



THE
BLACK INK

PROJECT



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PROJECT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Black Ink Project	1
Building Upon A Morehouse Tradition	3
Writing Proficiency Leads To Opportunity	5
Morehouse QEP Development	7
Goals & Outcomes	9
<i>Goal 1: Student Learning Outcomes</i>	10
<i>Goal 2: Student Learning Outcomes</i>	15
<i>Goal 3: Faculty Development Outcomes</i>	16
<i>Goal 4: Research Outcomes</i>	17
The Black Ink Project in Action	21
<i>Curriculum Components</i>	24
<i>Faculty Development</i>	25
<i>Timeline</i>	26
<i>Administration & Staffing</i>	27
<i>Resources & Budget</i>	27
<i>Assessment & Evaluation</i>	27



THE BLACK INK PROJECT

Students will immerse themselves in the writing process at every stage of their educational experience through writing topics related to Black Life, History, and Culture.

GOAL ONE

Provide students with numerous opportunities to engage in writing activities that improve their written communication skills throughout their matriculation at the College.

GOAL TWO

Facilitate student exploration and selection of writing topics related to Black Life, History, and Culture (BLHAC) in First Year Experience, General Education, and discipline-specific courses.

GOAL THREE

Provide opportunities for faculty development in teaching and assessment strategies to facilitate improvements in student writing and use of BLHAC topics.

GOAL FOUR

Morehouse College will become known for producing research on undergraduate Black males' writing and writing pedagogy, particularly on the use of culturally relevant topics in the writing process.



The overarching goal of The Black Ink Project is to increase the writing proficiency of students. As part of Morehouse College's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), The Black Ink Project will provide them with opportunities to immerse themselves in the writing process at every stage of their educational experience at the College—from General Education and First Year Experience courses to the senior-level writing assignments in the disciplines. This goal, which is consistent with the tradition of articulate servant leadership for which Morehouse Men are known, will be informed and facilitated through students' selection of writing topics related to Black Life, History, and Culture (BLHAC). Key to the success of this plan will be the preparation of faculty, equipping them with the knowledge of culturally relevant pedagogy and strategies for teaching and assessing writing skills across the curriculum and within disciplines. The project emphasizes assessment and use of results to inform strategies for improving student writing over time. This focused assessment process over the five-year period of the QEP will also contribute to building and strengthening a culture of assessment at Morehouse College.

Morehouse College has a strong record of preparing students to meet the challenges of each decade of its 151-year history; yet, there is evidence that the College must do more to enhance student outcomes and prepare highly trained and skilled leaders who are steeped in a strong liberal arts tradition.

Morehouse currently enrolls approximately 2,200 students and will work to increase enrollment to 2,600 within five years. The College's new president, Dr. David A. Thomas, has set an ambitious goal for the graduating class of 2022 to have at least a 70% graduation rate. Investment in a writing program and center is a critical component that will net great returns and allow us to enhance outcomes related to retention, persistence and graduation rates. The Black Ink Project writing program and center will help the College to meet the strategic goals of enhanced recruitment and admissions, increased persistence toward degree, and improved four and six-year graduation rates.

The mission of Morehouse College is to develop men with disciplined minds who will lead lives of leadership and service. A private historically black liberal arts college for men, Morehouse realizes this mission by emphasizing the intellectual and character development of its students. In addition, the College assumes special responsibility for teaching the history and culture of black people.

Founded in 1867 and located in Atlanta, Georgia, Morehouse is an academic community dedicated to teaching, scholarship, and service, and the continuing search for truth as a liberating force. As such, the College offers instructional programs in three divisions—Business and Economics, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Science and Mathematics—as well as extracurricular activities that:

- Develop skills in oral and written communications, analytical and critical thinking, and interpersonal relationships
- Foster an understanding and appreciation of world cultures, artistic and creative expression, and the nature of the physical universe
- Promote understanding and appreciation of the specific knowledge and skills needed for the pursuit of professional careers and/or graduate study
- Cultivate the personal attributes of self-confidence, tolerance, morality, ethical behavior, spirituality, humility, a global perspective, and a commitment to social justice

BUILDING UPON A MOREHOUSE TRADITION

Morehouse College has a proud tradition of producing articulate servant-leaders who not only have enriched black life and culture, but also American society.



Morehouse College has a strong record of preparing students to meet the challenges of each decade of its 151-year history; yet, there is evidence that the College must reaffirm its mission and do more to enhance student outcomes and prepare highly trained and skilled leaders who are steeped in a strong liberal arts tradition.

The Black Ink Project merges two aspects of Morehouse College's mission into one project. The most relevant mission-related project goals are:

- The College seeks to *“develop skills in ...written communications, analytical and critical thinking.”*
- Morehouse *“assumes a special responsibility for teaching the history and culture of black people.”*

The Black Ink Project will train faculty from all departments and disciplines to use best practices in teaching writing skills. Moreover, they will

learn strategies to assist students in using BLHAC topics to inform their writing and facilitate improvement. Morehouse students choose to attend this institution for a reason. Our students are seeking to become articulate and impactful servant leaders consciously aware of and empowered by their connection to the Black Experience. The writings of some Morehouse Men have even had a global impact. For example:

Howard Thurman's most famous book, *Jesus and the Disinherited* (1949), informed the activism of **Martin Luther King, Jr. '48**, Civil Rights icon and Nobel Peace Prize winner. King himself wrote many books and delivered the "I Have a Dream" speech, selected in 1999 as the 20th Century's Greatest Speech.



Shelton "Spike" Lee '79 is an Oscar-nominated screenwriter.



Corey Richardson '01 wrote a children's book *We Used to Have Money and Now We Have You* (2018).

Shaun King '02 is an activist with Black Lives Matter and blogger.

