fragments, comma splices, and fused sentences, with discussion of the problematic term "run-on").
- Agreement between subjects and verbs and between pronouns and antecedents.
- Mixed constructions (with discussion of the term "awkward").
- The role of punctuation in conveying meaning: commas, semicolons, colons, apostrophes.

April 2009 (2-hour session)

Topic: Documentation and Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR) Evaluation

Objective: Faculty teaching WI courses in fall 2009 will understand the basic requirements of APA and MLA documentation and will understand how to score student papers using the PoWR.

Procedure: Faculty teaching WI courses in fall 2009 will review the basic components of APA and MLA documentation and the components of the PoWR. They will then apply the rubric to 2 student papers without research and discuss their individual rationale for scores. Lastly, faculty from disciplines using APA documentation will score 2 student papers citing research in APA format, and faculty from disciplines using MLA documentation will score 2 student papers citing research in MLA format. Faculty in these two groups will discuss their individual rationale for scores.

April 2009 (2-hour session)

Topic: Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR) Evaluation and LiveText™

Objective: Faculty teaching WI courses in fall 2009 will work toward inter-rater reliability in scoring student papers using the PoWR and will be introduced to the use of LiveText™ for archiving and evaluation of papers.

Procedure: Faculty will apply the PoWR to several student papers and discuss their rationale for scores, working toward consistent assessment. An expert in LiveText™ will demonstrate how students access the LiveText™ software and archive papers, how faculty can access student papers, and, if they desire, grade using LiveText™.

FACULTY TRAINING PREVIEW

An abbreviated trial for faculty training was conducted on April 1 and 15, 2008. These two, 2-hour connected sessions led by the Director of the Writing Center, Dr. Rebecca Godwin, focused on the interpretation and use of the PoWR and allowed for the practice of the rubric's use in a group setting. Volunteers for this training were from a variety of disciplines including Biology (Dr. Kevin Pennington), Business Management (Ms. Yvonne Shanks), Accounting (Ms. Patricia Burrus), Economics (Dr. John Bethune), English (Dr. Kathy James and Dr. Elaine Marshall), History (Dr. Alan Lane), Mathematics (Mr. Gilbert Fair), Audio Recording Technology (Mr. Phil Valera), and Political Science

(Dr. John Bublic). The training plan was to require each participant to assign Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR) scores to each of a series of student writing samples. Results were shared, tabulated and discussed. The PoWR was developed, circulated, and its content known well in advance of these training activities. A post-training survey was administered; all eight of the volunteer participants promptly returned a completed survey. The survey included questions for feedback from the PoWR training and items for assessing general needs for future training. Results are summarized below.

VOLUNTEERS EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE IN THEIR ABILITY TO

	Percent	Rank
use the Pathways-to-Achieve-Writing-Success RUBRIC (later: PoWR)	90	1
share information about the Ragan Writing center with my students	88	2
incorporate pre-writing activities	73	5
incorporate revision activities	85	3
incorporate activities for assessing, incorporating, and/or documenting research	75	4

VOLUNTEERS SAID THEY WOULD PLAN TO

	Percent
use the Pathways-to-Achieve-Writing-Success RUBRIC (later: PoWR)	100
share information about the Ragan Writing center with my students	87
incorporate pre-writing activities	75
incorporate revision activities	87
incorporate activities for assessing, incorporating, and/or documenting research	87
use TURNITIN Plagiarism Software	75

Lessons learned from this pilot training initiative that will impact future plans for QEP faculty development opportunities are outlined below.

- A pre-training survey of participants was overlooked but would have been helpful and will be utilized prior to future training events. The survey items also need to deal more directly with the quality of the training.

- Informally, participants agreed that the format, length, and scope of the sessions were appropriate to their needs.

- Reaching an acceptable level of consistent application of the PoWR requires meaningful practice, a criterion that can be effectively provided by requiring the necessary training.

- After only two hours of PoWR training for the initial ten volunteer trainees, significant consensus among scorers existed for each scored writing sample (see Appendix J).

- A minimum of four hours of intensive PoWR training must be required in advance of the term in which QEP data is collected from faculty in QEP designated WI courses. Expectations are to give three-plus (3+) hours in the spring and two hours in August for faculty teaching a QEP designated WI course in the fall semester. For such faculty teaching a spring semester course the three-plus (3+) hours of training would occur in the preceding spring with a two-hour reprise in the January just preceding the course offering.

PROCESS FOR QEP DESIGNATED WI COURSE APPROVAL

Faculty proposing to teach QEP writing-intensive (WI) courses will submit their course design and syllabus to the appropriate committees and the QEP Director. Spring courses will need approval in the preceding November and fall courses in the preceding April. For QEP WI courses that are available within the general education core, the appropriate committee is the General Education Committee of the Faculty Assembly. Faculty teaching Gateway and Summit courses in the various major programs will seek approval from the QEPLT. The QEP Director will sit with both these committees. This timing requires that the courses in question already be listed in the course offerings for the specified semester; therefore, both the General Education Committee and the

QEPLT must act within a time frame that allows faculty necessary time to make any requested revisions.

THE QEP AND GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

The QEP and revised general education requirements (Core) have emerged separately but as complements from Faculty/Administration/Staff discussions on improving the College's impact on student learning. In 2004, focus on College concerns developed into two essential discussions at Barton, one concerning the focus of the QEP and the other a review of the existing Core. As time passed, these discussions moved to separate small groups each charged with the responsibility of defining dimensions of the individual projects. The results of the two projects---the QEP to focus upon improving students' writing and the Core to incorporate an emphasis on written, oral, and critical thinking skills---illustrate a consensus about academic issues to be addressed. The implementation of a new general education core at Barton (Appendix H) in fall 2009 emphasizing writing, oral, and critical thinking skills will coincide with the implementation of the QEP, with a focus on improving student writing. These two programs offer an opportunity to utilize their obvious synergy and compatibility to take a quantum leap for the benefit of our students. Whereas the new core of courses in general education has depth in the liberal arts, the QEP will add impressive breadth as it stretches out to include writing about the content within the major disciplines.

The WI courses where the newly adopted general education core and the QEP interface are these:
- ENG 101: Composition I
- ENG 102: Composition II
- WI Global Awareness courses, providing topics in American-Western and World Culture.

For the QEP all students must take the two composition courses and choose two courses from the last category, then add a Gateway and a Summit course in their major.

PROCESS AND TIMING: FACULTY TRANSMISSION OF EVALUATION DATA FOR THE QEP DESIGNATED WRITING-INTENSIVE (WI) COURSES.

Simple but powerful actions surround the implementation of the QEP. These components will enable the collection and analysis of data that will depict the progress of the QEP. This data collection process is described in detail below. Information will be collected on data cards that will be scanned by an optical mark reader, stored in a database, and utilized in important and descriptive data analysis. Entering freshmen who enroll in ENG 101: English Composition I in fall 2009 will comprise the initial QEP student cohort. This group will deliberately exclude those freshmen who place into ENG 100: Fundamentals of Writing, ENG 102: Composition II, or ENG 103: Honors Composition.

The critical points for collecting data about a student's level of writing skill are detailed as follows:

- ENG 101: QEP **Paper #1** Professors will score the first paper written by each incoming student to establish a baseline skill level.
  - ➢ Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR) scores for each student on the initial writing sample in this course will be recorded and submitted by the professor on a single optical mark readable data card.
  - ➢ PoWR scores are reported for each relevant rubric section (minimum 3; maximum 5).
  - ➢ Reportable data is now contained on a maximum of 25 machine readable data cards for each section of ENG 101: one card per student (maximum data cards fall 2009 = 150).
  - ➢ Each student card contains a unique student number enabling straightforward tracking of individuals.
  - ➢ PoWR scores are read and downloaded into a spreadsheet by an optical mark reader.
  - ➢ Each writing sample including PoWR scores is archived in LiveText™.

- ENG 101: QEP **Paper #2**   Professors will score a second paper written at or near the end of the course to begin the chain of evidence about achieving writing skills.

  ➢ In fall 2009, this task is assigned, received, and scored using the PoWR.

  ➢ The process for scoring and data collection duplicates that for paper #1.

  ➢ PoWR scores are read and downloaded into a spreadsheet by an optical mark reader.

  ➢ Each writing sample including PoWR scores is archived in LiveText™.

- ENG 102: QEP **Paper #3**   Professors will score a paper written at or near the end of the course to continue the chain of evidence about student writing skills.

  ➢ In spring 2010, this task is assigned, received, and scored using the PoWR.

  ➢ The process for scoring and data collection duplicates that for paper #1.

  ➢ PoWR scores are read and downloaded into a spreadsheet by an optical mark reader.

  ➢ Each writing sample including PoWR scores is archived in LiveText™.

- **Papers #4 and #5**   Professors in General Education writing-intensive courses will score and report upon papers written at or near the end of the semester. Each student will take two of these courses. Professors will submit a score for every student in the class; it is not necessary for professors to keep track of whether a student needs the course for QEP purposes.

  ➢ Scoring, tabulation, and submission will replicate the process in ENG 101 and 102.

  ➢ PoWR scores are read and downloaded into a spreadsheet by an optical mark reader.

  ➢ Each writing sample including PoWR scores is archived in LiveText™.

