

*Talladega College*  
*Quality Enhancement Plan*



*Pathway to Excellence:*  
*Strengthening Writing Skills*  
*2008-2013*

*Dr. Billy C. Hawkins*  
*President*

PATHWAY TO EXCELLENCE: STRENGTHENING WRITING SKILLS

TALLADEGA COLLEGE

ON-SITE REVIEW

OCTOBER 7-9, 2008

DR. BILLY C. HAWKINS, PRESIDENT

MRS. JULIETTE SMITH, ACCREDITATION LIAISON

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## **I. Executive Summary**

Talladega College identified writing in the general education curriculum as the key issue for its Quality Enhancement Plan. The Pathway to Excellence: Strengthening Writing Skills Program at Talladega College is designed to impact the writing skills of students during the freshman and sophomore years. The aim of the program is to integrate writing into specific general education courses other than those traditionally related to writing such as Communications (COM 101, COM 102, COM 201, and Com 202). In addition to these courses, intensive writing activities will be integrated into General Psychology (PSY 100), Introduction to General Sociology (SOC 100), Natural Science (NS 101 Biological Science and NS 102 Physical Science), Math 101 and Math102.

The writing program is designed to ensure that students enrolled at Talladega College will learn to write appropriately and effectively. Students will receive instruction in foundation courses---COM 101 and COM 102, that will reinforce the value of writing and help them learn to write clearly and with confidence.

Talladega College is committed to ensuring that students enrolled in the 2009 freshman cohort will demonstrate significant writing improvement over the first two years of their matriculation. This aim is aligned with the College's mission statement, Talladega College . . . "provides academic programs and experiences for students, that among other outcomes, produce graduates who: think analytically and strategically, speak effectively and read critically, write with precision and clarity, exhibit competency in their academic discipline...."

Consequently, the College's QEP has been developed and will be implemented with the institution's capability in mind. Personnel, resources and realistic timelines will be the focus of implementation. The responsibility for implementation will be a joint endeavor among the College's administration, key faculty and staff. Already aligned with

the mission statement, the QEP will be implemented into Talladega's strategic planning process including institutional effectiveness, assessment and use of results to ensure ownership, implementation and sustainability.

Development of the QEP involved a variety of constituents and included several topics that included a writing component. The process for developing the Pathway to Excellence: Strengthening Writing Skills Program began with the establishment of a Leadership Team and the formation of a QEP Committee in the spring of 2007. Representation on the QEP Committee included three deans, five faculty, three administrative staff and three students.

After considering two previous topics, data from a writing assessment that is administered to all Talladega College freshmen before they are placed in a communications class, and a three-day QEP work retreat indicated that students need more concentrated assistance in developing skills in writing. With this knowledge, the QEP Team recommended writing as the focus to improve student learning outcomes and to support the mission of the College.

The Pathway to Excellence: Strengthening Writing Skills Program will require students taking general education courses to participate in increased writing activities. During the freshman and sophomore courses, students will receive instruction and practice in writing in content courses that traditionally may not have included a significant amount of writing activities.

Selected faculty will work across disciplines to develop and implement assignments that reinforce the writing skills introduced in freshman English courses. To facilitate this initiative, faculty members teaching general education courses will participate in professional development activities designed to help them reinforce and/or develop teaching techniques that will strengthen writing throughout the general education curriculum. A complimentary component of the Pathway to Excellence: Strengthening

Writing Skills Program will be the establishment of a Skills Enhancement Center in Swayne Hall. The Skills Enhancement Center will provide a comprehensive program of assessment, advising and support services designed to help students develop effective skills in writing, speaking, listening, and test taking. The Center will also provide students with assistance in career planning/assessment, self-assessment, personality assessment, interviewing techniques, work study, and job placement. The Center will house a computer laboratory, library, tutorial, and office space. There will also be areas for small group meetings and one-on-one student advisement.

## **II. Process Used to Develop the QEP**

The process for developing the Quality Enhancement Plan began with the establishment of a leadership team and the formation of a QEP Committee in the spring of 2007. The major concern in forming the QEP Committee was ensuring broad-based involvement of the campus community in the selection of an appropriate topic. The following faculty, administrators and students were selected by the President to serve on the QEP Committee:

Mrs. Delois B. Cook, Director, Institutional Effectiveness and Research/ QEP  
Coordinator

Dr. Edward Hall, Dean, Division of Social Sciences and Education/Co-  
Coordinator/QEP

Dr. Charlie Stinson, Dean, Division of Natural Sciences and Mathematics

Dr. Trelle Jeffers, Dean, Division of Humanities and Fine Arts

Mr. Hayes Grooms, Assistant Professor, Division of Business and Administration

Mrs. Johnnie Lindsey, Associate Professor, Communications

Mr. Syed Raza, Associate Professor, Computer Science

Mr. Donald Baylor, Director, Student Support Services

Mrs. Stephanie Dates, Assistant Professor, Social Work

Dr. Paul Prueitt, Chair, Mathematics Department

Mrs. Patricia Higgins, Administrative Assistant, Division of Business and  
Administration

Mr. Desmond Parker, Sophomore, Chemistry Major

Mr. Reginald Brown, Junior, History Major

Ms. Tequila Brinson, Senior, English Major

### **Leadership Team Spring 2007**

Dr. Oscar L Prater, President

Dr. Arthur L. Bacon, Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs, Accreditation Liaison

Mrs. Juliette Smith, Librarian/ Director, Reaffirmation Process

Mrs. Delois B. Cook, Director, Institutional Effectiveness and Research/QEP Coordinator

Mrs. Phyliss Spragin, Vice President, Administration and Finance

With the arrival of a new administration in January 2008, the Administrative Leadership Team included the following:

Dr. Billy C. Hawkins, President

Dr. Christopher Jeffries, Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs

Mrs. Juliette Smith, Librarian/ Director, Reaffirmation Process/ Accreditation Liaison

Mrs. Delois B. Cook, Director, Institutional Effectiveness and Research/QEP Coordinator

On May 4, 2008, Tequila Brinson graduated. Brittany Waters, junior, Education major, replaced her in fall 2008. Effective August 12, 2008, Dr. Ricky Warner, Dean of Business and Administration and Dr. Silas Edet, Acting Chair of the Mathematics Department were hired. Both were immediately added to the QEP committee. Dr. Edet replaces Dr. Prueitt who left the College in spring 2008.

On February 15, 2007, a campus-wide reaffirmation kick-off was held at the College's first second semester convocation. At the March 13, 2007 faculty meeting (Appendix A, Minutes of March meeting), a proposal was introduced. to develop a QEP that focused on preparing students for graduate and professional school entrance exams and developing students' basic communications and mathematics skills during the freshman and sophomore years.

In the last two faculty meetings of spring semester 2000(Appendix B, Minutes of April and May meetings), which also marked the end the 2000-07 academic year, the



faculty continued to discuss student performance on graduate exams and the poor reading and communication skills of freshmen. As discussions continued, enthusiasm for the focus of the proposal relative to graduate school preparation waned over the summer months.

In a survey administered March 28, 2008, by the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs, 87% of the faculty indicated that the greatest academic challenge facing Talladega College students are communication skills (writing, speaking, and listening). Forty-eight percent of the faculty also identified critical thinking as a major concern (Appendix C). In a survey of students administered April 9, 2008 by Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER), they identified communications skills and critical thinking skills among their greatest academic challenges (Appendix D). A survey of alumni administered during commencement weekend, May 2-4, 2008 indicated that 46% believed that more concentration should be given to communications skills, reading and writing (Appendix E).

The Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research QEP Coordinator met during the months of February, March and April 2008 with all of the divisions to discuss the student learning outcomes submitted by each major in their division. On most of the learning outcomes matrixes submitted, faculty listed good communication skills as one of their objectives. Faculty talked about students not performing well on written assignments. Students had poor grammar skills, lack of structure and coherence and problems with subject/verb agreement. Some noted that some of these students had received above average grades in their Communications course. Faculty agreed that students don't apply the basic skills they learned in their Communications course in all course work. Stressing the importance of good communications skills (writing, reading, speaking, and listening) has to be a joint effort of all faculty.<sup>3</sup>(Appendix F).

Considering all of the above, the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs, division deans, faculty and students agreed that the focus of the QEP should change. A three day retreat attended by faculty, staff, and students was held on May 7-9, 2008 to develop Talladega College's QEP.

### III. Identification of the Topic

The topic, Pathway to Excellence: Strengthening Writing Skills is the result of data evaluated from surveys administered to students, faculty, and alumni and from first year communications courses. These data revealed that 19-38% of students in previous freshmen classes did not possess effective writing skills (Table 1). Also, the assessment of the student learning outcomes for all majors and the general education courses revealed that faculty believed that writing and critical thinking were areas that students needed the most assistance (Appendix G).

**Table 1**  
**Entering Freshman Placement Test**  
**Essay Writing Component Completion Scores**

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>#'s Scoring 4</b>	<b>#'s Scoring 3</b>	<b>#'s Scoring 2</b>	<b>#'s Scoring 1</b>	<b>#'s Tested</b>
<b>2005-2006</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>19 (19%)</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>2006-2007</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>51 (38%)</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>2007-2008</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>28 (23%)</b>	<b>123</b>

Explanation of table

Score of 4----Student has successfully completed an essay with a well-developed thesis statement; support material for the thesis is adequate; no grammatical errors; no errors in mechanics; structured five paragraph essay, and coherent

Score of 3----Student has well-developed thesis statement, adequate support material; few errors in grammar and mechanics; structured five paragraph essay, and coherent

Score of 2---- Student has a thesis statement, some support material for thesis; five paragraph essay, more errors in grammar and usage, spelling errors, structural problems

Score of 1---- Student does not have a thesis statement; there is no structure; many grammatical errors; many spelling errors; absolutely no coherence.

