

## Academic Unit Plan--English

Division\_Communications/English Academic Year: 2010-2011

Division Chair: Carmen Carrillo

### Executive Summary

This year our department has engaged in a variety of activities and projects. The English Department continues its assessment of its student learning outcomes with English 21, 28, 101, 102, and several 200 level courses. This fall 2009, the English Department will assess more 200 level courses and update the SLOs in the course outline of record. Our next goal is to begin updating and revising course outlines in fall 2010. The Department continues with professional development activities, like poetry night, including the revamping of our webpage. Our last program review indicated the need to address student's writing needs. Thus, the Department (Communications Division) opened a Language Arts Learning Center so that we can provide additional support services for our students. Students enrolled in English 185 can earn 1 unit and be provided with directed learning activities, grammar exercises, and workshops on various topics related to writing and literature.

**Activities Description Narrative:** please describe suggested activities, including grant proposals to be written, new course or program initiatives, or program viability studies in priority order.

1. Maintain the Language Arts Learning Center that allows all students enrolled in an English, ESL, journalism, or foreign language classes to seek tutorial assistance with a faculty tutor, work on directed learning activities as instituted by both Chaffey College and Riverside City College, and provide computer assisted programs.
2. Hire 2 full time instructors in English. The goal is to hire someone to teach online and to replace retirees in order to maintain the integrity of English program. Hiring additional faculty has always been part of the English Department's program review. To date the Department has 3 full time instructors as the other 3 full time instructors are on full or part reassignment. The additional hires are necessary as the A.A. degree in English requires offering more literature courses for graduation requirements.
3. Develop grammar classes to go between English 21 and 28 and to develop a developmental writing class to be offered upon completion of English 21 and before enrollment in English 28 or English 101. Assessment of English 21 and English 28 indicate that students are under prepared in the minimum requirements for these course levels. The need to address basic skills is essential to assist students to succeed from level to level.
4. Institute hybrid courses for English 28 and 200 level courses. This no-cost to college activity will allow those students who like the use of technology in the classroom to participate in a non-

traditional course setting. Hybrid courses will also allow instructors to use alternative means of pedagogy that lends itself to student success using technology.

5. Develop Learning communities in reading and writing among disciplines as outlined in Essential Skills' five year action plan promotes student success. Humanities, Social Sciences, and Liberal Arts courses together aid in overall informational competency of students. The five year plan concluded that the English Department should form a learning community between English 101 and English 137.
6. Develop a Grammar Slam for incoming and at risk students by providing grammar, sentence, writing skills that are needed at all English sequenced courses. Though this activity would need Basic Skills Initiative funding or any other grant monies available, the premise is one that would provide our most basic skills student and at risk student to be involved in a grammar immersion program to assist them with achieving minimum skill requirements for their English level courses. The plan would act as a bridge program to be held in the summer for an intensive three weeks. The faculty would facilitate the modules, use peer tutors, and make use of the Language Arts Learning Center for directed learning activities.
7. Institute a book to be read across the curriculum with activities to highlight the content. This no cost to the college activity brings to the forefront the concept of One Book, One City. It is a concept once developed by the City of Los Angeles and is being used in cities like San Diego and San Francisco. Universities also implement the reading of one book for freshmen year as is done at University of Northern Arizona. The idea is to bring together readers with non-readers to engage in discussion of the book and its issues.

**SLO Assessment Results Narrative:** please describe assessment activities that support proposed unit initiatives.

1. The recommendations to the department are contained in the attached narrative. The overwhelming evidence is that most students are unable to identify standard academic English conventions within the context of a paragraph and then correct those errors appropriately. A subsequent error analysis will be conducted to see if a pattern of errors can be established. Clearly we have much to do.
2. Almost half of the students exhibited problems with sentence structure. Fragment, run-on, and comma splice were common problems with students in this category. Other grammar and usage problems were a consistent point of view, pronoun reference and agreement, subject-verb agreement, capitalization, and spelling.
3. Forty-six percent of the students showed difficulty incorporating parallelism, the active voice, concise words, transition words, subordination, coordination, and a variety of word choice (synonyms). The misuse of the comma and semicolon were common problems with students.

**Staffing Implications:** if any request will require additional classified support or training, please describe its extent.

1. Developing and implementing the new AA in English as well as offering new courses will require additional faculty to staff courses. The Division will continue to address this need with FHPC.

**Technology Implications:** if any request involves technology, please describe its impact on the network, licensing, repair, training and support.

- 1.

