

English Department Unit-Level Assessment Liaison Report Spring 2019

Liaison Project Start Date: Spring 2019

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I. Department Buy-In and Outcome Definition

In spring 2018, ENG 096 launched its revised curriculum for developmental reading and writing. Based on Wright College's Aligned Reading and Composition (ARC) curriculum, the ENG 096 curriculum was designed locally by a team of faculty in the English department with support from the Office of Instruction. Approved by local, district, and state curriculum committees, ENG 096's final assessment requires that students gather a selection of revised papers from ENG 096 and compile those papers in a portfolio. As such, this assessment project examines the curricular alignment for a rhetorical knowledge learning outcome (purpose and audience) across the revised ENG 096 to the existing ENG 101 Exit Essay and the ENG 102 Research Paper assessments.

Prior to beginning this assessment project, I discussed and shared information about the assessment project with the then director of developmental English (Prof. Maria Ortiz) and the current English department co-chairs (Profs. J-L Deher-Lesaint and Sarah Liston), as well as communicated via email with an associate dean (Dr. Asif Wilson) regarding this project. Additionally, I corresponded with Prof. Willard Moody and other faculty regarding acquiring existing assessment data for ENG 096, ENG 101, and ENG 102. Further, I shared information with colleagues as I encountered them throughout the semester.

All parties expressed interest in the longitudinal look at existing rhetorical knowledge ENG 096, ENG 101, and ENG 102 learning outcomes. These outcomes include purpose and audience (two mainstay rhetorical situation/knowledge elements) integral to writing instruction and learning to write collegiately. The learning outcome was chosen because it exists in the entire course sequence. In other words, a rhetorical knowledge learning outcome currently exist on departmental syllabi for 096, 101, and 102, which is why the rhetorical knowledge outcome was chosen for this assessment. The learning outcome has been approved by the ICCB (096, 101, and 102) and IAI (101 and 102).

II. Assessment Research and Design

Using rhetorical knowledge learning outcomes (see Table 1) and existing assessment data for each course (see Table 2), with assistance from the HW institutional researcher, Sandy Vue, I identified a purposeful sample of students who met the specific criteria (see Table 3 below).

Course	Rhetorical Knowledge Learning Outcome
ENG 096	Analyze rhetorical strategies used in course readings with an emphasis on: developing voice, tone, <i>audience</i> , and <i>purpose</i> .
ENG 101	Analyze how <i>audience</i> and <i>purpose</i> dictate an essay's content, structure, and style.
ENG 102	Analyze how <i>audience</i> and <i>purpose</i> dictate information included, the order of information, voice, language, and style.

Table 1 English course sequence and rhetorical knowledge learning outcome (*emphasis* added).

Course	Existing Assessment
ENG 096	Portfolio
ENG 101	Exit Essay
ENG 102	Research Paper

Table 2 English course sequence and existing assessment.

Based on the sampling criteria (items 1-3 from Table 3) 4 students¹ met criteria 1-3. At the time of this writing, I have acquired 2 of the 4 students' complete existing assessment writings.

¹ In total and with the help of faculty, I have identified 5 students who have taken and passed the 096-101-102 sequence. However, 1 student was excluded from the sample because they 1) passed ENG 101 online and 2) passed ENG 102 at WR.

Purposeful Sampling Criteria	
1.	student has taken and passed ENG 096 at HW in a traditional classroom (no online, no mini session, no hybrid)
2.	student has taken and passed ENG 101 or ENG 101/197 or ENG 101/097 at HW in a traditional classroom (no online, no mini session, no hybrid)
3.	student has taken and passed ENG 102 at HW in a traditional classroom (no online, no mini session, no hybrid)
4.	student has turned in/taken the exit assessments (see Table 2) for each class and the assessment has been located/supplied

Table 3 Student sampling criteria.

The sample size (n=4) is admittedly quite small. However, currently, there are students who meet criteria 1 and 2 (n=10), and were enrolled in ENG 102 for the spring 2019 semester, which might indicate that the sample size will grow at the conclusion of the semester. So far, a spring 2019 102 student (n=1) has met all criteria. However, of those students (n=10), some have been disqualified (n=4) from inclusion in the sample for taking ENG 102 as a hybrid (n=2), enrolling in ENG 102 at another CCC (n=1), and taking ENG 102 before ENG 101 (n=1).² I anticipate the sample increasing from 0-3 students at the conclusion of the spring 2019 semester.