Students that score one (1) on the essay writing component of the placement test are placed in Communications 100, Basic Skills. This is a developmental writing and reading course that gives students instruction in grammar, vocabulary building, reading

comprehension, and paragraph and essay writing. Students who score two (2) and three (3), are placed in Communications 101. The Communications 101 course is a first year composition course designed to assist students in the development of effective essay writing skills. The reading of various forms of written material and literature is required. A score of four (4) places students in the Communications 101H, Honors Communications. In the Communications 101 Honors course, students are given an advanced curriculum which includes writing the documented essay, reading an additional novel not required in the regular 101 course, critiquing literary articles and oral presentations of special projects. There is a continued study of effective essay development.

The following topics are some examples of what entering freshmen have to choose from when taking the writing component of the placement exam.

- The advantage or disadvantage of home schooling
- The influence of popular culture on our youth
- How colleges should prepare students for life
- Why all Black people of voting age should vote in national elections.

#### **IV. Desired Student Learning Outcomes**

The student learning outcomes of Pathway to Excellence: Strengthening Writing Skills are stated below with a delineation of major action items:

- Students will improve writing skills and recognize the value of effective writing.
  - Selected General Education courses will include intensive writing assignments.
  - Initial English Courses (COM 101 and COM 102) will be re-examined and/or re-organized to introduce concepts related to writing across the curriculum.
  - A rubric will be developed for use in the English courses and in other identified general education courses.
  - Faculty development activities will be implemented to assist faculty in the various disciplines in developing and assessing writing activities in their discipline.
- Students will successfully complete writing enriched courses in their disciplines.
  - Courses that will include extensive writing assignments will be identified.
  - Selected General Education courses will develop criteria that will identify them as writing courses.
  - Establish common syllabi and common writing enriched activities in selected courses.
  - Establish criteria that at least 25% of the final course grades in these selected courses will be derived from writing assignments.
- Students will develop a five paragraph essay using correct grammar, mechanics, clarity, unity, etc.
  - Develop rubric to assess student writing.(Appendix H, Sample rubric)
- Students will successfully pass a grammar proficiency test.
  - Purchase PLATO, a self based, prescriptive and personalized software with assessment and tracking capability.
  - Purchase and participate in the ACT CAAP Writing Test.
  - Purchase and utilize the ETS Criterion Online Writing Software.
- Students will be able to write a letter of application and a resume.
  - Develop rubric

## **V. Literature Review and Best Practices**

The ability to write effectively is fundamental to a liberal arts education, essential to academic inquiry and important for student success in many endeavors. Effective writing is strengthened by critical thinking and information literacy and vice versa. If students are taught to write through synthesizing and evaluating information and then using that data to express coherent arguments, many of the challenges Talladega College students face will be obviated.

A part of the Mission Statement of Talladega College indicates that the institution is interested in producing, "... graduates who write with precision and clarity, think analytically and strategically and who exhibit competency in their academic discipline...." The College's faculty support the view expressed by Fulwiler (1986) that freshmen arrive at college believing that writing has more to do with correctness than with communication, with prescription than imagination, with drill than with critical thought. They believe that writing serves the teacher, not themselves.

First year college students show up in class behaving like first-year students. Their writing is full of sloppy reasoning, unsupported assertions and weak logic. John Bean et. al. (1982) found that instructors who regularly use writing in their classrooms, regardless of the discipline, report that they engage their students in composition practices that have been adapted to fit their discipline specific needs and goals. All disciplines are engaged in critical thinking, and critical thinking is at the heart of many of the following activities: journaling, free writing, peer review, reflective writing, writing to problem solve, micro-themes, pre-test writing, and written conference questions. However, professors in each discipline select among these general activities to fit their needs, the subject area learning, and modify and develop new activities as the need arises.

Gray (1988) argues that writing should be a means of instruction in almost every subject in the curriculum. The first year course in composition and, even the frequently

required upper division courses in expository, technical, or professional writing are not enough to make students the fluent, confident, and effective writers that everyone wants them to be. Composition and writing courses must be buttressed by requiring students to write a thoughtfully organized sequence of papers in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities. Writing is too important to be left to the English department only.

In a 2001 report, *Making the Most of College*, Richard Light contends that writing is indispensable in developing critical thinking skills, learning discipline-specific content, and understanding and building competence in the inquiry and dissemination applicable to various disciplines and professions. Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) pedagogy suggests that if students are to lay claim to these benefits, they must have frequent and significant opportunities to write and revise writing in their classes. College-level WAC programs, therefore, advocate and support the college-wide adoption of writing as a strong component in all classes in all disciplines, not just in communication or composition courses that are the responsibility of English departments.

Light (2003) *Writing and Student's Engagement* strongly suggests that WAC programs can assist in the development and teaching of writing intensive courses. Writing enriched classes tend to use a variety of writing tasks to help students build critical thinking skills, learn course materials more effectively, and communicate what they have learned. This study also finds that student engagement with the subject matter being taught increases significantly when they are asked to write about that subject more frequently.

Georgia State University (GSU) instituted Writing Across the Curriculum in 1995, which has been very successful in helping to improve the quality of its curriculum. Faculty members note that the greatest development is an increased awareness of the role writing can play in teaching and how well-designed writing tasks can serve as a powerful tool for learning. GSU faculty members thought they needed to think about the

way they designed writing assignments and how these assignments influenced the writing they receive from students.

GSU faculty members had several concerns about the widespread use of writing assignments. First, they were concerned that they didn't know how to teach writing. Second, if they taught writing, they would have less time to teach content. Third, they would increase their workload by spending more time reading and editing extra writing assignments. Fourth, students may resist more writing assignments in disciplines other than English.

Notwithstanding, as of 2007, 133 faculty members have been trained in WAC theory and methodology in summer workshops. In addition to their own use of the training to design and teach writing intensive courses, faculty members have shared the acquired knowledge of WAC pedagogy and theory with colleagues and graduate students in their departments. Georgia State's goal is to improve the quality of the curriculum and institutional excellence by having all students take at least one writing intensive course in their discipline.

A writing crisis was declared in 2005 when a survey of 1000 adults across America, conducted by Belden, Russonello & Stewart, concluded that learning to write well is valued not simply for its own sake. Americans believe learning to write well enhances other skills, including reading, communication, grammar, vocabulary, critical thinking and analytical skills.

The Boyer Commission on Educating Undergraduates (1998) emphasized the importance of undergraduate writing. The report stated that it would be hard to find a college president or a liberal-arts dean who could not give a solemn, impromptu lecture on the subject. The public perception that college graduates are not proficient writers dates back to 1975 when Sheils revealed that students attending college were likely to graduate unable to write ordinary, expository English with any degree of structure and



lucidity. Moreover, high school students who planned to attend college were unlikely to be able to write English at the minimal college level when they enrolled.

Susan H. McLeod (1992), in *Writing Across the Curriculum: An introduction*, believes that writing across the curriculum promotes a set of writing activities that are focused less on the product and more on the activities associated with acquiring knowledge, analysis, recall, association, analogy, prediction, hypothesis, etc. Merely assigning a research paper or to teach grammar across the curriculum are not the means to promote effective writing. McLeod and Maimon (2000) also assert in *Clearing the Air: WAC Myths and Realities* that:

- The act of writing facilitates learning.
- The act of writing disciplines thinking, slows it down, sorts it out, linearizes.
- The act of writing objectifies thinking, reifies it, and makes it available for observation and memory.
- The act of writing socializes thought, makes it possible to share and compare with others.
- The act of writing enables a person to accept responsibility for their thinking.

Emig (1977) suggests, in *Writing as a Mode of Learning*, that writing refines thinking because writing is a way of learning. This landmark article serves as a linchpin for the writing to learn movement. Because writing is neurophysiologically integrative, connective, active, and available to immediate visual review, Emig claims that it represents a unique form of learning that deserves increased experimental and theoretical attention.

Britton et. al. (1970) support the idea that cross-curricular writing programs could enhance student learning. Writing to learn is based on the observations that students'

thoughts and understanding can grow and clarify through the process of writing.

Elsewhere, E. M. Forster stated, "How can I know what I think until I see what I say."

Hilgers et. al. (1999), in a study conducted at the University of Hawaii-Manoa, sought to understand how students reflect on their writing experiences with their particular majors and disciplines. According to the authors, not only were students aware that learning to write and communicate clearly are important, they also understood the conventions and standards for their particular disciplines.

In interviews with more than three dozen students enrolled in writing-intensive classes within their academic disciplines, Hilgers et. al. report that students indicated a substantial commitment to using their writing to facilitate increased confidence in their major course subjects. Overall, students said that writing assignments enabled them to learn more, and feel more knowledgeable about their major course content. The authors conclude that when students had writing intensive courses in their majors, the most significant sources of learning took place.

If the results from Hilgers et. al. were duplicated at Talladega College, a significant impact on student learning would occur. However, in a study done by Russell and Yanez (2003), the authors found that writing in the general education courses rarely reaches beyond fact-based rote writing and lead to student alienation. The authors recommend skillful and attentive instruction to guide students toward meaningful higher order thinking ability in writing without expecting them to obtain the expertise of committed students in their academic majors.