- **Paper #6** Professors in designated QEP Gateway courses will collect papers written at or near the end of their courses each semester. Every School and Department will have selected one of its major courses for this purpose. This course will be taken in the second semester of the sophomore year or the junior year.
  - ➢ Scoring, tabulation, and submission will replicate the process in ENG 101 and 102.
  - ➢ PoWR scores are read and downloaded into a spreadsheet by an optical mark reader.
  - ➢ Each writing sample including PoWR scores is archived in LiveText™.

- **Paper #7** Professors in designated QEP Summit courses will collect papers written at or near the end of their courses each semester. Every School and Department will have selected one of its major courses for this purpose. This course will be taken during the senior year.
  - ➢ Scoring, tabulation, and submission will replicate the process in ENG 101 and 102.
  - ➢ PoWR scores are read and downloaded into a spreadsheet by an optical mark reader.
  - ➢ Each writing sample including PoWR scores is archived in LiveText™.

- Longer-term, the potential exists to utilize a reflective paper (Paper #8) contributed by each student in response to the archived portfolio of that individual.

- See Appendix G for a listing of specific Gateway and Summit courses by major program.

- The estimated number of individual faculty who will be involved in data collection for the QEP designated WI courses in each of the first four years of **Pathways to Achieve Writing Success** implementation is as follows: five in 2009-2010, thirteen in 2010-2011, thirty-two in 2011-2012, and forty-three in 2012-2013 and beyond. In summary for the first four years of the Barton College QEP:

Year	# QEP Faculty	# Courses (# Sections)	Estimated # of QEP Students: Adjusted for Expected Retention
2009*-2010	5*	2 (12)* ENG 101, ENG 102	150*
2010-2011	8*+5=13	8 (8)*+2 (12)=10 (20) Various WI Global Awareness courses	102*+150=252
2011-2012	19*+13=32	18 (20)*+10 (20)=28 (40) A WI Gateway in each major program	81*+102+150=333
2012-2013	11*+32=43	19 (20)*+28 (40)=47 (60) A WI Summit in each major program	73*+81+102+150=406

Red table values denoted with the * are representative of the expected data for the initial QEP cohort, entering freshman placing into ENG 101 in fall 2009.

- See the Critical Points Flow Chart and the Table of QEP Data Points by Year and by Cohort below.

Critical points for Data Collection: f = fall and s = spring

	Term(s)	**Maximum Data Points**

ENG 101: COMPOSITION I

Paper #1	**f 2009**	6 X 25 = 150
	f 2010, **f 2011**, **f 2012**	150 each

ENG 101: COMPOSITION I

Paper #2	**f 2009**	6 X 25 = 150
	f 2010, **f 2011**, **f 2012**	150 each

ENG 102: COMPOSITION II

Paper #3	**s 2010**	6 X 25 =150
	s 2011, **s 2012**, **s 2013**	150 each

WI GLOBAL AWARENESS I

Paper #4	**f 2010**	VARIOUS =150
	f 2011, **f 2012**, f **2013**	150 each

WI GLOBAL AWARENESS II

Paper #5	**s 2011**	VARIOUS =150
	s 2012, **s 2013**, **s2014**	150 each

WI GATEWAY: MAJOR PROGRAM

Paper #6	**f or s 2011-12**	VARIOUS = 150
f or s 2012-13, **f or s 2013-14**, **f or s 2014-15**		
		150 each

WI SUMMIT: MAJOR PROGRAM

Paper #7	**f or s 2012-13**	VARIOUS =150
f or s 2013-14, **f or s 2014-15**, **f or s 2015-16**		
		150 each

F2009 COHORT   **F2010 COHORT**   **F2011 COHORT**   **F2012 COHORT**

		COHORT					
Maximum Student Data Points/year	**Academic Year**	**F2009**	**F2010**	**F2011**	**F2012**	**F2013**	**F2014**
450	**2009-2010**	**450**	**none**	**none**	**none**	none	none
750	**2010-2011**	**300**	**450**	**none**	**none**	none	none
900	**2011-2012**	**150**	**300**	**450**	**none**	none	none
1050	**2012-2013**	**150**	**150**	**300**	**450**	none	none
1050	2013-2014	none	150	150	300	450	none
1050	2014-2015	none	none	150	150	300	450

Maximum Data Points per Cohort over Four Years	**1050**	**1050**	**1050**

F = fall

THE PLAN TO ARCHIVE STUDENT PORTFOLIOS ELECTRONICALLY

LiveText™ software, currently in use to archive student work in the School of Education, will be the repository for students' QEP writing portfolios. Recall that students' portfolios will accumulate seven pieces of QEP writing over the four-year period the average student attends Barton. The writing samples housed in this medium will be stored in external servers and maintained by LiveText™ management. The QEPLT has concluded that this individual writing history for each student who places into ENG 101: Composition I as a freshman and completes four years of study at the College will demonstrate whether the QEP project is effective in improving student learning.

Data collected can be managed within LiveText™ or downloaded into formats permitting observations on individual student progress, as well as freshman-to-senior, course-to-course, and/or cohort-to-cohort comparisons. See the additional discussion in this document, Section XI: Assessment.

STUDENT MARKETING PLAN

The Manager of Web Services at the College, assisted by a group of six students who are both creative in their thinking and interested in the goals of the QEP, has accepted the responsibility to promote the QEP on campus in ways that engage the Barton student body (see membership in Appendix A). Activities planned and executed by this group with the approval of the QEPLT and the Administration of the College will begin to be visible in fall 2008.

CURRICULUM COMMITTEE CONFIRMATION IN MARCH 2008

The Curriculum Committee of the Faculty Assembly reviewed the QEP blueprint on March 12, 2008, and voted to incorporate the two key QEP components, writing-intensive courses and a minimum grade requirement for these courses, into graduation requirements upon full implementation of the QEP in academic year 2009-2010. The Faculty Assembly affirmed this action by voice vote at a regularly scheduled meeting on April 15, 2008.

VIII.   **TIMELINE** (Historical and Pro Forma)

DATE	TASK
April-May 2005	QEP educational sessions for faculty, staff, student government and the Board of Trustees
April-May 2005	QEP information sessions for Academic Council, Schools and Departments, and Strategic Planning Task Force
September-November 2005	Faculty formulated list of possible QEP topics; results were compiled and distributed to faculty
September 2006	SACS timetable review and QEP update by the VPAA at Faculty Assembly
December 2006	QEP information session for College Staff
January 2007	Possible QEP topics reviewed, discussed, analyzed, and ranked by the faculty
February 2007	Communication skills identified by the faculty as the most critical area of concern needing improvement to enhance learning at Barton College
March-April 2007	QEP Leader appointed and QEP Leadership Team (QEPLT) assembled. The Team received orientation and was charged with the responsibility of narrowing the QEP focus within the area of critical concern identified by the faculty.
May-early June 2007	QEPLT defined the focus of the Plan: Improve the writing proficiency of Barton College students.
June-early August 2007	QEPLT gathered preliminary evidence that student writing must be improved, sought documentation that the chosen focus could be productive, did rudimentary research on Best Practices in teaching written communication skills, and agreed to a mission statement and associated goals for the Barton QEP --- meeting regularly and frequently over the summer.

DATE	TASK
August 2007	What to do about senior writing deficiencies: round-table sharing (see Appendix F).
August 2007	Presented the proposed QEP focus and associated mission and goals to the College community at the Opening-of-School College Assembly; the proposal included the means, methods, and measurements for the QEP. The QEPLT solicited input from School/Department faculty teams as to existing courses that could be utilized as writing-intensive Gateway and senior Summit courses in the various major programs of study.
September 2007	The QEPLT identified six areas where broader faculty and staff support for the further development of the QEP was needed; faculty and staff members of a subcommittee in each of these six areas were recruited. Each subcommittee was headed by one of the six members of the QEPLT (see Appendix A).
September 2007	The QEPLT subcommittee structure and the tasks of each were presented and described at both the Faculty Assembly and the Staff Assembly with the cooperation of the Faculty and Staff Moderators.
September-October 2007	Administer the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) to a Freshman sample under the auspices of the Office of Institutional Research; this was the third administration of the CLA to Barton College freshmen.
Late September – December 2007	All subcommittees functioned to make progress on their assigned tasks. Budget, Research: Best Practices and Faculty Training/Rubric Development subcommittees provided guidance to the QEPLT for short-term information needs, whereas, Technology Applications, Writing Fellows, and Student Assessment subcommittees moved toward planning for the longer-term.

DATE	TASK
December 2007	Members of the College community approved the 2007-2008 implementation components of the QEP at the regularly scheduled end-of-semester College Assembly.
December 2007	QEP proposal document born.
January 25, 2008	Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR) distributed to the Barton Community electronically as requested by members at the January 18 faculty workshop on writing skills.
February 7, 2008	Dr. Rudy Jackson, COC of SACS liaison for Barton spent the day at the College; the QEPLT met with him in a productive afternoon session.
February 2008	Recruitment of writing faculty volunteers to further document the state of student writing at the College in fall 2008.
March-July 2008	Formalize and develop the QEP proposal document
April 1 and 15, 2008	Pilot training of volunteer faculty to effectively use the PoWR.
April 15-May 7, 2008	Distribute a post-training survey to determine the effectiveness of the April 1 and 15 PoWR training and gain insights about the design of future faculty development for faculty who teach writing-intensive courses.
April 2008	Administer CLA to the Senior sample; this is the third administration of the CLA to Barton seniors.
May 1-10, 2008	Collect survey results from the volunteer faculty who participated in the faculty development on the PoWR on April 1 and 15.
May-June 2008	Trained faculty members explore the use of the PoWR and provide QEP state-of-student-writing information from various disciplines to the QEPLT.
June 2008	QEPLT reflects on the spring 2008 training and data gathering (lessons learned on page 43).