Mark Anthony Green '10 earned the role of GQ's Style Guy with regular columns and articles before he was 30.



1901

Professor Benjamin Brawley '01 wrote *History of Morehouse* (1917) and *A Short History of the American Negro* (1921)

1923



Howard Thurman '23 was an internationally renowned theologian, mystic, and author.

1931



Past Morehouse President **Dr. Hugh Gloster '31** wrote *Negro Voices in American Fiction* (1948).

1948

1949

Lerone Bennett '49 was Executive Editor of *Ebony* magazine for many years, and also wrote the groundbreaking history text *Before the Mayflower* (1962).

1979



Panama Jackson '01 is Co-founder of *VerySmartBrothas* blog.

2001

2002

2005

Ben Cory Jones '05 writes for HBO's *Insecure*.

2010

WRITING PROFICIENCY LEADS TO OPPORTUNITY

No matter what path or career the student chooses after graduation (as a scholar, educator, health practitioner, preacher, entrepreneur, artist, lawyer, engineer, or activist), he will use writing to propose, to investigate, to analyze, and to represent himself and his work.

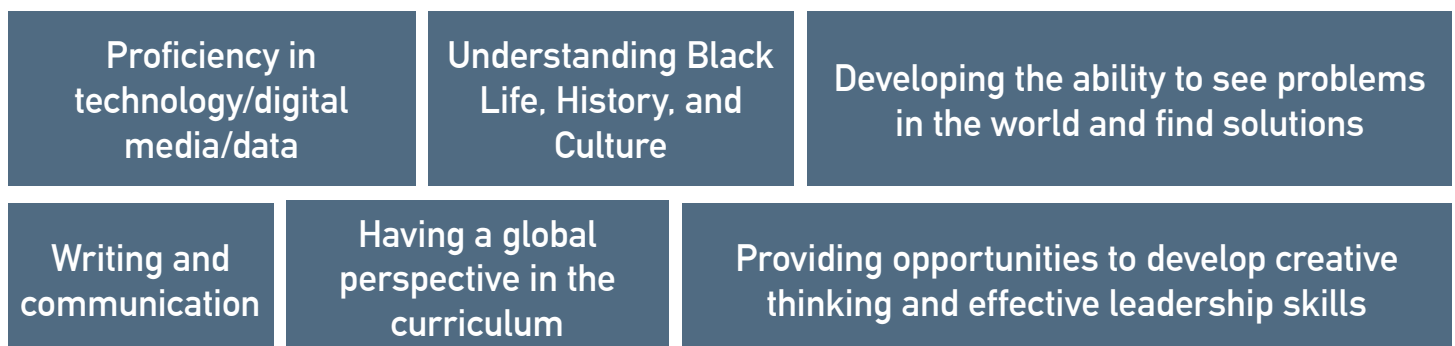
The College recognizes that the change that we seek in retention and graduation rates can only be obtained through intense and meaningful academic programs and systems of student support. The General Education reform initiative is underway with attention to the acquisitions of basic skills, of which writing is key. Simultaneously, as the College undergoes reaccreditation, the faculty consensus was to center its QEP in writing. The QEP is a planning exercise in which the College identifies an area that requires improvement and pledges to effect change in that area over the next five years. Writing was chosen as the topic of the QEP because it imparts a skill that touches all areas of college life and is in high demand by employers and graduate schools.

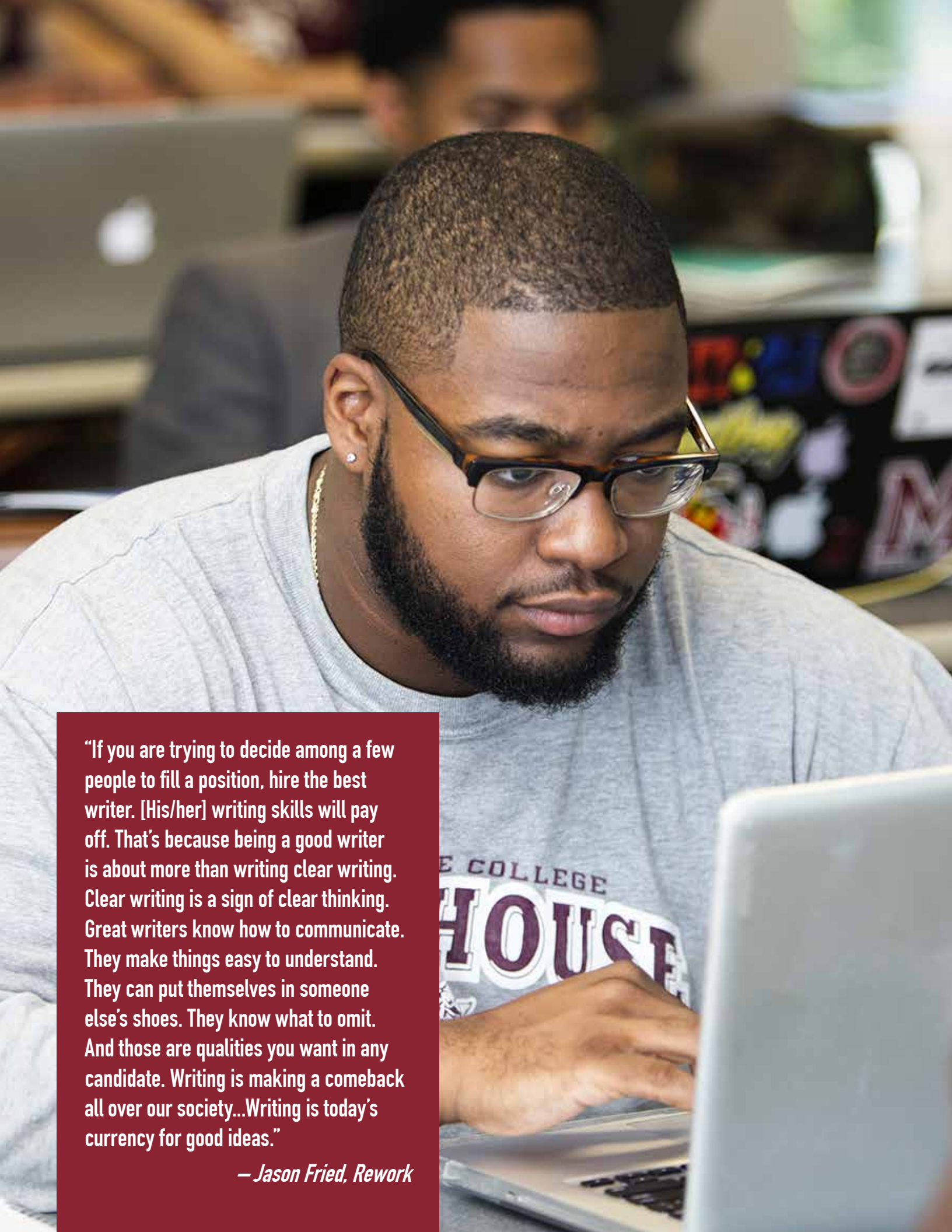
A Morehouse education begins, in part, with writing. The first writing task for all students entering Morehouse is an assignment that

