**Part V – Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) Impact Report**

**Title: Writing in the Majors:**

**Enhancing Student Writing Through Writing in the Academic Programs**

**I. Initial Goals and Intended Outcomes[[1]](#footnote-1)**

The original QEP established three goals to be achieved by the end of the plan:

**Goal One:** At least 35% of Guilford’s major academic programs (14) will contain at least one course that includes an intentional writing component based on guidelines approved by the faculty for the third tier of the writing sequence. These guidelines will measure student performance in the common learning outcomes which constitute effective writing.

**Objective One: Student** **Learning Outcomes**—By spring 2008, establish student learning outcomes for courses in the major that count for the third tier of the writing sequence, the “intentional writing component” of courses in the major. Action steps for this objective include approval and implementation of a common set of student learning outcomes for all four tiers of Guilford’s writing sequence.

**Objective Two: QEP Participation**—Secure participation in the QEP from at least 14 departments or programs, beginning with the pilot run (phase two, 2008-09). At least four additional programs will join the QEP during each subsequent year of the plan (phase three, 2009-2012).

**Objective Three:** **Education**—Conduct a series of workshops, forums and other educational opportunities, facilitated by internal experts and external consultants, for faculty to think and act creatively about writing in their programs, and learn how to more effectively engage students in the writing process.

**Objective Four:** **Course Implementation**—During each year of the plan, new and/or revised courses that include *Writing in the Majors*, and that meet the guidelines for the third tier of the writing sequence will be implemented into the curriculum.

**Goal Two:** Augment the college’s educational support services and technologies that facilitate the learning and teaching of writing, to meet program-specific writing needs. This part of the plan had three major foci:

**Objective One:** **Writing Studio**—Develop a Writing Studio located in the Learning Commons (formerly known as the Academic Skills Center, or ASC) that houses staff and student tutors trained in program-specific writing, and serves as the repository for all Web-based guidelines and resources related to writing in the majors.

**Objective Two: Information Technology**—Participating faculty will incorporate innovative technology into the teaching and learning process to improve student writing.

**Objective Three:** **Information Literacy**—The Information Literacy Librarian, along with other Hege Library staff, will provide students and faculty with additional bibliographic support and on-going discipline-specific and interdisciplinary instruction in information literacy.

**Goal Three:** Students who complete QEP courses will improve their ability to employ program-specific writing as a mode of critical thinking and communication, and will demonstrate better writing as compared to both internal control groups and students at similar institutions. The QEP established four objectives for student proficiency on the four learning outcomes:

**Objective One:** **Baseline Proficiency**—Upon entering the intentional writing course, half of the students will demonstrate at least proficient levels on rhetorical knowledge, critical analysis, process skills, and use of conventions.

**Objective Two:** **Value-Added**—Upon completion of the intentional writing course in their major, 70% of students completing a major that is participating in the QEP will exhibit at least proficiency in the four learning outcomes within the context of the program.

**Objective Three:** **Internal Comparisons**—Students in participating majors will exceed the performance of students in nonparticipating majors by at least 10% at graduation, beginning with the graduating class of 2010.

**Objective Four:** **External Comparisons**—Beginning with the graduating class of 2010, on average, students in participating majors will exceed the performance of students at similar institutions by 10% at graduation.

**II. Changes Made to the QEP**

Guilford implemented the QEP with few changes except for the way improvement in student writing would be calculated. To achieve Goal Three, Objective One we planned to use the median rubric score of students exiting tier-two (Historical Perspectives) to establish baseline proficiency for students entering QEP courses; and for Goal Three, Objective Two to measure the value-added by QEP courses, using the same rubric, aiming that 70% of students would achieve baseline proficiency. Upon further reflection, measuring student improvement this way seemed less informative than simply using mean scores. Therefore, we switched from using the percent of students reaching proficiency by the end of tier three to measuring using averages.

**III. Impact on Student Learning including Achievement of Goals and Outcomes**

**Goal One:** At least 35% of Guilford’s major academic programs (14) will contain at least one course that includes an intentional writing component based on guidelines approved by the faculty for the third tier of the writing sequence. These guidelines will measure student performance in the common learning outcomes which constitute effective writing.

**Objective One: Student Learning Outcomes**—The QEP Advisory Group proposed four common learning outcomes across the four tiers of the writing sequence and secured corporate faculty approval in April 2007. The outcomes went into effect in fall 2008.