DATE	TASK
June 2008	Hire a QEP Director (see pages 57-59).
June 2008	Establish QEP office (QEP Director office and lobby in Hines Hall on second floor: Dr. Alan Lane).
June 2008	Prepare 2008-2009 budget (see page 62).
July 2008	Submit the **PATHWAYS TO ACHIEVE WRITING SUCCESS** document to the SACS Visiting Team.
TIMELINE (CONTINUED) **Pro forma**	
DATE	**TASK**
August 2008	Purchase an optical mark reader for data entry and statistics generation. Trial runs using state-of-student-writing information submitted in May and June.
August 2008-2013	Writing faculty training reprise during Faculty/Administration/Staff (FAST) week. Pre-training survey distributed and completed by participants.
August-September 2008-2013	Post-training survey of effectiveness distributed, completed, and collected from Opening-of-School training reprise participants.
August-September 2008-2013	The QEP Director, in consultation with the QEPLT, Gen. Ed. Committee, and WI faculty, reviews the PoWR and the WI course standards and makes necessary and reasonable revisions.
Fall semester 2008-2013	Implement selected writing-intensive courses; gather data and archive student work using selected technology and the PoWR for assessment.
October-November 2008-2013	Faculty submission of WI courses for the following spring to the General Education Committee or QEPLT, as appropriate, for review and approval.

DATE	TASK
January 2009-2013	QEP Director and QEPLT reflection on effectiveness of three-fold writing faculty training, review records of monthly writing faculty encounters and respond accordingly.
January 2009-2013	Writing faculty training reprise during January Faculty Workshop. Pre-training survey distributed and completed by participants.
January-February 2009-2013	Post-training survey of effectiveness distributed, completed, and collected from January Workshop training reprise participants.
February 2009-2013	The QEP Director, in consultation with the QEPLT, Gen. Ed. Committee, and WI faculty, reviews the PoWR and the WI course standards and makes necessary and reasonable revisions.
February 2009-2013	Recruitment of writing faculty for the following fall
March 2009-2013	Faculty submission of WI courses for the following fall to the General Education Committee or QEPLT, as appropriate, for review and approval.
March-April 2009-2013	Writing faculty training
April 2009-2013	Writing faculty training reprise during Faculty/Administration/Staff (FAST) Week. Pre-training survey distributed and completed by participants.
April-May 2009-2013	Post-training survey of effectiveness distributed, completed, and collected from Opening-of-School training reprise participants.
May-June 2009-2013	The QEP Director, in consultation with the QEPLT, Gen. Ed. Committee, and WI faculty, reviews the PoWR and the WI course standards and makes necessary and reasonable revisions.
June 2009-2013	Prepare annual proposed budget for fiscal year beginning July 1, 20XX
June 2009-2013	Complete Annual Effectiveness Report 2009-2012; Impact Report 2013