requires them to write an essay that responds to an academic topic. This practice reflects the College's longstanding commitment to improving the writing abilities of Black males. In the 21st century, this need is more evident than ever before. No matter what field the student chooses, during his time here, he will use/need writing to think, analyze, investigate, and create. And no matter what path or career he chooses after graduation, he will use writing for those purposes and others: to propose, to investigate, to analyze, and to represent himself and his work. Mastery of such skills as oral and written communication have facilitated the success of Morehouse Men over time—a number of whom have distinguished themselves as great leaders, in large measure, because they have also been great communicators.

A 2014 Symposium on Writing at HBCUs spotlighted the needs of writing program administrators, composition teachers and faculty who use writing in the classroom at these special mission institutions. We believe Morehouse College should be at the forefront of this continuing discussion. The transformed General Education Program provides the infrastructure, the Writing Program provides strong components to facilitate improvement in student writing, and the QEP will provide mechanisms and strategies for ensuring these initiatives work in concert to achieve the desired goals and outcomes.

The General Education mandate was to create a smaller, more distributed model more closely aligned with clear learning objectives that are connected to our institutional mission and to the larger imperative to prepare students for 21st century needs, including:





“If you are trying to decide among a few people to fill a position, hire the best writer. [His/her] writing skills will pay off. That’s because being a good writer is about more than writing clear writing. Clear writing is a sign of clear thinking. Great writers know how to communicate. They make things easy to understand. They can put themselves in someone else’s shoes. They know what to omit. And those are qualities you want in any candidate. Writing is making a comeback all over our society...Writing is today’s currency for good ideas.”

— Jason Fried, *Rework*

MOREHOUSE QEP DEVELOPMENT

Of utmost importance to stakeholders in the Morehouse QEP development stage was consideration of the uniqueness of Morehouse College students—young Black men—and the challenges this population faces to get into college, matriculate, and complete their academic programs fully equipped with the skills in demand by employers and graduate schools.

Findings from focus groups and working sessions with representatives from all constituencies of the College during the 2014-2015 academic year were essential referents in developing the five guiding principles of the Morehouse Strategic Plan, Towards Capital and Character Preeminence (www.morehouse.edu/strategicplan). From that process, Principle Two emerged as most relevant to the QEP development process. It asserts that “today’s rapidly shifting higher education landscape demands that we must break from existing paradigms This means encouraging creativity and play in students, faculty and staff, ensuring opportunities to be trained on new tools, allowing ideas to flow from anyone at any level, and being willing to offer new courses in new ways.”

The QEP focus crystallized organically as faculty and administrators began the work of re-imagining and transforming the General Education curriculum during the 2015-2016 academic year. It started with a “Discussion Luncheon Series” among faculty, the Provost and other Academic Affairs administrators and continued with a Planning Retreat and Summer Institute with representatives from the same stakeholder groups. Later, all segments of the Morehouse community, including students, were surveyed to determine what they believed to be the greatest need in the education of the Men of Morehouse. The primary recurring theme among nearly all respondents was the need to better equip the Men of Morehouse with communication skills vital to their carrying on the tradition of articulate servant leadership for which Morehouse Men are known.

In late 2016 and early 2017, the SACSCOC Leadership Team, composed of administrators and faculty from across campus, proposed four topics, with Writing ranked number one:

- Writing
- Quantitative Skills
- Black Life, History, and Culture, and
- Placement (Developmental Education)

The QEP development process became more explicit early in 2017 when the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs established the QEP Advisory Committee, which has had primary responsibility for development of the Plan. In February 2017, a Morehouse Community Town Hall was convened to discuss options for the QEP topic. At that event, the consensus once again was that improving student writing was the top priority. The Director of General Education also reported that he had met with all departments on campus about the revised General Education curriculum, and there again, the top concern across campus was writing. The Town Hall group also recognized that a simultaneous focus on BLHAC could enrich the QEP focus, perhaps even increase the achievement of desired writing outcomes and simultaneously further advance achievement of another mission goal. The topic of the QEP was then on the agenda of college-wide faculty meetings that followed in March, May and August of 2017. The faculty was informed that the College was considering ‘Writing’ as the QEP topic and asked for feedback. Consistently, the faculty expressed support for the selection.