Many schools that have experienced success in their writing programs, including Writing Across the Curriculum or Writing in the Disciplines, have established writing centers as the main support facility. According to Mullin (2001), the development of the writing centers and Writing Across the Curriculum grew up together as a result of open admissions, changing student population demographics, and increased focus on

institutional accountability. Almost all writing centers focused on delivering one-on-one tutorial support for students addressing the fundamental issues of learning to write rather than simply providing a proofreading or correction service. Some writing centers act as a hub within the university community, offering services to both students and faculty and outreach services to the local community.

Issues of assessment are addressed in Yancey and Huot (1997) *Assessing Writing Across the Curriculum: Diverse Approaches and Practices*; Allen (2004) *Assessing Academic Programs in Higher Education* and Walvoord (2004) *Assessment Clear and Simple*. These authors all agree that a variety of assessment tools must be constructed and the criteria used for assessment must be articulated. They also suggested that creating rubrics or building portfolios on students will document their achievement.

Reising (1997) argues that the “writing process works” and that there are teaching and learning opportunities when professors require multiple drafts of papers. Reising also suggests that students should utilize individuals other than professors to review their writing. He asserts that writing should be taught in every classroom because, “writing is a way of knowing and of coming to know.”

According to Reising, “A writing teacher, every teacher, has no more important task than to prove that communication and education work and they are the avenues leading to success and fulfillment in the contemporary world.” He explains that intensive evaluation is seldom desirable and that a few well-selected reactions usually advance a piece, and a writer, far faster than does a torrent of questions.

A range of useful classroom ideas is listed in *Teaching Writing in All Disciplines by Griffin (1982)* and Tchudi (1986) discusses teaching writing in the content areas at the elementary, junior high school, high school and college levels. Tritelli (2003), editor of the *Peer Review*, contends that writing should be at the center of the undergraduate curriculum, and recommends writing as a way of learning. Monroe (2002) of Cornell

University says that focusing on writing across disciplines encourages faculty members to embrace writing as an institutional goal. In a workshop presented at Talladega College in the early 1990s on Writing Across the Curriculum, the presenters stressed that writing is not an innovation but a rediscovery of what is essential to successfully educating its students. Talladega College faculty members believe that writing is essential to educating its students.

In conclusion, faculty members at Talladega College concur with the view that, "Writing needs to be guided and nursed by teachers that will ask you questions that will make you think. New writers need questions asked that will help them understand why they are writing and will guide their purpose to have greater clarity for them and others. Teachers need to be taught to help their students find a purpose in writing instead of a teachers dread at reading their papers." (Message posted to <http://anne.teachesme.com/category/writing/>)

## **VI. Actions to be implemented**

Achieving the goal of the Pathway to Excellence: Strengthening Writing Skills Plan and the attainment of student learning outcomes will be a joint effort of Talladega College's administration, faculty, staff and students. Specific actions and responsibilities will include

1. Appoint the Director for the Implementation for the QEP. The Director will report to the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs; serve on the General Education Advisory Committee; and will work closely with the Director of the Skills Enhancement Center and the Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research.
2. Appoint an Advisory Committee for the QEP, Pathway to Excellence: Strengthening Writing Skills, which includes division deans, one faculty member from each of the four divisions, one student from the freshman and sophomore levels, and a staff member.
3. Assign the General Education Advisory Committee with the responsibility of serving as liaison between the general education faculty and the advisory committee.
4. Hire staff for the Skills Enhancement Center to include two faculty members and 10 student tutors.
5. Provide professional development for administrators, faculty, staff and students.
  - a. Conduct writing across the curriculum workshops for general education professors during the fall 2008 semester.
6. Develop instructional strategies for the successful implementation of the writing program.
  - a. Administer pretest assessment of students' writing skills.

- b. Promulgate pretest results among General Education Advisory Committee and faculty.
  - c. Introduce writing objectives in General Education course syllabi.
  - d. Develop grading rubrics for use by faculty in assessing student learning outcomes and performance.
  - e. Purchase software for use by students that incorporates best practices in teaching effective writing.
7. Complete the development of the Skills Enhancement Center's Policies and Procedures Handbook.

### **General Education Advisory Committee**

The purpose of the General Education Advisory Committee is to assist entering freshmen with elevating and improving their success as engaged learners at the college level. The committee is charged with establishing student learning outcomes, resource materials and assessment activities. In addition, the committee is responsible for developing writing competencies, faculty professional development activities, strategies for incorporating writing into the general education curriculum, and assessment tools.

The committee is chaired by Mrs. Johnnie Lindsey, Associate Professor of Communications. The chair of the committee will report to the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs and provide updates to the QEP director. Mrs. Lindsey has more than 25 years of classroom experience in secondary, postsecondary, vocational, and higher education and she has a proven track record of mentoring students. She has been employed with the College's communications department since 1989.

Mrs. Lindsey received a Bachelor of Arts in English from Miles College in Birmingham, AL. and a Master of Arts in Education from the University of Alabama in Birmingham, AL. She holds the Alabama Teachers Certificate Secondary 16, Rank 2 Endorsement in English. She has an additional nine hours in vocational education and

fifteen hours in advanced education courses including special education. In addition to

Mrs. Lindsey the chair, the committee members are:

Mrs. Johnnie Lindsey, Chair, Associate Professor, Communications

Mr. Syed Raza, Associate Professor, Mathematics

Mr. Donald Baylor, Director of Student Support Services

Mrs. Stephanie Dates, Assistant Professor, Social Work

Mr. Desmond Parker, Junior, Chemistry Major

Mr. Reginald Brown, Junior, History Major

Mr. Hayes Grooms III, Assistant Professor, Business and Administration

Mrs. Juliette Smith, Library Director, Accreditation Liaison

Mrs. Delois B. Cook, Director, Institutional Effectiveness and Research

Dr. Rickey Warner, Dean, Division of Business and Administration

Dr. Edward Hall, Dean, Division of Social Sciences and Education

Dr. Trelle Jeffers, Dean, Division of Humanities and Fine Arts

Dr. Charlie Stinson, Dean, Division of Natural Science and Mathematics

Dr. Christopher Jeffries, Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs

### **The Skills Enhancement Center**

The Skills Enhancement Center will provide assistance to students in developing effective skills in writing, speaking, listening, and test taking. Also, the Center will provide students with assistance in career planning/assessment, self-assessment, personality assessment, interviewing techniques, work study, and job placement.

The Center will be staffed with a director, clerical personnel, two instructors and ten student tutors. The operating hours of the Center will be from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m., Monday through Friday and from 12 noon until 6 p. m. on weekends. Students will be referred to the Skills Center by general education professors for assistance with writing skills.

Referred and walk-in students in the general education courses will receive assistance with paragraph development, grammar, spelling and developing thesis statements among others. Upper division students may receive assistance to help them demonstrate good writing habits, complete research papers, case studies, proposals, critiques, and other writing assignments.

Students will be advised of the services offered by the Skills Enhancement Center through referrals, word-of-mouth, e-mail, flyers, the Student Government Association, other campus leaders, and announcements during convocations and other special events on campus. Faculty and staff will be notified of the Center's activities via the General Education Advisory Committee, during mandatory monthly faculty meetings and the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs' meetings with various constituents in academic affairs.

The Center Director, Dr. Edward Hall, will coordinate activities with the General Education Advisory Committee on writing initiatives and expected student writing competencies. He will supervise the development and operation of the Center and ensure that resources are available to carry out the objectives of the QEP. The Director of the Skills Enhancement Center will report to the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Dr. Hall has substantial experience working in the field of education and is currently Dean of the Division of Social Sciences and Education. Dr. Hall received his Bachelor of Science degree from Tuskegee University, Master of Arts degree and Certificate of Advanced Study from the University of Alabama in Birmingham. He earned the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Educational Leadership from the University of Alabama. Dr. Hall has served in numerous capacities in higher education as well as K-12. He began his career as a classroom teacher of English and Social Studies in Talladega County and retired as Assistant Superintendent of Instruction and Staff Development in 1996.



Dr. Hall has held numerous leadership positions at the state and international levels. He has served as president of the Alabama Council of School Administrators, now known as CLAS, the Alabama Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (AASCD) and president of the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).

Skills Enhancement Center(SEC) faculty will assist in developing and implementing appropriate activities for the Center, teach undergraduate classes, advise and counsel undergraduate students, and possibly supervise clinical experiences. SEC faculty will exhibit a commitment and ability to conduct scholarly activities and engage in professional, college, and community service. They will also demonstrate the ability to relate across cultural boundaries.

The clerical staff will perform daily clerical and other non-teaching duties for the Center as necessary.

The student tutors will be selected by the General Education Advisory Committee. Student tutors must be in good academic standing, a sophomore or above, and have and have a grade point average of 3.0 or above (on a 4.0 scale). They must possess interpersonal, computer, clerical, reading, writing, and math skills commensurate with assigned tasks.

All SEC staff members will report to the director of the Skills Enhancement Center.

The Director of the QEP will report to the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs regarding the accomplishment of the goals of the QEP. The Director will work closely with the Director of the Skills Enhancement Center, general education professors and other faculty members, and the General Education Advisory Committee.

## **Faculty Workshops**

During the early 1990s, Talladega College instituted a Writing Across the Curriculum program. Former Division Dean of Humanities and Professor of Communications, Dr. Yakini Kemp, conducted two three-day workshops on Writing Across the Curriculum with all faculty members in May 1991 and May 1992. Some faculty members adopted teaching strategies to improve student learning, writing and engagement.

A review of the literature and best practices indicated that when faculty members were trained through workshops on how to incorporate writing into their courses, their attitudes changed about teaching writing in their courses. Workshops to train faculty who teach the general education core courses will begin the fall semester of 2008, continue intensively during the spring 2009 semester and as needed through the duration of the initial QEP. The Director of the QEP, Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research (IER), Chair of the Department of Communications, Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs and the General Education Advisory Committee will be involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of these workshops.