IX. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The line and staff structure for implementing, sustaining, and assessing the Quality Enhancement Plan at Barton College is depicted below. The entire organization should be in place by fall 2008.

```
                                                    QEP Leadership Team


                         VP of Academic Affairs           (Supported by Data Analysis and Clerical Personnel)


                                                         QEP Director

President (CEO) of the College      VP for Administration and Finance


                                Director of Institutional Research
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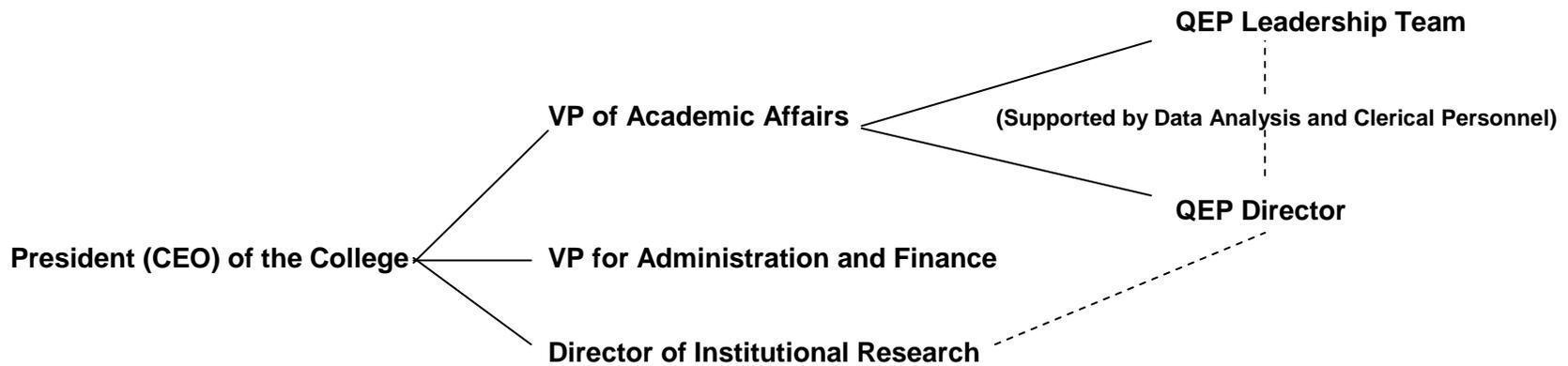
The job description for the QEP Director should include the following responsibilities:

- Oversee the implementation of the QEP
- Manage the QEP Budget
- Direct assessment processes for all aspects of the QEP
- Supervise faculty development, data entry, data analysis, and clerical function
- Promote student awareness of the QEP
- Report assessment findings and discuss issues with the QEP Leadership Team, in a consulting role, and Academic Council
- Prepare annual reports, including the Impact Report in 2012-2013
- Promote faculty participation
- Maintain communication channels with constituencies

The QEPLT will continue to function in a consulting and project evaluation role, working directly with the QEP Director and reporting to the VPAA.

Job Title: **QEP Director/General Education Coordinator**

Position Description:

This is a full-time position at Barton College beginning 2008-2009 and reporting directly to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. The successful candidate should currently hold a full-time tenure-track faculty position at the College. This individual will devote three-fourths time to directing the preparation and implementation of the QEP, the primary goal of which is to improve students' written communication skills, and to coordinating the General Education Core. The successful candidate will devote the remaining one-fourth time to teaching two classes per year. These courses should be designated as either General Education Core or QEP writing-intensive in a major program.

Qualifications:

Required:

- Master's Degree in a field appropriate to teaching at Barton College.
- Experience leading teams and/or leading an academic School or Department.
- Experience in teaching and assessment.

Preferred:

- Ph.D. in a field appropriate to teaching at Barton College.

Salary:

- Current salary plus a supplement of $3,500 - $6,000.

QEP Director

This position has been filled. Dr. Alan Lane, Associate Professor of History and Chair of the Department of History and Social Sciences, will assume this position effective for the 2008-2009 academic year. Dr. Lane's leadership strengths have been most recently demonstrated by his conducting the affairs of his department as Chair and his able management of the institutional Curriculum Committee during 2007-2008. His interest in and knowledge of the use of writing-intensive opportunities for students has historically defined one aspect of his teaching philosophy. As a member of the General Education Task Force that ultimately designed the new general education content for Barton College, Dr. Lane studied in both breadth and depth how best to improve students' thinking, learning, and writing. As the General Education Task Force was reaching the conclusion of its work in fall 2007 and had begun the process of conveying the new general education design within the community, Dr. Lane agreed to serve as one of the inaugural members of the Quality Enhancement Plan Leadership Team (QEPLT) which was formed in April 2007. He has been an important resource in the development of the Barton QEP and will serve the College well in the position described on page 58. The energy and interest he brings to the position will motivate both faculty and staff to cooperate in the successful implementation of the QEP.

X. RESOURCES

THE SAM AND MARJORIE RAGAN WRITING CENTER

Currently, an important resource for student writers is Barton College's Sam and Marjorie Ragan Writing Center. The Center will provide support for students in the QEP writing-intensive courses; the use of peer writing fellows and peer evaluators correlate with improvement in student written communication skills (Soven, 2001).

Students become peer tutors in the Writing Center after they complete ENG 221: Writing Center Tutoring, a one-credit-hour course covering grammar review, the stages of the writing process, interpreting writing assignments, documentation styles, and strategies for helping writers to focus, develop, organize, and edit their own writing. The goal of Writing Center sessions is to make better writers, not just better pieces of writing, and so

tutors are trained not to revise and edit for tutees but to ask questions and explain reasons for needed improvements. After completing the course, tutors receive pay for scheduled hours in the Writing Center, and students seeking assistance with their writing come during the posted hours. The Director of the Writing Center also tutors students during some hours when peer tutors are not available.

During the 2006-2007 academic year, the Writing Center was open for tutoring for 567 hours, with tutors being paid for 530 of those hours and the Director covering the others. One-hundred and forty (140) different students visited the Writing Center in 283 appointments, indicating that students often return for more than one session. For Weekend College, a tutor is available for an hour and a half during the Saturday lunch break between classes, and students who need help at alternate times contact the Writing Center Director for an appointment at another time. The Director also responds to papers electronically for these Weekend College students. A tutor was available during summer sessions in 2007, working with students who contacted her for an appointment.

In the 2007-2008 academic year, students have completed 225 appointments in the Writing Center. Sessions usually last about a half hour, and students have sought help in courses in composition, religion, music, nursing, education, athletic training, fitness management, criminal justice, and business. Three tutors worked in the fall and three in the spring, assisted by the Writing Center Director.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The QEP Budget Subcommittee first met on October 10, 2007, and discussed the importance of developing a set of budget line items for the QEP that are separate from all other SACS accounts. During the organizational meeting, the subcommittee reviewed an outline of the QEP and prepared an initial list of costs for the current year, 2007-2008, along with estimates of costs for the next five years, 2008-2013. Within two days of the meeting, Rosanne Harrell, Controller, developed the account numbers for the Budget for Quality Enhancement Plan. The QEP budget items for 2007-2008 were estimated and recorded using the line items for this new account and submitted to Mr. Richard Marshall, Vice President for Administration and Finance.

Mr. Marshall incorporated this information into his report for the Board of Trustees meeting on October 20, 2007; the 2007-2008 institutional budget for the College including the QEP requests was approved by the Barton College Board of Trustees at this same October 2007 meeting. As the QEP is further developed, the QEP Budget Subcommittee will continue to work on the budget for the next five years. The budget for 2007-2008 and estimated budget items for the period 2007-2013 are presented on the next page. An annual review will keep the QEP budget on page 62 relevant and aligned with appropriate needs.

2007-2013

Project Administration and Budget

Activity	Account Number	Implementation Responsibility	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Telephone-Basic Service	01-52006-1500-53001-01	QEP Director	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
Telephone-Long Distance [5001]	01-52006-1500-53002-01	QEP Director	$50	$50	$50	$50	$50	$50
Postage Expense	01-52006-1500-53030-01	QEP Director	$100	$100	$100	$100	$100	$100
Photocopying [2605711]	01-52006-1500-53010-01	QEP Director	$500	$500	$500	$500	$500	$500
Telephone- Fax	01-52006-1500-53004-01	QEP Director	$50	$50	$50	$50	$50	$50
Professional Development for Faculty (Faculty Training)	01-52006-1500-55001-01	QEP Director	$5,000	$2,000	$2,000	$2,000	$2,000	$2,000
Supplies: General and Promotion (Marketing)	01-52006-1500-54001-01	QEP Director	$100	$1,000	$200	$200	$200	$200
Technology Equipment	01-52006-1500-58056-01	QEP Director	$0	$6,500	$0	$0	$0	$0
Technology Supplies	01-52006-1500-54008-01	QEP Director	$0	$25	$90	$90	$135	$180
CLA Subscription	01-52006-1500-57010-01	Director of IR	$6,800	$6,800	$6,800	$6,800	$6,800	$6,800
CLA Proctor Miscellaneous	01-52006-1500-57060-01	Director of IR	$0	$2,500	$2,500	$2,500	$2,500	$2,500
Student LiveText™ Subscriptions	01-52006-1500-57010-01	VPAA	$0	$0	$30,000	$30,000	$30,000	$30,000
QEP Director Supplement and Adjuncts	01-52006-1500-51130-01	VPAA	$0	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000	$15,000
QEP Director Travel (SACS)	01-52006-1500-55051-01	VPAA	$0	$2,000	$2,000	$2,000	$2,000	$2,000
Surveys (Assessment Tools)	01-52006-1500-57012-01	QEP Director	$50	$200	$200	$200	$200	$200
Printing- General	01-52006-1500-53020-01	QEP Director	$100	$1,000	$100	$100	$100	$100
ANNUAL TOTALS			$12,750	$37,725	$59,590	$59,590	$59,635	$59,680
GRAND TOTAL (6 years)			-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	$288,970

HUMAN RESOURCES: HARNESSING STUDENT ENERGY AND IDEAS

