



Upcoming Visits

UNC Pembroke is pleased to host the visits of two external reviewers relative to the SACS Reaffirmation process. Dr. Suzanne Ozment, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs at USC Aiken, has had extensive experience with SACS chairing Off Site and On Site Review Committees. She will review drafts of the Compliance Certification and the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) and provide expert advice on the strengths and weaknesses of these documents prior to their submission to SACS. She will visit the campus on April 1, 2009 and will meet with the Compliance Certification Committee and the QEP Writing Committee.

Dr. Gerald Lord is the Staff Liaison representative for UNC Pembroke at the SACS organization. Consistent with SACS policy, Dr. Lord makes himself available to SACS member institutions to review drafts of the Compliance Certification and the QEP and offer advisory opinions on the suitability of these documents for submission to SACS Review Committees. Dr. Lord will be on campus April 23-24, 2009. Biographical information for Dr. Ozment and Dr. Lord is included below.

Profile for Dr. Suzanne Ozment

Suzanne Ozment received her B. S. and M. A. in English from East Carolina University. She earned her Ph. D. in nineteenth-century British literature from the University of North Carolina-Greensboro. Her dissertation was on the Victorian poet, Robert Browning.

She began her teaching career at Lenoir-Rhyne College, a coeducational Lutheran college in Hickory, North Carolina. Five years later, she accepted a position in the English Department at The Citadel. She spent fifteen years as a full-time faculty member there, earning tenure and ultimately promotion to full professor. Dr. Ozment published essays and presented papers at scholarly conferences on the works of several nineteenth-century British writers--Robert Browning, Matthew Arnold, and Thomas Hardy--and was, for ten years, editor of a scholarly interdisciplinary journal titled *Nineteenth Century Studies*. With a colleague in North Carolina, she co-edited an anthology of nineteenth-century literature about work. That book, *The Voice of Toil*, was published by Ohio University Press in 2000.

In 1997, Dr. Ozment was appointed Dean of Undergraduate Studies at The Citadel. In 2002, she came to USC Aiken as Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Professor of English. While her administrative duties have made it difficult for her to teach many classes at USC Aiken, she has taught summer courses for high school English teachers, offered short courses for members of the Aiken community through USC Aiken's Academy for Lifelong Learning, and led a reading and discussion group at the Aiken Center for the Arts.

Profile for Dr. Gerald D. Lord

Gerald D. Lord is Vice President of the Commission on Colleges, the unit of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools responsible for the accreditation of approximately 800 postsecondary degree-granting institutions in the eleven-state southern region.

UNC Pembroke SACS Schedule and Deadlines

Year 1 – 2008

- > Orientation of Leadership Teams

Year 2 – 2009

- > Compliance Certification due—September 10
- > Off-site review—second week in November

Year 3 – 2010

- > Quality Enhancement Plan due—six weeks prior to the on-site review
- > On-site review conducted between mid January and the third week in April
- > Review by the Commission on Colleges—first week in December

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Profile for Dr. Gerald D. Lord(cont.)

At the Commission, his responsibilities include assisting in coordinating the development and implementation of programs, policies, and procedures to aid institutions in meeting accreditation standards and improving educational programs; serving as staff liaison representative for over 100 member institutions; assisting in identifying good educational practices and experimental activities and in disseminating information to selected institutions; conducting, or assisting in conducting, studies to develop and improve standards for accreditation and to raise the quality of educational programs; and visiting member, candidate, and applying institutions and coordinating on-site visits to assist institutions in determining needs and improving educational programs during the accreditation process.

Before joining the Commission on Colleges in 1991, he held faculty and administrative appointments at Emory University's Candler School of Theology and at The University of Tennessee's Department of Political Science/Bureau of Public Administration with three years in the U.S. Army in between. His academic degrees are from Emory University, the University of Tennessee, and Millsaps College.

A native of Mississippi, Lord lives in Atlanta, Georgia, where he is active in church and community affairs. He is married to Joan McCarty Lord, Vice President of the Southern Regional Education Board. They have two daughters and a very cute and smart grandson.

The QEP Student Writing Survey shows that the number of writing assignments in most classes is very low and that there is a tendency for some students to avoid courses requiring "a lot of writing."

The Quality Enhancement Plan—A Synopsis

What follows below is a synopsis of the latest draft of the Quality Enhancement Plan. This draft includes sections on institutional context, development and rationale, needs assessment, literature review, student learning outcomes, and strategic initiatives. Sections on the assessment of student learning outcomes, organizational structure and budget have yet to be completed.

Scholar Skills: Enhancing Student Writing

The Institutional Context section of the document describes the University of North Carolina at Pembroke, its programs and enrollment. There is also a discussion of the socio-economic factors for both Robeson county and UNCP.