Three members of the QEP Advisory Committee attended the SACSCOC Summer Institute in July 2017 in Austin, Texas. A plenary speaker, Dr. Mark Taylor, speaking on needs of the Generation Z population of students entering colleges, described how the new generation of students performed better when they were intellectually engaged in the topic. Dr. Norment, QEP Director, had relevant research on students using culturally relevant topics in writing skill development. Taken together, these two elements inspired the QEP Advisory Committee to consider the premise of using BLHAC to assist students in developing their writing skills. Surveys of the faculty, students and alumni in April 2018 further emphasized the need for writing skill improvement.





GOALS & OUTCOMES

The Black Ink Project will tie the writing skills development of our students to their exploration of topics related to Black Life, History, and Culture, a process that we believe will increase their engagement and ultimately improve their writing proficiency.

The overarching goal of The Black Ink Project is to motivate students, the Men of Morehouse, to hone their written skills and immerse themselves in the writing process in the tradition of articulate servant leadership for which the institution is known and informed by their study of the Black Experience in Africa, America, and the Diaspora. Key to the success of The Black Ink Project will be the preparation of faculty, equipping them with the knowledge of culturally relevant pedagogy and strategies for teaching and assessing writing skills across the curriculum and within the disciplines.

The Black Ink Project aims to improve the writing skills of all Morehouse students by emphasizing high-level written communication in several fundamental places: (1) English Composition 101 and 102; (2) First Year Experience (FYE), the General Education Curriculum (Gen Ed), the BLHAC courses, and significant culminating writing assignments in the disciplines; (3) Faculty Workshops designed to teach faculty the techniques identified as the best practices to teach and assess writing, and (4) assigning students to the Writing Lab for individualized tutoring to develop and improve language skills. The QEP will ensure that all the components of the framework are linked and complementary, working together to improve writing proficiency of all students. Below the specific goals and student learning outcomes of the Black Ink Project are the aligned rubrics, particularly our Writing Rubric, adapted from the Association of American Colleges and Universities Written Communication VALUE Rubric and the Critical Thinking VALUE Rubric.



GOAL ONE

Provide students with numerous opportunities to engage in writing activities that improve their written communication skills throughout their matriculation at the College.

Student Learning Outcome 1: Produce a grammatically and mechanically correct written document with proper sourcing, if required.

SL01 Control of Syntax and Mechanics	Advanced	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to audience with clarity and fluency and is virtually error free.
	Proficient	Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to audience. The language in the output/product has few errors.
	Intermediate	Uses language that generally conveys meaning to audience with clarity, although communication may include some errors.
	Novice	Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage.
SL01 Language	Advanced	Language choices are imaginative, memorable, and compelling, and enhance the effectiveness of the communication. Language is appropriate to the audience.
	Proficient	Language choices are thoughtful and generally support the effectiveness of the communication. Language is appropriate to the audience.
	Intermediate	Language choices are mundane and commonplace and partially support the effectiveness of the communication. Language is partially appropriate to the audience.
	Novice	Language choices are unclear and minimally support the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in communication is not appropriate to the audience.

SL01
Sources and Evidence

Advanced	Demonstrates skillful use of high quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the communication.
Proficient	Demonstrates consistent use of credible, relevant sources to support ideas that are situated within the discipline and genre of the communication.
Intermediate	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the communication.
Novice	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the communication.



Student Learning Outcome 2: Organize a coherent and cohesive written document.

SL02
Organization

Advanced	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable and is skillful and makes the content of the communication cohesive.
Proficient	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable within the communication.
Intermediate	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is intermittently observable within the communication.
Novice	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is not observable within the communication.



Student Learning Outcome 3: Utilize critical thinking when producing a written document.

SL03
Explanation
of issues

Advanced	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding.
Proficient	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated, described, and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions.
Intermediate	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown.
Novice	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated without clarification or description.

SL03
Evidence

Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion

Advanced	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly.
Proficient	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are subject to questioning.
Intermediate	Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are taken as mostly fact, with little questioning.
Novice	Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/evaluation.

SL03
Influence of
context and
assumptions

Advanced	Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.
Proficient	Identifies own and others' assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position.
Intermediate	Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa).
Novice	Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position.

SL03
Student's
position

*(perspective,
thesis/hypothesis)*

Advanced	Student's position is imaginative, taking into account the complexities of an issue. Limits of position are acknowledged. Others' points of view are synthesized within the position.
Proficient	Student's position takes into account the complexities of an issue. Others' points of view are acknowledged within the position.
Intermediate	Student's position acknowledges different sides of an issue.
Novice	Student's position is stated, but is simplistic and obvious.

SL03
Conclusions
and related
outcomes

*(implications and
consequences)*

Advanced	Conclusions and related outcomes are logical and reflect student's informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order.
Proficient	Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints; related outcomes are identified clearly.
Intermediate	Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes are identified clearly.
Novice	Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes are oversimplified.



Student Learning Outcome 4: Correctly apply an appropriate mode of writing considering the context and purpose of the document.

SLO4
Genre and Disciplinary Conventions

Formal and informal rules inherent in the expectations for communicating in particular forms and/or academic fields.

Advanced	Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or communication task(s) including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices.
Proficient	Demonstrates consistent use of important conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or communication task(s), including organization, content, presentation, and stylistic choices.
Intermediate	Follows expectations appropriate to a specific discipline and/or communication task(s) for basic organization, content, and presentation.
Novice	Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation.

SLO4
Integrated Communication

Advanced	Fulfills the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) in ways that enhance meaning, making clear the interdependence of language and meaning, thought, and expression.
Proficient	Fulfills the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) to explicitly connect content and form, demonstrating awareness of purpose and audience.
Intermediate	Fulfills the assignment(s) by choosing a format, language, or graph (or other visual representation) that connects in a basic way what is being communicated (content) with how it is said (form).
Novice	Fulfills the assignment(s) (i.e. to produce an essay, a poster, a video, a PowerPoint presentation, etc.) in an appropriate form.