A student task force under the supervision of the Manager of Web Services at the College has been assembled (see Student Marketing Task Force in Appendix A). The work of this group will focus on sensitizing the entire campus community and particularly the student body to the important goals and procedures of **Pathways to Achieve Writing Success**. Some of the exciting suggestions from the students at their organization meeting attended by the QEPLT are outlined below. Mr. Ken Dozier, Manager of Web Services, and a core group of six students plan to revisit these ideas and implement those deemed to be most effective and practical over the course of 2008-2009 and forward. A few examples of ideas proposed follow:

- Random Questions asked of students around campus, such as "What is the QEP?" A business card would be handed out to students who are unaware of the QEP. On this card would be an URL directing the students to a website with relevant QEP facts.
- QEP Day would utilize upper level students who would speak to other students for a few minutes in each class, presenting information such as key talking points related to the QEP.
- Incoming Freshman Orientation Day would include a brief information session about the QEP.
- Paraphernalia promoting the QEP would be distributed to students. A proposed venue for distribution of the paraphernalia would be "Bulldog Day." Paraphernalia may include pens, key chains, lanyards, T-shirts, plastic cups, elastic yo-yos, canvas tote bags, and "Kewpie QEP" dolls.
- Article in the *Collegiate*, the Barton College Student Newspaper.
- Insert mailed in billing statement.
- Rolling script on Bulldog Space web community.
- "Viral campaign" involving mystery to create curiosity and interest in the QEP. For example, banners with "QEP" and no explanation or "QP" dolls mysteriously appearing about campus, leading up to a big reveal.
- Utilization of the cafeteria as a key, central spot that allows reaching a high volume of students.

HUMAN RESOURCES: FACULTY AND STAFF

The key to QEP success is clearly tied to the enthusiasm and commitment of the learning community at Barton. Successful provision for meaningful solutions for students' writing weaknesses will depend on the dedication of specific writing faculty together with peer and staff support. Approximately half of the seventy-four current full-time faculty will be directly involved in teaching and data collection in the QEP designated writing-intensive courses by 2012-2013. The focus on improving students' writing has captured the interest and the efforts of many faculty and staff from the initial discussions about the QEP. Nineteen faculty and six staff have devoted many hours to develop the QEP.

A QEP Director, supported by a QEP Leadership Team (QEPLT) consisting of faculty and staff, will insure that the plan is implemented and systematically administered. The VPAA will oversee the work of both the QEP Director and the QEPLT. The Director of Institutional Research will provide expertise in data analysis. The Senior Staff will maintain its commitment to improving student writing by providing sufficient funding and facilities.

XI. ASSESSMENT

The effectiveness of Barton's QEP will be measured by data that quantifies changes in students' writing skills. A Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR) score establishing a baseline for each freshman enrolled in ENG 101: Composition I in fall 2009 will be compared to semester-by-semester measurements culminating in a final measurement in the senior year. In addition, Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) scores will be documented for entering freshmen and later compared to CLA scores for these students as seniors. Student surveys conducted within the writing-intensive series of courses will provide a third assessment tool to measure the effectiveness of the QEP. Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) and Administrative Objectives (AO) were detailed in Section V. The components of the QEP assessment strategy are addressed below.

ADHERENCE TO THE QEP TIMELINE

The Section IX: Organization Structure section of this document depicts line and staff relationships for the management of the QEP. Going forward, the QEP Leadership Team (QEPLT) will function in a consulting and assessment role. The QEP Director and the Leader of the QEPLT will be responsible for ensuring the adherence of the QEP to the Timeline in Section VIII. Aligned with the original QEP subcommittee structure (Appendix A), the six individual members of the QEPLT will assist the QEP Director in managing delegated areas of the QEP, including Budget (Ms. Sheila J. Milne, Registrar), **P**athways **o**f **W**riting **R**ubric (Dr. Alan D. Lane, until his replacement on the QEPLT is named), Faculty Training (Dr. Rebecca L. Godwin), Best Practices (Dr. Kevin N. Pennington), Assessment (Mr. Philip J. Valera), and Technology Issues (Ms. Patricia N. Burrus). The QEP Director assisted by these individuals will use the following procedures to verify adherence to the QEP timeline:

- Provide timely scheduling of writing-intensive (WI) course content approval.
- Use results of student surveys within the WI courses to verify that syllabi and content meet the expectations of the reviewing committee---General Education Committee for required General Education courses and the QEPLT for WI courses in the major programs.
- Conduct an annual budget review and revision in light of changing needs.
- Employ Pre- and Post-Faculty Development surveys.
- Develop informal avenues for information sharing among QEP-involved groups.
- Plan for periodic PoWR review and revision timed to occur after Faculty Development activities in April, August, and January.
- Review the methods of data collection and evaluate data analysis results.
- Coordinate the documentation of WI course grades with the Registrar's office.

STUDENT SURVEYS

Beginning in fall 2009 student surveys will be distributed, completed, and collected for each QEP designated WI course. The results compiled from these student surveys will document the extent to which each course adhered to WI course standards. This feedback will allow for course monitoring and permit an opportunity for timely

intervention to discuss suggestions for any necessary corrective actions. Specifically, surveys administered to students in the QEP designated WI courses will seek student responses to questions about PoWR use, course syllabi and content, as well as other strategies used in particular WI courses (see Appendix C).

THE COLLEGIATE LEARNING ASSESSMENT (CLA): A DESCRIPTION, THE ADMINISTRATION, AND REPORTING TIMETABLE

As described previously in Section IV: Identification of the QEP Topic, a primary external source of feedback about current student writing issues is the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA), a national project sponsored by the Council on Aid to Education and funded by the Rand Foundation. As part of a Council of Independent Colleges consortium, Barton has participated since the fall of 2005 in the CLA. The specific attributes measured by the CLA are enumerated and discussed in Section IV on pages 11 through 17. The CLA results are submitted at approximately mid-summer each year to participating colleges and universities in an Institutional Report containing commentary and results for both freshmen and seniors tested at a specific institution for the year. Scores are reported for separate tasks within the CLA as well as an overall CLA total score. The total score is then compared to the expected score for the test groups; the expected score is determined for each institution by the CLA.

The CLA is administered annually at Barton in September to freshmen and in April to seniors. The number of freshmen taking the CLA in fall 2005, the first year of administering the test at Barton, provided a more than adequate sample size. Participation by freshmen in each of the two subsequent years has been stable. The testing schedule is organized to utilize a broad spectrum of testing times, and taking part in the testing is promoted to freshmen through the First-Year-Experience classes. Although the senior sample size in spring 2007 was increased from spring 2006, the difficulty of convincing seniors to participate in the CLA testing has called attention to the need to develop new measures that will maintain the trend of progressively adding to the senior sample. One such measure will take advantage of a QEP writing-intensive course in each senior student's major, the Summit, to vigorously promote increased senior involvement in the CLA testing. The first QEP cohort, the entering freshmen who place into ENG 101 in fall 2009, will be required to take a Summit course in 2012-2013.

Attention to this sampling process will help to refine the CLA testing medium as one means of timely and reliable assessment of the QEP.

Within the CLA a Performance Task and an Analytic Writing Task are given, and each is scored separately. Subscribers to the CLA are either longitudinal or cross-sectional schools; Barton is a cross-sectional school. Thus, Barton freshmen and seniors have taken either the Performance Task or the Analytic Writing Task in each of the three years of CLA participation. In year four of CLA testing at the College, 2008-2009, the test results will begin to provide longitudinal data as freshmen who took the CLA in fall 2005 take the test as seniors in spring 2009.

The Analytic Writing Task requires that each student write in response to two essay prompts. Analytic Writing Task scores reported for entering freshman in fall 2009 will be used as a CLA baseline for QEP assessment. The Analytic Writing Task scores for seniors in spring 2013 will demonstrate, by comparison to the freshman scores, the extent to which improvement in students' writing skills has occurred (Student Learning Outcome #1: Section V).

PATHWAYS of WRITING RUBRIC (PoWR)