The Development and Rationale section reflects on identifying the topic and needs assessment for the QEP. The determination of the topic consisted of 3 phases. In phase 1, a member of the steering committee met with every department or school on campus to describe the QEP process and distribute a survey soliciting suggestions. In phase 2, a second survey was conducted asking faculty to prioritize the top 3 topics generated from the first survey. During the meeting following this survey, the topic was narrowed to writing. In phase 3, a group of faculty brainstormed the 3 topic areas. Writing emerged as the central concern in this meeting as well.

Many studies were cited that demonstrate the importance of writing in academic success as well as the need for improvement in student writing. Employers also highlight the need for improved student writing. The same issues are raised among government officials for state employees.

Data show that students at UNCP also demonstrate the national trends in the need to improve student writing. The first-year English Composition sequence provides a good start for our students. The National Survey on Student Engagement shows that UNCP freshmen do more writing than those at our peer institutions as well as NSSE institutions. However a significant percentage of the students do not earn passing grades. However while our freshmen students write more on average, UNCP seniors

Scholar Skills: Enhancing Student Writing (cont.)

write much less than those at other institutions. The QEP Student Writing Survey shows that the number of writing assignments in most classes is very low and that there is a tendency for some students to avoid courses requiring “a lot of writing.” The QEP states that the data point to a need for more writing intensive courses in the General Education program and in departmental majors as well as requirements for students to take writing intensive courses.

Eighty seven percent of faculty believe that students should be able to write before taking upper level courses. They expect the students to have basic writing skills, and they also expect the students’ writing to improve further. Fifty seven percent disagree that the freshmen writing course should supply students with all of their necessary writing skills. From the survey, 1) sixty-nine percent (69%) would like to see more writing intensive courses taught in their discipline 2) fifty-seven percent (57%) would be willing to teach writing intensive courses in their discipline (at least given smaller enrollments in such courses) 3) seventy-seven percent (77%) indicate a willingness to attend workshops on teaching writing in their discipline.

The two primary components to analytic writing are Make an Argument and Critique an Argument. The data for UNCP show the need to improve critical writing skills.

The literature shows that composition studies have progressed from writing as process to writing in the disciplines or writing across the curriculum. First year composition courses provide a framework to writing abilities. However students also need to learn to communicate and write for their chosen disciplines and professions. While students expect faculty to impart knowledge, faculty expect students to be able to critically evaluate and synthesize information. “What matters most to successful writing in college is not basic skills—students can get those through tutoring and practice. What matters most is knowledge of and practice with the genre conventions operant within a discipline whose discourse students must master in order to demonstrate their learning and knowledge.”

The goal of the Quality Enhancement Plan is to enhance the ability of students’ to write effectively and appropriately in the discipline through general writing as well as professional writing.

- **General writing** demonstrates critical thinking, style and fluency appropriate to the audience and task, consistency in focus and reasoning, structural integrity, and mastery of standard edited English.
- **Professional writing** should also exhibit style and vocabulary appropriate to the discipline and task, synthesize research in writing appropriate to the discipline, and exhibit the ability to access, evaluate, and utilize information from a variety of sources and media.

The goal is for students to:

- Demonstrate overall proficiency in written communication,
- Employ program specific writing showing critical thinking and communication,
- And demonstrate improved writing compared to both student data at UNCP as well as similar institutions.

The four writing skill areas are: rhetorical knowledge; critical knowledge; critical thinking, reading and writing; processes, and knowledge of conventions. The student learning outcomes will address these areas at both a general as well as disciplinary/professional competency levels.

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Scholar Skills: Enhancing Student Writing (cont.)

There are four initiatives to help us achieve the goals of the QEP.

1. The first initiative is a two tiered program of course development. Tier I begins with the freshmen composition courses, English 1050 and 1060. This includes continuing the "Plus I" program for at risk students. The second tier is the development of a writing intensive program requiring nine hours of Writing Enriched and Writing in the Discipline courses. This could include General Education courses. Writing in the Discipline are newly created inter-departmental courses. Intensive writing

Courses would require students to write throughout the semester and require drafts of papers. Writings may take the form of formal and informal papers, journals, learning logs, online discussion forums, in-class assignments and research projects. Within five years, the Writing Intensive Program will offer at least 25 courses to students.

2. The second initiative is Faculty Development. Faculty has the primary role to facilitate student writing skills necessary for success in both general and discipline specific writing. Faculty teaching courses in this program will attend workshops, seminars, and/or lectures led by internal and external experts on writing. All faculty are encouraged to participate in these faculty development opportunities with primary focus on those faculty and staff aligned with the writing intensive courses to be named later. These faculty and staff sessions will assess knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of the participating faculty.
3. Initiative three is to strengthen the University Writing Center through: A) Student tutors from the various disciplines; B) Professionals who will train and oversee the disciplinary student tutors; and C) An on-line tutoring service.
4. The final initiative is to provide a writing specialist to find and implement appropriate technology tools to promote writing improvement.

