

## English Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Project 2005-2006

The major in English at California State University Channel Islands approaches the study of Literature, Writing and Criticism in an interdisciplinary context. Students develop a sound foundation in all three areas. They develop analytical and critical skills as well as the ability to explore, organize, and articulate ideas through writing. Literature and language are significant cultural phenomena that shape and are shaped by particular contexts; therefore, this program addresses the historical and cultural significance of the English language, literature written in English, and other literatures in translation.

Course work in the English: Literature and Writing program is completed in three areas. Foundation courses provide the tools for intellectual discussion of materials. Interdisciplinary courses provide connections with different ideas, approaches and ways of knowing. The required sequence provides in-depth investigation in a specialized field of Multicultural Literature, Writing or Education. In addition, the student may choose to pursue an emphasis in Creative Writing, Multicultural Literature, English Education Preparation, or a certificate in Technical Writing.

English majors keep a portfolio of work produced in each of their required courses and electives. The students work closely with their advisors in developing the portfolio, which is reviewed by the capstone instructor to verify that requirements have been fulfilled for the major, and there is a review of the final portfolio by a committee of at least three English professors.

In addition, the end of the students' senior year, they are asked to complete a survey on the educational experience received at CSUCI. Because the return rate for these surveys has been relatively low, it was decided that surveys this year will be taken during regular class time. Students will be taken to the library wireless classroom, where they will be able to complete the survey anonymously.

The disciplinary, interdisciplinary, multicultural, international and service learning aspects of the English program provide students with an excellent opportunity to achieve the CSUCI goals for graduates as listed below.

*CSUCI graduates will possess an education of sufficient breadth and depth to appreciate and interpret the natural, social and aesthetic worlds and to address the highly complex issues facing societies. Graduates will be able to:*

- *Identify and describe the modern world and issues facing societies from multiple perspectives including those within and across disciplines, cultures and nations (when appropriate).*
- *Analyze issues, and develop and convey to others solutions to problems using the methodologies, tools and techniques of an academic discipline.*

### English Program Goals and Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will examine texts, issues, or problems in the discipline from multiple perspectives (multicultural, interdisciplinary, international, experiential, theoretical and/or educational)
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of a range of texts, representative of genres, periods, ethnicities and genders

Each of the following must be demonstrated by at least one paper in the student's assessment portfolio:

3. Critical interpretation and analysis of original texts (written, visual, and/or electronic)
4. Effective use of current scholarship (literary analysis, linguistics studies, applied research, etc.)

- 5. An understanding of how disciplines relate/can relate.

For the 2005-2006AY, the program selected a lynchpin learning goal to assess:

- Students will examine texts, issues, or problems in the discipline from multiple perspectives (multicultural, interdisciplinary, international, experiential, theoretical and/or educational).

**DATA, ANALYSIS, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAM MODIFICATION**

Below are the rubrics, data and other results and conclusions we have come to regarding the English program at CSUCI.

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**PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT**

**PRECONDITION CRITERIA (FOR ALL STUDENT PORTFOLIOS)**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Five graded papers from a variety of areas in the English Program, including literature, writing, an interdisciplinary course, and research.
- \_\_\_\_\_ At least one paper is drawn from an interdisciplinary GE course.
- \_\_\_\_\_ At least three papers are from CSUCI English core upper division courses.
- \_\_\_\_\_ A minimum of 3.0 grade point average of the five papers; 2.0 minimum overall GPA
- \_\_\_\_\_ Thoughtful reflective statement of 500-700 words

**PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT**

**FALL 05-SPRING 07: SCORED FOR PROGRAM REVIEW ONLY**

**BEGINNING FALL 07: SCORED FOR CAPSTONE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENT**

- 3 Exceptional evidence in support
- 2 Adequate evidence in support
- 1 Little to no evidence in support

Across a majority of papers in the portfolio, the student

	Examines texts, issues, or problems in the discipline from multiple perspectives (multicultural, interdisciplinary, international, experiential, theoretical and/or educational)
	Demonstrates knowledge of a range of texts, representative of genres, periods, ethnicities and genders

Each of the following must be demonstrated by at least one paper in the portfolio:

	Critically interpretation and analysis of original texts (written, visual, and/or electronic)
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	Effective use of current scholarship (literary analysis, linguistics studies, applied research, etc.)
	An understanding of how disciplines relate/can relate

In the reflective statement, the student

	Reflects substantively on his or her growth over time, with an accurate perception of his/her performance in the program
	Expresses him/herself effectively in writing

To pass, a student must receive at least a 2 in every category

Evaluated by:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

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**English Portfolio Reading and Program Assessment**