**Objective Two: QEP Participation**—Faculty from four programs participated in the pilot phase (2008-09). Five more programs joined in 2009-10, six more in 2010-11 and 2011-12. At present, twenty-one (21) academic programs are participating in the QEP, or about 55% of the college’s academic programs — seven more than the original goal of 14 programs (35%). More importantly, since the QEP focused on large programs, 72% of the student body is enrolled in programs that offer QEP courses. Table 1 below lists the participating majors.

**Table 1: Academic Programs Added by Year of Plan**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2008-09** | **2009-2010** | **2010-11** | **2011-12** |
| Biology,  Education Studies  Psychology,  Theatre Studies | Art, Chemistry, Music,  Justice and Policy Studies,  Political Science | Business, History, Economics, English,  Religious Studies,  Sports Studies | French, Geology,  German, Mathematics, Physics, Spanish |

**Objective Three: Education**—Each summer, the QEP Advisory Group organized a three-day writing workshop for participating faculty, facilitated by Martha A. Townsend, Associate Professor, and former Director of the Campus Writing Program (from 1991-2006) at the University of Missouri. The workshops began with practical instruction on the different forms of writing for critical thinking and learning (e.g., formal and informal writing), the principles of assignment design, the design and uses of rubrics, and strategies for effectively responding to student writing. Faculty participants then collaborated with colleagues to develop course assignments and rubrics and to calibrate standards for assessing student writing. Participants also met with professional tutor liaisons from the Writing Center and received initial training on the use of *Moodle* (Learning Management System, LMS), *Digication* (e-Portfolio), and *Library Guides*. To date, fifty-one faculty members have participated in summer workshops. In addition, during the academic year the Faculty Development Committee, in consultation with the QEP Advisory Group, sponsored 26 faculty and student workshops and forums about writing and teaching.

**Objective Four: Course Implementation**—The following guidelines were established for the third tier of the writing sequence. All QEP-courses must carry HP as a prerequisite; entail multistage revision of writing assignments; employ program specific conventions, vocabulary, format, and documentation style; use appropriate information technology; and use the faculty-approved learning outcomes. The College now offers twenty-eight “QEP courses” in the twenty-one majors participating in the plan.

**Goal Two:** Augment the college’s educational support services and technologies that facilitate the learning and teaching of writing, to meet program-specific writing needs.

**Objective One: Writing Studio**—The Writing Studio, housed in the Learning Commons (LC), officially opened in January 2010. It contains 18 individual workspaces, including 9 computers, also available for tutoring and small group work. In addition to the Writing Studio, the LC has expanded its discipline-specific writing work to include additional resources on the LC web pages, including a Faculty Resources link with Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) and Writing in the Disciplines (WID) sites, resources and articles, and WAC/WID links on the Tutorial Services: Materials page.

1. **Tutor Liaisons**: Throughout the QEP timeline, professional tutors from the Learning Commons have participated each May in the faculty training workshops. Following the May workshops, the professional tutors have followed up with each QEP faculty member to discuss their implementation of QEP assignments and to share these assignments with the tutoring staff each fall semester. These assignments and supporting materials, including style manuals, are housed in the LC for all tutors’ reference as they work with students.
2. **Writing Fellows**: The LC Director worked with the Writing Program Director to design a one-credit class to train peer tutors in writing pedagogy, GST 250: Writing Peer Tutoring by the LC Director in spring 2011, resulting in 5 peer tutors assisting across the disciplines and four additional tutors trained in fall 2011.

**Objective Two: Information Technology**—As part of Information Technology reorganization, the Instructional Technologist position, formerly housed in Information Technology and Services, moved to a Library position, Instructional Technology (IT) Librarian, in spring 2011.  This change more closely aligns instructional technology with teaching and learning and creates better relationships with faculty. The IT Librarian directs the campus wide implementation of the ePortfolio initiative, and *Moodle*, the Learning Management System (LMS).