SL04

Context of/ Purpose for Communication

Includes considerations of audience, purpose, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s).

Advanced	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.
Proficient	Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with audience, purpose, and context).
Intermediate	Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions).
Novice	Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).



GOAL TWO

Facilitate student exploration and selection of writing topics related to BLHAC in First Year Experience, General Education, and discipline-specific courses.

Student Learning Outcome 5: Student will write a document that draws upon aspects of the lives, histories, and cultures of Black people.

SL05

Integration of BLHAC Content

Advanced	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the individual's understanding, and shaping the whole work.
Proficient	Uses appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work.
Intermediate	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through most of the work.
Novice	Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop simple ideas in some parts of the work.



GOAL THREE

Provide opportunities for faculty development in teaching and assessment strategies to facilitate improvements in student writing and use of BLHAC topics.

Faculty Development Outcome 1: Faculty members will be trained to use culturally relevant teaching strategies and assessment methods as they prepare students in First Year Experience, General Education, and discipline-specific courses for writing assignments using BLHAC content.

FD01 Faculty Development	Excellent	100% of full-time faculty members participate in writing workshops.
	Good	75% of full-time faculty members participate in writing workshops.
	Fair	50% of full-time faculty members participate in writing workshops.
	Poor	25% of full-time faculty members participate in writing workshops.

Faculty Development Outcome 2: Academic discipline faculty members will design significant writing assignments for junior/senior students using culturally relevant topics in their discipline.

FD02 Major Writing Assignments	Excellent	100% of academic discipline faculty create the writing assignment, approved by the QEP Advisory Committee.
	Good	80% of academic discipline faculty create the writing assignment, approved by the QEP Advisory Committee.
	Fair	60% of academic discipline faculty create the writing assignment, approved by the QEP Advisory Committee.
	Poor	40% of academic discipline faculty create the writing assignment, approved by the QEP Advisory Committee.



GOAL FOUR

Morehouse College will become known for producing research on undergraduate Black males' writing and writing pedagogy, particularly on the use of culturally relevant topics in the writing process.

Research Outcome 1: Faculty members will produce research on Black males' writing and writing pedagogy, particularly on the use of culturally relevant topics in the writing process.

R01
Research Publications

Peer-reviewed Journal Articles, Book Chapters, Edited volume on QEP-related research

Excellent	Morehouse College faculty produce a combination of 14 Peer Reviewed Journal articles and book chapters and publish 1 edited volume during the QEP period.
Good	Morehouse College faculty produce a combination of 10 Peer Reviewed Journal articles and book chapters during the QEP period.
Fair	Morehouse College faculty produce a combination of seven Peer Reviewed Journal articles and book chapters during the QEP period.
Poor	Morehouse College faculty produce one Peer Reviewed Journal article and book chapter during the QEP period.

R01
Conference Presentations

Excellent	Morehouse College Faculty present results of QEP research findings at eight conferences during QEP period
Good	Morehouse College Faculty present results of QEP research at six conferences during QEP period
Fair	Morehouse College Faculty present QEP research at four conferences during QEP period
Poor	Morehouse College faculty present research at one to two conferences during QEP period.



Research Outcome 2: Faculty members will establish a Morehouse-based internal and virtual global Community of Practice (CoP) to share and discuss results of QEP-related research.

R02
Multiple modes of communication

Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morehouse creates robust CoP for institutional, national, and global participants via a dedicated website. • Maintains group contact via Facebook group page, blogs. • Hosts two Virtual Peer Learning institute with 70% participation rate.
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morehouse creates robust CoP for institutional, national, and global participants via dedicated website. • Maintains group contact via Facebook group page, blogs. • Hosts one Virtual Peer Learning institute with 60% participation rate.
Fair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morehouse creates CoP via Morehouse institutional website only. • Communications with CoP members also via email and conference calls, creation of Facebook group. • Hosts one Virtual Peer Learning Institute with 30% participation rate
Poor	CoP developed via email, conference calls, occasional Skype conversations, Facebook group.

R02
Institutional, local, national, global participants

Excellent	CoP participants include Morehouse stakeholders and stakeholders from other local institutions, as well as national and international institutions.
Good	CoP participants include Morehouse stakeholders and stakeholders from other local and national institutions.
Fair	CoP participants include Morehouse stakeholders and stakeholders from other local institutions.
Poor	CoP participants include Morehouse stakeholders only.



R02
Impact of CoP

Excellent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual exchange of information about research and results among Morehouse stakeholders and other local, national and international members of the CoP. • Evidence provided by 70% of participants to show how shared information has influenced pedagogies, teaching strategies and assessment.
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual exchange of information about research and results among Morehouse stakeholders and other local, national and international members of the CoP . • Evidence provided by 50% of participants to show how shared information has influenced pedagogies, teaching strategies and assessment.
Fair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange of information about research and results among Morehouse stakeholders and a few other local and national members of the CoP. • Evidence provided by 30% of participants to show how shared information has influenced pedagogies, teaching strategies and assessment.
Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange of information about research and results among Morehouse and a few other local stakeholders only. • Evidence provided by 10% of participants to show how shared information has influenced pedagogies, teaching strategies and assessment.

Morehouse College believes that The Black Ink Project can dramatically improve student learning outcomes through the combination of better preparing teachers and through increasing the motivation of students through the culturally relevant topics. The desired outcomes for the students are as follows:

- After the freshmen year, 80% of the randomly selected students will average a 2 on the rubric associated with the five Student Learning Outcomes.
- After the sophomore year, 80% of the randomly selected students will average a 3 on the rubric associated with the five Student Learning Outcomes.
- After the junior year, 80% of the randomly selected students will average a 4 on the rubric associated with the five Student Learning Outcomes.
- After the senior year, 80% of the randomly selected students will average a 5 on the rubric associated with the five Student Learning Outcomes.
- On the faculty and research outcomes, Morehouse aims to achieve a 5 on the rubric associated with all of those outcomes by the end of the project period.