May 15, 2006

Present: Mary Adler, Bob Mayberry, Joan Peters, Brad Monsma

Data from scoring of 9 portfolios (one scored 3 times):

	# of 3s	# of 2s	# of 1s	mean
<i>Majority of papers demonstrate:</i>				
1. Multiple perspectives	2	15	2	2.0
2. Range of texts	3	16	0	2.2
<i>At least one paper demonstrates:</i>				
3. Analysis of original texts	4	15	0	2.2
4. Current scholarship	5	12	2	2.2
5. How disciplines relate	2	11	6	1.8
<i>Reflection statement demonstrates:</i>				
6. Substantive reflection	7	10	2	2.3
7. Effective writing	6	12	1	2.3

Very consistent scoring—not surprising on a 3-point scale—with only one aberrant question, the one we identified during the scoring as problematic, #5.

With the exception of that one question, note that no more than 2 low scores were given for any criteria. That means these portfolios met our expectations. Again excepting item #6, no more than one portfolio earned a low score in each category. In fact, if we toss out the strange score of 1 Bob gave for item #7

(and which he later withdrew), only one portfolio (Bevilacqua's) earned low scores on any criteria EXCEPT #5. Which means our program is succeeding with all its goals, except teaching students to explicitly relate different disciplines.

#### Narrative Report:

Each portfolio was read and scored twice according to the English Program Portfolio Assessment Guidelines. This rubric corresponds to English Program Learning Outcomes and allows the readers to score the portfolio's performance in each outcome. Third readings took place where one reader gave an outcome the lowest score, which according to the current guidelines would, beginning in Fall 07, prohibit the student from advancing to the capstone course. Hardcopies of the scoring sheets will be on file.

#### Reflection:

1. We recognized tension in the combined goals of student and program assessment. As a resolution we propose to score rubric numbers 1-5 for program assessment only. The capstone entrance requirement will be met by the Precondition Criteria and by evaluation of the reflective statement in the portfolio.
    - a. By separating program assessment of learning outcomes from any consequences to students, we will enable ourselves to be rigorous and honest in assessing whether assignments, courses, and the English curriculum as a whole allow students to meet our Program Learning Outcomes. Changes to the portfolio guidelines will alert students to these changes.
    - b. By separating the program assessment from the capstone requirement, we leave open the possibility to do selective assessment of portfolios in the future as the program grows rather than reading all of the portfolios.
  2. We agreed that in the future, portfolio readers will, for certain students, identify weakness that must be addressed as part of the student's capstone project. These needs will be communicated to students through the capstone directors.
  3. We made numerous changes to the format of the portfolio and the guidelines as well as to the process by which students are made aware of the requirements and due dates.
  4. We agreed that in the future, we will ask students to submit clean copies of papers rather than graded ones.
  5. We agreed that in the future we will begin the portfolio reading session by "norming" or "socializing" among readers to internalize the scoring mechanism and clarify purposes for assessment. We selected portfolios to use for future norming and will seek permission from students for their use.
  6. In the process of re-evaluating Program Learning Outcomes, we agreed to present the program faculty with the need for an outcome corresponding and supporting courses in creative and technical writing.
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#### **DSP ASSESSMENT**

Assessment of CSUCI's experimental Directed Self-Placement program in English involves three different kinds of evaluation:

1. Comparison of student self-placement in the one-semester composition course, ENGL 105, to self-placement in the two-semester STRETCH course, ENGL 102-103;
2. Analysis of student success in the courses they elected based on results of holistic evaluation of student writing in ENGL 102-103 and 105; and
3. Surveys of student attitudes toward writing.

Each of these assessments is on-going. The data is inclusive through fall of 2004.

### #1: Self-placement in Composition Courses

	<u>ENGL 102-103</u>	<u>ENGL 105</u>	<u>Total</u>
Fall 2003	121 (.62)	73 (.38)	194
Fall 2004	194 (.71)	79 (.29)	273

Two patterns are apparent in this data: first, that between two-thirds and three-quarters of students self-select the year-long STRETCH composition classes; and second, that nearly 10% more students chose the STRETCH sequence of classes in 2004 than did so in 2003.

From 2003 to 2004, the single biggest change made in the orientation process, where students select their composition course, was to have a composition faculty member explain the choices and describe the courses for students. Armed with more detailed information about the expectations and assignments in the two courses, even more students selected the STRETCH option.

While changes in *how* orientation sessions were conducted in 2004 as opposed to 2003 may account for the increase in students selecting the STRETCH sequence, the fact remains that in both years a large majority of students saw themselves as needing or wanting a year-long writing course.