From the earliest readings by the QEP Leadership Team (QEPLT) about writing skills assessment, it was apparent that successful rubric use was a well-documented and preferred means of writing evaluation. This initial observation was confirmed by the thorough work of the Research: Best Practices Subcommittee of the QEP LT reported in Section VI: Literature Review and Best Practices. The Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR) was developed first by the Faculty Training and Rubric Development Subcommittee of the QEPLT and ultimately approved by a coalition of the QEPLT and the General Education Committee of the Faculty Assembly following rigorous questioning and revision. The PoWR, to be used in all QEP designated WI courses, appears on page 28. The PoWR contains a series of five sections, each of which can be ranked on a digital scale of 1-4 (Student Learning Outcomes #2 and #3: Section V).

Basic in its concept and understandable for ease of application, the PoWR will gain widespread academic use beyond the QEP needs throughout the General Education

required courses. As noted in Section VIII: QEP Timeline, assessment and revision of the PoWR will occur each year in February, May, and September.

LiveText ™*:* DESCRIPTION, CAPABILITIES OF PORTFOLIO MANAGEMENT, AND HISTORY OF USE AT THE COLLEGE

College LiveText edu solutions™ (LiveText™) is a web-delivered subscription service which makes online portfolio creation and management uncomplicated. LiveText™ software has broad potential for a variety of college campus applications, but the QEP at Barton will utilize a narrow set of these tools to focus on student portfolio building and assessment. The School of Education at the College currently requires each of its one-hundred and twenty, full-time, traditional majors and another sixty weekend and part-time majors to purchase and use LiveText™ for submitting assignments, accumulating portfolios, and receiving instructor feedback on completed coursework. Current institutional experience with this software suite of tools gave impetus to a plan to utilize LiveText™ as a QEP assessment tool. Developed to meet the needs of education professionals, LiveText™ is especially well-suited for portfolio management and collecting student performance data. LiveText™ provides external archiving of student portfolios on state-of-the-art servers and technical support for both students and faculty; users do not need dedicated servers or specialized hardware to access the software. The company has a ten-year track record in providing innovative, easy-to-use components housed in a reliable and redundant environment (College LiveText edu Solutions™, 2008). To take advantage of this technology, QEP action items are the following:

- The institution will purchase individual subscriptions to LiveText™ for each freshman who places into and takes ENG 101 in fall 2009 (see QEP Budget, page 62). This scenario will be repeated each fall.
- Students will have step-by-step instructions allowing each to create his or her QEP portfolio of writing content directly into LiveText™ or to upload coursework in response to WI course assignments. The ability to search and select previous work and selectively share a portfolio with potential employers are additional appealing features of LiveText™ portfolio tools.

- Faculty may design templates, use a software-embedded PoWR, and grade student work within LiveText™ but will not be <u>required</u> to do so in the initial phases of the QEP. Data submission will be by machine readable data cards:
  - one card per student,
  - for one writing assignment per course,
  - for each QEP designated WI course,
  - except ENG 101, where data will be collected at two points within the course, one providing a baseline PoWR score.

The faculty are not being asked to grade within LiveText™ because grading on the computer is a skill that takes veteran teachers, accustomed to writing comments on paper, considerable time and effort to master; reaching a comfort level through experience adds significant time to the grading process. Giving faculty the option to simply complete the straightforward task of assigning standardized rubric scores to student writing and reporting such scores on a machine readable card for each student increases the probability of faculty buy-in to the essential aspects of the QEP.

Writing samples graded using the Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR) will be collected from each student in each QEP designated WI course. The seven writing samples (discussed previously in section VII: Actions to be Implemented and referred to as **Papers #1-#7**) and the resultant PoWR scores will comprise the individual student's QEP portfolio. An individual student's scores from these sample writings will be tracked to describe progress throughout the student's Barton career (<u>Student Learning Outcome #3, Section V</u>).

Course-to-course and cohort-to-cohort average scores can be observed within the hierarchy of the QEP. PoWR scores, which will provide the database for assessment of both individual student and cohort progress within LiveText™, will be confirmed by submitting a sample of student portfolio components to PoWR-trained external graders.

TECHNOLOGY BEYOND THE PORTFOLIO TOOL

To develop a database from which to explore a more sophisticated set of statistical conclusions, the institution will purchase an optical mark reader (OMR). This equipment will scan the data cards submitted from the WI course faculty. The purchase of an OMR along with supplies has been accounted for in the QEP Budget (see page 65). Three such readers that generate good statistical information and provide the capability to copy PoWR scores into Excel spreadsheet files are under consideration:

1. BubbleScan 101 OMR Scanner (hand fed, $1,895)
2. Pearson Assessments OpScan Insight 4 OMR Scanner with Remark Classic OMR Software ($5,430)
3. Scantron Optical Mark Reader (Model 2260-AF) with Scanbook Software ($6.419)

Data cards scanned by the OMR will also provide the basis for data entry into the LiveText™ package.

XII. CONCLUSION

Pathways to Achieve Writing Success will transform writing and learning at Barton College. As students become better writers, they will certainly become better thinkers, creating a vital learning environment at the College. A well-conceived plan for implementation of the QEP exists, and effective assessment tools have been identified. As this landmark plan unfolds over the next five years, clear indicators of future directions for quality enhancement will become evident.

Assuming the achievement of both the goal to implement the current QEP timeline and the goal to successfully improve student writing, the QEP planners have already looked beyond the existing timeline and envisioned some potential additional accomplishments. Future strategies that could build upon and maximize the benefits of the QEP presented in this document include the following:

- Design and implement a Writing Fellows Training Program to prepare participants to assist writing faculty and student writers.
- Maximize the use of LiveText™ to take advantage of available tools beyond portfolio building and archiving.
- Increase the numbers of writings within each student's portfolio, including a reflection paper based on a student's observations on his/her archived portfolio.
- Revise student learning outcomes over time to increase expectations.
- Devise ways to effectively assess the development of thinking in the specific disciplines of the major programs.
- Adapt the QEP design to the Weekend College format.

The QEP will be the beginning of promoting improved quality on various collegiate levels including academics, student affairs, faculty/student relationships, student/staff interactions, and administrative connections.

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Appendix A: **QEP Leadership Team, Subcommittee Structure, and Duties**

President of the College

Vice President for Academic Affairs

QEP LEADERSHIP TEAM

Ms. Patricia N. Burrus, Assistant Professor of Accounting, School of Business

Dr. Rebecca L Godwin, Professor, Department of English, and Director of the Ragan Writing Center

Dr. Alan D. Lane, Associate Professor of History and Chair, Department of History and Social Sciences

Ms. Sheila J. Milne, Registrar, Barton College

Dr. Kevin N. Pennington, Assistant Professor of Biology, Department of Science and Mathematics

Mr. Philip J. Valera, Assistant Professor of Audio Recording Technology, Department of Communication and Performing Arts

Subcommittee Structure and Duties

FACULTY TRAINING AND RUBRIC DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Elizabeth Dennis, Lecturer, Department of English

Dr. Dawn M. McCrumb, Associate Professor, Department of Physical Education and Sports Studies

Dr. Jane S. Webster, Associate Professor, Department of Religion and Philosophy

Dr. Alan Lane, Associate Professor and Chair, Department of History and Social Sciences (Serving until a replacement is named; Dr. Lane becomes QEP Director beginning August 2008.)

1. **Develop a faculty training program for writing faculty and other interested parties designed to provide tools to implement and sustain the QEP.**

2. **Define the timeline for faculty training, the ways such training will be tracked and assessed, and how the assessment results will be used to make positive changes to the training program.**

3. **Develop generic rubrics appropriate for college-wide and discipline-specific courses.**

4. **Devise a plan for integrating the use of rubrics into faculty training and writing intensive courses.**

5. **Plan for an avenue of feedback and revision of the rubrics**

QEP BUDGET

Ms. Susan D. Clayton, Instructor, School of Nursing

Ms. Rena Corbett, Assistant Professor, School of Business

Mrs. Rosanne W. Harrell, Assistant Vice President, Administration and Finance and Controller

Ms. Sheila J. Milne, Registrar

1. **Outline budget needs to support the QEP in 2007-2008.**

2. **Estimate budget needs to support the QEP through fiscal 2013.**

