



WILKES COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Wilkes • Ashe • Alleghany



EMPOWERING COMMUNICATION

Quality Enhancement Plan Annual Report

July 2026

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Foreword by Dr. Rodgers, WCC President

At Wilkes Community College, our mission has always been centered on transforming lives through education. Every decision we make is guided by our commitment to preparing students not only to earn credentials but also to thrive in meaningful careers, contribute to their communities, and adapt to an ever-changing workforce. Our Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), **Empowering Communication**, reflects that commitment and represents one of the most significant investments we can make in the future success of our students.

The development of this Quality Enhancement Plan has been driven by a simple yet powerful question: *What skills will best prepare our graduates for success beyond the classroom?* Through extensive collaboration with faculty, staff, students, employers, advisory committees, and community stakeholders, one answer emerged consistently—effective workplace communication is among the most valuable and sought-after competencies in today's workforce.

Employers across every industry tell us that technical expertise alone is not enough. Graduates must also be able to communicate ideas clearly, present information confidently, listen actively, collaborate professionally, and write with clarity and purpose. These are the skills that build relationships, inspire confidence, and create opportunities for career advancement. They are also the skills that enable our graduates to become leaders in their professions and engaged citizens in their communities.

Empowering Communication was intentionally designed to strengthen these essential workplace competencies across the curriculum. Rather than existing as a standalone initiative, this QEP is embedded within academic and workforce programs throughout the College, ensuring that students have multiple opportunities to develop, practice, receive feedback on, and refine their communication skills throughout their educational journey. By focusing on oral presentations and professional electronic communication, we are equipping students with practical skills that will immediately benefit them in the classroom, during work-based learning experiences, and throughout their careers.

This initiative exemplifies the collaborative culture that defines Wilkes Community College. Faculty and staff from every division contributed their expertise to researching best practices, developing assessments and instructional resources, creating professional development opportunities, expanding student support services, and designing a sustainable implementation plan. Their dedication demonstrates our shared belief that student success is everyone's responsibility.

Our investment extends well beyond the classroom. The establishment of the Communication and Writing Center, expanded tutoring services, enhanced instructional technology, and comprehensive faculty professional development all reflect our commitment to creating an environment where every student has the opportunity to develop the confidence and communication skills necessary for lifelong success. These efforts ensure that students receive consistent support regardless of their program of study, campus location, or learning modality.

As we implement this five-year plan, we remain committed to continuous assessment, thoughtful reflection, and ongoing improvement. The QEP is not simply an accreditation requirement, it is a strategic commitment to excellence that strengthens our institution and advances our mission. By measuring student learning outcomes, evaluating our effectiveness, and adapting based on evidence, we will continue to enhance the educational experience for generations of Wilkes Community College students.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the many faculty, staff, students, administrators, and community partners whose vision, creativity, and dedication made this initiative possible. Your commitment to innovation and student success exemplifies the very best of Wilkes Community College.

Together, we are empowering our students with the communication skills, confidence, and professionalism they need to excel in today's workforce and to lead tomorrow's communities. I am proud of what we have accomplished, inspired by the work ahead, and confident that **Empowering Communication** will leave a lasting legacy of student success at Wilkes Community College.

Dr. Mike Rodgers
President

Initial QEP Goals and Outcomes

Wilkes Community College (WCC) developed a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), titled Empowering Communication, to enhance students' workplace communication skills with implementation beginning in fall 2025. Extensive stakeholder feedback has shown workplace communication skills to be a critical employability requirement. While communication is already a key component of the WCC curriculum, we aim to enhance our students' success rates and seamless transitions into the workforce by focusing on improving their communication skills in a professional context.

Due to its relevance across industries and alignment with WCC's core values of learner-centered excellence, equity, and continuous quality improvement, the following goal and student learning outcomes were identified for this QEP initiative:

Goal: WCC will increase student competency and readiness for professional workplace communication.

The identified **Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)** that will guide the QEP's initiative are:

- 1) Students will deliver clear, well-organized presentations.
- 2) Students will compose clear, concise professional electronic communication.

The development of the QEP has been a collaborative, team-based effort. This QEP will be implemented campuswide over the next five years as new programs are added each year. Several teams were created to assist with literature review, rubric and assessment development, curriculum mapping, marketing, student support services, professional development, and implementation.

Rubrics were created for both SLO 1 ([Appendix A](#)) and SLO 2 ([Appendix B](#)) by the rubric and assessment team. Multiple assessors were trained to use the rubrics to assess the baseline artifacts collected prior to the start of the QEP in fall 2025.

WCC's QEP focuses on equipping students with essential workplace communication skills to enhance employability and meet the needs of regional employers. By integrating these skills across programs and providing robust professional development for faculty, WCC aims to create a sustainable framework for student success in a dynamic workforce environment.

