

Columbus State University

Quality Enhancement Plan Annual Report

2009-2010

Prepared by

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## **Executive Summary 2009-20010**

Academic Year 2009-2010 was another transitional year for the Quality Enhancement Plan at Columbus State University. Despite changes in key personnel, the work of the QEP continued, as this year was successful in awarding 5 faculty writing fellowships and awarding **{number to be supplied later}** QEP mini-grants in both Fall and Spring terms. Additionally, 10 faculty members were named Outstanding Teachers of Writing. Workshops on best practices in writing instruction were held throughout the year; assessment artifacts were collected and evaluated, Professors Hickson, Butcher, Sheeks, and Loughman held a roundtable discussion on planning and implementing a QEP at the SACS conference at Atlanta in December 2009 and Professors Cummings and Owen presented on the new CSU QEP Assessment Plan (the Universal Prompt) which is now being used to collect and analyze evidence of student writing improvement.

Dr. Joyce Hickson retired at the end of Fall 2009 from her position as Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and SACS Liaison. Dr. Hickson had overseen QEP operations from the very beginning of the initiative, when the topic was chosen and the plan was created during the SACS reaffirmation year of 2005-2006. Dr. Tina Butcher has taken her place as SACS Liaison and has ably managed the QEP since January 1, 2010. Dr. Jim Owen returned to his duties as a full-time professor of English January 1, 2010; hence, for a term, the Faculty Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning has been without a Director as well as without an administrative assistant, thus limiting the programs offered during Spring term of 2010; however, the QEP Advisory Committee undertook the process of awarding grants and teaching awards, so faculty programs continued as planned. The position of Director was advertised internally, but after consultation with Dr. Bill Hill, Director of the Kennesaw's CETL, it was decided to open up the process to a nation-wide search; applicants are being screened and interviewed during the summer of 2010.

Ms. Angela Green began her first year of service July 1, 2010, and has proven to be an excellent QEP Writing Specialist. She oversaw the projects of 5 Faculty Writing Fellows which culminated in the Celebration of Student Writing, she coordinated workshops on best practices with Professors Roderick and Rendleman, and she oversaw the collection of data using the Universal Prompt. Ms. Green quickly learned to coordinate and run Universal Prompt rating sessions and has assembled a group of finely trained raters, some of whom were experienced CLAQWA scorers and some of whom are new to the field of writing assessment. In fact, the training of raters from throughout the differing disciplines to use rubrics for the assessment of writing has proven to be an unforeseen yet positive consequence of the Writing Initiative and the use of the Universal Prompt. During the last year of CLAQWA data analysis, Professors Cummings and Owen had noted that although the CLAQWA had initially been rated by faculty members throughout the disciplines, interest in its use outside the Department of English had waned: the raters had complained that CLAQWA was cumbersome, and the Universal

Prompt was developed in response to rater comments. During Academic Year 2009-2010, Specialist Green held three two-day rating sessions: one in Fall 2009, one in Spring 2010, and one in Summer 2010.

Dr. Noah Roderick assumed the position of Acting Director of First Year Composition and immediately began working to communicate best practices in writing instruction within the entire campus community, holding workshop on writing instruction to which all faculty members were invited. Dr. Roderick has proven an invaluable resource for the QEP, as he has worked in collaboration with Ms. Green's efforts to recruit volunteers to collect data using the Universal Prompt: hence, we have continued to have good luck collecting data from first-year composition classes.

Dr. Eliot Rendleman came on board as Director of the Writing Center in July 2009 and has worked closely with the QEP leadership team since his arrival. In collaboration with Green and Roderick, Dr. Rendleman has conducted workshops for all faculty members on best practices in creating writing assignments. His perspective on the creation of writing assignments is enhanced by his experience working in and directing writing centers, as he sees the way that students respond to written assignments; hence, he stresses that the clearer the instructor makes his or her expectations, the more likely they are to get writing that lives up those expectations.

## **II: Report on Progress toward Goals**

### *A. Goal 1: To Provide an Infrastructure for Professional Development Activities to Improve Student Writing*

During AY 2009-2010, there were several major changes in QEP personnel. The administrative assistant's position remained closed; university budget cuts over the past two years have been slightly over 23%, and unless there are major changes to the Faculty Center's place at CSU, there is little hope of recovering that lost position.

Dr. Owen, who had served as Director of the Faculty Center and hence the QEP, returned to his position as Full Professor of English starting January 2010. For Spring 2010, the Faculty Center was unstaffed.

Professor Green and Drs. Rendleman and Roderick came on board as QEP Writing Specialist, Director of the Writing Center, and Acting Director of First Year Composition.

Dr. Joyce Hickson retired from her position as Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Affairs; she had been the SACS Liaison and the Chair of the QEP Oversight Committee. Dr. Tina Butcher replaced Dr. Hickson in January 2010; until the hiring of a new Director, she has handled all matters related to the QEP.