1. **ePortfolio (*Digication*):** Guilford adopted *Digication* as its digital portfolio (ePortfolio) provider in May 2010. The following semester, ePortfolios were piloted in two academic programs (Business and Theatre Studies). In fall 2011, digital portfolios were introduced to all traditional-age first-year students in the First-Year Experience (FYE 101) class. The program has since expanded to include classroom instruction, individualized training sessions, and faculty resources housed in the Digital Portfolio Design Lab in the lower level of Hege Library. As a link to *Guilford Connects* (the experiential learning component of a Guilford education), ePortfolios have been introduced in the Career Development Center, Study Abroad programs, and the Bonner Center for Community Service and Learning, among others, as places for student reflection on their extra- and co-curricular experiences. There are currently 950 active student portfolios, and 41 active faculty ePortfolios in the system. Using the ePortfolio as an assessment tool is the next phase of implementation.
2. **Learning Management System (*Moodle*):** The IT Librarian has also directed outreach programs to faculty and students for the campus LMS (*Moodle*). Most Guilford courses currently use *Moodle* to deliver instructional materials, submit assignments, grading, and assessment. An average of 1,010 *Moodle* course sites have been used each semester for the past three years. The ePortfolio system will eventually replace *Moodle* to archive student work. Meanwhile, *Moodle* is the LMS used to archive student samples for use in assessment.

**Objective Three: Information Literacy**—Guilford College hired a full-time Information Literacy Librarian (ILL) in September 2009 to manage the information literacy program of Hege Library. The ILL provides programming for faculty development and classroom instruction for students, and develops online instructional materials, including *Library Guides*, in research and the use of library resources.

1. **Information Literacy Sessions:** Information Literacy Sessions are now offered to any course, across all disciplines, as requested by faculty. Sessions focus on the basic principles of information literacy as tied to specific course assignments or information needs. The Information Literacy Librarian has taught approximately 75 face-to-face instruction sessions per year of the plan. In a typical year, 1300-1400 students have received instruction in information literacy related to specific course assignments. In addition, the ILL received a Kenan Grant for the Improvement of Teaching to run three information literacy workshops for faculty: one for FYE faculty, one for English 102 and Historical Perspectives faculty, and a third for QEP faculty.
2. **Library Guides:** *Library Guides* were implemented at Hege Library in December 2009 to create general subject guides and customized course guides to support research-writing assignments across the curriculum. These *Library Guides* offer step-by-step support in topic formation, identifying appropriate research sources, and creating proper attribution for sources. As of November 2011, 140 *Library Guides* had been created, including 72 course-specific guides, 35 general subject guides, and 33 library internal-use guides (templates, committee-use, indexes, etc.).

**Goal Three:** Students who complete QEP courses will improve their ability to employ program-specific writing as a mode of critical thinking and communication, and will demonstrate better writing as compared to both internal control groups and students at similar institutions.

**Objective One: Baseline Proficiency**—The Curriculum Committee approved a proposal requiring Historical Perspectives (HP) as a prerequisite for all third-tier writing courses (courses containing “summative assignments”) in October 2007. The Assessment Committee, along with the Director of Institutional Research, coordinated an assessment of the General Education Writing Program during the 2010-2011 academic year. A common “Writing Outcomes Assessment Rubric” was developed and approved by the faculty for this purpose. In spring 2011, the Assessment Committee and faculty teaching English 102, Historical Perspectives, and IDS 400-level classes conducted the assessment of tiers one, two, and four of the writing sequence. Scores from tiers one and two were used to establish average proficiency for students entering “QEP courses.” Table 2 provides summary data for all four tiers of the writing sequence with respect to the learning outcomes.

**Objective Two: Value-Added**—To establishthe average level of proficiency of students at the completion of QEP courses, QEP faculty assessed samples of student “summative writing” using the common rubric during the final two years of the plan. Table 2 summarizes the data, and provides a comparison of QEP-student writing to student writing at the other tiers.

**Table 2: Writing Program/QEP Quantitative Assessment of Learning Outcomes**

(Scale: 4 = Exemplary, 3 = Satisfactory, 2 = Emerging, 1 = Not Demonstrated)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Learning Outcomes** | **English 102** | **Historical Perspectives** | **QEP Courses** | **IDS 400** |
|
|
| A. Rhetorical Knowledge | 2.09 | 2.56 | 3.10 | 3.48 |
| B. Crit. Think, Read & Write | 2.07 | 2.61 | 3.12 | 3.11 |
| C. Conventions | 2.02 | 2.45 | 2.93 | 3.28 |
| D. Process | 2.00 | 2.36 | 2.98 | 3.14 |
|  | n = 192 | n = 96 | n = 346 | n = 144 |

The data in Table 2 indicate that students demonstrate each of the learning outcomes more effectively as they progress from the beginning to the end of the writing program, with the greatest increase in ratings, on average, between HP and the completion of QEP courses. The improvement in the “process” outcome upon completion of the QEP course is most dramatic, and is consistent with the QEP’s emphasis on peer editing of multiple drafts.