QEP Implementation

Programs

The QEP will be embedded across the curriculum at WCC over the next 5 years through strategic expansion. The plan is to increase participation by 20% of the student population each year. Programs will be added each year from every academic division and Workforce Development and Community Education (WDCE) until all programs are involved by the fall of 2029.

1st Year Implementation (Fall 2025)

- Applied Engineering Technologies
- Associate in Arts Teacher Preparation (AATP)
- Associate in Science Teacher Preparation (ASTP)
- Automotive Systems Technology
- Business Administration
- Criminal Justice
- Nursing
- WDCE – HVAC and Residential Plumbing

2nd Year Implementation (Anticipated Fall 2026)

- Accounting and Finance
- Architecture Technology
- Associate in Science
- Construction: Building Construction Technology
- Early Childhood Education
- Electrical Systems Technology
- Emergency Medical Science
- Respiratory Therapy
- WDCE – EMT and Paramedic

Professional Development

Professional development for the first-year programs was launched in fall 2025 using a professional learning community (PLC) model. WCC's Empowering Communication Professional Development Series consisted of six training sessions offered throughout the fall semester. A total of 30 participants completed the series, including 26 faculty members and four staff members. The participant group included the three QEP co-directors, who completed the training alongside faculty and staff to support future implementation efforts.

The first session was led internally by the WCC Information Technology Department, while the remaining five sessions were facilitated by Dr. Alan Mueller, our professional communications consultant. The professional development series was designed to prepare faculty and staff to integrate professional communication skills into first-year courses and support the goals of the Quality Enhancement Plan. Part-time faculty were encouraged to participate, and program lead instructors were expected to assist with QEP implementation in courses taught by adjunct faculty. Participants received a \$300 stipend upon successful completion of all professional development requirements, including full attendance, submission of student learning outcome data, and completion of reflection statements.

Beginning in the fall of 2026, the first session will be led by Dr. Alan Mueller, while the remaining sessions will be led by the QEP co-directors, who received training from Dr. Mueller during the implementation. Based on participant feedback and lessons learned from the fall 2025 cohort, several improvements will be implemented for future offerings of the Empowering Communication Professional Development Series. The curriculum will be reviewed and refined to strengthen content delivery and better support participant engagement. In addition, participants will receive a printed professional development binder containing session materials, note-taking guides, resources, and reflection activities. This tangible resource will provide participants with a centralized reference that can be used during the training sessions and revisited throughout the academic year.

The participant stipend will remain at \$300 for individuals who successfully complete all program requirements, including attendance, submission of SLO data, and reflection statements. The fall 2026 cohort is projected to include 25 participants and will continue to utilize the professional learning community model established during the initial implementation. These improvements will help ensure the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of the professional development program while supporting continued implementation of the Quality Enhancement Plan across the institution.

Fall 2025 Professional Development Sessions

Session 1: Technology and Tools

- Identify and describe key technology tools (e.g., Echo360, mobile tech, in-class cameras) that support effective communication.
- Set up and operate classroom recording technology to capture short presentations.
- Use mobile and AI-based tools to enhance the quality and delivery of presentations.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of different technologies in improving communication skills in academic or professional contexts.

Session 2: Foundations of Professional Communication

- Apply effective strategies for teaching professional communication skills to diverse student populations.
- Demonstrate active listening techniques that support meaningful and respectful communication.
- Analyze audience needs and tailor communication approaches to various professional contexts.
- Recognize and address cultural differences in communication styles to promote inclusivity and clarity.

Session 3: Receiving and Giving Constructive Feedback

- Apply feedback strategies that promote growth-oriented dialogue, including reframing techniques.
- Evaluate the impact of word choice, tone, and delivery on how feedback is perceived and internalized.
- Facilitate and navigate difficult conversations with professionalism and empathy.
- Teach students foundational feedback skills they can apply in academic and post-college environments.

Session 4: Written Communications Best Practices

- Identify and apply best practices for achieving clarity, coherence, and conciseness in written communication.
- Model professional and context-appropriate writing for students across various settings.
- Design writing assignments and activities that support learning outcomes in diverse disciplines.
- Evaluate the use of AI tools in teaching, supporting, and assessing written communication.

Session 5: Oral Communication Best Practices

- Identify and demonstrate effective non-verbal communication techniques, including body language, facial expressions, and professional appearance.
- Apply public speaking strategies such as voice modulation, pacing, and tone to enhance clarity and audience engagement.
- Develop inclusive communication strategies that support neurodiverse students and promote awareness among all learners.
- Incorporate techniques to reduce public speaking anxiety and encourage active audience participation through discussion and interaction.

Session 6: Assessment

- Understand and correctly apply written and presentation assessment rubrics.
- Practice evaluating sample assignments using the written assessment rubric.
- Practice evaluating sample presentations using the presentation assessment rubric.
- Utilize backward planning methods to align rubrics and assessments with learning outcomes for effective course sequencing.