### *Objective 1: Establish and Infrastructure for Faculty Development Related to Student Writing*

## QEP Advisory Committee AY 2009-2010

As directed by the QEP document, the QEP Advisory Committee was constituted of faculty members and administrators, with faculty members comprising the majority. Because of sabbaticals, retirements, and changes in academic responsibilities, the make up of the committee shifted in Spring 2010. The full committee needs to re-examine its composition for 2010-2011 to align itself with the new division of academic units: at the time of this committee's composition, University College was a separate academic unit, and Letters and Sciences had not yet merged. *Ex officio* members include the Vice President for Student Affairs, the QEP Writing Specialist, the Director of First Year Composition, the Director of the Writing Center, the Director of the Faculty Center, and the SACS Liaison Officer.

### Fall 2009 Committee Members

Dr. John Barone, Chair  
Dr. Becky Becker  
Dr. Walter Breaux  
Dr. Elizabeth Wurz  
Dr. Thomas Loughman  
Ms. Paula Adams  
Mr. Jon Haney  
Mr. Edwin Parker, Student

Ms. Angela Green, *ex officio*  
Dr. Joyce Hickson, *ex officio*  
Dr. Jim Owen, *ex officio*  
Dr. Eliot Rendleman, *Ex officio*  
Dr. Noah Roderick, *ex officio*  
Dr. Gina Sheeks, *ex officio*

### Spring 2010 Committee Members

Ms. Paula Adams, Chair  
Dr. John Barone (on sabbatical) Dr. Becky Becker  
Dr. Walter Breaux  
Dr. Elizabeth Wurz  
Dr. Thomas Loughman  
Mr. Jon Haney  
Mr. Edwin Parker

Ms. Angela Green, *ex officio*  
Dr. Jim Owen, *ex officio*  
Dr. Eliot Rendleman, *Ex officio*

Dr. Noah Roderick, *ex officio*  
Dr. Gina Sheeks, *ex officio*  
Dr. Tina Butcher, *ex officio*

Committee business, 2009-2010

The Director of the Writing Center was added as an *ex officio* member.

When the Committee met in Fall 2009, it was unanimously decided to retain the representatives who were appointed to represent the academic units that had previously been in place; hence, Dr. Wurz remained an active member of the committee in her second year of service. Dr. Barone was elected chair; Dr. Adams agreed to serve as chair in Spring 2010 while Dr. Barone was on sabbatical.

It was suggested that the committee needs to address several issues in AY 2010-2011. Its membership is spelled out in the QEP document; however, at the time that document was approved, the university had a different alignment of academic units and did not make any contingencies for realignment. If the committee has representatives only from the remaining four academic units and the library, there will be fewer faculty members than there are administrators serving on the committee: the intention of the designers of the QEP was that this committee be faculty driven. Hence, it may be necessary to specify that each academic unit send two representatives to the QEP Advisory Committee in the future.

Further, the subcommittees work quite well in deciding on Fellowships and Grants; however, the Outstanding Teacher of Writing Awards need to find a better timeline. It has never been the intention of the committee that these awards be part of scholastic honors convocation, but we have each year made these awards rather late in the Spring term, and it seems we need to find a better way of recognizing the awardees to the whole campus community.

#### QEP Oversight Committee

The QEP Oversight Committee had been in prior years been comprised of the Writing Specialist, the SACS Liaison, the Director of Institutional Effectiveness, the Director of the Writing Center, and the Director of Freshman Composition. During Fall 2009, the committee welcomed new members Angela Green (QEP Writing Specialist), Noah Roderick (Director of First Year Composition), and added Eliot Rendleman (Director of the Writing Center). Jim Owen and Dr. Joyce Hickson continued to serve as Director of the Faculty Center and SACS Liaison Officer in the Fall of 2009, and the committee met weekly. However, Dr. Hickson's retirement and Dr. Owen's return to full-time teaching responsibilities ended the weekly meetings; in Spring 2010, Dr. Butcher took over the job of SACS Liaison Officer and met with the remaining members of the Oversight Committee individually as needed.

## **Fall Book Group**

The Faculty Center conducted a faculty book group in Fall 2009; its purpose was threefold—it offered new faculty members a chance to continue their orientation on our campus; it provided a forum on teaching for faculty members at all levels of experience, and it served as a quiet recruiting program for the QEP (4 of this year’s Faculty Writing Fellows had been book group members during prior year).

This year’s book group had 16 participants: Gregory Domin, Kyle Christensen, Samuel Abegaz, Yousef Ahmadibeni, Lydia Ray, Sonya Boadu, Ata Yesilyaprak, Zewdu Gebeyehu, Courtney George, Paula Adams, Noah Roderick, Angela Green, Zdeslav Hrepic, Claudia Williams, Dorinda Dowis, and Patrick McHenry.