The faculty workshops will introduce professors to strategies in teaching writing to undergraduate students and ensure that faculty members are familiar with the pedagogy associated with teaching effective writing. External consultants and campus writing experts will conduct the workshops. While not an exhaustive list, some workshops objectives will be to:

- Demonstrate the connection between writing and learning
- Change the attitudes of faculty and students toward writing
- Integrate writing into the general education and undergraduate curriculum

- Develop strategies to encourage all students to practice good writing habits, not just weak writers
- Develop and implement a reward system that acknowledges the contribution of faculty members in promoting effective student writing
- Establish mechanisms for evaluating and providing feedback to students on their writing.

### **Writing Center**

The Talladega College Writing Center, a later project, will be housed in Swayne Hall as a part of the Skills Enhancement Center. The Center will be equipped with appropriate instructional materials, reference texts, computers and other technology students use as they work with tutors, faculty, and other Center staff. The Writing Center will offer students a full service location for writing on campus complete with a support staff and an atmosphere conducive to writing.

Mrs. Johnnie Lindsey, Communications department, who has extensive experience working with first year students, will assist in training student tutors assigned to work in the Center. Mrs. Lindsey currently teaches Communications 100(Basic Skills), Communications 101, Technical Writing, Introduction to Literature, and Advanced Grammar and Speech. As an Education Specialist with the College's Student Support Program, she provides developmental tutorial materials, acts as a resource person for peer tutors, and provides computer assisted instruction in basic writing, reading comprehension skills and vocabulary development.

For employment in the Center, student tutors will be required to possess good writing, language, and interpersonal skills. They must have also received above average grades in core curriculum classes. Peer tutors will be available throughout all phases of the development of the writing center project.

Muriel Harris in her article, *The Writing Center and Tutoring in WAC Programs*, states that, “tutors function in a non-evaluative, supportive environment, offer writers the opportunity to write, think, and talk with someone who through this collaborative talk and questioning helps the writer use language to develop ideas, to test possibilities, to re-see and re-think in the light of the feedback from the tutor.”

By utilizing peer tutors, students will feel free to ask questions their professor wish they would ask in class but they won't because they fear they are setting themselves up for ridicule. Working with peer tutors can remove the assumption that they must only listen to what the professor wants. Peer tutors will offer ideas that the student can build on, or reject. This dialogue between the tutor and student will help the latter develop their own ideas.

## VII. Timeline

The following timeline was developed by the Quality Enhancement Plan Committee for the successful implementation of the QEP. Talladega College believes that this timeline is a viable plan of implementation.

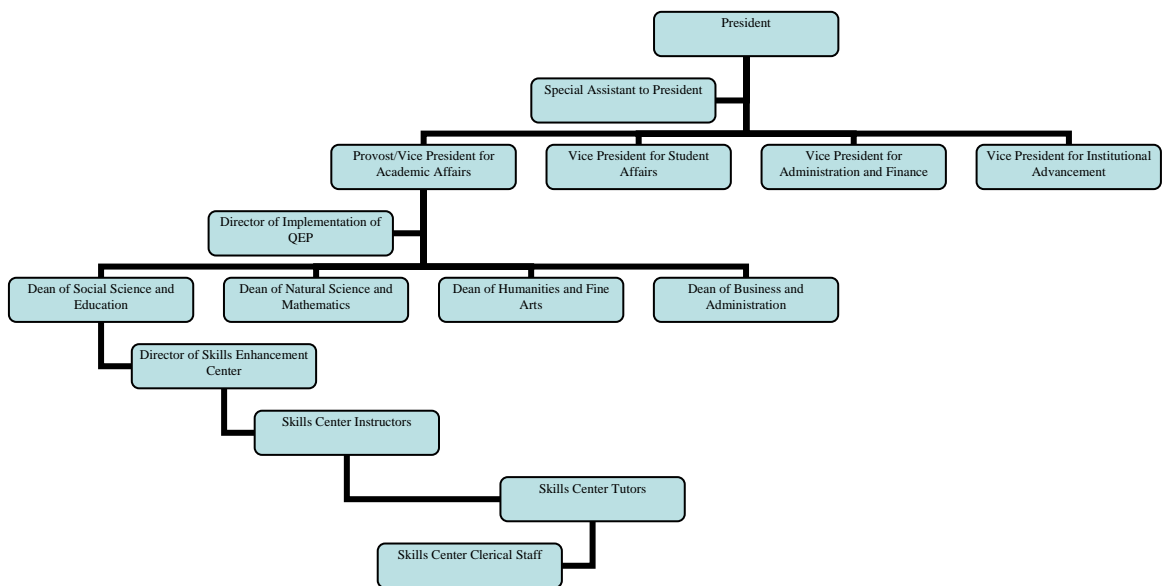
ACTION	IMPLEMENTATION DATE
Appoint QEP Advisory Committee	Summer 2008
Appoint a director of QEP	Summer 2008
Assign responsibilities of the General Education Advisory Committee	Summer 2008
Appoint a Director of the Skills Enhancement Center(SEC)	Summer 2008
Appoint a Director of QEP	Summer 2008
Appoint personnel for the Skills Enhancement Center (SEC)	Fall 2008
Collect initial performance data on entering students	Fall 2008
Administer faculty survey for workshop development	Fall 2008
Purchase and install furnishing for SEC	Fall 2008
Purchase ETS Criterion Online Writing	Fall 2008
Develop common syllabi and writing enriched exercises	Fall 2008 and spring 2009
Develop grading guidelines for writing enriched courses	Fall 2008 and spring 2009
Develop grading rubrics for revised courses	Fall 2008; each semester as needed through 2013
Faculty development workshop	Fall: 2008; each semester through 2013
Administer assessment survey to students	Fall 2008 through spring 2013
Gather course completion data	Fall 2008, spring 2009, ongoing each semester through spring 2013
Collect and analyze student persistence to graduation data	Fall 2008, spring 2009, ongoing each semester through spring 2013
Introduce writing objectives in General Education course syllabi	Spring 2009
Purchase PLATO	Spring 2009
Purchase ACT CAAP Writing Test	Spring 2009

Professional Development Activity for faculty and staff	Spring 2009
Develop and distribute annual report	Summer 2010, summer 2011, summer 2012, summer2013

## VIII. Organizational Structure

### Hierarchy for QEP

#### Pathway to Excellence: Strengthening Writing Skills



**IX. Resources**

**Talladega College Quality Enhancement Plan Five Year Budget**

The budget was developed for the five year period of the QEP.

	Year 1 2008-2009	Year 2 2009-2010	Year 3 2010-2011	Year 4 2011-2012	Year 5 2012-2013
QEP Director	\$35,000	\$36,750	\$38,588	\$40,517	\$42,543
Skills Enhancement Center Director	\$40,000	\$42,000	\$44,100	\$46,305	\$48,620
Skills Enhancement Center Personnel	35,000	36,750	38,588	40,517	42,543
Skills Enhancement Center Tutors	\$7,500	7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$7,500
Professional Development Workshops	\$4,000/yr	4,200/yr	\$4,410	4,631	4,863
Faculty Stipends	\$4000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,000
Skills Enhancement Center Supplies	2,500	\$3,000	\$3,500	\$4,000	\$4,500
Resource Tool Kits	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Divisional Resources	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Grammar Test	\$4,000				
Marketing	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Computers	\$60,000				
Furnishings	\$20,000				
Software	\$20,000				
Publication of Annual Reports	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
<b>TOTAL</b>					
	\$ 132,000	\$137,200	\$144,686	\$151,470	\$160,569



## **X. Assessment**

Assessment of the Talladega College Quality Enhancement Plan will consist of multiple assessment tools that will be integrated into the annual strategic planning process. The College realizes that the assessment measures associated with the Plan must become a part of the ongoing process for sustainability. Multiple assessment measures will include:

1. Performance data collected on entering students to serve as the benchmark assessment to determine the levels of student learning at the beginning of the QEP.
2. Student assessment survey data to be used in writing enriched courses.
3. Student assessment data from rubrics based on student learning outcomes.
4. Faculty survey data for workshop development.
5. Criterion Online writing assessments data.
6. Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) data.
7. Course completion data.
8. Student persistence to graduation data

Assessment results will be collected annually. The General Education Advisory Committee, the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Director of the Implementation of the QEP will annually monitor the progress of the plan. A detailed report will be generated annually for years 2, 3, and 4 of the Quality Enhancement Plan. The report will include the results of assessments, benchmarks and other comparisons, recommendations to strengthen the Plan and any corrective actions that might be needed.

Below are outcome measures that relate to the Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will improve writing skills and recognize the value of effective writing.

- 75% of the students enrolled in the writing enriched courses will successfully complete the courses with a grade of “C” or better (Fall 2009 and beyond).
  - Greater numbers of students will be successful at Talladega.
  - More intervention strategies will be available to students earlier.
2. Students will successfully complete writing enriched courses in their disciplines.
    - 75% of the students enrolled in the writing enriched courses in their discipline will successfully complete the courses with a grade of “C” or better (Fall 2009 and beyond).
    - More students will seek out faculty in the discipline for advising.
  3. Students will develop a five paragraph essay that includes correct grammar and mechanics, clarity, unity, etc.
    - 70% of all students taking writing enriched courses will earn an average score of “3” on the writing rubric.
  4. Students will successfully pass a grammar proficiency test.
    - 70% of all students taking the grammar proficiency test will pass.
    - 70% of all students taking the CAAP will score within the identified range for acceptance/pass.
  5. Students will be able to write a letter of application and a resume.
    - 70% of all students taking writing enriched courses will earn an average score of “3” on the rubric.
  6. Students will attend the Skills Enhancement Center in a group and/or individual sessions or as the result of faculty referral.
    - More at-risk students will receive services through the Center.
    - More students will be engaged with Center staff for tutoring and other academic assistance.
    - More students will interact with faculty for assistance in writing while in the Center.
    - By 2009, discipline specific approaches will be incorporated into the Center’s academic assistance offerings.