The Black Ink Project in Action

The essence of the project is to provide an overarching structure for student writing experiences at the College that ensures continuity and complementarity among the units, courses, and programs focusing on writing.

The Black Ink Project pulls from bodies of research around four interrelated, progressive and proven approaches to the teaching of writing:

Writing in the Discipline (WID)

Writing in the Discipline, or “learning to write” for specific disciplines, is a concept that is included in the Writing Across Curriculum pedagogy. The following describes best practices Morehouse College will use in structuring its emphasis on Writing in the Discipline:

Writing intensive courses promote the following goals:

- 1. Writing as Discovery:** Students in writing intensive courses spend significant time completing writing assignments that encourage them to develop the habit of using writing to explore new ideas, reflect on these ideas in relation to themselves, and construct knowledge for themselves.
- 2. Writing/Thinking as Process:** The writing process of mature writers is reinforced in writing intensive classes. Students are given instruction in pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing.
- 3. Writing in Context:** Purpose and audience are the primary factors shaping discourse. Students are given clear instructions regarding purpose and format, and designated audience.
- 4. Writing to Achieve Course Aims:** The assignments in a writing intensive course are used to develop higher levels of critical thinking.
- 5. Amount of Writing:** Students are encouraged to write only if their writing is an integral part of the course; therefore, a significant portion (possibly 50% or more) of a student’s course grade should be based on the writing assigned.”

Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC)

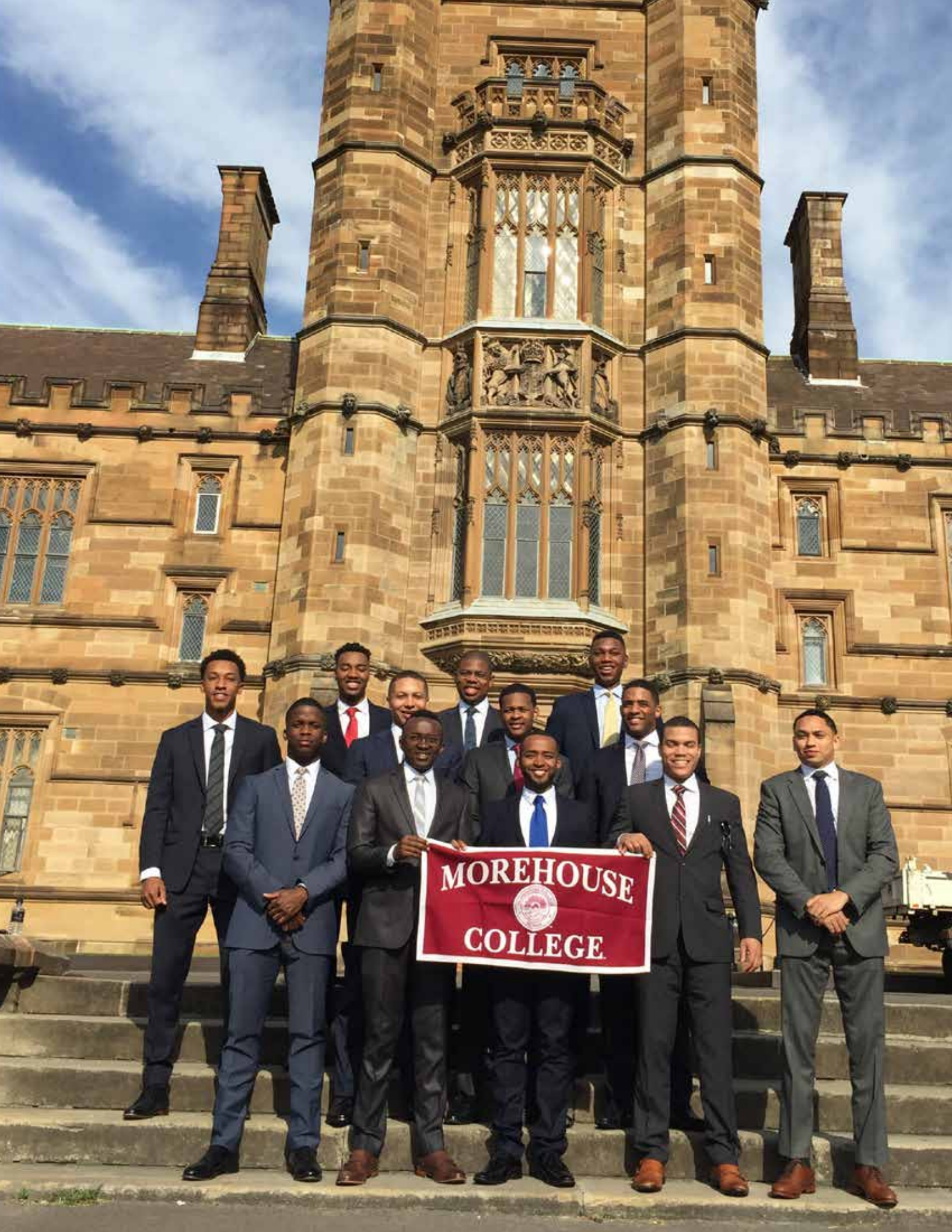
Writing Across Curriculum stresses student-centeredness as the most effective means to educate learners. A major thrust in WAC as we are using it at Morehouse refers to its use in the process of students' writing to learn. In recent years, some educators have attempted to enhance approaches to WAC by using unique modes of delivery. One of the most recent offerings is Kathleen T. McWhorter's *Successful College Writing* (2018) which provides a unique visual approach. McWhorter focuses on providing strategies for advancing first-year composition students at all levels of preparedness, toward success in college writing. Morehouse College adapted Dr. McWhorter's textbook to create a unique version "featuring 24 professional selections and three student works curated by the Morehouse faculty for their cultural relevance..." for use in the current freshman composition courses.