Dr. Owen served as moderator and facilitator. While the majority of the participants were in their first three years of service at CSU, Drs. Yesilyaprak, Gebeyehu, Dowis, and McHenry contributed their experience as veteran faculty members.

This year’s text was Peter Filene’s *The Joy of Teaching*, and it was very well received by the readers. It was very well suited for junior faculty members in their first years of teaching, but offered plenty of advice for experienced faculty members, too. It fit quite well with prior book group offerings on teaching: Ken Bain’s *What the Best College Teachers Do* and Robert Boice’s *Advice to New Faculty*.

## **New Faculty Orientation, 2009**

Drs. Hickson and Owen and Professor Green were active in New Faculty Orientation; Green and Owen presented on the importance of the CSU Writing Initiative. By taking part in all the New Faculty Orientation sessions, Owen gained support for the QEP, as evidenced by the fact that of the 10 Outstanding Teacher of Writing Awards given out in 2010, 3 were received by faculty members in their first year of service at CSU.

Further, 1 QEP mini grant was awarded to a faculty member in his first year of service at CSU, and 8 new CSU faculty members took part in Professor Green’s Universal Prompt Rating Sessions in AY 2009-2010

## **Meeting with Bill Hill**

In April 2010, Dr. Bill Hill, Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning at Kennesaw State University, visited campus as a consultant and met with various groups involved with the QEP and the Faculty Center. The following summarizes the meeting he held with Tina Butcher, Carl Wallman, Noah Roderick, Eliot Rendleman, and Jim Owen concerning the state of the QEP and the Faculty Center.

Dr. Hill had read the QEP carefully and recognizes the ambitious nature of the writing initiative. However, he felt that by staking the Faculty Center so fully on one initiative,

the framers of the QEP had perhaps limited its operation too strictly and created some redundancies of programs.

For example, Dr. Hill pointed out that the Faculty Center has operated under the direction of the QEP Advisory Committee, as outlined in the QEP document approved in 2005. This committee makes decisions on Faculty Writing Fellowships, QEP Grants, and on Outstanding Teacher of Writing Awards. Dr. Hill suggested that the overall purposes of Faculty Development on CSU's campus might be better served by a Faculty Development Committee that handled all fellowships, grants, and awards in connection with the Faculty Center. Hence, if the Faculty Center were given more scope, perhaps as the clearing house for all faculty development activities on campus, it would be more vital to the operations of the campus.

Dr. Hill liked the ways that the Faculty Center had involved itself with reaching out to new faculty through its involvement in New Faculty Orientation and through the book groups that had been held each semester, and suggested that programs such as these were helpful in helping faculty members grow as teachers and as scholars—that the goal of the Faculty Center should be to aid faculty members in their teaching and their scholarship, helping them to meet the goals set for tenure and promotion.

#### Objective 2: Provide Incentives for Faculty to Participate in Professional Development Activities

When faculty focus groups were asked what it would take to get faculty members to emphasize writing in their classes, there were four answers: (1) the opportunities for ongoing professional development; (2) time; (3) money; and (4) recognition. The QEP was designed to respond to each of these faculty concerns, and during its first three years of operation, it has done so through faculty writing fellowships, QEP mini-grants, reassignment time, and outstanding teacher of writing awards.

During Academic Year 2009-2010, there were 5 Faculty Writing Fellows, there were multiple QEP-sponsored workshops related to the teaching of writing, there were 9 faculty members who received QEP grant monies for programs directly related to improving student writing on our campus, and there were 10 Outstanding Teacher of Writing Awards.

During Summer 2009, we put out a call for Writing Fellows; experience from our first two years of operation has suggested that it is best to have the applications due around the beginning of Fall term; we have tried earlier dates, but have had better success scheduling fellowship applications in the Fall rather than in the preceding Spring. This year, there were seven applicants and five were chosen. Faculty Writing Fellows meet regularly as a group with the QEP Writing Specialist in the fall term, planning for ways to incorporate writing into at least one of their spring classes; during spring term, they institute changes that they have designed and assess the ways that the teaching of writing has affected their students' learning. As a culmination of their fellowships, these faculty members'

students make presentations at the CSU Celebration of Student Writing. In academic year 2009-2010, we had five Faculty Writing Fellows (the number called for in the QEP planning document): Drs. **Becky Becker**, Theatre; **Mariko Izumi**, Communications; **Lydia Ray**, Computer Science; **Carmen Skaggs**, English; **Cheryl Smith**, Nursing

B. Goal 2: To Improve Faculty and Staff Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes Related to Student Writing

### **Writing Fellows, Reassignment Time Recipients, Grant Recipients 2009-2010**

The Faculty Writing Fellows program remains the most prestigious and most visible faculty development program in the QEP. Fellows are given a yearly stipend of \$2,000 and are required to meet regularly as a group, to coordinate with the QEP Writing Specialist in the design of a writing-enriched class to be taught in the Spring term, and to contribute to the annual Celebration of Student Writing.