**Objective Three: Internal Comparisons**—The QEP Advisory Group used a comparative analysis of student writing between participating (treatment) and non-participating (control) programs to establish this objective—the extent to which improvements in student writing at Guilford College can be attributed to participation in the QEP. Two methods were used for this intra-institutional comparison:

**Method 1:** QEP-faculty used the common rubric to assess end-of-program samples from their student majors in the year prior to beginning their participation in the QEP, thereby providing an initial benchmark for end-of-program proficiency in the treatment group. QEP-faculty also used the common rubric to assess similar end-of-program writing samples at the end of their first year of participation. In addition, faculty members in non-participating (control) programs were recruited to assess end-of-program samples in their programs using the common rubric. Assignments were chosen to ensure comparability, and faculty members were provided instruction on the use of the rubric. Rubric scores of students in QEP-majors prior to participation were then compared to rubric scores for QEP-majors after the program’s first year of participation. Similarly, rubric scores of students in QEP-majors (participating programs) were compared to rubric scores of students in the control group (non-participating programs). The results of these comparisons are summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3: Internal Comparisons—Participating and Non-Participating Programs**

**(2009-2012)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **1st Year of QEP Participation** | | **Non-Participating**  **Programs** | | **QEP Programs Prior to Participation** | |
| **Learning Outcomes** | |
| **10 - 11** | **11 - 12** | **10 - 11** | **11 - 12** | **09 - 10** | **10 - 11** |
| A) Rhetorical Knowledge | | 3.05 | 3.26 | 2.86 | 3.00 | 2.65 | 2.77 |
|
| B) Crit. Think, Read & Write | | 3.06 | 3.05 | 2.88 | 2.65 | 2.48 | 2.41 |
|
| C) Knowledge of Conventions | | 2.86 | 2.98 | 2.62 | 2.74 | 2.30 | 2.35 |
|
| D) Process | | 2.94 | 3.06 | 2.81 | 2.51 | 2.45 | 2.50 |
|
|  |  | n = 170 | n = 176 | n = 90 | n = 65 | n = 84 | n = 80 |

The pre-post comparisons (“QEP Programs Prior to Participation” compared to “1st Year of QEP Participation”) show gains for students in QEP majors across all four learning outcomes. Similarly, the rubric scores of participating faculty indicate an improvement in student writing compared to the control group (non-participating faculty) on all four learning outcomes (“Non-Participating Programs” compared to “1st Year of QEP Participation”).

**Method 2:** The Director of Institutional Research administered the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) Writing Essay Test to entering first year students and to seniors each of the past three years. The QEP Director then compared the CAAP Writing Essay Test scores of students in the control group (seniors who have not been exposed to QEP-courses) to students in the treatment group (seniors who have completed QEP-courses). The CAAP Writing Essay Test is designed to measure a student’s ability to formulate and support an argument to a given audience, and to organize and express that argument in clear, effective language. CAAP scores (which are reported holistically) do not make it possible for institutions to disaggregate the various components of effective writing.

Nevertheless, it is possible to draw general conclusions about student proficiency on the learning outcomes from the overall results. First, Guilford students in QEP majors consistently scored in the top quartile nationally more frequently than students in non-QEP majors. Conversely, students in QEP majors scored in the bottom quartile less frequently than students in non-QEP majors. On average, students in QEP majors had both a higher score and a higher national percentile on the instrument than did students in non-QEP majors. The results of these comparisons are summarized below.