Culturally Relevant (aka Culturally Responsive) Pedagogy (CRP)

Developed by a number of talented researchers, such as Jaqueline Irving and Gloria Ladson Billings, culturally relevant pedagogy stresses the need for teachers to use their cultural competence and critical consciousness to make classroom choices. Ultimately, this leads to high academic achievement for all students. CRP cannot be boiled down into a list of strategies or teacher moves. A key element of CRP is the trust and relationships that teachers build with students. Through these relationships, teachers learn the strengths, needs, languages, and lifestyles of their students. Affirmation and strategic use of this knowledge can help teachers make decisions that will support all of their students.

Culturally Influenced Writing Style of African American Students

In addition to using topics in Black Life History and Culture as subjects for writing, students themselves are centered as sources of knowledge. Researchers (Ball, Fowler, Chaplin, Gay, Norment, and Wilson among others) have suggested that the attitudes a writer acquires about written discourse are influenced by the writer's experiences and culture. Language not only maps the individual's culture, but it also facilitates and shapes thought. An understanding and validation of linguistic styles of written language communication empowers the writer. They recognize, and as needed, incorporate the African American experience to strengthen their writing—as have Morehouse Men—such as Howard Thurman, Lerone Bennett, Martin Luther King, Jr., Spike Lee, and Killer Mike.



MOREHOUSE

COLLEGE

Curriculum Components

English 101-102 Composition

English 101 and 102 is a two-semester, freshman-level sequence of basic composition designed to help individual writers gain more control over the writing process and improve largely at their own pace. Writing and analytical skills are enhanced through extensive work in expository, argumentative, and documented essays. Activities allow exploration of a variety of perspectives in different disciplines and cultures, with an emphasis on works by African American authors in the department's new textbook. A grade of C or above is required in each course for successful completion of this sequence, which satisfies the Core requirement in Composition.

First Year Experience (FYE)

The primary purpose of the First Year Experience is to guide and support incoming students in their efforts to make a successful transition from their high school experience to their new college environment. The course topics are carefully crafted to address specific adjustment needs as well as to provide freshmen with new knowledge and information that will help them succeed academically and personally in their first year. Note: Some Writing Program courses, like first-year seminars, have a special focus, which is more about "theme/topic," such as social justice, gender, cultural identity, sustainability, etc.

General Education Curriculum (Gen Ed)

The General Education curriculum is organized around a set of "essential learning outcomes" that are the key outcomes of a liberal education. Innovative general education models abound and include many models that enhance the depth of content, effectiveness of learning, retention and graduation rates. The inclusion of intensive writing in selected courses throughout the Gen Ed curriculum is a major focus. Other examples of innovative pedagogical approaches in general education include a number of other high impact educational practices, such as first-year programs, collaborative assignments, undergraduate research, and service learning.

Students will continue to develop higher levels of competency of learning objectives within majors, minors, and co-curricular experiences such as service learning, study abroad, internships, and mentored apprenticeships. Gen Ed will empower students to integrate knowledge and skills from their academic and co-curricular experiences by becoming active participants in their own learning. Through a distribution model of course selection, they can exercise agency in designing their own education, and reach the learning outcomes of the experience.

Black, Life, History, and Culture Courses

Black, Life, History, and Culture is an integrative learning experience that is grounded in an understanding of Africa and its Diaspora. These courses are grounded in the College's Mission to "teach the history and culture of Black people." This means that the General Education experience at Morehouse will be distinctive in its deliberate use of texts, examples, perspectives, experiences, and principles by and from Black people from all over the world and across time, working across themes of social justice, equity and servant leadership within the humanities, sciences and business. Courses will be designated as Black Life, History, and Culture as part of this effort.

To demonstrate integrative learning in Black Life, History, and Culture, students will: (1) analyze the history and culture of Africa and the African Diaspora through multiple disciplines and critical perspectives, including but not exclusive to African-centered models; (2) understand the diverse experiences, patterns, philosophies, theories, and ways of knowing pertaining to Africa and the African Diaspora; and (3) integrate ideas, knowledge, and practice within the context of Black Life, History, and Culture.

Discipline-based Writing Assignments

Following up on the BLHAC courses that are disseminated throughout the General Education core, a major component of The Black Ink Project is that each academic discipline will create a significant writing assignment within their area that speaks to BLHAC. During the first two years of the project, as more and more faculty are being trained, each discipline will undergo conversations and planning on requiring students to prepare a writing assignment that touches on BHLAC. These assignments will begin to be assigned during the third year and will represent the final evaluation touch point for each cohort, to be graded using the same rubric. To give disciplines more flexibility, this is not required to be a capstone project but it should be considered a significant part of an upper-level class.

Faculty Development

Faculty Development and Workshops

Students will learn both foundational and advanced knowledge, skills and abilities through working with faculty. Few students can learn effective writing or achieve the learning outcomes on their own. Because it is the faculty who are responsible for guiding their students. Therefore, The Black Ink Project will facilitate the smooth implementation of the new approaches to First Year Experience, English Composition, Gen Ed, and BLHAC courses through experiences that focus on developing faculty knowledge, skills and abilities as well

Faculty Writing Workshops and Support for Teaching Writing

The goal of the Faculty Writing Workshops is to improve the quality of writing instruction across the campus. Upon completion of the workshops, faculty members will be able to use teaching techniques that are immediately transferable to their classrooms. Faculty members who participate in a workshop learn about (1) Pedagogy of writing, (2) Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and designing effective writing assignments; (3) Writing in disciplines; (4) Strategies for responding to and evaluating student writing; (5) Designing writing assignments that motivate Critical Thinking/Reading; and (6) Function of student conferences. Faculty members who embrace the best practices for teaching and assessing writing will be invited as guest speakers or workshop facilitators in subsequent semesters and will be compensated for their participation.

