

**WRIGHT COLLEGE
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES
1/30/12 (draft)**

ONGOING ASSESSMENT

1. PLACEMENT EXAMS

E-write:

- Researched the use of machine-scored essay exams. Challenged the claims of reliability of IntelliMetric, which is used to score E-write essay exams.
- Collected institutional data from Wright, Truman and Harold Washington Colleges on the accuracy of this district-mandated component of the placement exam. Compared human rater scores with E-write scores to determine potential misplacement of students. Determined the disagreement, or the average inaccuracy of placement, of 50% (fall 2009 – present).
- Administered a survey to monitor misplacement of ESL students due to the implementation of the new placement tool, E-write. Concluded that E-write essays of scores of 5 – 7 need to be read by human readers in order to identify second language writers and that checks for misplacement in developmental courses must occur the first week of class (fall 2010).
- Proposed a placement exam project with three schools, Wright, Truman and Harold Washington, whereby other writing placement tools would be researched and a new tool would be developed. In the fall of 2011, the project started. Theories behind various types of exams were researched and models from similar urban institutions, in particular CUNY, were examined. A new writing placement instrument was developed, along with supporting materials for student preparation. The exam is holistic, incorporating student background data, Compass reading scores, and two student writing samples. It will be scored by faculty readers, who are knowledgeable of the English Department's curriculum and course standards. Implementation of the exam is to begin in spring 2012.

2. EXIT EXAMS

Reading COMPASS Exam: Continue to give reading exit exams to help determine achievement of student learning outcomes. An appeals process also continues.

English 98/98ESL, 100/100ESL and 101 Exit Exams:

- Continue to give exit exams in these courses.
- Changes in the Spring 2012 semester: Changes entail improvements in the reading of the exams. A benchmarking session will take place in weeks 7 and 8 for each level of instruction (98, 100 and 101) with both full- and part-time instructors. Writing assignments, current student writing, and writing standards

will be discussed. The reading of the exams will now occur in one day, on a Friday, to provide conditions with fewer interruptions and greater dialogue among faculty members.

- Proposed changes for the Fall 2012 semester: Move to a model that our sister institution, Truman College, uses. This model combines an exit exam with a portfolio assessment that is read and graded by faculty members in cohorts. These cohorts comprise both full- and part-time faculty members who meet mid semester for benchmarking purposes and at the end of the semester for the reading of the exit exam/portfolio.

YEARLY ACTION PLANS

1. Fall 2011: English Department Assessment Project: Early, Intrusive Intervention for At-Risk Students

- A. **Background & Purpose:** This project was intended to devise a systematic way of:
- a) identifying students who are at risk for failing their courses; and
 - b) facilitating early intervention in order to best serve the needs of these students.

Additionally, this project provided an opportunity for faculty, both part- and full-time, to collaborate and to discuss writing criteria and the needs of our students. Such dialogue is an important part of on-going assessment of the English Department's grading standards and collective grading practices; it is also a form of mentoring new/adjunct faculty.

- B. **Results:** 50% of the students who were identified as at-risk students at the midterm and who were encouraged to get some form of help, either at the Writing Center or with their professor during office hours, successfully passed their English course.

What was learned from the results?

- Some kind of correlation exists between early intervention with at-risk students and success in a course.
- Intervention should occur earlier than week 8 in order to allow more time for students to get the necessary help and increase the efficacy of the help they receive.

What was learned from a discussion of the results?

- Numerous factors in a student's life, such as work, finances, or personal issues, can prevent a student from actively seeking the support he/she needs to be successful in a class, even with frequent encouragement.
- Dialogue with colleagues is constructive for identifying at-risk students, sharing assignments, discussing methods of assessment,

benchmarking and maintaining standards within a course and between courses.

2. _____ – present: **Portfolio Assessment of Achievement for Departmental Learning Outcomes**

OTHER

1. **District Collaboration:** In the spring of 2011, faculty members participated in numerous district-wide English Departmental meetings, in which common SLOs (student learning outcomes), syllabi and exit exam practices were shared. Common SLOs in English 98, English 100, English 101, Reading 99 and Reading 125 were agreed upon and distributed.
2. **Rubrics Revision:** In the 2009-2010 academic year, placement and exit exam rubrics were developed in alignment with CCC's English rubric.
3. **Generation 1.5 Research:** In 2006-2007, research was done on the characteristics and needs of Generation 1.5 students. (These are students who are permanent residents who have been in the United States for a significant period of time and who have been raised in two languages.) Surveys were administered to identify gen 1.5 students in Wright's ESL and developmental classes, a focus group was held to determine preference for placement, and a placement recommendation was made.