## Documentation

### Los Angeles Harbor College: English 28 SLO Report

#### Background

During the fall term of 2008, the English 28 student learning outcome committee revised and synthesized two intended course outcomes for the evaluation of the English 28 Exit Examination. The committee wanted to implement a better barometer, or measure, of how the student would meet the demands of the next English course, English 101. The committee chose to integrate the first two student learning outcomes (listed below) because it would represent the core concept of English 28, reading critically and writing logically. For the English 28 Exit Examination, students write an in-class essay which responds to a debatable article and a common prompt. The examination is given four weeks prior to the students' final exam. All of the English 28 instructors participate in the evaluation of the exams. Instructors are asked to make the Exit Examination worth 25% of the students over all grade during the term. Below is the current two course intended outcomes, and they are followed by the revision that synthesizes the two. As previously mentioned, the revision was proposed for the purpose of a more measurable barometer of the students' capability for his or her future success in English 101.

A) Comprehend, evaluate, and discuss with insight essays written at the 13<sup>th</sup> grade level and above which deal with a wide range of issues and points of view presented in various rhetorical modes.

B) Students will be able to create well supported and organized 500 word essays by incorporating various rhetorical modes.

#### Revision

C) **Demonstrate the ability to comprehend college-level readings, from various rhetorical modes, by responding to those readings with logically constructed, well supported, and edited essays that exhibit a critical analysis of those readings.**

The focus of curriculum in English 28 is writing short essays that respond to texts which demonstrate advanced-intermediate methods of academic written discourse with sentences relatively free from errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics; therefore, the committee divided the student learning outcome C into six areas to assess: The student effectively deciphers the author's intent, inference, or judgment.

- The student is well organized and well developed by clearly stating his or her claim, point, or idea.
- The student uses clear and appropriate examples by incorporating observations, anecdotes, or analogy as support.
- The student properly cites the article as evidence, explanation, illustration, or clarification.
- The student displays syntax and punctuation.
- The student displays mechanics, grammar, usage, and range of vocabulary.

The committee chose the article "A Former Smoker Cheers," by David Rakoff (refer to page 5) due to the articles debatable topic - should the government or the individual make the decision about smoking? Also, the reading is at a pre-collegiate level. The prompt and the article ask the student to take into consideration that 43 colleges in the United States are smoke free. In addition, as of October 2008, three local city beaches banned smoking. The committee felt this topic was current and would incite opinion from the student, and the article's prose would not be overly challenging for the English 28 student. The article will allow the student writer to draw on his or her own personal experiences concerning government intervention and personal choice, smoking in an outdoor public area, and/or health risks involved with second hand smoke. The committee created the following prompt:

**According to USA Today, 43 colleges from California to New Jersey have gone smoke free. As of October 2008, all beaches in the South Bay have banned smoking. In the article "A Former Smoker Cheers," David Rakoff asserts that he was pleased that the government imposed laws that would restrict a smoker's individual rights. Write a well developed essay in which you argue whether or not the government has the right to regulate an individual's personal choice. Use the article and your personal experiences to support your view point.**

## **Process and Results**

First, students review and discuss the various strategies in developing a well organized, argumentative essay with their instructor. Then, students were given one hour to read and interpret what the article infers; they were allowed to annotate the primary text to analyze and evaluate the author's argument. Next, students were given one hour to produce a written response to the prompt and article. The entire process takes two class meetings.

With the new student learning outcome revision, 95 student essays were submitted from 19 English 28 sections; a random sampling of five from each class was submitted. On December 5, a committee of five English 28 professors gathered to refine the rubric and establish norms for each category. Essays were evaluated on the six point criteria assessment.

On the following pages, the report contains the rubric for evaluating student competence for transfer into English 101 (Table 1), an assessment data breakdown of student competence in each designated category (Table 2), and a dissection of essays demonstrating competence versus incompetence (Table 3).

# Criteria of Competence for Exiting English 28 Students

**Table 1**

Rubric for Evaluation	Demonstrates excellence (4)	Demonstrates clear competence (3)	Demonstrates adequate competence (2)	Demonstrates inadequate competence (1)	Demonstrates incompetence (0)	Score achieved in this element
The student effectively deciphers the author's intent, inference, or judgment.						
The student is well organized and displays development by clearly stating his or her claim, point, or idea.						
The student uses appropriate examples by incorporating observations, anecdotes, or analogy as support.						
The student properly cites the article as evidence, explanation, or counter-argument.						
The student displays grammar, usage, and mechanics.						
The student displays syntax, punctuation and range of vocabulary						
The accumulated score						