#### **Writing Fellows**

Writing Fellows propose a plan to enhance writing in a course or courses. In concert with the QEP Writing Specialist, these innovators develop a comprehensive approach to improving students' writing skills, they establish outcomes for writing, and they assess these outcomes. Professors Cummings and Owen encouraged faculty members who had shown interest in the QEP in past years to apply for fellowships, faculty were encouraged to apply at every QEP-sponsored event, and an electronic call for proposals was sent out to all faculty members. When Professor Green replaced Professor Cummings as QEP Writing Specialist, she met with interested potential fellows at the beginning of Fall 2009 to help them hone their proposals.

As a result, we had seven quality applications, five of which were approved by the selections subcommittee of the QEP Advisory Committee. The original QEP planning document called for five Faculty Writing Fellows per year, with the intention that each academic unit be represented. This creates a slight difficulty now that we have only four academic units: it seems best to keep the number of fellowships at five in order for more faculty members (and hence more students) to be able to participate. This year, each of our remaining academic units was represented by a Faculty Writing Fellow; the newly formed College of Arts and Communications had two Fellows. Further, a variety of levels of classes were represented: Dr. Skaggs' project targeted writing in the core, while the other Fellows' projects were aimed at writing in the disciplines.

The following faculty members were selected:

- Dr. Becky Becker, Theatre, for her proposal to make writing a major focus in her THEA 3248 class, Devising Performance; Dr. Becker's students created a performance out of materials that they discovered in conducting oral histories of our region. Her students had to first transcribe the materials they gathered in their

- histories, then to turn them into polished monologues, and then to collate them into a complete performance;
- Dr. Mariko Izumi, Communications, for her proposal to use differing types of writing assignments in her COM 4115 Rhetorical Criticism class. Perhaps the most ambitious part of Dr. Izumi's project was that she proposed to teach this class entirely on line;
  - Dr. Lydia Ray, Computer Science, for her proposal to infuse writing into her computer science class; Dr. Ray's students had to learn to perform a "digital forensics" project, recovering information from computers to be used in writing reports for legal investigations;
  - Dr. Cheryl Smith, Nursing, for her proposal to infuse her nursing course with high and low stakes writing assignments;
  - Dr. Carmen Skaggs, English, for her proposal to change the way that she taught writing in her English 1101 classes; Dr. Skaggs' project involved getting students to consider audience in any writing project and culminated in her students writing personal belief essays which they recorded as three-minute podcasts modeled after NPR's "This I Believe" series.

A total of \$10,000 was awarded to Faculty Writing Fellows in AY 2009-2010. The number of students affected in writing-enriched classes taught by the Fellows was **128** in academic year 2009-2010. These students contributed projects to the Celebration of Student Writing.

### **Grants and Reassignment Time Awardees**

This year, there were no applications for reassignment time; during the past two years' budget shortfalls, the climate has been such that the initial QEP plan of reducing teachers' loads for teaching a writing-enriched class seems ill-timed. The initial QEP budget included monies to be used for the hiring of part-time instructors to take over one class for a term and thus give a release-time recipient extra time to spend on writing instruction. However, state funds for the university have been cut slightly more than 25% during the past two years, and students this coming year are facing an increase in fees; hence, this is not a good time for faculty members to ask for reduced loads. Many of our departments are operating with fewer full-time faculty members than they currently need, so they could not afford to lose even 1/8<sup>th</sup> of a full-time faculty member's teaching load.

The QEP Advisory Committee agreed to roll over the \$10,000 that would have gone into hiring part-time faculty members into the monies available for QEP mini grants; hence, we were able to award 10 QEP mini grants in both the Fall and Spring of AY 2009-2010: 6 in Fall 2009; 4 in Spring 2010 for a total of \$17,150 for faculty members involved in programs directly related to the improvement of student writing

**A total of \$9,550 in QEP grants were awarded for Fall 2009.** Under the guidance of the QEP Advisory Committee, a call for proposals was sent out to all faculty members through electronic mail and through forums in Spring 2009. The Advisory Committee

formed a subcommittee to rate the proposals with a rubric; the subcommittee majority vote was faculty and staff. The following faculty members' projects were funded:

- **Gregory Domin**, Political Science, was awarded \$1,350 for his project to blend high and low stakes writing assignments in his core Political Science classes;
- **Lei Li**, Management and Marketing, was awarded \$1,000 for his plan to use writing in Management and Marketing classes that had had no writing assignments in the past;
- **Amanda Rees**, History and Geography, was awarded \$2,000 for her proposal to alter the way that she was using writing assignments in core Geography classes;
- **Eliot Rendleman**, English, was awarded \$1,200 for bringing two acclaimed Georgia Writers to campus as part of CSU's recognition of the National Day on Writing;
- **Cheryl Smith**, Nursing, was awarded \$2,000 for her department's plan to create a capstone e-portfolio;
- **Ata Yesilyaprak**, Accounting and Finance, was awarded \$2,000 for his proposal to add a high-stakes writing assignment to his FIN 3156 Course.