3. **Match cost estimates to the QEP timeline.**

RESEARCH: BEST PRACTICES

Dr. Jeff Broadwater, Associate Professor, Department of History

Mr. Rodney Lippard, Director, Hackney Library

Dr. S. Elaine Marshall, Professor, Department of English

Dr. William A. Wallace, Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry

Dr. Kevin N. Pennington, Assistant Professor, Department of Biology

1. **Document Best Practices for improving the written communication skills of college students.**

2. **Confirm that our QEP consists of a subset of those that have been successful.**

3. **If writing intensive courses in the core and in the major are identified as valid tools, provide guidelines for conducting the writing component of these.**

4. **Provide a short list of independent nominees, one of whom will be selected by SACS to serve as Lead QEP Evaluator on the SACS On-Site Review Committee in September 2008**

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Mr. Ronald E. Eggers, Associate Professor, School of Business

Dr. Michael S. Fukuchi, Professor, Department of English

Mr. Robert Hudson, Director of Institutional Research

Mr. Philip J. Valera, Assistant Professor, Department of Communication and Performing Arts

1. **Evaluate and perfect measurement items concerning the student portfolio and CLA results.**

2. **Devise a third measurement approach designed to provide assessment information related to the various objectives of the QEP**

3. **Define the timeline for each measurement approach relative to the overall QEP.**

<u>TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS</u>

Dr. Jackie S. Ennis, Associate Professor, School of Education

Ms. Linda Mercer, Programmer Analyst

Ms. Teresa C. Parker. Associate Professor, School of Business

Mrs. Patricia Burrus, Assistant Professor, School of Business

1. **Discover an electronic means of archiving student portfolios comprised of at least 7 documents per student over a 4-5 year period.**

2. **If current resources are ill-suited or not sufficient for QEP assessment needs, recommend a reasonable cost solution.**

3. **Describe the facility of chosen software to accomplish the necessary archiving and reviewing of the student portfolios.**

4. **If cost to students is involved in using the selected tool, recommend method(s) of administering this fee.**

<u>WRITING FELLOWS: SELECTION, TRAINING, AND UTILIZATION</u>

Mr. John Kofi Dogbe, Assistant Professor, Department of Chemistry

Dr. Joe F. Jones, Professor, Department of Religion and Philosophy

Ms. Meaghan Lynch, Student

Ms. Angela M. Walston, Director of Student Success

Dr. Rebecca L. Godwin, Professor, Department of English (Until this committee is reactivated, Dr. Godwin assumes the role of Faculty Training Leader.)

1. **Develop selection criteria.**

2. **Define a compensation plan.**

3. **Devise a systematic approach for utilization of the fellows inside and outside the classroom.**

4. **Establish a timeline for the above components, for tracking and assessing the effectiveness of the fellows program, and for integrating assessment findings to improve the Fellows program.**

QEP LEADERSHIP TEAM: QEP ASSESSMENT

Mrs. Patricia N. Burrus (Leader)

Dr. Rebecca L. Godwin

Dr. Alan D. Lane

Ms. Sheila J. Milne

Dr. Kevin N. Pennington

Mr. Philip J. Valera

1. **Track the progress of QEP development**

2. **Systematize the five-year timeline for QEP implementation.**

3. **Assimilate changes to the QEP based on new information, subcommittee findings and suggestions, and community input.**

4. **Cooperate with QEP Budget subcommittee to match the Plan timeline with resource needs.**

STUDENT MARKETING TASK FORCE

*Mr. Ken Dozier, Manager of Web-Services

*Princena Simpkins

Kristen Packer

Peter Damroth

Lauren Kollar

*Rose Cooper

*Will Cobb

*Attended organizational meeting

1. **Publicize the QEP to campus constituencies.**

2. **Coordinate marketing with the QEPLT.**

Appendix B: NATIONAL SURVEY OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT WRITING TOPICS FOR BARTON COLLEGE STUDENTS---NSSE Mean Comparisons (Indiana Center for Postsecondary Research, 2007)

Student Attributes	Barton College		Selected Peers		NSSE 2007	
	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior	Freshmen	Senior
* Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	2.82		2.72		2.64	
		2.64		2.58		2.47
* Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	3.08		3.14		3.03	
		3.42		3.43		3.29
* Number of assigned textbooks, books, or book-length packs of course readings	2.77		3.30		3.20	
		3.14		3.26		3.13
* Number of written papers or reports of 20 pages or more	1.10		1.27		1.24	
		1.62		1.68		1.62
* Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages	2.00		2.33		2.25	
		2.40		2.67		2.55
* Number of written papers or reports fewer than 5 pages	2.90		3.13		3.02	
		2.78		2.98		2.96
* Writing clearly and effectively	3.12		3.11		2.95	
		3.30		3.21		3.06

Appendix C:

Quality Enhancement Plan --- Student Survey (Tentative) --- 2009-2010

Name:_____   Student ID#:_____

Course Name and #:_____   Section Letter:_____

Please respond to the statements below using the following scale:

1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Not applicable 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree

_____ 1.   The instructor introduced the purpose and expectations of a writing-
              intensive course.

_____ 2.   The instructor provided feedback as to the quality of my writing.

_____ 3.   I was given the opportunity to revise my work.

_____ 4.   The writing tasks in this class helped my understanding of the course
              content.

_____ 5.   The instructor's use of the Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR) to
              evaluate my writing was helpful in improving my writing skills.

_____ 6.   The instructor provided information about writing styles expected for this
              discipline (instructor guides, handbook, etc.)

_____ 7.   I composed 15 or more pages of written work in this course including
              journals, papers, tests, etc.

_____ 8.   I was required to conduct document-based research for at least one of
              the writing assignments in this course.

CLA Scale Scores Freshmen/Seniors 2005-2006

□ denotes Freshmen
○ denotes Seniors
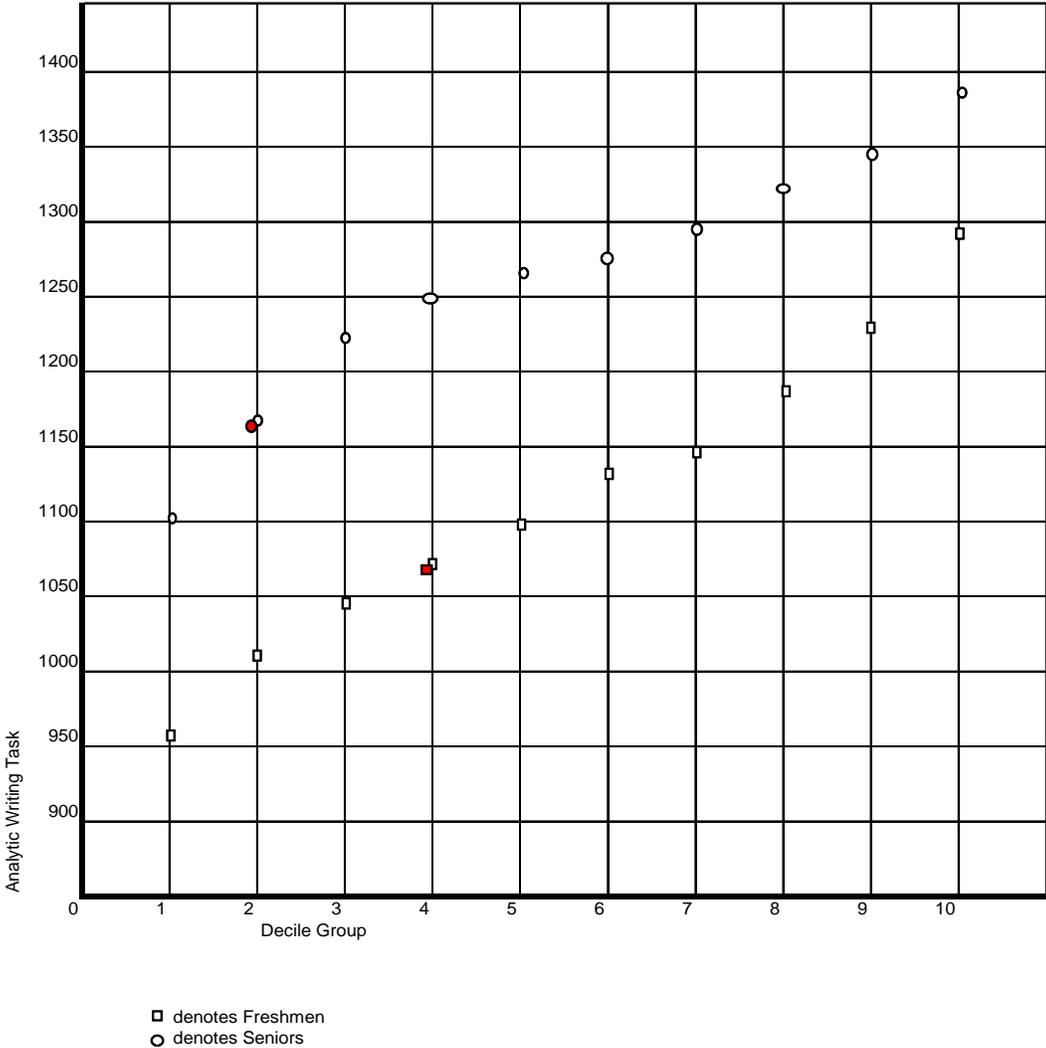
Appendix D: **2005-2006 ANALYTIC WRITING TASK SCORES FOR FRESHMEN AND SENIORS WITH IMPLIED VALUE ADDED AFTER FOUR YEARS---**

Decile group (X axis) vs. SAT scores (Y axis)

CLA Scale Scores Freshmen/Seniors 2006-2007

denotes Freshmen
denotes Seniors
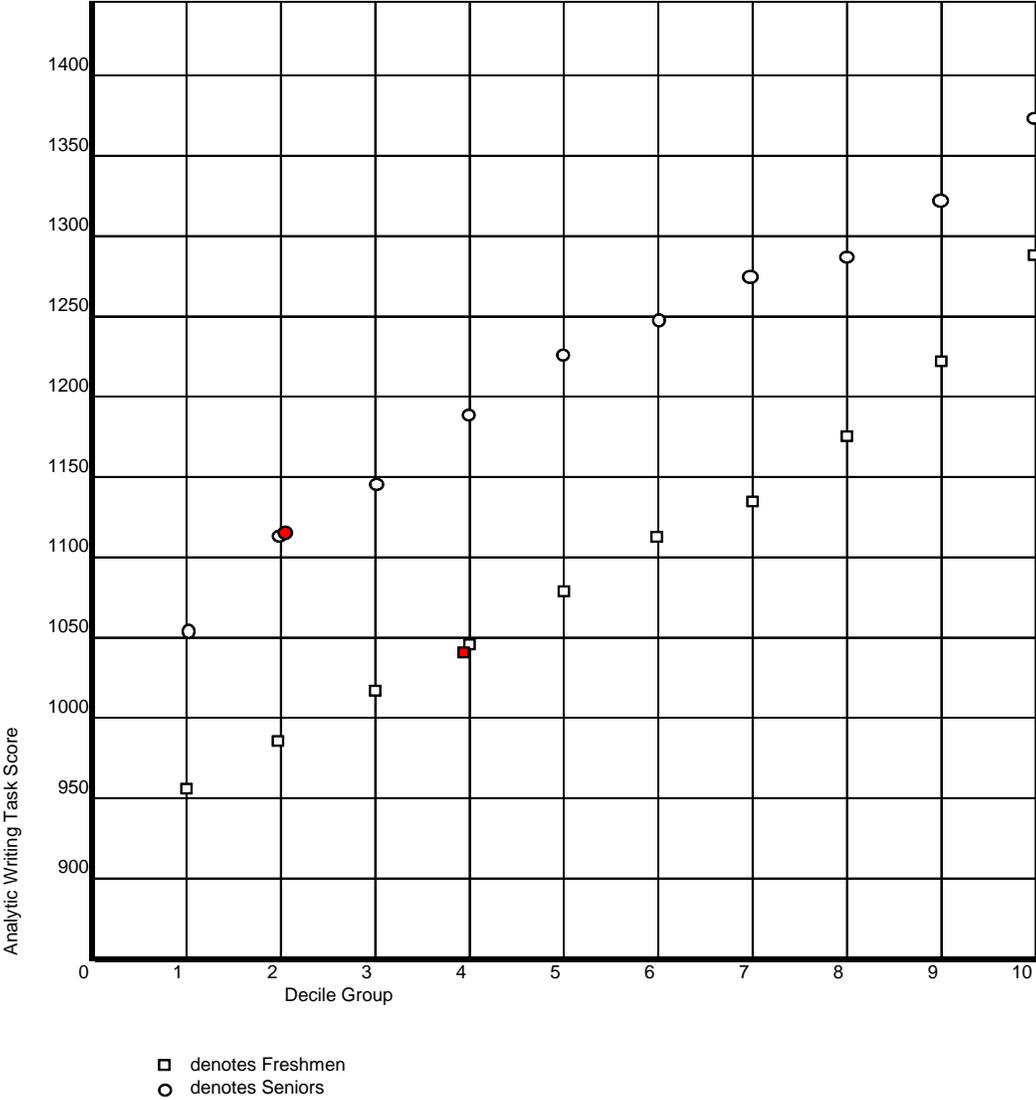
Appendix E: **2006-2007 ANALYTIC WRITING TASK SCORES FOR FRESHMEN AND SENIORS WITH IMPLIED VALUE ADDED AFTER FOUR YEARS--- Decile group (X AXIS) vs. SAT scores (Y AXIS)**

Appendix F: **RESULTS OF TABLE DISCUSSIONS 8/20/07 ON "WHAT TO DO ABOUT WRITING AND THINKING SKILLS OF SENIORS"**

1. Make better writing assignments that include
   a. making and breaking arguments
   b. student/peer and faculty feedback
   c. revision opportunities
   d. include emphasis on following directions
2. Practice, practice, practice
3. More explicit assignments
4. Teach students to read and follow directions carefully
5. Oral and written activities
6. Final assessment
7. Put it in every class
8. Raise standards
9. More focus on logic and communication skills
10. Critical thinking exercises, using course content
11. Have students complete exercises similar to the CLA ones
12. Teach students to question statements, to look at logic and use of evidence
13. Writing throughout the curriculum
14. Teaching students to outline in order to organize thoughts.
15. Have students give rough draft to instructor
16. Logic—use the writing vehicle to be able to demonstrate critical thinking skills
17. APA or MLA style—show need earlier
18. Critique peer review articles
19. Have students work problem exercise with their peers in a real time situation
20. Writing throughout the curriculum
21. Revive writing across the curriculum, assuming that all faculty will grade writing at the level of English 102
22. Campus-wide rubrics for all classes
23. Students should have opportunities in various classes to experience different types of critical thinking and how to express themselves and how to understand specific instructions.
24. These kids are still young. We should provide opportunities for them to think and make decisions, and we should give them feedback.
25. How many opportunities do students have to practice/learn how to write in this way?
26. Are students adequately motivated to do their best on CLA?
27. Intensive Writing in all disciplines, as well as reading and communication
28. Increase number of writing opportunities
29. Provide peer tutors in each discipline.
30. Expose students to more variety in writing assignments, with feedback opportunities and rewriting opportunities
31. Help make directions for writing assignments clearer

32. Writing assignments across all disciplines
33. Writing tutorials in all school and departments
34. Writing workshops for faculty to help them to better teach and evaluate students' writing assignments
35. Ask how writing is different for different professional fields, make it clear what is needed
36. Teaching grammar in freshman English composition to help with deficit that students bring from high school

Appendix G: QEP WRITING INTENSIVE COURSES IN THE MAJOR PROGRAMS

	GATEWAY	SUMMIT
SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES		
Department of Art		
Studio Art	ART 305 Junior Portfolio	ART 403 Senior Portfolio
Art Education	ART 305 Junior Portfolio	ART 403 Senior Portfolio
Department of Communication and Performing Arts		
Mass Communications	COM 301 Mass Communications II: Mass Media and Society	COM 451 Senior Interdisciplinary Seminar
Theatre	THE 314 Theatre History	COM 451 Senior Interdisciplinary Seminar
Department of English and Modern Languages		