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# ***Appendices***

## **Appendix A**

Faculty Meeting  
March 13, 2007  
Swayne 1  
4:30 pm

Dr. Bacon presided over the meeting.

Agenda for the day approved.  
Minutes were approved.

### **2009 Reaffirmation and Accreditation—Dr. Prater, President**

- Sincere thanks to the faculty for your tremendous work in helping to get off SACS probation
- Applaud Dr. McCleod for the great work of the choir
- Congratulations to McNair students for winning presentations
- Dr. Cole was given an award for Most Outstanding Research on Diabetes
- Applaud the work of Mrs. Long and her Staff with Reaffirmation of the Social Work program
- Renovation of Swayne Hall- with and edition of air and heating unit
- Still Work to be done in Silsby Hall
- Chairpersons selected for each committee for the 2009 Reaffirmation process
- The Quality Enhancement Plan

### **Quality Enhancement Plan----Dr. Prater**

“The Quality Enhancement Plan describes a carefully designed and focused course of action that addresses a well-defined topic or issue(s) directly related to enhancing student learning. The Commission on Colleges and Schools expects the institution to have in place a focused topic, clear goals, adequate resources in place to implement the plan, evaluation strategies for determining the goals, and evidence of community development and support of the plan. Dr. Prater proposed that Talladega College considers a plan that would involve assisting students in passing graduate and licensure exams in preparation for graduate and professional schools. This plan would involve developing a Skills Enhancement Center equipped with computer technology for students to read and complete modules on mathematics, reading, English and science during their freshman and sophomore year and begin practice on the exit exams such as the GRE, the MCAT, LSAT, the Praxis II, and the Social Work licensure exam in their junior and senior year.”

The reading component will be the focus in their freshman and sophomore years.

### **Skills Enhancement Center**

Discussion:

Dr. Drummond— Will this center be open to all students?

Dr. Prater-- Yes, all students will have the opportunity to work on their reading skills. I

Dr. Hall—The Skills Enhancement Center will probably have two fulltime staff and 10 student tutors.

**Other concerns**

- Work is being done to restore hot water in Ish Hall
- Inappropriate music being played in the college cafeteria
- Some people did not turn in mid-term grades on time
- Young men wearing hats in the buildings
- Errors on the website

**Classroom Etiquette-Dr. Carmode**

- Rude behavior of students in the classroom
- Academic advising committee and Catalogue committee will address these concerns
  
- **Announcements**
- Ceremonial and Occasions Committee Meeting Thursday March 29, 2007 in Sumner Hall 202
  - Public Policies discussion Tuesday March 27, 2007
  - Arts Festival March 26-29
  - Students' Art exhibit in April
  - Commencement—May 6, 2007



## **Appendix B**

### **Faculty Meeting**

#### **Minutes**

**April 12, 2007**

**4:40 pm**

**Savery Library**

**Dr. Bacon, Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs, presiding.**

#### **Dr. Patrick—Vice President of Institutional Advancement**

Dr. Patrick asked to come to the faculty meeting to discuss events scheduled for alumni weekend

- Passed out Alumni weekend schedule
- Asking support of College Faculty
- 25 task captains—responsible for each one of these events
- 32 class captains (Alumni) for classes ending in 2 and 7
- Sent out 3000 brochures

#### **Schedule of Events**

- Dega Faculty Showcase—May 4<sup>th</sup> 2:00pm-3:15pm
  - Technology—Mr. Raza
  - Diabetes Research—Dr. Cole
  - Politics of Civil Rights—Drs. Winsel and Dr. Bray
- A Night at the Mocha Lounge
  - Faculty/Alumni Grown-up talent show (Callahan Student Union Upper Lounge)
  - Beverages/Sparkling wine
  - Contact: Mrs. Funderburg
- Alumni Picnic
- Alumni Banquet—Gala
- Saturday Night—Restaurant dining atmosphere
  - Silent Auction
  - Artists/Students Art
  - Wine will be served
- Registration
  - Door \$150.00
  - Pre-Registration \$135.00

Usually they have class tables at commencement gala.

**Dr. Bacon—“There will be one more faculty meeting in May.”**

- **Faculty Handbook—Revision Committee**
  - Dr. Farr, Mrs. Cook, Dr. Bacon, Dr. Stinson, Mrs. Long, Dr. Jeffers
- **Catalog Committee**
  - Dr. Farr, Dr. Jeffers, Mrs. Cook, Mrs. Dates, Mr. Dawson, Mrs. Lindsey, Mrs. Long
  - Review 4 or 5 past catalogs
- **Comprehensive Exams**
  - Comprehensive exam from all content areas
  - Junior/Senior English comprehensive exam
  - Develop strategies to get students through college
  - Make it mandatory that they pass these comprehensive final exams
  - General education comprehensive final exam
  - Consult ETS for types of exams or develop our own
  - Preparing students to do well on graduate exams in the quantitative and content areas.

**Quality Enhancement Plan---Dr. Bacon**

“We have not yet arrived at a way to best serve our students. The proposed plan to work through the modules and help our student performance is good, but I think there are other issues to consider.”

Dr. Drummond—“Has any kind of survey or evaluation of students needs been done?”

Dr. Bacon. “No, but perhaps this is a place to begin. Perhaps working with Institutional Effectiveness and the deans of each division, we can begin to assess the areas where our students need more attention.

Dr. Jeffers—“I believe that a Skills Enhancement Center would be helpful. Passing the graduate exams is important, but our students are not reading at the level that they should be. Many freshmen that take the Communications Placement exam, students score very low on the vocabulary and reading comprehensive portion of the exam. About a third of the students read at the third and fourth grade levels.

Mrs. Lindsey—Not only are they reading below the standard level, their writing skills are not where they should be. Many students have problems formulating simple sentences.

Mr. Raza—When I give written assignments in my Computer Science class, I tell students that they will be graded not only on the content of the paper but also on sentence structure, grammar and punctuation. They respond with, “This is not Communications 101; I don’t have to have that here.”

Dr. Jeffers—“That has been a concern for me and other Communications faculty. For our students to perform better, our students in whatever course they are taking must work on their reading and writing skills. If they cannot express themselves verbally and written, then how will they ever get a job.”

Mrs. Dates—“In my Social Work classes, all students have several writing exercises. Some of them include case studies, journal reports, and research papers. The students have material to compose these papers, but they cannot structure the paper grammatically.

Dr. Bacon—"These are very good comments and as we move in the direction of finding a focus for the QEP, we will certainly consider the issues you have raised today."

- **Concerns of Faculty**

- Financial support for faculty to accomplish what is needed for instruction
  - Role of Student Affairs
    - Students not attending convocation
    - Counseling/Planned Parenthood
    - Dorms are not ready when students return to college
      - Rooms filled with trash
      - No doors on some rooms
      - AC not working
    - Social behavior of students
      - Bad students drive good students away
      - Students not attending tutoring for math, writing, and reading
    - Enforce policies in the student handbook/dress code
  - Changes made on TC Webpage/ Pictures of students who are not Talladega College students
  - Faculty should be the force on the campus
- We would like for persons responsible in these areas to come before the faculty and discuss these concern

Dr. Cole—Students should take both quantitative and content comprehensive exams.  
Where do they start?

Management achievement

Dr. Stinson— The American Chemical Society may have a comprehensive exam for chemistry majors.

Drummond—Will the committee on testing look at it from discipline specific?

Dr. Bacon—That would probably be the best approach.

General Education—Comprehensive Exams

Discipline specific = Major/Department 2 possible

Jr. English comprehensive (general education) Exam

We may want to develop our own or consult ETS.

Dr. Farr—I don't think there is a student that does not belong in college. Our job is to develop something to get these students through

Dr. Drummond—Superior remedial program: We are shooting ourselves in the foot if we don't do something.

Dr. Bacon—Support services are on campus and students are not being encouraged by faculty to attend.

Dr. Farr—Lack of tutoring for math, writing and reading. If we don't have the things in place, we can't hold students accountable.

Dr. Jeffers—I tutor my own students if they need tutoring

Dr. Bacon—The faculty should be the force on campus.

Dr. Stinson—We are at a point now where we can move to another level and put things in the proper focus.

Dr. Chijioke—Student Support Services/What happened to that program?

Mr. Oyekenu—Most of the bad students are driving the good students away.

### Student Affairs

Faculty does not have the support of the Student Affairs  
President is upset with students trickling into convocation

Dr. Cole—I think that we should ask persons (administrative) responsible in these situations to come before the faculty

Dr. Bray—I feel a sense of hope Dr. Bacon. I respect you for telling it like it is. Are we really proposing to act? Is anything going to happen after this faculty meeting?

Dr. Bacon—Yes I am taking these concerns to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board

Mrs. Long—Is there really money?

Mrs. Long—I put in a request to the business office and nothing is done.

Online Courses are available.