"The purpose of the Institute on Quality Enhancement and Accreditation is to highlight student learning activities and quality enhancement initiatives in higher education."

Recent Conferences

2008 Annual Meeting: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools

Marriott Rivercenter, San Antonio TX
December 6-9, 2008

The conference was attended by Dr. William H. Gash, Dr. Elizabeth Normandy, and Dr. Kathleen Hilton.

The Institute of Quality Enhancement and Accreditation

J.W. Marriott Grande Lakes, Orlando FL
July 27-30, 2008

The purpose of the Institute on Quality Enhancement and Accreditation is to highlight student learning activities and quality enhancement initiatives in higher education. The objectives of the institute are to:

- Examine educational research on teaching and learning at colleges and universities in the United States;
- Identify programs that demonstrate the assessment of student learning outcomes in general education and the major;
- Focus on case studies that illustrate good educational practice in curricular and co-curricular programs;

SACS Committee Membership
Leadership Team

Allen Meadors, Chancellor
Charles Harington, Provost
Bill Gash, Associate Provost
Kathleen Hilton, Associate Provost
Elizabeth Normandy, Teaching and Learning Center

Compliance Certification Committee

Chairs

Bill Gash, Office of Academic Affairs
Elizabeth Normandy, Teaching and Learning Center

Ann Coleman, Livermore Library
Betty Brown, School of Education
Beverly King, Office of Institutional Effectiveness
Charles Tita, Office of Distance Education
Chris Ziemnowicz, School of Business
Elinor Foster, Livermore Library
Kathleen Hilton, Office of Academic Affairs
Lela Clark, Office of Admissions
Lisa Schaeffer, Office of Student Affairs
Marlene Powell, Dept. of Sociology and Criminal Justice
Robert Brown, Dept. of History
Robert Orr, Division of Information Technology
Roger Guy, Dept. of Sociology and Criminal Justice
Sara Simmons, Graduate School
Sharon Bell, School of Business
Sharon Kissick, Registrar
Sherry Edwards, Dept. of Social Work
Shilpa Regan, Dept. of Psychology and Counseling
Sylvia Pate, Regional Center
Tom Dooling, Dept. of Chemistry and Physics
Tony Curtis, Dept. of Mass Communications

QEP Writing Committee

Chairs

Bill Gash, Office of Academic Affairs
Elizabeth Normandy, Teaching and Learning Center

Adam Walls, Dept. of Art
Anita Guynn, Dept. of English and Theatre
Cherry Beasley, Dept. of Nursing
Cynthia Miecznikowski, Dept. of English and Theatre
David Nikkel, Dept. of Philosophy and Religion
Debra Branch, Dept. of Social Work
Judi Lash, School of Education
Mark Canada, Dept. of English and Theatre
Roger Guy, Dept. of Sociology and Criminal Justice
Rosemarie Pilarczyk, Dept. of Nursing
Sherry Edwards, Dept. of Social Work
Stewart Thomas, School of Business
Tim Ritter, Dept. of Chemistry and Physics
Tony Curtis, Dept. of Mass Communications

Recent Conferences (cont.)

- Pursue effective ways to relate quality enhancement initiatives to regional accreditation standards.

The conference was attended by Dr. William H. Gash, Dr. Elizabeth Normandy, and Dr. Kathleen Hilton.

Orientation Meeting for Graduate and Professional Degree Granting Institutions Scheduled for Reaffirmation in 2010

Renaissance Concourse Hotel, Atlanta GA
June 9, 2008

The Orientation Program is intended to provide the participants with opportunities to:

- Enhance their capacity to provide the leadership necessary to guide their institutions through a successful process of seeking reaffirmation of accreditation with the Commission on Colleges;
- To learn from the experiences of others from similar institutions that has recently completed the reaffirmation process;
- To meet with the Commission staff member(s) who will work with their institution throughout the reaffirmation process.

The conference was attended by Dr. Allen C. Meadors, Dr. William H. Gash, Dr. Elizabeth Normandy, Mr. Neil Hawk, and Dr. Kathleen Hilton.

Timeline for Reaffirmation

	2008
Orientation of Leadership Teams	June 9
	2009
Compliance Certification Due	September 10
Off-Site Peer Review Conducted	November 2-5
	2010
Quality Enhancement Plan Due	4-6 weeks in advance of On-site Review
On-Site Peer Review Conducted	January 25 – April 16
	2010
Review by the Commission on Colleges	December 4-7