A total of 9 faculty members were affected by Fall 2009 QEP grants (the Nursing grant included 4 faculty members); **275** students benefited from taking writing-enriched classes in the Fall.

**A total of \$7,600 in QEP grants were awarded for Spring 2010.** A second call for proposals was distributed through electronic mail after the awarding of the Fall grants; additional interest was created through announcements made in the Fall QEP Faculty Forum, in QEP Professional Development Activities, and in New Faculty Orientation programs. The following faculty members were awarded grants:

- **Dr. Barbara Johnston**, Art History, received \$2,000 for her project, "Developing Effective Writing Assignments for Art Appreciation Classes"; this work represents a follow-up to the Art History Department's Spring 2009 retreat on establishing writing as a major component in their department's curriculum;
- **Dr. Daniel Ross**, English, was awarded \$2,000 for his project, "Use of a Writing Fellow in a Freshman Learning Community"; Dr. Ross used these funds to pay for an outstanding English Major, Kristen Taylor, to serve as a teaching assistant to his Spring Freshman Learning Community and to make Blogging a part of the LC class.
- **Dr. Florence Wakoko-Studstill**, Sociology, was awarded \$2,400 for her project, "Writing to Learn in Social Research Methods";
- **Dr. Elizabeth Wurz**, Basic Studies, was awarded \$1,200 for her project, "Experiential Learning and Collaboration in Learning Support Writing"; her

students presented a panel for the university community. On a side note, Dr. Wurz's study was part of a larger project that she conducted in her Basic Studies English Classes, whereby a total of 109 freshmen were directly affected during the year-long study.

Four faculty members were affected by Spring 2010 grant monies, and a total of **145** students were directly affected. Academic Year 2009-2010 classes directly affected represent a healthy blend of classes in the core and in the disciplines, thus fulfilling the QEP's goal of developing competent and professional student writers.

In addition, Ms. Crystal Woods, director of the English Lab, received \$2,700 in QEP monies to design an interactive plagiarism tutorial for all Nursing students. Drs. Butcher and Owen made the decision to fund this project (which came at a different time from the normal grant applications) based on their understanding of the way that the Nursing Program was a major contributor to the QEP and of the way that the tutorial would benefit many students for years to come.

#### Department-level Initiatives, Academic Year 2009-2010

The QEP continued to encourage program-level interventions; in Fall 2009, Green and Owen visited the College of Education to encourage the use of the Universal Prompt. Nursing and Art History again demonstrated their commitment to the QEP through several projects: Dr. Johnston's grant to develop effective writing assignments for Art Appreciation courses represents a substantial effort to increase writing in the core; while Dr. Smith's work on E-portfolios and shared assessment demonstrates Nursing's continued emphasis on the importance of building effective writing skills.

The most important Departmental-Level intervention this year was in the Department of Nursing. Crystal Woods, the director of the English Writing Lab, had previously developed a highly effective plagiarism tutorial that all students are required to pass successfully in order to receive credit for English 1102; her tutorial is specifically designed for first-year students and is also discipline specific in that it focuses on Modern Language Association methods of citation. In Spring 2009, Woods and Owen conducted campus-wide workshops on ways to discourage plagiarism and guide students toward academic honesty, and when the School of Nursing faculty members who attended these workshops saw Professor Woods' tutorial, they realized its value for their juniors and seniors. Hence, Professor Woods designed and created a tutorial on academic honesty specifically geared toward Nursing students, using citations from Nursing journals and incorporating discipline-specific citation style. This tutorial will positively affect all Nursing juniors and seniors for years to come. Woods received \$2,700 from QEP funding for this project.

#### Outstanding Teaching of Writing Awards

As outlined in the QEP document, the Advisory Committee may recommend up to eleven Outstanding Teacher of Writing Awards per year; two for each of the five academic units

existing at the time of the plan's development, and one for the library. The restructuring of the colleges that has taken place over the past year will force the Advisory Committee to revisit the initial plan and to make changes in the way that awards are divided up amongst colleges. For example, the newly formed College of Letters and Science is very large when compared with some of the other academic units and indeed comprises many of the classes taught in the core (or competent-level) curriculum.

