

**Program/Discipline:** ENGLISH

**Instructional Manager:**  
Bruckert

**Semester/Year:** Fall 2011, Spring 2012  
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**Department Chair:** Battle

**The current submission is which of the following:**

**Initial Plan**    **date:** 08/2011

**Mid-year update**    **date:**   1/18/12       **Final Report**    **date:** 4/13/12  

**College Mission:**

**Program/Discipline Mission:** Identify student achievement on SLOs using the new outcomes accepted District-wide in 2011.

**A. Initial Assessment Plan**

**Area of Focus:**

Your department efforts are to improve learning in what topic/area?

Understanding student struggles within the writing curriculum and where they require the most focus for improvement.

**Evidence:**

What past results have led your department to conclude that this is an area needing attention?

The department distributed and collected surveys asking teachers to identify student achievement levels in each of the six new SLOs adopted by the English Departments District-wide in the Spring-Summer of 2011.

**Course(s) of Interest:**

What courses will be involved in your plan?

All writing courses were surveyed, 98, 100, 101, 102, and Literature.

**Intended Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**

List each relevant SLO that this project pertains to.

1. Process
2. Purpose and Audience
3. Exposition and Argument
4. Organization and Development
5. Mechanics
6. Critical Thinking/Reading

**Involved Faculty:**

List the instructor(s) participating in the assessment process for each outcome listed above.

56 members of the English Department participated in this survey (out of 70 dept. members)

**Assessment/Intervention Process**

Address the following questions:

- What** approach will be used?
- Why** was this process selected?
- How** will student learning be measured?
- When** will data collection be completed?
- Who** will analyze the results?

**What:** Survey teachers on student needs.  
**Why:** Identify where students continue to struggle with mastering SLO skills at the end of the semester.  
**How:** Survey asks professors to rate students based on the acquisition of the SLO skill levels expected of them by the end of the semester appropriate to the course level for which they were enrolled.  
**When:** Dec. 2011  
**Who:** All English faculty.

**B. Midyear Update**

**By January of 2012, the surveys from instructors had been collected. Responses indicate that students need the most help in critical thinking/reading, developing an effective writing process, and mastering Ens mastering the mechanics of the English Language (Figure 1).**

Figure 1

Student Learning Outcome	Beginning	Developing	Achieving
Process	6	20	30
Purpose and Audience	5	25	26
Exposition and Argument	5	29	21
Org. and Development	6	21	29
Mechanics	9	28	19
Critical Thinking/Reading	13	21	24

Each number reflects the total tally of professor's impressions of a course section who identified students at that level of SLO skills acquisition. This table therefore represents 56 course sections from composition 98, 100, 101, 102, and literature out of a total of 146, roughly 38% of the course sections taught.

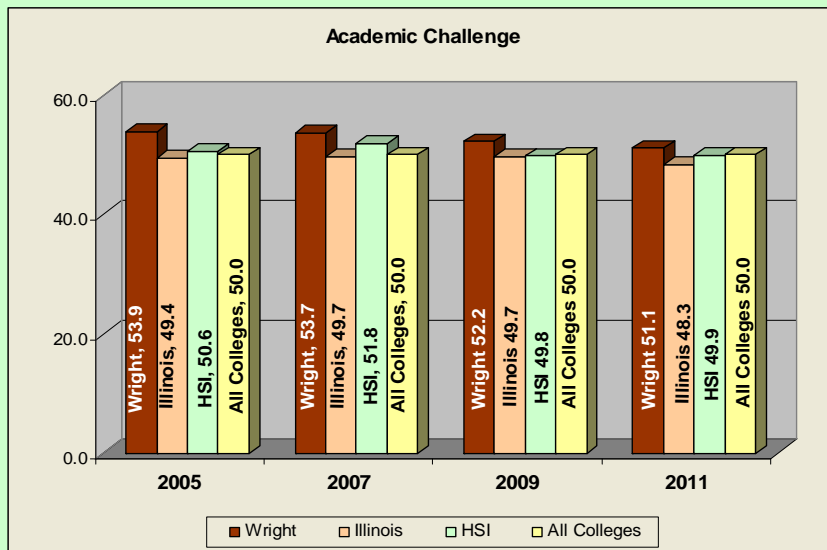
**Part C –**

**Summary of Results and Analysis of Data Collected**

- What were the results of the assessment process?
- What was learned from the results?