## Data Breakdown of Categories

**Table 2**

Assessment Data Breakdown	Essays read	Demonstrates excellence (4)	Demonstrates clear competence (3)	Demonstrates adequate competence (2)	Demonstrates inadequate competence (1)	Demonstrates incompetence (0)	% of students passing
The student effectively deciphers the author's intent.	95	23	36	23	12	1	86%
The student is organized and displays a plan of development.	95	17	33	24	21	0	77%
The student incorporates support and examples.	95	25	20	34	15	1	83%
The student cites the primary text as support or counter-argument.	95	22	19	16	23	15	60%
The student displays grammar usage and mechanics	95	0	16	36	42	1	54%
The student displays syntax, punctuation, and range of vocabulary	95	4	14	34	42	1	54%

These numbers were reached by incorporating the rubric of evaluation illustrated on page 3, Table 1.

### Competence versus Incompetence

**Table 3**

A Dissection of Essays	Demonstrates competence	Demonstrates Incompetence
Deciphers the author's intent	82	13
Organization and development	74	21
Incorporates support and examples	79	16
Cities the primary text as evidence or counter-argument	57	38
Grammar, usage, and mechanics	52	43
Syntax, punctuation, and range of vocabulary	52	43

A scale is illustrated below that represents essays in each category.

Grade Point	Grade	Count
Average		
4.0 - 3.5	A	5
3.4 - 3.0	B	17
2.9 - 2.0	C	35
1.9 - 1.0	D	32
0.9 - 0	F	3

## Conclusions

- A majority of students, eighty-six percent, were able to comprehend Rakoff's claim concerning personal choice and civic responsibility. However, there were students who interpreted Rakoff's disclaimer, the overpowering addiction of a former smoker, as his claim. Fourteen percent of the students believed the author was advocating a smoker's right to smoke in well populated areas.
- Seventy-seven percent of the students were able to clearly state their opinion concerning the prompt. However, students who demonstrated excellence or clear competence with their thesis statement incorporated a complete thesis statement; they stated their claim as well as the reasons for the claim in the introductory paragraph. The complete thesis statement established a pattern for development and organization which kept the student on point; they did not deviate from the claim they were arguing or contradict their opinion. Students who implied their claim or did not explicitly state their thesis had difficulty with focus and logical reasoning.

- A majority of the examples students used to support their claim dealt with observations and public knowledge concerning second-hand smoke. Students who did not demonstrate competence in this category would often incorporate circular reasoning as evidence; specifics were rarely integrated. Students who used personal anecdotes, analogy, and specific evidence as reasons for their opinion fared well in this category.
- Forty percent of the students did not cite the article, "A Former Smoker Cheers," as evidence, explanation, or counter-argument. Those students who did incorporate the article into their argument did not properly introduce the author or the text. Verbs of attribution were rarely integrated when citing the primary text.
- Almost half of the students exhibited problems with sentence structure. Fragment, run-on, and comma splice were common problems with students in this category. Other grammar and usage problems were a consistent point of view, pronoun reference and agreement, subject-verb agreement, capitalization, and spelling.
- Forty-six percent of the students showed difficulty incorporating parallelism, the active voice, concise words, transition words, subordination, coordination, and a variety of word choice (synonyms). The misuse of the comma and semicolon were common problems with students.

## Recommendations

- Reading strategies for the purpose of comprehension need to be illustrated for the student at this level. The understanding of vocabulary in context, summarizing the literature through writing, determining the main idea, recognizing key supporting details, and the making of inferences about the literature need to be practiced by the student.

- A thesis statement that explicitly presents the writer's claim and the specific reasons for that claim should be demonstrated by the instructor. A thesis that is too broad, too narrow, develops more than one idea, or announces the topic must be avoided by the student. The student must understand that the thesis statement is the road map or guide for the essay.
- The difference between vague and specific support needs to be illustrated by the instructor and practiced by the student. Evidence that is demonstrated through analogy, details, and anecdotes that exemplify evidence of the writer's point, attitude, or opinion should be practiced by the student.
- The results from the assessment demonstrate that students need more practice in setting up a response. An introduction of the writer and article, and a thesis statement that reflects an argument in response to the writer is crucial for the student's success in English 101. Students need to be guided on how to frame a direct quote and the proper use of verbs of attribution for the purpose of evidence and support.
- A good portion of English 28 must be dedicated to the teaching of sentence skills that illustrate formal standard American English. The practice of sentence skills and argumentation can be practiced with more in class essays, or journaling. The writing lab could incorporate learning programs or activities where students can practice their sentence skills and receive extra credit from the instructor.