Fall 2026 – Anticipated Professional Development Sessions

Session 1: Foundations of Professional Communication *(Facilitated by Dr. Alan Mueller)*

- Apply effective strategies for teaching professional communication skills to diverse student populations.
- Analyze audience needs and adapt communication approaches to various academic and workplace contexts.
- Demonstrate active listening techniques that support meaningful and respectful communication.
- Recognize and address barriers to effective communication, including cultural and generational differences.

Session 2: Curriculum Mapping

- Identify opportunities to incorporate professional communication outcomes within existing course curricula.
- Align course activities and assignments with QEP Student Learning Outcomes.
- Develop curriculum maps that demonstrate where communication skills are introduced, reinforced, and assessed.
- Collaborate with colleagues to ensure consistency in communication skill development across programs.

Session 3: Student Learning Outcome 1 – Clear, Well-Organized Presentations

- Apply the oral presentation rubric consistently when evaluating student work.
- Design assignments and learning activities that support the development of clear, well-organized presentations.
- Identify effective instructional strategies for teaching organization, audience engagement, and presentation delivery.
- Evaluate sample student presentations and provide constructive feedback that promotes improvement.

Session 4: Student Learning Outcome 2 – Clear, Concise Professional Electronic Communication

- Apply the written communication rubric consistently when evaluating student work.
- Design assignments that require students to compose professional electronic communications appropriate for workplace settings.
- Identify best practices for teaching clarity, conciseness, tone, and professionalism in electronic communication.
- Evaluate sample student communications and provide constructive feedback aligned with rubric expectations.

Session 5: Information Technology and Instructional Technology Tools

- Identify and utilize technology tools that support the teaching and assessment of communication skills.
- Use classroom and instructional technologies to facilitate student presentations and communication activities.
- Evaluate the appropriate use of AI and emerging technologies in communication-focused assignments.
- Integrate technology resources that enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

Session 6: Student Support Resources and Strategies

- Identify institutional resources available to support student success and communication skill development.
- Implement strategies that promote student engagement, persistence, and confidence in communication-related activities.
- Develop inclusive teaching practices that support diverse learners, including neurodiverse students.
- Collaborate with student support personnel to address barriers that may impact student learning and success.

Student Support

With the implementation of the QEP in fall 2025, Instructional Support Services created the Communication and Writing Center through the Academic Support Center (ASC). This newly reorganized center provides targeted support for communication-focused assignments and academic skill development.

To support these efforts, a dedicated Moodle course was created to house shared resources for faculty, staff, and tutors who are engaged in promoting student success through the QEP. The course also serves as a collaborative repository where instructional materials and resources can be shared across departments. To strengthen technology-enhanced communication skills, the ASC offers instructional videos, tools, and workshops focused on the effective use of Echo360 technology.

The student-facing ASC Moodle course, in which all registered students are enrolled, was updated to provide QEP information, including communication-focused options and additional communication support resources. Students can access the Moodle course to submit assignments for asynchronous review, reserve space for oral presentation practice, and receive assistance with both written and oral communication projects. Examples include developing professional resumes and cover letters, composing professional emails, and preparing for mock interviews. These services ensure equitable access to communication support regardless of a student's location or course modality.

The ASC has enhanced its technology infrastructure through investments in webcams, podcast microphones, and upgraded computer equipment to support student learning and success. Students also have access to reservable spaces for practicing and recording oral presentations at all four Wilkes Community College campuses.

Through these comprehensive initiatives, Instructional Support Services has documented 48 total visits from students completing assignments specifically related to the QEP in the 2025-2026 academic year. Looking ahead at future implementation cycles, student visits for support services are projected to increase due to faculty expectations, instructional context, and student engagement with the QEP.

Instructional support services that will be implemented in fall 2026 include collaborating with faculty to identify additional needs and support measures and developing QEP-focused training and resources. This training will be used to design targeted communication skills for tutors, students, faculty, and staff. Faculty and staff will be supported through the faculty/staff QEP Moodle course as a centralized repository for shared materials and ongoing collaboration.

The ASC will also provide support and maintenance for the student facing Moodle course to ensure alignment with faculty expectations and instructional context. The anticipated outcomes for these updates include increased student engagement with QEP related services and growth in the usage of communication support resources.

QEP Implementation Budget

Wilkes Community College has dedicated significant resources to support the development, implementation, and completion of the Empowering Communication QEP. The college employs three QEP co-directors who are also full-time faculty in different academic divisions.

- Matt Baldwin – Chair of Business & Culinary in Business and Public Service Technologies
- Joey Phillips – Lead Instructor of Electronics and Computer Engineering in Applied Career Technologies
- Valerie Bailey – Simulation Coordinator/Instructor of Nursing in Health Sciences

Each co-director receives a stipend and course load reduction (or monetary equivalent). Positions may temporarily be backfilled by full-time, part-time, or adjunct faculty to ensure adequate attention can be allocated to the implementation of the QEP. The primary consideration is to ensure a balanced workload for the individuals assigned to this position. The co-directors' roles and responsibilities are defined in the QEP co-director job description. Annual one-on-one reviews are conducted with the QEP co-directors by the Executive Director of Institutional Research and Planning to evaluate the individual contributions and responsibilities and adjust for the upcoming annual cycle. During these annual reviews, discussions are held between each co-director and the executive director reviewing the previous year's progress and determining steps for the upcoming fiscal year.