- **Announcements**

- Student Art Show
- Dr. Bacon Art Exhibit—Commencement Weekend
- Mr. Dawson—Would like to thank the faculty for its support of the art exhibits
- Learning Communities health fair
  - *Health Disparities Among African Americans* –April 25, 2007
- Faculty Club—\$20.00 contribution from each faculty member
- Still have the option of getting a faculty house

- **Dr. Stinson**

- Faculty representative bylaws are going to have to be revised
- Board wanted to dictate how the faculty rep would be selected
- The faculty will have a faculty representative and we will decide how the person is selected

Meeting Adjourned at 6:00pm

Respectfully submitted

Delois B. Cook

Faculty Secretary

## **Faculty Meeting**

**May 3, 2007**

**Minutes**

**4:30 p.m.**

**Swayne 1**

### **Dr. Bacon presiding.**

Dr. Bacon called the meeting to order.

#### **Acceptance of Minutes and Agenda**

- Dr. Bray: "I object to accepting the minutes without an opportunity to read them."  
Dr. Bray is legally blind.
- Dr. Bacon: A copy of the minutes will be given to Dr. Bray prior to each meeting.
- Agenda and minutes were accepted.

Congratulations to Dr. Leonard Cole—winner UNCF Noble Prize for Best Research

#### **Dr. Bacon:**

"This has been a good year despite our financial woes and laboring under difficult circumstances. We delivered a quality education to our students. The *Washington Monthly* and the *Princeton Review* stated good things about the quality of our graduates.

#### **Long Range Planning**

- Long Range Planning Committee will meet sometimes this summer.

#### **Quality Enhancement Plan—Dr. Bacon**

"After reading the minutes from the April faculty meeting, I see that we need more discussion about the QEP and our focus."

Dr. Farr—"I have some concerns about the reading, writing and math skills of our students. In many of the high schools, students are not getting the writing and math skills they need. In the Psychology classes, all students are required to complete several writing assignments including journal reports, documented essays and case studies. The freshmen students and some majors have not mastered the basic writing skills. The Skills Center is good and I hope to see it come to life. We need to look at what we can do as a faculty, not just the Communications faculty, to get our students writing and reading better and therefore performing better.

Mrs. Swain—"Students have assignments to complete that require that they use correct writing skills. Some students respond correctly orally in class, but when it comes to writing an essay or a simple discussion question on a test, they cannot complete a sentence. The same problem occurs when they have to write up an experiment and some other project completed in class."

Dr. Bacon—"I have been thinking perhaps that using the concepts of the learning communities as a possibility for the focus of our QEP. We can still use the Skills Enhancement Center as a resource for the learning communities. Perhaps, Mrs. Cook and the QEP committee will consider this option."

Mrs. Cook—"We will discuss in our next Quality Enhancement Plan meeting."

### **Curriculum Study Meeting**

Dr. Carmode—moved that the following changes be accepted for Mass Communications

- No new courses added and none taken away
- Students need 125 hours to graduate not 137
- Required courses moved to the elective area
- 39 hours in the major

Questions from the faculty:

Dr. Chijioke—“Have you made any contacts with local newspapers and the radio stations.”

Dr. Carmode—“Yes; student are required to do an internship, so, we have to make contact with the various of media(television, radio, television).”

The motion passed.

### **Dr. Hall—Alabama Report Card**

- Talladega College will not come out looking very well from the results of the Praxis II tests. Education majors have been required to take the Praxis II content area test for certification and licensure in the State since 2005.
- Dr. Hall gave out letter from the Department of Education at the April faculty meeting/*Teacher Education Program Status Report*.
- Talladega College will be shown with a zero passing rate. Two students failed in the content area (English Language Arts).
- Workshops on the Praxis test will be held and faculty can attend if interested.

Questions from Faculty

Mrs. Smith asked, “What is the status of the Talladega College Education Program?”

Dr. Hall responded, “There is 25 students in the program; none graduating in 2007. Students must have a 2.5 in the content and pedagogical area.”

Dr. Jeffers asked, “What area do students have the most trouble?”

Dr. Hall responded, “6<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade literature and grammar.”

### **Mathematics Program-Concerns**

- Dr. Stinson stated that work will be done over the summer to address the mathematics concerns.
- Many non- science majors and some science majors have difficulty with mathematics.
- Looking for a full time person in mathematics.
- Dr. Funderburg stated that a teaching alternative of math could be done in a small group environment.
- Dr. Taku stated that the mathematics taught in high schools perhaps is not preparing our students well.

### **Faculty**

- Two resignations/ Dr. Fintel, Biology and Mr. Funderburg, Mathematics.
- Departments need to begin search
- Dr. Bacon stated that the same interviewing and hiring process that is used for full time faculty should be used for interviewing and hiring adjunct faculty. We are also looking into increasing adjunct pay to at least \$1500.

- For alumni weekend faculty pay half price for all events. If you bring someone with you must pay full price.

#### **Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE)**

- Attended the Regional Competition, Atlanta, Georgia
- Received 2<sup>nd</sup> runner up award
- Six students interviewed for internships/ Three were given the opportunity to work

#### **Graduates Receiving Terminal Degrees**

- Division of Natural Science and Mathematics-Dexter Watts from Auburn University , Alvin Smith PhD from Howard University, Donnie Eddins PhD from University of North Carolina
- Division of Humanities and Fine Arts Bertis English, PhD from Auburn University and Natasha Walker EdD University of Sarasota, Florida/ also Patricia Kemp J.D., practicing law in Montgomery

Mr. Raza (ABD) expects to receive degree by February 2008.

#### **Blackboard and Online Courses**

- Summer Online courses faculty need to fill out paper work in Dr. Bacon's Office if interested in teaching
- First classes start June 5<sup>th</sup>

#### **Announcements**

- Learning communities conference at Talladega College June 7<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> (Howard University, Xavier University, Jackson State, and Talladega College)
- All grades and roll books must be turned into the Registrars office for faculty clearance
- Partnering with Lawson State and Gadsden State Community Colleges for Project Management courses

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Submitted by Delois B. Cook, Faculty Secretary

## Appendix C

Response to Summary Academic and Social challenges facing students at Talladega College Survey given the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs




### Response Summary

Total Started Survey: 29

Total Completed Survey: 29 (100%)

1. What do you see as the greatest academic and/or social challenges facing students at Talladega College? Multiple answers are allowed, if desired.			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Communication Skills (writing, speaking, listening)		86.2%	25
Computational Skills		37.9%	11
Soft Skills (social graces, personal habits etc.)		69.0%	20
Leadership Skills		20.7%	6
Global Understanding		34.5%	10
Critical Thinking		44.8%	13
Moral and Ethical Development		51.7%	15



1. What do you see as the greatest academic and/or social challenges facing students at Talladega College? Multiple answers are allowed, if desired.			
Community Involvement and Service		17.2%	5
 Other (please specify)		17.2%	5
<b><i>answered question</i></b>			<b>29</b>
<b><i>skipped question</i></b>			<b>0</b>

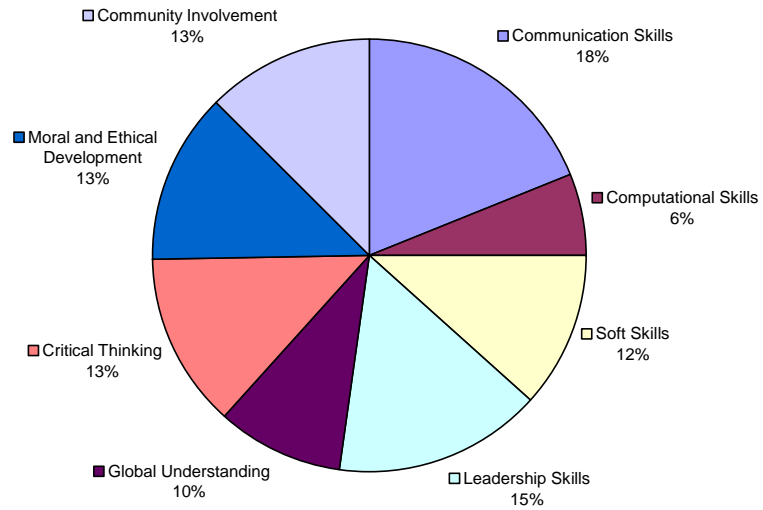
2. To address the academic and/or social challenges facing our students, primary attention should focus on:			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Freshmen Students		27.6%	8
Sophomore Students		3.4%	1
Junior Students		0.0%	0
Senior Students		0.0%	0
<b>All Students at the</b>		<b>69.0%</b>	<b>20</b>

**2. To address the academic and/or social challenges facing our students, primary attention should focus on:**

College			
	<i>answered question</i>		<b>29</b>
	<i>skipped question</i>		<b>0</b>

## Appendix D

Academic & Social Challenges of Talladega College Student Survey Spring 2008 Results



Number of Students ----250 student responses from the total enrollment of 325

Survey conducted by Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research Spring 2008

**Talladega College**  
**Sample Student Survey**  
**May 2, 2008**  
**Assessment Tool**

The following survey is conducted in an effort to better serve our students' needs for building excellence in learning outcomes and performance.

What do you see as the greatest academic and/or social challenges facing students at Talladega College? Multiple answers are allowed, if desired.