English	ENG 201 Introduction to Literature	ENG 457 Senior Portfolio
Spanish	SPA 202 Intermediate II	SPA 457 Senior Portfolio
Department of History and Social Sciences		
History	HIS 307 Methods, Revisions and Lies In American History	HIS 430 Origins of the American Republic or HIS 440 Modern America
Political Science	POL 202 State and Local Government	POL 410 Western Political Theory or POL 301 Comparative Government of Western Nations
Social Studies with Teacher Licensure	HIS 307 Methods, Revisions and Lies In American History	SST 459 Instructional Design and Strategies in the Social Studies
Department of Physical Education and Sport Studies		
Athletic Training	SPS 201 Introduction to Sports Studies	SPS 410 Organization and Administration of Physical Education and Sport Programs
Fitness Management	SPS 201 Introduction to Sports Studies	SPS 410 Organization and Administration of Physical Education and Sport Programs

	GATEWAY	SUMMIT
Department of Physical Education and Sport Studies (cont.)	SPS 201 Introduction to Sports Studies	SPS 410 Organization and Administration of Physical Education and Sport Programs
Physical Education with Teacher Licensure	SPS 201 Introduction to Sports Studies	SPS 410 Organization and Administration of Physical Education and Sport Programs
Sport Management		
Department of Psychology		
Psychology	PSY 270 Statistics & Research Methods I	PSY 499 Senior Thesis II
Department of Religion and Philosophy		
Religion and Philosophy	REL 221 Old Testament	REL 450 Senior Seminar
Department of Science and Mathematics		
Biology	BIO 315 Cell Biology	SCI 482 Internship Reflection
Chemistry	CHE 312 Organic Chemistry	SCI 482 Internship Reflection
Math	To be determined	To be determined
SCHOOL OF BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES		
Criminal Justice and Criminology	CJC 230 The American Legal System	CJC 415 Criminal Justice Administration Or CJC 420 Crime and Delinquency
Gerontology	GRN 101 Aging, The Individual and Society	GRN 440 Family Care Giving & Dementias
Social Work	SWK 210 Social Policy I	SWK 428 Social Work Practice II
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS		
Accounting	MGT 301 Principles of Management	ACC 420 Auditing
Business Management	MGT 301 Principles of Management	BUS 490 Business Policy and Strategy
Computer Information Systems	MGT 301 Principles of Management	CIS 410 Systems Analysis and Design
Management of Human Resources	MGT 301 Principles of Management	BUS 490 Business Policy and Strategy
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION		
Birth-Kindergarten Education	EDU 223 Educational Psychology or EDU 225 Intro to Exceptional Children	EDU 451 Classroom Management
Elementary Education	EDU 223 Educational Psychology or EDU 225 Intro to Exceptional Children	EDU 451 Classroom Management
Middle School Education	EDU 223 Educational Psychology or EDU 225 Intro to Exceptional Children	EDU 451 Classroom Management

	GATEWAY	SUMMIT
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION (cont.)		
Education of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing	EDU 223 Educational Psychology or EDU 225 Intro to Exceptional Children	EDU 451 Classroom Management
Special Education: General Curriculum	EDU 223 Educational Psychology or EDU 225 Intro to Exceptional Children	EDU 451 Classroom Management
SCHOOL OF NURSING		
Nursing	NUR 202 Introduction to Professional Nursing or NUR 317 Health Maintenance Through the Life Span	NUR 417 Nursing Leadership

Appendix H: GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: EFFECTIVE 2009-2010

FYS 101   3_____   Learning Outcome: Oral Communication
ENG 101   3_____   Learning Outcome: Written Communication
ENG 102/103 3_____   Learning Outcome: Written Communication
CIS 110   3_____   Learning Outcome: Communication Tech
SCI 110   4_____   Learning Outcome: Critical Thinking
MTH 120/130 3_____   Learning Outcome: Critical Thinking

SPORTS SCIENCE (2)

Fitness   1_____
Life Sport   1_____

SOCIAL SCIENCE (3)

Any one:

ECO 101

POL 101   3_____   Learning Outcome: Critical Thinking

PSY 101

SOC 101

GLOBAL AWARENESS (12)

AWC 201   3_____   Learning Outcome: _____
WDC 202   3_____   Learning Outcome: _____
AWC elective 3_____   Learning Outcome: _____
WDC elective 3_____   Learning Outcome: _____

Learning outcomes: 2 must be writing; 1must be oral; 1 must be critical thinking

CAPSTONE (3)

GEN 301   3_____

EXPLORATION (12)

3_____

3_____

3_____

3_____

Total Hours: 51

Appendix I: **PARTIAL LIST OF LINKS TO WRITING-INTENSIVE COURSE CHARACTERISTICS AT OTHER COLLEGES**

Vanderbilt University: http://Sitemason.vanderbilt.edu/cwp/generalsyllabus

University of Hawaii at Manoa: http://www.mwp.hawaii.edu/wi-hallmarks.htm

Ferris State University: http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/academics/wac/

Dickinson College: http://alpha.dickinson.edu/departments/writing/description.html

Appendix J: NOTES OF THE WORKSHOP LEADER FOR THE APRIL 2008 INITIAL FACULTY RUBRIC TRAINING

QEPLT member Dr. Rebecca Godwin, Professor of English and Director of the Ragan Writing Center, led the workshops on April 1 and 15, 2008 from 5:00-7:00 pm, in Hines Hall 105.

The following faculty members volunteered to participate in two two-hour sessions to practice interpreting and applying the Pathways Writing Rubric (PoWR):

- Dr. Kevin Pennington and Mr. Gil Fair from the Department of Science and Mathematics,
- Dr. Katherine James and Dr. Elaine Marshall from the Department of English and Modern Languages,
- Dr. John Bublic and Dr. Alan Lane from the Department of History and Social Sciences,
- Mr. Phil Valera from the Department of Communication and Performing Arts,
- Dr. John Bethune, Ms. Yvonne Shanks, and Ms. Pat Burrus from the School of Business.

On April 1, 2008, all ten of the volunteer faculty members participated. After reviewing the QEP plans for writing-intensive courses and discussing the components of the Pathways to Writing Success Rubric (PoWR), they scored two ENG 102 Composition II papers requiring research, both written during spring 2008 for a professor not participating in the training workshop. Student writers' names were deleted. After scoring the papers, participating faculty shared their scores for Paper A: Television Violence on Children, and after discussing their reasoning for scores on the rubric components, they shared their scores for Paper B, a paper on the benefits of firearm control laws, again defending their reasoning for scores. The resulting range of rubric scores indicates the degree of inter-rater reliability achieved during this training session. Dr. Godwin, workshop leader, also scored the papers, making 11 scorers.

Results of PoWR scoring during the April 1 training session:

Paper A

	Number of Faculty Assigning the Following PoWR Scores (reference the PoWR on page 28 of the Main Narrative).				
PoWR Components	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**
Mechanics	6	4	1	0	11
Organization	4	7	0	0	11
Content	7	4	0	0	11
Research	3	8	0	0	11
Documentation	11	0	0	0	11

Paper B

	Number of Faculty Assigning the Following PoWR Scores (reference the PoWR on page 28 of the Main Narrative).				
PoWR Components	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**
Mechanics	6	5	0	0	11
Organization	0	11	0	0	11
Content	4	7	0	0	11
Research	2	9	0	0	11
Documentation	7	4	0	0	11

On April 15, 2008, the participating faculty, with the exception of Dr. Katherine James, again gathered for rubric training, this time scoring four papers in two sets of two. Faculty first rated a review of a campus lecture written for a Speech class (Paper 1) and a play review written for a Theater class (Paper 2). These papers did not require research and so were scored on the first three elements of the rubric—mechanics, organization, and content. Then faculty scored two ENG 102 Composition II

argumentative papers requiring research and documentation, Paper 3 The Blocked Children and Paper 4 Block on Education. Results of the scoring for both initial trials indicate satisfactory inter-rater reliability:

Paper 1

	Number of Faculty Assigning the Following PoWR Scores (reference the PoWR on page 28 of the Main Narrative).				
PoWR Components	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**
Mechanics	2	8	0	0	10
Organization	2	6	2	0	10
Content	1	7	2	0	10

Paper 2

	Number of Faculty Assigning the Following PoWR Scores (reference the PoWR on page 28 of the Main Narrative).				
PoWR Components	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**
Mechanics	0	1	7	2	10
Organization	1	7	2	0	10
Content	1	5	4	0	10

Paper 3

	Number of Faculty Assigning the Following PoWR Scores (reference the PoWR on page 28 of the Main Narrative).				
PoWR Components	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Total**
Mechanics	0	7	3	0	10
Organization	0	6	4	0	10
Content	1	7	2	0	10
Research	0	7	3	0	10
Documentation	3	6	1	0	10

Paper 4

PoWR Components	1	2	3	4	Total
Mechanics	0	1	8	1	10
Organization	0	3	6	1	10
Content	0	3	6	1	10
Research	0	2	8	0	10
Documentation	0	4	6	0	10

Summary of Participant Rubric Scores during April 1 and April 15 Workshops

Reported as a Percentage of Scores Assigned to Total Score Items Possible for each Paper Evaluated

Recall that the Pathways of Writing Rubric (PoWR) contains five sections, each of which may receive a score of 1, 2, 3, or 4.

- On papers A and B there were 11 scorers and five rubric sections were utilized.
- On papers 1and 2 there were 10 scorers and three rubric sections were utilized.
- On papers 3 and 4 there were 10 scorers and five rubric sections were utilized.
- Grade clustering is viewed as an indicator of scorer agreement.

	Possible scores	1	2	3	4
Paper A	11 scorers X 5 sections	56%	42%	2%	0%
Paper B	11 scorers X 5 sections	35	65	0	0
Paper 1	10 scorers X 3 sections	17	70	13	0
Paper 2	10 scorers X 3 sections	7	43	43	7
Paper 3	10 scorers X 5 sections	8	66	26	0
Paper 4	10 scorers X 5 sections	0	26	68	3