### #2: Student Success in Composition Courses

We have two ways to measure student success and the appropriateness of their directed self-placement decisions:

- in-class essays administered during each semester, and
- pass-fail rates for each course.

#### In-class Essay Scores

Three times each semester in 2003-2004, and twice each semester since, students wrote one-hour essays in class. They are each scored by at least two members of the composition faculty, three in cases where the scores diverge. Here are the numbers of students receiving scores that would translate to grades of D or F:

<u>Fall 2003</u>	<u>essays scored</u>	<u>Ds or Fs</u>	<u>success rate</u>
ENGL 102:			
1 <sup>st</sup> essay	121	4	.97
2d essay	120	0	1.0
3d essay	117	1	.99
ENGL 105:			
1 <sup>st</sup> essay	73	5	.93
2d essay	73	12	.84
3d essay	70	2	.97

## Spring 2004

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### ENGL 103:

1 <sup>st</sup> essay	105	10	.97
2d essay	104	6	1.0
3d essay	104	4	.99

### ENGL 105:

1 <sup>st</sup> essay	18	7	.61
2d essay	14	0	1.0
3d essay	15	0	.97

### Mean Success Rate

**.95**

### Pass-Fail Rates

At the end of each semester, students in ENGL 102, 103 and 105 submit portfolios of their written work to be scored by the team of composition faculty. Here are the data we've collected for the last two semesters:

<u>Spring 2004</u>	<u>portfolios scored</u>	<u># failing</u>	<u>success rate</u>
ENGL 103:	104	3	.97
ENGL 105:	15	2	.87

### Fall 2004

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ENGL 102:	201	8	.96
ENGL 105:	77	1	.99

### Mean Success Rate

**.96**

Whether measured by student scores on in-class essays or their final portfolios, students are very successful in their chosen composition classes. If students were placing themselves in an inappropriate composition class, we would expect to see very low success rates, especially on the first in-class essays. That is only the case in one composition section during spring of 2004. But the sample is too small (18) to provide a useful comparison or to permit any conclusions.

Students electing the ENGL 102-103 sequence are succeeding at a very high rate, both on in-class and out-of-class work. Students electing the one semester ENGL 105 course are succeeding as well, but at less dramatic rates. Overall, this data makes it clear that students are very successful at placing themselves in the appropriate composition section.

Interestingly, data from the CSU-required English Placement Test (which DSP replaces) identifies only 54.5% of incoming freshman at Channel Islands as "proficient" in English. According to the cut-off score used by the Chancellor's Office, nearly 46% of our first year students should take "remedial" English coursework before enrolling in composition. Without offering any remedial courses, the Channel Islands composition program has helped 95-96% of first year students to succeed at composition. The chief causes of that success are: student self-placement, small classes (maximum of 20 students), and moderate teaching loads for composition faculty.

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DSP UPDATE 2006

**DIRECTED SELF-PLACEMENT**

At other CSU campuses, freshmen are placed in a first-year writing course based on their scores on the English Placement Test (EPT). CSUCI students *choose* which class is appropriate for them. During orientation each summer, staff and faculty inform students about the composition program and differences between ENGL 102-103 and ENGL 105 classes, so students can make an informed choice that fits their confidence and skills as writers. ENGL 102-103 *stretches* writing instruction over two semesters and provides students with more support and assistance in developing their academic writing skills. ENGL 105 is a one semester class for students prepared to begin doing research and writing academic papers.

### 1. Courses Freshmen Elect

	ENGL 102-103		ENGL 105		Totals
2003-04	121	.57	91	.43	<b>212</b>
2004-05	194	.66	100	.34	<b>294</b>
2005-06	255	.68	107	.29	<b>362</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>.66</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>.34</b>	<b>868</b>

### 2. Student Success: In-Class Essays

	Fall 03	Spring 04	Fall 04	Spring 05	Fall 05	Spring 06	Totals
A, B, C grades	550	333	520	350	553	278	<b>2584</b>
D, F grades	24	27	21	22	61	13	<b>168</b>
<b>Success rate</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>94%</b>

### 3. Student Success: Out-of-Class Portfolios

	Spring 2004	Spring 2005	Spring 2006	Totals
A, B, C grades	114	166	240	<b>520</b>
D, F grades	5	7	12	<b>24</b>
<b>Success rate</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>96%</b>

### 4. Conclusions

- DSP is a better method of placing students in composition than is the EPT.
- STRETCH classes increase likelihood that students with limited writing experience or lack of confidence will succeed.
- Students are more motivated when they decide which composition class to take.