Communication skills (writing, speaking, listening)

Reading

Computational Skills

To address the academic and or/social challenges facing our students, primary attention should focus on:

Freshman Students

Sophomore Students

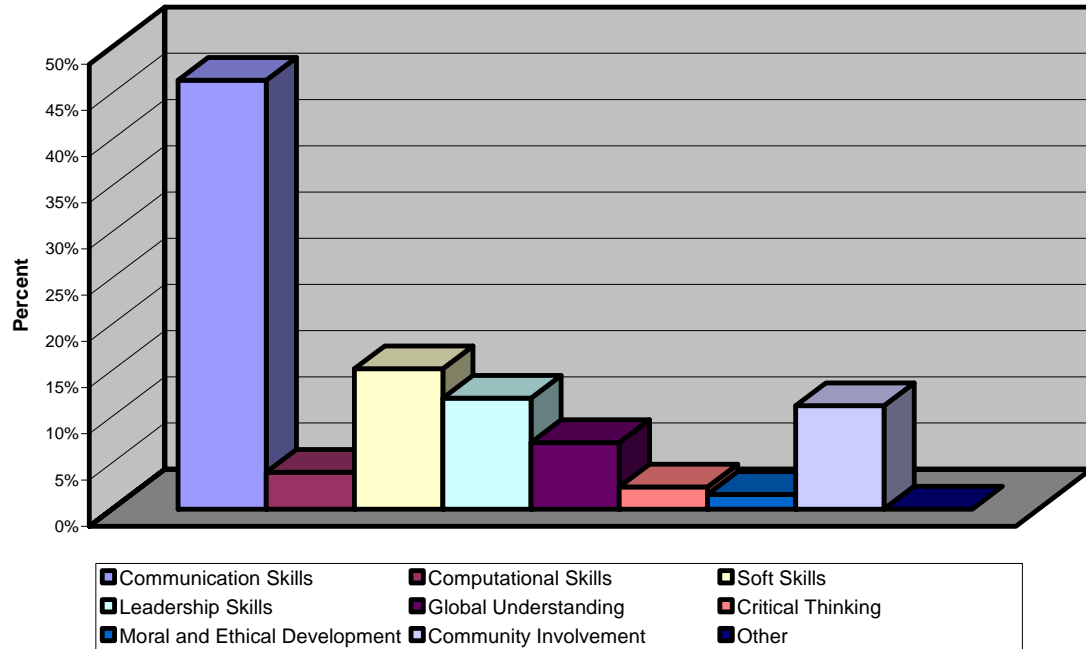
Junior Students

Senior Students

All Students at the College

## Appendix E

Alumni Perceived Academic and Social Challenges of Talladega College Students



Number of Alumni 150  
125 alumni responses

Survey conducted by Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Research Spring 2008

## Appendix F

**Talladega College  
Biology Department Meeting  
Division of Natural science and Mathematics  
Monday, February 11, 2008  
Silsby 109  
12:00 noon**

Attendances: Dr. Alison Brown  
Mrs. Gladys M. Swain  
Ms. Pamela Calhoun (Taking notes)

### I. Learning Outcomes

Suggestions for QEP: Communication, Reading and Writing

What is the QEP? The quality Enhancement Plan is a long-range project which focuses on student learning and enhances the mission and goals of the College. QEP has an impact on the whole campus and community.

1<sup>st</sup>-Reading Comprehension

Dr. Jeffers suggested the need to hire a reading specialist to see what needed to be improved. What should be done? Pre and post test for methods of measurement.

Standardized test-so it will be a part of a class

College Orientation-maybe has two semesters of the class (I&II).

Assignment/Assessment of each class

QEP/all students should be involved, not just the freshman class.

Grammar, punctuation and reading comprehension are some of the areas that need to be addressed in the learning outcomes. Biology uses the MCAT and GRE for measurement.

### II. Quality Enhancement Plan

Areas that need to be addressed:

- i. Punctuation
- ii. Reading
- iii. How to take notes?
- iv. Reading comprehension

Need to understand that most students are at different levels. Students need to review and read each class. Pop quizzes are given the first 10 to 15 minutes of class and if you miss the quiz you can't make it up. You should also quiz before the material is taught and after to see how much of the information is retained. Most freshmen are not prepared for class. They come to class with no pencils, pens or paper to take notes. Most students don't know how to take notes properly. Most students are not on time for class.

One reason why students have writing problems is because of text messaging, instant messaging, etc. (using slang and acronyms. Most students can't write a Complete sentence. In classes we need to make information appealing and interesting so students will retain the information.

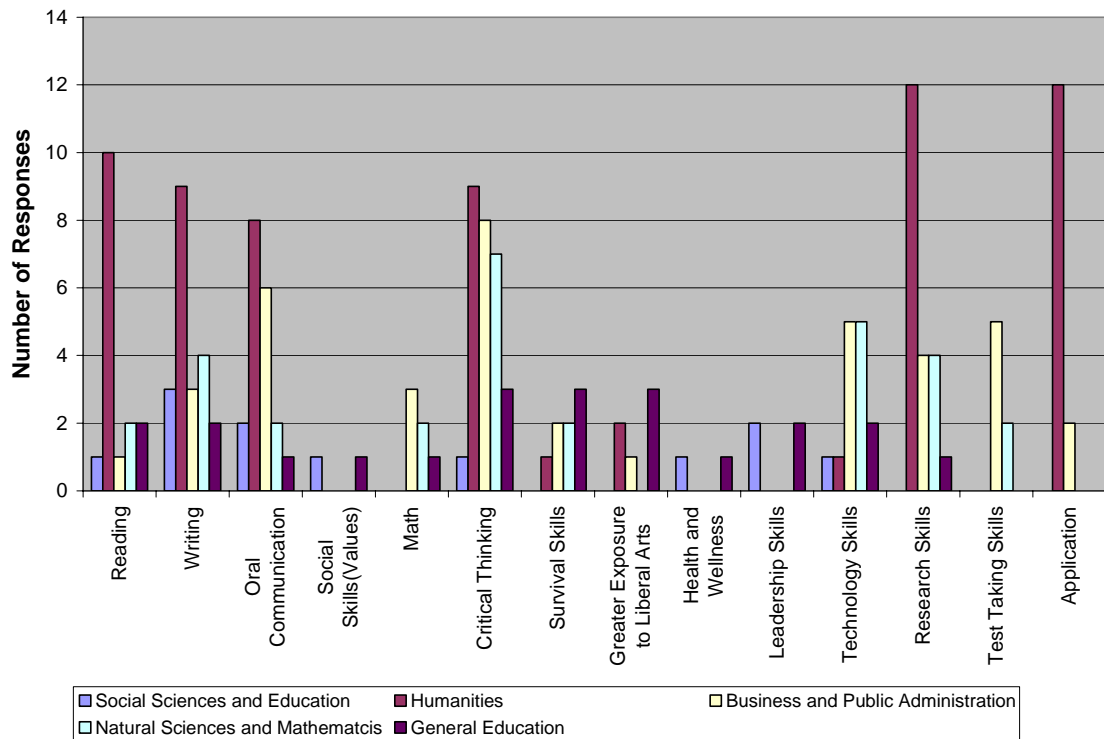
Mrs. Cook—Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research/Co-coordinator of the QEP

“The concerns that you raise here are very important to student learning outcomes and student performance. As I talk with each division I will share with each of these concerns. In the division of Humanities and fine Arts, Dr. Jeffers and the faculty discussed in length the problems students have in seeing the importance of good communications skills. There should not be a course here that does not require good writing, speaking and listening skills. I think that when you consider your learning outcomes that you keep in mind the importance of good communication skills.

Encourage students to study in a study group and ask help from faculty and their peers. Students are not managing their time wisely. They need to study more.

## Appendix G

An Institutional Effectiveness evaluation of assessment of student learning outcomes submitted by faculty for AY 2004-2005 and 2005-2006

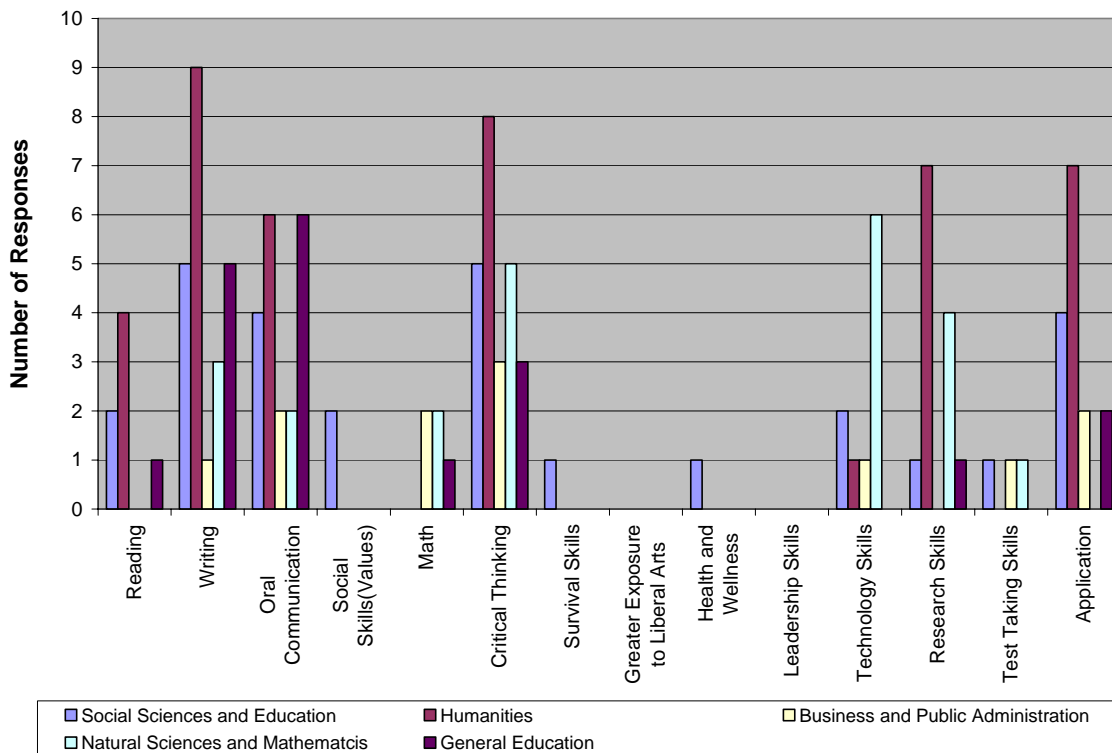


Learning Outcomes and Assessment 2004-2005					
	Social Sciences and Education	Humanities	Business and Public Administration	Natural Sciences and Mathematics	General Education
<b>Reading</b>	1	10	1	2	2
<b>Writing</b>	3	9	3	4	2
<b>Oral Communication</b>	2	8	6	2	1
<b>Social Skills (Values)</b>	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Math</b>	0	0	3	2	1