## The English 28 SLO Committee

Carmen Carrillo

Kent Stoddart

Elayne Sidley

Wendy Walsh

Avis Yarborough

## The English 28 SLO Advisory Committee

John Corbally

Pamela Watkins

Susan McMurray

Discipline	Reg FTEF	Hrly FTEF	Total FTEF	Total FTES	Total WSCH	FTEF / FTEF	WSCH / FTEF	Average Class Size
DEV COM	0.00	2.00	2.00	24.24	727	12.1	363.6	
DC w/o ESL		1.75	1.75	22.85	686	13.1	391.7	32.6
DC-ESL		0.25	0.25	1.4	42	5.56	166.7	13.9
ENGLISH	3.49	14.31	17.80	237.1	7113	13.32	399.5	33.3
ENG-ESL	0.42	2.05	2.47	15.31	459	6.21	186.3	15.5
ESL	0.00	0.40	0.40	0.96	29	2.4	72.1	4.8
FRENCH	0.00	1.00	1.00	6.28	188	6.3	188.6	12.6
JAPAN	0.00	0.40	0.40	6.73	202	16.8	504.9	33.7
JOURNAL	0.00	0.59	0.59	6.09	183	10.3	307.9	20.5
SPANISH	1.00	4.40	5.40	71.79	2154	13.3	398.8	26.6
SPEECH	1.60	4.13	5.73	80.2	2407	14.0	419.8	28.0
SPE-ESL	0.00	0.40	0.40	2.6	77	6.4	192.3	12.8
total	6.51	29.29	35.80	448.76	13463	12.5	376.1	29.1

**Communications: Successful Completion Rates**

	Fall '03	'04	'05	'06	'07
Devel Com	61.8%	65.5%	62.7%	30.5%	69.5%
English	63.0%	61.2%	60.0%	59.9%	60.9%
ESL	50.0%	63.6%	100.0%	88.9%	71.4%
French	51.6%	74.7%	60.4%	67.0%	59.0%
Japanese	70.5%	52.5%	67.4%	47.4%	71.0%
Journalism	58.8%	86.4%	76.8%	72.6%	65.5%
Spanish	66.7%	70.8%	67.5%	69.9%	62.8%
Speech	70.5%	78.4%	67.5%	63.2%	60.3%
<b>Division Rates</b>	<b>64.8%</b>	<b>66.5%</b>	<b>63.1%</b>	<b>62.2%</b>	<b>61.7%</b>

LA Harbor College

Unit Plan Activity Summary Sheet

Division Communications---English Academic Year 2010-2011 Division Chair: Carmen Carrillo

Discipline ID#	Department Priority (1 to 99)	College Strategy Supported (separate columns if two)	Student Success Initiative	Technology Access	Department Objective (link to Program Review)	Proposed Activity	Brief Summary of SLO Assessment Results (See attached forms)	List Other Supporting Documents/Links Attached (E.G., WSCH, Wait Lists, Retention, Environmental Scans)	Resources Required (list faculty, equipment, etc.)	Estimated Total Cost and Source (E.G., Program 100, VTEA, etc.)
30	1	1.5	x	x	Provide students with specific support instruction in disciplines	Maintain Language Arts Learning Center that allows all students enrolled in an English, ESL, journalism, and foreign language classes to seek tutorial assistance, directed learning activities, and/or computer assisted programs.	E28 E101 (see attachments)	Assessment scores; Program Review successful completion rates; Division Annual goals	Faculty tutors; software	Reassign faculty to teach E67 or E185; block grants (software)
30	2	1.5	x		Facilitate student learning via qualified faculty	Hire 2 faculty members for English Department		WSCH; Retention; waitlists		Program 100
30	3	2.3	x	x	Provide students with specific support for success	Develop grammar classes to go between English 21 and 28, and develop a developmental writing class to insert between English 28 and English 101.	E28 assessment outcomes	WSCH; successful completion; assessment scores	faculty	Program 100 (replace with one existing course)

	4				Emerging need from Prog Rev	Institute an English 28 hybrid course and literature stack classes	E28	Environmental scan/world café	Faculty (existing)	Program 100 (replace an existing course)
30	5	2.3	x	x	To develop student success in reading and writing across the curriculum	Institute more learning communities within English as well as with other disciplines.		Completion rates	Faculty (in existing courses)	Creative scheduling; training workshops
30	6				Increase student success and retention	Develop a Grammar Slam for incoming and at risk students by providing grammar, sentence, writing skills that are needed at all English sequenced courses	E21; E28	Retention rates and success rates	Faculty	Essential Skills \$25,000
30	7	1.4	X		Develop student success in reading across the curriculum	Institute a book to be read across the curriculum with activities to highlight the content.	E21; E28	Completion rates	Faculty	