**Table 4: CAAP Writing Essay Results for Seniors (Fall 2009 – Fall 2011)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2009** | | **2010** | | **2011** | |
|  | **QEP Majors** | **Non-QEP Majors** | **QEP Majors** | **Non-QEP Majors** | **QEP Majors** | **Non-QEP Majors** |
| **Quartile** |
| Ranked in highest 25% nationally | 40.0% | 30.4% | 40.4% | 20.5% | 23.3% | 16.7% |
|
| Ranked in middle 50% nationally | 50.0% | 48.6% | 44.7% | 53.8% | 58.1% | 61.1% |
|
| Ranked in lowest 25% nationally | 10.0% | 20.0% | 14.9% | 25.6% | 18.6% | 25.0% |
|
| Cohort average score | 3.5 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.1 |
| Cohort percentile | 69.6 | 58.8 | 69.4 | 53.8 | 62.6 | 52.2 |
|  | n = 20 | n = 70 | n = 47 | n = 39 | n = 43 | n = 36 |

**Objective Four: External Comparisons**—The College used national assessment tests to compare student writing at Guilford to student writing at other institutions:

**CAAP Writing Essay Test**: Guilford used the Writing Essay Test to compare graduating seniors’ scores in QEP majors to national norms over the past three years. Table 5 summarizes the percentile scores of Guilford seniors for the Writing Essay Test.

**Table 5: CAAP Writing Essay Percentile for** **Seniors (Fall 2009 – Fall 2011)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** |
| QEP-Senior | 70 | 69 | 63 |

Table 5 shows that for each of the past three years, Guilford seniors in QEP majors scored well above the national mean for seniors taking the CAAP Writing Essay Test.

**CAAP Writing Skills Test**: The Director of Institutional Research administered the CAAP Subject Area Writing Skills Test to seniors during the 2008, 2010 and 2011 academic years. The table below summarizes the percentile scores of Guilford seniors overall for the Writing Skills Test, as well as the percentile scores for the writing sub-scores in Usage/Mechanics and Rhetorical Knowledge.

**Table 6: CAAP Writing Skills Percentiles for QEP-Majors**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Subject Area** | **2008** | **2010** | **2011** |
| Writing Skills PPCTL | 36 | 53 | 55 |
| Usage/Mechanics | 44 | 53 | 62 |
| Rhetorical | 37 | 57 | 53 |

The data in Table 6 indicate that Guilford students are demonstrating overall improvement in writing skills, and compare favorably nationally with respect to the two sub-scores.

1. **National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)**: A major reason that writing was chosen as the focus of Guilford’s QEP were findings in 2002 and 2006 that Guilford students exhibited average (or only slightly above average) engagement with writing compared to students at peer institutions. The college administered the NSSE in 2008 and again in 2010. Table 7 summarizes the results from three years of NSSE participation.

**Table 7: Comparison of NSSE Writing Outcomes with Peer Institutions and National Results**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NSSE Mean Comparisons (2006, 2008, 2010)** | | | | |
| **2006** | **Class** | **Guilford College** | **Guilford**  **Peers** | **NSSE** |
| Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in. | SR | 2.71 | 2.40 | 2.49 |
| Number of written papers or reports of **20 pages or more.** | SR | 1.80 | 1.74 | 1.64 |
| Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages. | SR | 2.89 | 2.85 | 2.59 |
| Writing clearly and effectively. | SR | 3.48 | 3.27 | 3.07 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **2008** | **Class** | **Guilford College** | **Guilford**  **Peers** | **NSSE** |
| Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in. | SR | 2.72 | 2.41 | 2.47 |
| Number of written papers or reports of **20 pages or more.** | SR | 1.80 | 1.75 | 1.64 |
| Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages. | SR | 3.00 | 2.82 | 2.58 |
| Writing clearly and effectively. | SR | 3.54 | 3.31 | 3.11 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **2010** | **Class** | **Guilford College** | **Guilford**  **Peers** | **NSSE** |
| Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in. | SR | 2.82 | 2.48 | 2.51 |
| Number of written papers or reports of **20 pages or more.** | SR | 1.76 | 1.69 | 1.65 |
| Number of written papers or reports between 5 and 19 pages. | SR | 3.07 | 2.80 | 2.55 |
| Writing clearly and effectively. | SR | 3.54 | 3.26 | 3.13 |

The 2008 and 2010 NSSE results in Table 7 indicate that Guilford students now consistently prepare more drafts of their assignments, and report writing more research papers of greater than 20 pages (and between 5 and 19 pages) than the mean for students at both Guilford peer institutions and institutions nationally that administered the NSSE. Seniors also state that their Guilford education has contributed to their ability to write clearly and effectively at rates well above comparison groups.