WCC's Administrative Council is supportive of allocating funds to implement the QEP. The original QEP budget, created prior to the SACSCOC on-site visit, was prepared based on the academic calendar. ***QEP budgets moving forward will be created based on the WCC fiscal calendar***, which is July 1st – June 30th, and will be revised each year as necessary.

Clarification: *The Original QEP Budget – Fall 2025 did not include the benefits associated with the additional stipends and summer contract extensions. The QEP Projected Budget – Fall 2026 does include these benefits as part of the "QEP Co-Director Pay and Benefits" section.*

See Table 1: QEP Projected Budget – Fall 2026 and Table 2: Original QEP Budget – Fall 2025.

QEP Budget Item Descriptions

- **QEP Co-Director Pay and Benefits** – Each QEP co-director is provided a fall and spring semester stipend along with summer contract extensions as needed. For fiscal year 2024-2025, this was a one month summer contraction extension, while for fiscal year 2025-2026 was a two month summer contract extension. This amount also includes the additional benefits accumulated through the

stipend and summer contracts along with course reduction equivalents and travel for QEP related activities that are not located at the co-director's home base, which is standard WCC policy. **Moving forward, QEP Co-Director Stipends, Summer Contract Extensions and Benefits and QEP Co-Director Course Reduction Equivalent from the original budget will be combined for a more clear comparison of all pay and benefits associated with the QEP.*

- **Revising & Editing Services** – WCC engaged a consultant who supported the QEP planning process as well as other reaffirmation activities.
- **Self-Efficacy Survey Gift Cards** – Faculty completed a self-efficacy survey during the fall 2024 semester. The academic department with the highest completion percentage received gift cards for each faculty member.
- **Faculty & Staff Stipends** – Faculty & staff who complete the workplace communication professional development series will receive a one-time \$300 stipend dependent on meeting specific deliverables.
- **Workplace Communication Keynote Speaker** – Dr. Alan Mueller presented to all WCC faculty and staff during the college-wide PD day in January 2025.
- **Workplace Communication: Professional Development Series** – Dr. Alan Mueller collaborated with WCC's QEP Co-Directors to create the customized Empowering Communication Professional Development Series for fall 2025. Beginning in fall 2026, Dr. Mueller will lead one session per QEP PD series.
- **Conference Travel** – Includes travel to and participation in the SACSCOC Annual Conference and SACSCOC Summer Institute. Due to changes in the SACSCOC QEP requirements, QEP Co-Directors are not expected to travel to the Annual Conference or Summer Institute in subsequent years.
- **Graphic Design Gift Cards** – WCC awarded two gift cards to graphic design student James Brandt for his winning QEP logo.
- **QEP Signage** – WCC projected costs for posters, flyers, and orientation packet inserts related to the QEP.
- **QEP Faculty & Staff Shirts** – All WCC faculty and staff received a QEP themed t-shirt during the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Additional shirts will likely be purchased during the 2026-2027 fiscal year for new hires moving forward.
- **ASC Equipment** – The Academic Support Center purchased equipment related to the QEP, such as tripods, cameras, tablets, and/or microphones.
- **Mobile Packs** – Each mobile pack will include a tablet, tripod, and microphone for instructors to use when recording presentations in classrooms that are not equipped to record. WCC was awarded an Echo360 grant of \$2,000 to purchase equipment for mobile packs during the spring 2025 semester.

Table 1. QEP Projected Budget - Fall 2026

QEP Projected Budget - Fall 2026						
	Planning	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
Administrative						
QEP Co-Director Pay and Benefits	\$52,802	\$82,889	\$56,076	\$58,000	\$60,000	\$62,000
Consultant Fees	\$4,125	—	—	—	—	—
Self-Efficacy Survey Gift Cards	\$160	—	—	—	—	—
Administrative Totals	\$57,087	\$82,889	\$56,076	\$58,000	\$60,000	\$62,000
Professional Development						
Faculty & Staff Stipends	—	\$11,909	\$10,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000
Workplace Communication Keynote Speaker - 01/2025	\$3,010	—	—	—	—	—
Workplace Communication Professional Development Series	—	\$12,505	\$2,860	\$2,860	\$2,860	\$2,860
Conference Travel	\$5,477	\$6,034	—	—	—	—
Professional Development Totals	\$8,487	\$30,448	\$12,860	\$10,860	\$10,860	\$10,860
Marketing						
Graphic Design Gift Cards	\$100	—	—	—	—	—
QEP Printing	—	\$940	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$750
QEP Faculty & Staff Shirts	—	\$3,137	\$400	\$200	\$200	\$200
Marketing Totals	\$100	\$4,077	\$1,150	\$950	\$950	\$950
Support Resources						
ASC Equipment	\$93	\$516	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Mobile Packs	—	\$1,023	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Student Support Totals	\$93	\$1,539	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Misc.						
Contingencies	—	—	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Grant Funds Received	—	-\$2,000	—	—	—	—
Annual Totals	\$65,767	\$116,952	\$77,086	\$76,810	\$78,810	\$80,810