III. Pilot Assessment Tools and Processes

The pilot assessment tool will be used during FDW at HW in August 2019. The ENG liaison submitted a proposal for FDW. In it, she proposed a workshop where faculty can use the tool on a student's complete artifact collection (i.e., their ENG 096 portfolio; their ENG 101 Exit Essay; and their ENG 102 research paper) regardless of the faculty member's discipline. The pilot assessment tool--which is called Decisions Squares--is like a decision tree, which asks a series of questions, resulting in choices, and is an assessment tool that any faculty member could use. The assessment tool uses color, like a heat map, to show where on a scale the student's writing places. For more information, please see Appendices.

² While looking for students who meet the criteria for the purposeful sample, a student was found to have skipped ENG 101/097 and is currently enrolled in ENG 102. This was reported to Advising.

Audience	Purpose
Does the writer explicitly acknowledge a reader?	Does the writer identify a purpose or thesis statement in their first paragraph?
Does the writer define terms and concepts?	Does the writer explicitly state a guiding idea in their introduction?
Does the writer write out acronyms and abbreviations?	Does the writer repeat or refer back to their guiding idea in the body paragraphs?
Does the writer make statements that indicate the reader's knowledge?	Does the writer repeat or refer back to their guiding idea in their final paragraph?
Does the writer explicitly forecast the essay's organization in the introduction?	Does the writer implicitly address why they wrote the essay?
Does the writer employ grammatical and mechanical correctness?	Does the writer explicitly address why they wrote the essay?
Does the writer include appropriate content?	Is it clear the writer either summarized, analyzed, synthesized, or evaluated?
Does the writer format their essay into logical, manageable chunks?	Does the writer return back to aspects of their guiding idea in the first sentence of most paragraphs?
Does the writer acknowledge other viewpoints?	Does the writer pinpoint their guiding idea in one sentence in the first paragraph of their essay?

Table 4 Rhetorical knowledge audience and purpose questions for readers.

Using the above questions as a guide, I developed a rhetorical knowledge decision square heat map (Appendices A and B). To use the rhetorical knowledge decision square heat map, first a person reads the texts for either ENG 096, 101, or 102. Based on the reader, the individual answers a series of questions (Table 1).

IV. Administer Specific Assessment

Since the purposeful sample will only include students who have taken and submitted the 096, 101, and 102 assessments (see Table 1), existing student writing will be used for this assessment. In other words, a specific assessment does not need to be administered. The English department has assessment mechanisms and existing practices in place. For example, in ENG 096, students submit portfolios as the end of the semester; in ENG 101, students write an Exit Essay assessment near the end of the semester; and in ENG 102, students write a research paper and faculty submit a rubric for those research papers. For these reasons, and in order to take full advantage of those existing assessments, the English liaison opted to use existing assessments.

V. Data Analysis

Currently, data is being gathered. Data will be analyzed in the fall 2019 semester.

VI. Supporting Evidence-Based Change (Use of Findings)

Suggestions about how to support evidence-based changes will be shared in the fall 2019 semester.

Success Factors

This assessment project relies heavily on the assumption that students are moving through the writing curriculum sequence from ENG 096 to 101 to 102. Since the revised curriculum was launched in spring 2018, there are only 4 semesters (spring 2018, summer 2018, fall 2018, and spring 2019) of student assessment data from which to draw the sample (n=5). For this reason, the anticipated sample size is projected to grow in subsequent semesters as more students progress through the writing course sequence. However, there may not be a substantial sample size (n=100) for 7-10 (or more) academic years or 14-20 semesters.

Furthermore, obtaining the ENG 096 portfolios and ENG 102 research papers are also another integral success factor. In other words, if these assessments are unavailable, the project is not possible. To this end, I have already spoken with Prof. Maria Ortiz about digitizing all ENG 096 portfolios, and I have emailed/spoken with ENG 102 faculty of the students who are currently enrolled in ENG 102 (spring 2019) and meet sample criteria to request that they supply me a digital copy of their ENG 102 research papers if those students (n=7) pass ENG 102. Basically, if the assessment artifacts are unavailable, i.e., the students' writings, then the assessment project the English liaison has developed will not be possible to assessed as currently designed In other words, although these assessments theoretically exist, only the ENG 101 Exit Essay is stored for easy retrieval. .

Recommendations

At this time, the most pressing recommendation is to encourage ENG 096 faculty to digitally store their students' final portfolios and for ENG 102 faculty to digitally store their students' research papers. Without these artifacts, the assessment cannot be completed, which is another potential limiting success factor, too.

Appendices

[Rhetorical Knowledge Decision Tool Instructions](#)

[Rhetorical Knowledge Decision Tool for Audience](#)

[Rhetorical Knowledge Decision Tool for Purpose](#)

[Student Rhetorical Knowledge Score Sheet](#)