In Spring 2010, the Advisory Committee sent out the following call for nominations; it was agreed that the stream-lined nomination and documentation process that we had instituted in Spring 2009 had worked effectively, it was continued:

*Nominations for this Year's Outstanding Teacher of Writing Awards*

*In support of Columbus State University's Quality Enhancement Plan, "Writing the Solution: Steps Toward Developing Competent and Professional Student Writers," the QEP Advisory Committee is pleased to call for nominations for the third annual Outstanding Teacher of Writing awards.*

*Awards are for \$1,000; in the past, we have awarded up to 11 awards. All faculty members, including Library faculty, are eligible for an Outstanding Teacher of Writing award. No more than 3 awards will be given to any one academic unit.*

*Emailed or hard-copy nominations for faculty members from all disciplines are welcomed. Nominations will be accepted from faculty, students, and staff. Students should feel free to nominate any active CSU instructors who have had a positive impact on their writing in any class and at any point in their college career. Self-nominations are also encouraged. All nominations should be submitted by April 2, 2010 to*

*Eliot Rendleman  
The CSU Writing Center  
Columbus State University  
4225 University Avenue  
Columbus, GA 31907  
[faculty\\_center@colstate.edu](mailto:faculty_center@colstate.edu)*

*Nominations should include specific evidence of outstanding teaching from the nominator's perspective, including, but not limited to, statements on the impact of the writing curriculum on the lives of the nominee's students, descriptions of effective writing assignments, observations on how the nominee's teaching of writing has improved his or her classes and contributed to a culture of learning on our campus.*

*Nominated candidates  
must be active full or part-time CSU faculty,  
must have demonstrated commitment to using writing to improve student learning,  
must model effective strategies for incorporating writing into their classes,*

*and must show their commitment to innovation and/or self-improvement in their teaching of writing.*

The intent was to award up to 11 awards, as called for in the planning document, but to restrict the awards such that no academic unit would receive more than 3. A subcommittee was formed, headed by Edwin Parker, our student representative, and consisting of Parker, Rendleman, Adams, and Haney; the Advisory Committee agreed that Rendleman would be the logical point person to receive nominations and collect supporting documentation from nominees.

The number of nominations, 26, was similar to that of AY 2008-2009. However, the majority of the nominations came from the College of Letters and Science, and the subcommittee recommended the following 10 faculty members:

CHRISTENSEN	KYLE	Political Science
DELANEY	TOM	English
DOMIN	GREGORY	Political Science
REES	AMANDA	Geography
WURZ	ELIZABETH	Basic Studies
GEORGE	COURTNEY	English
HANSEN	KRISTEN	Music
IRVIN	TERRY	Basic Studies
WRIGHT	MOLLY	English
COOK	ALYCE	Spanish

On a positive note, the QEP's commitment to reaching all faculty members at CSU is reflected in the fact that two of the winners are part-time instructors and one is a non-tenure track lecturer. The director and specialist's commitment to stressing the importance of the QEP at new faculty orientation is once again affirmed: three of the winners are in their first year of service at CSU.

It is troubling, however, that fewer academic units were represented in the awards this year than ever before. The members of the subcommittee suggested that the awards be handled differently in the coming year; perhaps model nominations and responses could be made available to all faculty members so that more faculty members would create effective packets for consideration.

Timing was once again a problem, in part because of the difficulties in agreeing on awardees. By the time the awards were settled, the term was almost over. The committee recommends that next year's process begin far earlier in Spring term, if not in Fall, so that awardees will get proper recognition.

QEP Writing Awards for English 1101-1102

This year, no QEP writing awards were given for outstanding 1101 and 1102 essays. The former director of first-year composition handled these awards in the past; it is up to the Advisory Board and Professor Roderick to decide whether or not to continue these awards in the future.

### 2010 Celebration of Student Writing

The 2010 Celebration of Student Writing showcased the works of those students who were taking classes from the AY 2009-2010 Faculty Writing Fellows. A total of 60 students presented at the Celebration of Student Writing this year, though the work of 128 students was on display there. Attendance was lower than usual: around 200 students and faculty attended. We had changed venues to the Lumpkin Center, so perhaps construction and parking difficulties created difficulties for some. In the past, all first-year composition students were required to attend; this year, attendance was made optional; Green and Roderick may decide to make attendance by 1102 students required. Additionally, the committee may consider combining the CSW with the newly instituted Tower Day events.

- Becky Becker's students presented videos of their works in progress: monologues related to their oral history project; they also showed how their writings were the results of multiple drafts;
- Mariko Izumi's students presented on their discoveries of the way rhetoric was intermingled in many parts of their daily lives. For example, several of her students had made rhetorical analyses of the film *Crash*;
- Lydia Ray's students showed how digital forensics would be used in reports of insurance fraud;
- Cheryl Smith's students shared posters related to their writing projects; they also shared them during Tower Day;
- Carmen Skaggs' students shared their podcasts of their "This I Believe" projects; they also showed how their final narratives were the results of careful editing of multiple drafts.