Timeline

Month	Activity	The Black Ink Project						
		Pre Planning	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Oct	Communicate The Black Ink Project to the campus community	■						
Aug	Test the culturally relevant prompts with the incoming freshman class	■						
Aug-May	Collect writing samples from students to serve as baseline for comparison	■						
Oct-May	Test E-portfolio on Blackboard	■						
Aug	Administer Writing Assignments to Students in the New Student Orientation.		■	■	■	■	■	■
Aug-May	Collect writing samples from English Composition 1 and 2 and FYE classes.		■	■	■	■	■	■
Aug-May	Faculty workshops to train faculty how to better give and grade culturally relevant writing assignments are given. (2 to 3 per semester)		■	■	■	■	■	■
Dec/May	Reader Corps created and trained		■	■	■	■	■	■
May-Jun	Reader Corps evaluate a random sampling of writing assignments from across campus. (End of year)		■	■	■	■	■	■
Aug	Reader Corps prepare a report summarizing evaluations to be presented to faculty as formative assessment.			■	■	■	■	■
Aug-May	Collect writing samples from sophomore level General Education classes.			■	■	■	■	■
Aug-May	Develop major writing assignments (using BLHAC topics) at the junior and senior level in all academic disciplines.		■	■	■			
Nov, April	Collect upper-level writing assignments in all academic disciplines.				■	■	■	■
May-Jun	Annual reports to Faculty and Provost on progress in the QEP			■	■	■	■	■
May-Jun	Mid-plan report to make adjustments as necessary				■			
Jan-Jun	Final report							■

Administration & Staffing

During Fall 2017, Morehouse College appointed a QEP Director, Dr. Nathaniel Norment, a renowned educator and researcher in Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. The Director will administer the QEP and lead and manage the day-to-day QEP implementation efforts.

To accomplish marketing, faculty outreach, and assessment, the Director will work with offices on campus such as the Office of Strategic Communication (OSC), the Office of Faculty Development (OFD), and the Department of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (DIRE). OSC will develop a comprehensive marketing strategy plan directed towards administrators, alumni, faculty, staff, and students. OFD will assist in developing and assessing faculty workshops. DIRE will provide ongoing assessment of the student learning outcomes and evaluation of program implementation and effectiveness. The Advisory Committee will provide support and advice to the QEP Director and oversee the implementation of The Black Ink Project.

Resources & Budget

Morehouse College is committed to the success of The Black Ink Project. Although the budget allocation over the five years of the QEP is minimal—\$250,000 (\$50,000 per year)—it will support the implementation of the foundational components of the program—such as compensation of the QEP Director, consultant fees, faculty development workshop stipends, and compensation for faculty participation in the assessment Reader Corps.

Over the five years of implementation of The Black Ink Project, of necessity the budget will be small and lean. However, the new Morehouse administration has committed to scaling up and fully institutionalizing support for this comprehensive approach to improving student writing proficiency moving forward.

Assessment & Evaluation

Student writing will be assessed for attainment of the student learning outcomes using the QEP Writing Rubric. The QEP will be considered to have improved students' writing if students who have progressed through (1) English Composition 101 and 102; (2) First Year Experience (FYE), (3) the General Education Curriculum (Gen Ed),

(4) the Black, Life, History, and Culture and (5) the discipline-specific courses demonstrate the attainment of the five learning outcomes at a level higher than those students enrolled at Morehouse prior to the installation of the new writing paradigms. Research will also be encouraged on measuring the impact of the Faculty Writing workshops on the student learning outcomes. Achievement of the student learning outcomes will be demonstrated in written artifacts stored in e-portfolios.

The QEP Reader Corps comprised of six faculty members, representing a cross section of disciplines and trained in writing assessment best practices, will conduct the assessment of student writing completed within the context of designated courses (First Year Experience, English Composition, General Education, and writing intensive discipline-specific courses). The size of the Reader Corps is predicted to grow as more cohorts are added in subsequent years. The assessment process will begin in Fall 2019. The primary assessment methodology will be direct evaluation of the writing of a random sampling of students grouped in cohorts beginning in their freshman year of matriculation. The first cohort will be selected in Fall 2019. The training of the faculty will begin Spring and Summer 2019. To assist in establishing a useful assessment process, we will clearly identify the writing samples of students in classes taught by faculty members who have participated in QEP faculty development workshops. In addition, baseline writing samples of seniors who have not progressed through the new curriculum will be collected from 2019-2021 for comparison.

Of particular importance is that The Black Ink Project features a new institutional practice for Morehouse in assessing student writing. Electronic portfolios will both encourage process-based writing and reflection and to generate authentic artifacts for assessment. In addition, The Black Ink Project increases faculty ownership of writing assessment, moving it from the margins to the center by opening regular conversations about how to improve teaching and learning. Artifacts will be collected from student electronic portfolios and will be evaluated using the Morehouse QEP Writing Rubric. Rubrics promote validity and reliability on the part of the evaluators and also provide students with perspectives on precisely what is valued and expected in their writing.



The assessment results will be communicated to the Morehouse community via several mechanisms including distribution of the QEP Annual Report at the conclusion of each program

year. The Morehouse QEP website and the OSC will be used as the primary means for informing the general public about ongoing QEP activities.

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