<b>Critical Thinking</b>	1	9	8	7	3
<b>Survival Skills</b>	0	1	2	2	3
<b>Greater Exposure to Liberal Arts</b>	0	2	1	0	3
<b>Health and Wellness</b>	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Leadership Skills</b>	2	0	0	0	2
<b>Technology Skills</b>	1	1	5	5	2
<b>Research Skills</b>	0	12	4	4	1
<b>Test Taking Skills</b>	0	0	5	2	0
<b>Application</b>	0	12	2	0	0

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes submitted by faculty for AY 2005-2006



Learning Outcomes Assessment  
2005-2006

	<b>Social Sciences and Education</b>	<b>Humanities</b>	<b>Business and Public Administration</b>	<b>Natural Sciences and Mathematics</b>	<b>General Education</b>
<b>Reading</b>	2	4	0	0	1
<b>Writing</b>	5	9	1	3	5
<b>Oral Communication</b>	4	6	2	2	6
<b>Social Skills(Values)</b>	2	0	0	0	0
<b>Math</b>	0	0	2	2	1
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	5	8	3	5	3
<b>Survival Skills</b>	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Greater Exposure to Liberal Arts</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Health and Wellness</b>	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Leadership Skills</b>	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Technology Skills</b>	2	1	1	6	0
<b>Research Skills</b>	1	7	0	4	1
<b>Test Taking Skills</b>	1	0	1	1	0
<b>Application</b>	4	7	2	0	2

**Appendix H  
Talladega College Communications Department Sample Rubrics  
Writing Evaluation Criteria**

The numbers in the top of the boxes are points in a continuum. For example, you can assign 13 points for quality of purpose. As long as you do not give more points than suggested in the leftmost box, the score will range between 0 and 100 when you add up the numbers.

**Quality of Purpose (15%)**

<b>15</b> The purpose was extremely clear and precise.	<b>11</b> The purpose was generally understandable.	<b>7</b> The purpose was only hinted at.	<b>3</b> The purpose was not stated clearly.
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**Development of Purpose (20%)**

<b>20</b> The paper was extremely well organized and supported through the use of details and examples.	<b>15</b> The organization of the paper was good and generally well supported with examples.	<b>10</b> The organization of the paper was weak and support was insubstantial or unconvincing.	<b>5</b> The paper was poorly organized and lacked supporting evidence. Generalizations were a problem.
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**Paragraph Organization (20%)**

<b>20</b> All paragraphs were organized around topic sentences and fully developed. Transitions were handled well.	<b>15</b> Most paragraphs were organized around topic sentences and fully developed. Transitions were adequate.	<b>10</b> Few paragraphs were organized around topic sentences and fully developed. Transitions were weak.	<b>5</b> Little or no evidence of paragraph organizations. Transitions were poor or lacking.
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**Variety of Sentence Structure (10%)**

<b>10</b> Sentences were varied and well written.	<b>7</b> Most sentences were varied and well written.	<b>5</b> Sentences were somewhat varied, and some were awkward.	<b>3</b> Most sentences followed the same pattern and many were awkward.
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**Grammar-Mechanics-Usage-Spelling (15%)**

<b>15</b> No major errors; 1-2 minor errors. (See below)	<b>11</b> No major errors; 3-4 minor errors. (See below)	<b>7</b> One major error; 5-6 minor errors. (See below)	<b>3</b> Two or more major errors; 6 or more minor errors. (See below)
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*Examples of Major Errors: comma splice, sentence fragment, fused sentence, subject-verb not in agreement.*

*Examples of Minor Errors: spelling errors, comma errors, general punctuation errors, pronoun errors, sentence structure errors.*

**Overall Assessment (20%)**

<p><b>20</b> The paper was outstanding. It demonstrated superior understanding of the material covered.</p>	<p><b>15</b> The paper was good. It demonstrated an average understanding of the material covered.</p>	<p><b>10</b> The paper was acceptable. It demonstrated some understanding of the material covered.</p>	<p><b>5</b> The paper was not acceptable. The work was not up to the level of quality expected in this course.</p>
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<p>TOTAL POINTS</p>		
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COMMENTS

## **WRITING EVALUATION CRITERIA**

1. Talladega College is committed to helping students develop superior writing skills. This evaluation rubric was developed by the faculty to help assure consistency in evaluating student written reports.
2. This rubric will be introduced in the first class of each component, and is to be used by each instructor. No other evaluation forms are to be used by any instructor. However, the weighting may be adjusted for specific classes as deemed appropriate by the instructor.
3. Give each student a copy of the Writing Evaluation Criteria form at the beginning of the class to indicate how their reports will be evaluated. If any criterion is not clear, discuss it means.
4. Complete an evaluation for each written report. Evaluation forms should be returned to students no later than the next class.
5. To use the standard writing evaluation rubric, simply place a check mark in the appropriate box for each of the six categories. Write any additional comments at the bottom. Add up all the values in the upper left hand corner of each box checked, and write the total points in the space at the bottom of the form. Letter grades are matched to the range of possible scores.
6. If students are experiencing difficulties in writing well, please refer them to the Skills Enhancement Center for assistance.

**Sample resume rubric**

Skill	Outstanding (A)	Good (B)	Average (C)	Unsatisfactory (F)	Total
Presentation Format	.Typed or computer generated .balanced margins with eye appeal .format highlights strengths and information .appropriate fonts and point size used with variety	.typed or computer generated .balanced margins .format identifies strengths and information .appropriate fonts and point size used	.typed or computer generated .somewhat balanced margins .format identifies strengths and information .no variation in fonts and point size	.typed or computer generated .unbalanced margins .format detracts from strengths and information .fonts distract from readability	
Ranking Points	10	8	7	6	
Job Specific Information	.all action phrases used to describe duties and skills .balanced margins with eye appeal .information demonstrates ability to perform the job .professional terminology used when describing skills	.1-2 duties/skills lack action phrases .Information demonstrates ability to perform the job .Some professional terminology used when describing skills	. 3-4 duties/skills lack action phrases .some information demonstrates ability to perform the job	. 5-6 duties/skills lack action phrases .information does not clearly demonstrate ability to perform the job	
Ranking Points	15	12	11	10	
Resume Content	.heading, objective, skills, experience, and education covered in detail .extra information given to	.heading, objective, skills, experience, and education covered in some detail .extra information given to enhance resume	.heading, objective, skills, experience, and education covered in little detail .minimal extra information given to enhance		

	enhance resume		resume		
Ranking Points	15	12	11	10	
Spelling & Grammar	. no spelling errors .no grammar errors	.1-2 spelling errors .1-2 grammar errors	.3-4 spelling errors .3-4 grammar errors	.5-6 spelling errors .5-6 grammar errors	
Ranking Points	10	8	6	4	
					TOTAL

Source: <http://www.indiana.edu/~r231/1resumeassign.htm>

## *Announcing Talladega College's Quality Enhancement Plan*

### *Topic*



### *Pathway to Excellence: Strengthening Writing Skills 2008-2013*

*The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is submitted by each institution to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in compliance with the reaffirmation for accreditation process. The focus of the QEP is improving student learning and performance. Talladega College is up for reaffirmation in 2009*





August 25, 2008

Mr. Jesse Henderson  
President  
National Alumni Association  
Alpharetta, Georgia

Dear Mr. Henderson:

Let me take this opportunity to inform you of Talladega College's continued commitment to academic excellence. As stated in our mission statement, "Talladega College provides academic programs and experiences for students, that among other outcomes, produce graduates who:  
think analytically and strategically, speak effectively and read critically, write with precision and clarity, exhibit competency in their academic discipline and assume leadership roles in society."

Keeping in mind the goals of our mission, faculty, students and administrators of the college are initiating a Quality Enhancement Plan that is a carefully designed and focused course of action that addresses a well-defined topic or issue directly related to enhancing student learning. The Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) is a requirement by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools for all institutions going through the Reaffirmation process for Accreditation. Talladega College is up for reaffirmation in summer 2009. Our on-site visit is October 7-9, 2008.

Talladega College has identified writing in the general education curriculum as the key issue for its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). The topic for the QEP is **Pathway to Excellence: Strengthening Writing Skills**. The **Pathway to Excellence: Strengthening Writing Skills** program at Talladega College is designed to impact the writing skills of students during the freshman and sophomore years. The aim of the program is to integrate writing into specific general education courses other than those traditionally related to writing such as Communications.

Please join with us in promoting this program for our students as they complete their studies here at the Alpha Lyrae Vega of them all. We thank you for your continued support.

Respectfully submitted

Delois B. Cook  
Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research/Co-Coordinator of the QEP



August 25, 2008

Mr. James Thornton  
Chairman  
Board of Trustees  
Bel Air, Maryland

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