Table 2. Original QEP Budget - Fall 2025

Original QEP Budget – Fall 2025						
	Planning	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	2024-2025	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028	2028-2029	2029-2030
Administrative						
QEP Co-Director Stipends, Summer Contract Extensions and Benefits	\$51,130	\$51,130	\$25,565*	\$25,565*	\$25,565*	\$25,565*
QEP Director Course Reduction Equivalent (Adjunct Pay)	\$10,326	\$10,326	\$10,326	\$10,326	\$10,326	\$10,326
Consultant Fees	\$4,125	–	–	–	–	–
Self-Efficacy Survey Gift Cards	\$160	–	–	–	–	–
Administrative Totals	\$65,741	\$61,456	\$35,891	\$35,891	\$35,891	\$35,891
Professional Development						
Faculty & Staff Stipends	–	\$12,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000	\$8,000
Workplace Communication Keynote Speaker - 01/2025	\$3,010	–	–	–	–	–
Workplace Communication Professional Development Series	–	\$12,500	–	–	–	–
Conference Travel	\$15,200	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$12,500
Professional Development Totals	\$18,210	\$37,000	\$20,500	\$20,500	\$20,500	\$20,500
Marketing						
Graphic Design Gift Cards	\$100	–	–	–	–	–
QEP Signage	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500
QEP Faculty & Staff Shirts	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500
Marketing Totals	\$2,100	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Support Resources						
ASC Equipment	\$2,500	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Mobile Packs	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Student Support Totals	\$4,500	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Contingencies						
Contingencies	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Annual Totals	\$95,551	\$107,456	\$65,391	\$65,391	\$65,391	\$65,391

*Years 2 - 5 totals will be re-evaluated each year

Assessment and Data Collection

The QEP necessitated a consistent scoring system to evaluate diverse assessment types across programs. The QEP co-directors, the QEP Rubric and Assessment Team, and Dr. Jody Call, Executive Director of Institutional Research and Planning, have worked together to create the QEP assessments.

Overall, WCC's Empowering Communication QEP assessments focus on:

- Faculty completing a workplace communication professional development series.
- Curricular revision to ensure sufficient instructional opportunities related to SLO 1 and SLO 2.
- Assessing student artifacts related to SLO 1 and SLO 2 using rubrics and trained assessors.

Assessment teams will be assigned for each SLO. Based on fall 2024 enrollment, approximately 100 artifacts were needed to achieve a 90% confidence interval. Based on a similar enrollment, it is expected that approximately 160-170 artifacts will be needed to achieve the same confidence interval while adding the 2nd year programs. The number of artifacts assessed, and therefore number of assessors needed, will increase over the next five years as all WCC programs implement the QEP. The QEP assessment data has no impact on student grades as instructors will continue to assess these assignments separately in their classes while implementing components of each SLO rubric into their own grading.

Assessments – Fall 2025 & Spring 2026

Assessment 1 – Professional Development

WCC plans to provide quality professional development ([pg. 5](#)) for instructors in the designated implementation programs each fall throughout the implementation process. The year one performance target was for at least 20% of WCC full-time faculty to complete the PD series during the fall 2025 semester. The year two performance target is for at least 40% of WCC full-time faculty to complete the PD series during the fall 2026 semester. To calculate this percentage, the number of full-time faculty employed at WCC will be updated each year. WCC employed 82 full-time faculty in fall 2025 and 81 full-time faculty in fall 2026.

All full-time WCC faculty will complete this professional development series by 2030. Part-time faculty will have the opportunity to complete this PD; however, it is expected that program lead instructors will help facilitate QEP implementation in courses taught by part-time faculty, especially for those unable to complete the PD. WCC full-time staff members can also complete the PD series. Four staff members completed the series in fall 2025, while six staff members are currently signed up for fall 2026.

Table 3. Assessment 1 - Professional Development

Assessment 1 - Professional Development			
Goal: WCC will increase student competency and readiness for workplace communication.			
Action: WCC will provide quality workplace communication professional development for faculty and staff.			
Time Period	Group	Performance Target	Result
Fall 2025	Designated faculty (1st year) and staff	20% of WCC full-time faculty will have completed workplace communication PD series	31.7% of WCC full-time faculty completed the workplace communication PD series (26 out of 82)
Fall 2026	Designated faculty (2nd year) and staff	40% of WCC full-time faculty will have completed workplace communication PD series	55.6% of WCC full-time faculty will have completed the workplace communication PD series (anticipated 45 out of 81)

Assessment 2 – Instruction Implementation (SLO 1)

WCC will implement instruction and assignments related to SLO 1 in at least 50% of classes in each program's curriculum, which includes both general education and program specific courses. Each implementation program will have a detailed overall program curriculum map completed as part of the planning and professional development process. [Appendix C](#) shows an example of a program curriculum map. Each program will use their curriculum map to ensure students are receiving substantial workplace communication instruction along with ample opportunities to develop these skills while at WCC.