The English Dept contrasted Fall 2011 data with CCSSE data on academic challenge and student effort to determine insights.  
 WWC uses CCSSE and NCCBP data to benchmark itself with other institutions of higher education. Overall, CCSSE reports students describe the overall academic experience at WWC to be more challenging and requiring more effort than the average school reporting.  
 Figure 1 illustrates the available trend data on the *academic challenge* WWC presents students.

Figure 2



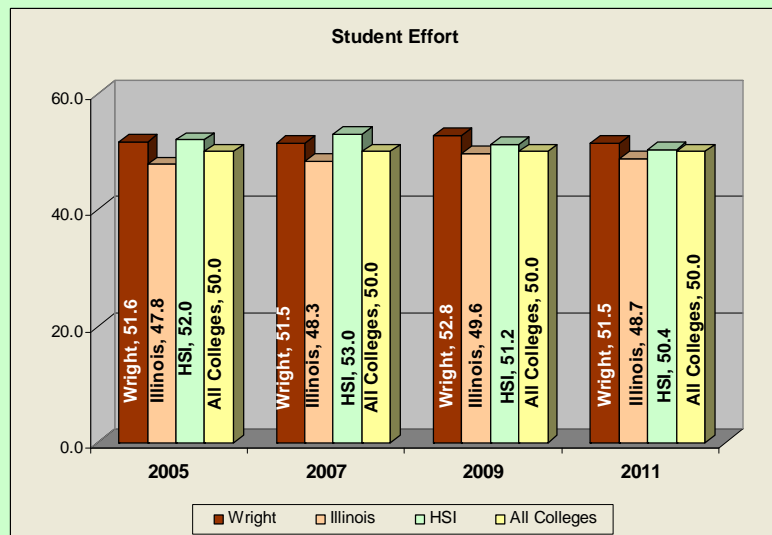
Similarly, in 2011, CCSSE reports that the *student effort* score at WWC was 51.1, above the national cohort (50.0) and the large colleges (49.4).

Survey questions related to determining the *student effort* score include:

- Frequency: Peer or other tutoring.
- Frequency: Skill labs (writing, math, etc.) and Computer labs.
- Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in.
- Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources.
- Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment.
- Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, or other activities).

Figure 3 illustrates WWC's trends for student effort in the CCSSE reporting.

Figure 3



**INSIGHTS:**

**Too much composition instruction focusing on drill mechanics or content discussions leaves too little time developing necessary skills for critical thinking and process development. The English Dept. is now planning to replace the single exit exam/appeal process for end of course proficiency testing with a portfolio review process featuring small instructor cohorts, semester-long collaborations, and diverse writing selections. Truman College uses a similar process-review for portfolios, and that department has been helpful in sharing their insights. A vote in late March was conducted for full-time English faculty to vote on switching from the current Exit/appeal process to the portfolio review. A strong majority of the department approved the change, and 11 faculty members volunteered to participate on the committee charged with determining the new portfolio process and developing the accompanying materials.**

Based on what was learned, what additional steps will be taken to improve student learning?

**Over the summer of 2012, the portfolio committee will meet to develop the new process. By Fall 2012, the department would like to implement this new portfolio review process. It is crucial that the department maintains a high academic challenge and encourages students wishing to learn and to write better to develop skills valued beyond the composition classroom.**

Are there any obstacles to the implementation of the plan that the Assessment Committee should know about or can assist with?

**The main challenge is to determine exactly what the portfolio review process will be: How will cohorts be formed? What materials will go into the portfolio? Will there be a common Exit Exam to test the in-class writing performance of students? Also, the supporting materials and rubrics need to be developed. And finally, will the process be determined in a timely manner for the Fall 2012 instructors to coordinate their syllabi accordingly?**