1. **Consortium for the Study of Writing in College (CSWC)**: Guilford College joined the Consortium for the Study of Writing in College (CSWC) in January 2010. The CSWC is a partnership between the Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA), the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), and participating institutions to investigate how student writing experiences impact their engagement and learning. As part of the consortium, Guilford students are asked a supplemental set of 27 questions designed to provide colleges with a snapshot of their undergraduates’ writing activities and of how faculty are assigning writing. The results are summarized in Table 8 below.

**Table 8: Comparison of NSSE Writing Outcomes with the Consortium for the Study of Writing in College**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NSSE 2010 Mean Comparisons**  **Consortium for the Study of Writing in College** | | | | | | | |
| **2010** |  |  |  |  | **Class** | **Guilford College** | **CSWC** |
| Received feedback from your instructor about a draft before turning in your final assignment. | | | | | SR | 3.35 | 2.91 |
|
|
| Write in the style and format of a specific field (engineering, history, psychology, etc.) | | | | | SR | 3.48 | 3.26 |
|
|
| Provided clear instructions describing what he or she wanted you to do. | | | | | SR | 4.03 | 3.92 |
|
|
| Explained in advance the criteria he or she would use to grade your assignment. | | | | | SR | 4.18 | 3.90 |
|
|
| Asked you to do short pieces of writing that he or she did not grade. | | | | | SR | 2.41 | 2.20 |
|
|
| Asked you to give feedback to a classmate about a draft or outline the classmate had written. | | | | | SR | 2.70 | 2.30 |
|
|

The CSWC results in Table 8 corroborate the finding that Guilford seniors are asked to write in the style and format of their chosen field more than students elsewhere in the consortium. In addition, they report receiving greater feedback from faculty and peers. The data also support the conclusion that faculty are more likely to provide clear instructions on writing assignments, to explain the criteria for evaluation in advance, and to use shorter, “informal” writing assignments to teach their subjects.

**IV. Reflection on the QEP Experience**

Guilford College learned several things from its QEP experience. First, like any educational undertaking, teaching students to write effectively is a team effort requiring the collaboration of faculty and staff across departments and disciplines. One of the many benefits of *Writing in the Majors* was the opportunity for participating faculty to collaborate with educational support staff, and each other, in developing and implementing the various initiatives in the Plan. As a result, faculty learned to think more deliberately about the teaching and learning process in their disciplines—for example, how to craft assignments toward specific learning outcomes, to scaffold assignments, and provide feedback on student drafts to enhance learning. Moreover, faculty came to realize that the responsibility for teaching writing extends beyond what is done in the students’ first year courses (ENG 102/HP), or in courses taught in the English Department. Indeed, most participating programs now teach writing throughout their curricula, from lower- to upper-level courses, rather than relegate the teaching of writing to one or two courses in their majors.

Second, we learned that our students have a strong desire to produce and present original research in their major fields of study. To foster that desire, the College held the first Guilford Undergraduate Symposium (GUS) in 2008. GUS provides Guilford students an opportunity to showcase their original work, such as senior projects and theses. The first GUS involved 60 students. Since then, participation has grown steadily, with more than 140 students participating at the 5th annual GUS in 2012.  Many more of Guilford’s academic programs have adopted a senior thesis or project or a capstone course as part of their graduation requirements.

Third, the QEP experience helped to instill further a culture of assessment and self-reflection on campus. For example, the Digital Portfolio initiative now provides students an opportunity to reflect on their experiences, and to build a portfolio to exhibit their accomplishments. For their part, faculty understand more fully the need to think deliberately about student learning outcomes in crafting their assignments and courses, and the importance of using well-designed rubrics as an on-going part of the teaching and learning process.

Finally, the college learned that building on our successes requires a more-appropriate administrative structure, and on-going support for the writing program. The college recently appointed a new Writing Director to oversee all four tiers of Guilford’s writing program from beginning (ENG 101/102) to end (IDS 400) and all of the parts in between (Historical Perspectives, *Writing in the Majors*). The current QEP budget will be shifted to the writing program, and resources and learning spaces have been allocated to encourage faculty and professional tutors to continue to work together and with students.

1. *Enhancing Student Writing Through Writing in the Academic Programs*, submitted to COC/SACS in 2006. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)