WCC will implement the QEP in stages within each program, beginning with first-year classes. By the end of the second year of implementation, the performance target is for 30% of academic programs to implement QEP-related instruction and assignments in at least 50% of the classes in the program. This includes a combination of general education and program-specific courses.

Table 4. Assessment 2 - Instruction Implementation (SLO 1)

Assessment 2 - Instruction Implementation (SLO 1)			
SLO 1: Students will deliver clear, well-organized presentations.			
Action: WCC will implement instruction and assignments related to SLO 1 in at least 50% of classes in the curriculum.			
Time Period	Group	Performance Target	Result
2025-2027	1st Year Implementation Programs	15% of all WCC programs have implemented instruction and assignments related to SLO 1 in at least 50% of classes in the curriculum	20% of WCC programs have implemented instructions and assignments related to SLO 1 (7 out of 35)
2026-2028	2nd Year Implementation Programs	30% of all WCC programs have implemented instruction and assignments related to SLO 1 in at least 50% of classes in the curriculum	Anticipated 42.9% of WCC programs have implemented instructions and assignments related to SLO 1 (15 out of 35)

Assessment 3 – Instruction Implementation (SLO 2)

Similar to Assessment 2, WCC will implement instruction and assignments related to SLO 2 in at least 50% of classes in each program's curriculum, which includes both general education and program specific courses. Each implementation program will have a detailed overall program curriculum map completed as part of the planning and professional development process. [Appendix C](#) shows an example of a program curriculum map. Each program will use their curriculum map to ensure students are receiving substantial workplace communication instruction along with ample opportunities to develop these skills while at WCC.

WCC will implement the QEP in stages within each program, beginning with first-year classes. By the end of the second year of implementation, the performance target is for 30% of academic programs to implement QEP-related instruction and assignments in at least 50% of the classes in the program. This includes a combination of general education and program-specific courses.

Table 5. Assessment 3 - Instruction Implementation (SLO 2)

Assessment 3 - Instruction Implementation (SLO 2)			
SLO 2: Students will compose clear, concise professional electronic communication.			
Action: WCC will implement instruction and assignments related to SLO 2 in at least 50% of classes in the curriculum.			
Time Period	Group	Performance Target	Result
2025-2027	1st Year Implementation Programs	15% of all WCC programs have implemented instruction and assignments related to SLO 2 in at least 50% of classes in the curriculum	20% of WCC programs have implemented instructions and assignments related to SLO 2 (7 out of 35)
2026-2028	2nd Year Implementation Programs	30% of all WCC programs have implemented instruction and assignments related to SLO 2 in at least 50% of classes in the curriculum	Anticipated 42.9% of WCC programs have implemented instructions and assignments related to SLO 2 (15 out of 35)

Assessment 4 – SLO 1 and Assessment 5 – SLO 2 (Student Artifacts)

The QEP has been designed to allow programs to implement assessments specific to their programs. Examples of assessments and subsequent student artifacts that may be collected:

- **SLO 1 (presentations)** – PowerPoint presentations, oral board interviews, demonstrations, role-playing customer interactions, SBAR (oral), etc.
- **SLO 2 (electronic communication)** – Emails, SBAR (written), memos, invoices, etc.

Over the next five years, as the QEP is implemented in each program, data will be collected at three intervals throughout the course of a standard two-year degree for Assessments 4 and 5. The QEP assessment data will have no impact on student grades as instructors will assess these assignments separately in their classes.

QEP co-directors will be responsible for gathering, organizing, and distributing randomly selected student artifacts pertaining to each SLO for Assessments 4 and 5. WCC will use the North Carolina Community College System enrollment data for each program to calculate the number of artifacts needed. The number of artifacts collected is based on the student enrollment of the programs involved at the time.

During the spring 2025 semester, 250 student artifacts were collected and assessed for baseline data. Reviewing approximately 100 artifacts was the goal for the first-year implementation group. This number will likely increase to approximately 160-170 artifacts as programs are added for the second year.

As noted above, each two-year cycle will have the following data collection points:

- 1) QEP Data Point #1** – The first QEP data point in any program will be collected during a first-year class in the fall semester where most students are in their first semester at WCC.
- 2) QEP Data Point #2** – The second data point in any program will be collected during the second semester (spring for first-year students) or third semester (summer or fall for second-year students) of the program as a midpoint check to gauge improvement from data point #1.
- 3) QEP Data Point #3** – The third and final data point in any program will be collected during the fourth semester (spring for second year students) where most students are in their final semester and preparing for graduation.