The students demonstrated many ways that writing related to their lives and offered many different examples of the ways that writing would be used in their differing majors and professions. Those students who attended were challenged to think of the ways that writing skills would play a major role in their careers. UITS archived the event by videotaping it; Green is currently working with Steve Roach on editing the tape for possible streaming on the CSU website. Past Celebrations of Student Writing are available for viewing at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P7UpdSWv1CY> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fF418iSOdXc>.

*Objective 3: Establish Resources Related to Promoting Student Success in Improving Writing Abilities*

Professional Development Events Conducted By Roderick, Rendleman, and Green

## Fall 2009

Fall Orientation for Teachers of First-Year Composition (Roderick): Faculty discussed some of the new directions the writing program would take with Roderick at the helm. The group also talked about best practices, and held a syllabus workshop.

Contrastive Rhetoric and Teaching in the Multicultural Classroom (Roderick)--This PDE focused on different cultural approaches to writing against the idea that the writing class has traditionally been a tool of enculturation for the academy and for the nation-state. Roderick introduced the field of contrastive rhetoric, and invited three international students to come in and talk about their experiences in the FYC classroom.

The 1102 Research Paper (Roderick): In this PDE, faculty members talked about successful primary and secondary research assignments for 1102. We also talked about ways of teaching research ethics.

The Economy of Response and Recorded Assessment (Roderick): Guest speakers Angela Green and Molly Wright talked about making the most out of minimal responses on student papers, and about the benefits of responding to student writing using MP3 voice recorders.

Best Practices in Designing Effective Writing Assignments (Rendleman): Rendleman held multiple workshops in the Fall geared toward getting faculty members across the disciplines to design effective writing assignments, giving students a clearer idea of what the instructor expects.

Responding to Student Writing (Green): Green conducted two workshops on ways that instructors could effectively respond to student writing; her thesis was that many instructors over-respond to student writing, overwhelming both the student and the faculty member.

## Spring 2010

Spring FYC Orientation (Roderick): Discussed best practices in the FYC class. Held a syllabus workshop that focused on articulating learning outcomes (and how participation in the QEP could help with that) and also planned for future professional development events.

Revising the FYC Handbook (Roderick): In this PDE, we collectively revised the research paper portion of the FYC handbook, and discussed undergraduate research in general, as well as undergraduate publishing opportunities.

Disability Studies and Composition (Roderick): This one focused on the subject of disability in the writing classroom. We read and discussed an article entitled "Discourses of Disability," which was guided by our first guest speaker, and disability studies

specialist, Josh Eyler. We talked not only about accommodating for disability, but how studying the rhetoric of disability can be a fruitful topic in the Composition class. Sheri Allen from the Counseling Center also spoke to the group about how to assist students with emotional disabilities.

### Fall Faculty Forum

On 10 October 2009, a full faculty forum was hosted by Hickson, Green, Rendleman, Roderick, and Owen. The purpose was to introduce the new members of the QEP team, to promote faculty involvement in grants and fellowships, and to make public the preliminary data gleaned from the piloting of the universal prompt. 17 faculty members attended.

### **III. Writing Assessment 2009-2010**

This marked the first full year that the Universal Prompt and Rubric were used for rating essays. The universal prompt and the rubric for scoring it were prepared with collaboration from Dr. Robert Cummings, Dr. Michael Neal, Dr. William Hortman, and many faculty members who were involved in our initial studies using the CLAQWA. Its creation is detailed in the AY 2008-2009 QEP Annual Report.

Students in any level class are given the following prompt to respond to:

#### QEP Universal Writing Prompt

After reviewing the learning outcomes listed in the syllabus for this course, and reflecting on the assignments you have completed for this class, please write a short essay of approximately 750 words to answer the following questions:

Which course learning outcome would you identify as being the most significant in your personal learning experience this semester? What one assignment, completed for this course, would you point to as significant work toward fulfilling this outcome?

As you compose your response, be sure to:

- Identify or reproduce the learning outcome;
- Interpret the outcome in your own language;
- Describe the work you completed for one assignment which is significant in light of fulfilling this outcome;
- Apply the work of that one assignment to the learning outcome, explaining how your work is evidence of having made progress toward fulfilling the outcome;
- Analyze why your work toward this outcome is significant to your class learning experience, explaining what makes this work valuable to you;
- Evaluate or assess the overall significance of this experience. You might consider what this learning experience means to you now, or what it might mean to you

in the future. You might consider if this experience has made a difference in your life as a student of this subject, or if it has led to a change in your thinking.

Please do not compose statements for each bullet point in a question and answer format. Rather, your response should be in the form of a complete essay. Your essay will be addressed to a general audience – those who are not familiar with your class – and not specifically to your teacher. You should introduce the course work in such a way that others, who have not enrolled in the course, could understand it. You do not need to provide documentation (i.e., a works cited page or bibliography) for either your the course syllabus or your work.