The performance target is a 10% increase in both the assessed rubric overall average as well as the section averages for student artifacts collected. The rubric overall average is calculated based on the section averages in the rubric.

- **SLO 1 Sections** – (1) Clarity in Speaking, (2) Physical Presentation, (3) Extemporaneous Delivery, and (4) Visual and/or Auditory Aid
- **SLO 2 Sections** – (1) Clarity and (2) Professionalism

Tables 6 and 7 show the baseline, performance target, fall 2025, and spring 2026 assessed artifact data per rubric section.

Table 6. Assessment 4 - Student Artifacts (SLO 1)

Assessment 4 - Student Artifacts (SLO 1)						
SLO 1: Students will deliver clear, well-organized presentations.						
Action: Program specific electronic presentations related to SLO 1 will be assessed by the QEP rubric assessment team.						
Time Period	Category	Baseline	Performance Target (10% Increase)	Data Point 1 (Fall 2025)	Data Point 2 (Spring, Summer, or Fall 2026)	Data Point 3 (Spring 2027)
2025-2030	Overall Average	1.66	1.83	1.57	1.89	TBD
2025-2030	Clarity of Speaking	1.86	2.05	1.85	1.99	TBD
2025-2030	Physical Presentation	1.62	1.78	1.53	1.84	TBD
2025-2030	Extemporaneous Delivery	1.56	1.72	1.42	1.77	TBD
2025-2030	Visual and/or Auditory Aid	1.62	1.78	1.49	1.95	TBD

During the fall 2025 semester, 103 artifacts were collected and assessed for SLO 1 – Data Point 1. Scores for each section in the fall were slightly lower than the baseline data. Similar scores to the baseline data would be expected for the first data point during each cycle. This data is collected during the first semester while instructors are completing the PD series and before students have had several opportunities to practice and improve their skills. The smaller number of artifacts also allows for greater variance in the average in either direction.

Around 100 artifacts total will be collected for SLO 1 – Data Point 2 during the spring, summer, and fall 2026 semesters. So far, 32 artifacts have been collected and assessed, with the remaining Data Point 2 artifacts to be collected in either the summer or fall 2026 semesters. Early trends show improvement across all scoring criteria, although the same qualifier about the small number of artifacts increasing variance still applies.

Table 7. Assessment 5 - Student Artifacts (SLO 2)

Assessment 5 - Student Artifacts (SLO 2)						
SLO 2: Students will compose clear, concise professional electronic communication.						
Action: Student artifacts related to electronic communication will be assessed using the SLO 2 rubric.						
Time Period	Category	Baseline	Performance Target (10% Increase)	Data Point 1 (Fall 2025)	Data Point 2 (Spring, Summer, or Fall 2026)	Data Point 3 (Spring 2027)
2025-2030	Overall Average	1.56	1.72	1.68	2.26	TBD
2025-2030	Clarity	1.66	1.83	1.83	2.46	TBD
2025-2030	Professionalism	1.46	1.61	1.54	2.07	TBD

During the fall 2025 semester, 99 artifacts were collected and assessed for SLO 2 – Data Point 1. Scores for each section in the fall were higher than the baseline data. As mentioned for SLO 1, similar scores to the baseline would be expected. The smaller number of artifacts also allows for greater variance in the average in either direction.

Around 100 artifacts total will be collected for SLO 2 – Data Point 2 during the spring, summer, and fall 2026 semesters. So far, 41 artifacts have been collected and assessed, with the remaining Data Point 2 artifacts to be collected in either the summer or fall 2026 semesters. Early trends show significant improvement across all scoring criteria, although the same qualifier about the small number of artifacts increasing variance still applies. Another variable when analyzing the current data is some programs may inherently have more built-in opportunities to practice these skills prior to QEP implementation.

Conclusion

At the conclusion of the 2025–2026 fiscal year, Wilkes Community College successfully completed the first year of implementation of its Quality Enhancement Plan. To support meaningful institutional change and measurable student outcomes, WCC allocated financial resources and designated personnel to guide the initiation, implementation, and ongoing assessment of the plan. The initiative is designed to create a more supportive learning environment through targeted strategies that promote student success and progression throughout their academic programs.

At the onset of QEP implementation, a collaborative group of faculty and staff participated in a six-session professional development series. These sessions provided participants with tools and resources to enhance classroom instruction in professional communication, curriculum design and development, instructional technology, and student engagement strategies. A professional development binder with QEP-related resources is being created and will be given to participants. Participating programs incorporated instruction and assignments aligned with the QEP Student Learning Outcomes. Student artifacts are being collected and assessed each semester. Early results are encouraging and trending in the right direction, although there is still significant room for improvement.

Student support efforts expanded resources for faculty, staff, and students to support the QEP objectives. Enhancements included the establishment of the Communication and Writing Center, expanded tutoring services that allow students to submit assignments asynchronously for feedback, dedicated spaces for practicing oral presentations, improved technology for recording presentations, and the integration of Echo360 resources.