Any one task, assignment or activity you have completed for this course is eligible to be considered as evidence toward completing a learning outcome; this includes in-class assignments, exams, your studying for exams, your reading of textbook assignments, lab activities, extra credit assignments, any and all reading and/or research you have conducted, or papers you have written.

Essays are collected by the instructor and then rated by a team of trained faculty raters. In AY 2009-2010, raters were trained by Green and Owen. Rating sessions were held in both Fall and Spring.

The following rubric is used by raters to score the collected essays. Each essay is read by a group of two readers; the final score for any one trait must be agreed upon collaboratively between the two raters.

Thus far, there have been two unintended yet happy consequences of the QEP data collection and scoring method. First, because it is voluntary and now captures for the instructor of the class a snapshot of student learning related to his or her class, there is more incentive for faculty members to devote time in assigning it and marking it.

Secondly, it is itself a faculty development opportunity that trains faculty members to use rubrics effectively to rate writing assignments. Raters are paid \$150 for each 4-hour rating session. The team for 2009-2010 included:

- Angela Green, English
- Mariko Izumi, Communications
- Markus Weidler, Philosophy
- Gregory Domin, Political Science
- Barbara Hunt, English
- Joseph McCallus, English
- Courtney George, English
- Noah Roderick, English
- Eliot Rendleman, English
- William Owen, English
- Daniel Gullo, History
- Zdeslav Hrepic, Physics
- Dianne Armstrong, English
- Dorinda Dowis, Criminal Justice
- John Summerfield, English
- Elizabeth Culverson, English
- Elizabeth Wurz, English
- Rachael Williams, Basic Studies

It is recommended that each year, more faculty members be encouraged to use the Universal Prompt and to be trained as raters.

Essay Number: Summer 09 - \_\_\_\_\_

Essay Rater Name: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Trait 1: Assignment Requirements</b>
<i>Did the writer attempt the cognitive tasks in the prompt?</i>
5: The writer <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• identifies the outcome</li><li>• describes supporting coursework</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• applies the coursework to the outcome</li> <li>• analyzes the significance of the work</li> <li>• and evaluates the significance of the overall experience.</li> </ul> <p>4: The writer attempts four of the above tasks.  3: The writer attempts three of the above tasks.  2: The writer attempts two of the above tasks.  1: The writer attempts one or none of the above tasks.</p>
<input type="radio"/> 5 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 1

<p><b>Trait 2: Cognitive Development</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>How well did the writer develop the cognitive tasks in the prompt?</i></p>
<p>5: The writer’s overall development of the cognitive tasks is persuasive.  4: The writer’s overall development of the cognitive tasks is effective.  3: The writer’s overall development of the cognitive tasks is sufficient.  2: The writer’s overall development of the cognitive tasks is insufficient.  1: The writer’s overall development of the cognitive tasks is wholly ineffective or absent.</p>
<input type="radio"/> 5 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 1

<p><b>Trait 3: Unity</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>What is the relationship between the text and the identified outcome?</i></p>
<p>5: The writer offers consistent focus throughout the paper for having achieved the outcome.  4: The writer offers mostly consistent focus throughout the paper for having achieved the outcome.  3: The writer’s focus has some deviation, but spends enough time on the topic to remain effective.  2: The writer offers inconsistent focus in the paper for having achieved the outcome.  1: The writer fails to offer much, if any, focus on having achieved the outcome.</p>
<input type="radio"/> 5 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 1

<p><b>Trait 4: Presentation</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>How well does the form of the text support the message?</i></p>
<p>5: The writer observes standard edited English, and the reader is not immediately aware of errors.  4: The writer observes standard edited English, with a few errors, but not enough to distract the reader.  3: Isolated errors in standard edited English may be present, but do not significantly distract the reader.  2: The writer is struggling with standard edited English, and errors are consistent and/or severe enough to distract the reader.</p>

1: The writer fails to observe standard edited English so that the failed presentation replaces the writer's ideas in the mind of the reader.

5       4       3       2       1

**Trait 5: Arrangement**

*How well is the text organized?*

5: The text is organized logically to support claims of achieving the course outcome.  
4: The organization of the text supports claims of achieving the course outcome.  
3: The organization of the text mostly supports claims of achieving the course outcome.  
2: The organization of the text interferes with claims of achieving the course outcome.  
1: Ineffective organization of the text makes understanding claims of achieving the course outcome extremely difficult.

5       4       3       2       1

**Trait 6: Audience Awareness**

*How well does the text meet the expectations of an academic audience?*

5: The diction, tone, style, and formality of the text are persuasive for an academic audience.  
4: The diction, tone, style, and formality of the text are effective for an academic audience.  
3: The diction, tone, style, and formality of the text are sufficient for an academic audience.  
2: The diction, tone, style, and formality of the text are insufficient for an academic audience.  
1: The diction, tone, style, and formality of the text are inappropriate for an academic audience.

5       4       3       2       1