This QEP not only addresses areas of needed improvement identified through institutional research and comprehensive planning but also represents a proactive step toward equipping students with skills that will serve them throughout their lives.

Appendices

Appendix A: SLO 1 Rubric

Professional Workplace Communication: Oral Presentation Assessment

Date: _____

Skill	Desired Outcome	Score (1-3)
❖ Category One: Clarity of Speaking		
Enunciation	Consistently clear enunciation that does not hinder understanding.	
Conversational Pace	A conversational flow that is easy to understand.	
Speaking Tone & Volume	Limited but appropriate use of tone and volume that establishes emphasis on message meaning and does not create distraction.	
Content focus clarity	Speaker has a clearly declared purpose.	
Content appropriate to audience	Vocabulary, sentence structure, and complexity of information are appropriate and do not hinder audience understanding.	
Content organization	Information points flow with transitions in a logical manner appropriate to reinforce the declared purpose.	
❖ Category Two: Physical Presentation		
Physical Presentation	Speaker movements support or enhance points with movements that do not create a distraction or hinder understanding.	
Facial Expression	Speaker's use of facial expression reinforces tone and meaning.	
Posture & Negative Movement	Speaker maintains professional posture that does not interfere with content delivery.	
❖ Category Three: Extemporaneous Delivery		
Extemporaneous Presentation	The speaker may occasionally refer to notes but maintains a smooth flow, quickly reengaging with the audience without causing distraction.	
❖ Category Four: Visual and/or Auditory Aid Use		
Visual/Auditory Aid Use	Speaker uses visual/auditory aids to supplement and guide speech when appropriate. Aids are clear and enhance the presentation without distracting from its purpose.	

ASSESSMENT SCALE:

- 3 – Exceeds general college-level competency expectations.
- 2 – Meets general college-level competency expectations.
- 1 – Does not meet general college-level competency expectations.

Total Score: _____

Scoring Average: _____

Appendix B: SLO 2 Rubric

Professional Workplace Communication: Electronic Communication Assessment

Date: _____

Skill	Desired Outcome	Score (1-3)
❖ Category One: Clarity		
Clear and Concise	The message is clear, specific, and to the point.	
Accurate and Relevant	The facts and content of the message are accurate and relevant. All parts of the document support the purpose effectively.	
Audience Appropriateness	The writer considers the needs, knowledge, and point of view of the audience.	
Organization	Document follows a clear organizational pattern which logically supports the purpose.	
❖ Category Two: Professionalism		
Tone and Formality	The message conveys a suitable and considerate tone appropriate for the recipient.	
Professional Presentation	The document looks polished and professional with appropriate and consistent formatting.	
Grammar and Punctuation	Document is free of pervasive errors in English usage which interfere with clear communication. Such errors may include grammatical errors such as fragments or comma splices, spelling errors including capitalization	

ASSESSMENT SCALE:

- 3 – Exceeds general college-level competency expectations.
- 2 – Meets general college-level competency expectations.
- 1 – Does not meet general college-level competency expectations.

Total Score: _____

Scoring Average: _____

Appendix C: Curriculum Mapping Sample (Business Administration)

Program: Business Administration (Seated Track)		SLO 1: Students will deliver clear, well-organized presentations.			
Class	Introduced	Developed	Assessed	QEP	Assignment
Fall 1st Year					
ACA 115 - Success and Study Skills					
CIS 110 - Intro to Computers					
BUS 110 - Intro to Business	✓	✓			
BUS 115 - Business Law I	✓	✓	✓	✓	Case Studies
ACC 120 - Prin. of Financial Acc.					
ENG 111 - Writing and Inquiry	✓				
Spring 1st Year					
ACC 121 - Prin. of Managerial Acc.					
BUS 121 - Business Mathematics	✓	✓	✓		Shark Tank
CTS 130 - Spreadsheet					
MAT 152 (110 or 143 not covered)	✓	✓	✓		TBD
HUM/Fine Arts Elective - HUM 110	✓				
Fall 2nd Year					
ENG 112 - Writing/Research in the Disc.	✓	✓	✓		Career
BUS 139 - Entrepreneurship I	✓	✓	✓		Business Plan (1)
BUS 153 - HR Management					
BUS 225 - Business Finance	✓	✓	✓	✓	Business Plan (2)
ECO 251 - Prin. of Macroeconomics					
MKT 120 - Prin. of Marketing	✓	✓	✓		Global Marketing
Spring 2nd Year					
BUS 137 - Prin. of Management	✓	✓	✓		Business Profile
BUS 240 - Business Ethics					Current Events
BUS 260 - Business Communication	✓	✓	✓		
BUS 270 - Professional Development	✓	✓	✓	✓	Resumes
ECO 252 OR PSY 150	✓				
WBL 111 - Work-Based Learning I					

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