

English (Reading Emphasis) Department Meeting September 22, 2016

Attendees: D. Breckheimer, R. Cerofeci, M. Cheung, S. Corbin, C. Glover, R. Lewitzki, P. Marcoux, S. Schwartz, T. Lew (Dean), R. Kistler (excused)

1. 84 SLO results

In spring 2016, 82% of the students passed SLO 1, 69% passed SLO 2 and 49% passed SLO 3. The spring was the first time that the annotation component of the test was administered. The implementation and reporting were easy and the results positive. In addition to annotating the required article, the students were, for the first time, encouraged to annotate the entire test. Making the tests consumable may have contributed to an overall increase in SLO 2. In spring 2015, only 60% of the students passed SLO 2.

a. Using online tests (stop the shredding)

The majority of the department felt that making the tests consumable was a positive and beneficial change. However, this resulted in a tremendous amount of paper that needed to be shredded. Continuing to shred all of the tests isn't sustainable. Additionally, the computer that is attached to the parscore machine is no longer reliable. It may not make it through finals. These two issues create a problem with administration and scoring of the final exam. The department did some brainstorming and decided that the most logical and simplest solution is to use the tests that are online. English 82 would use test A & B (pre & final) and English 84 would use test C & D (pre & final). All of the tests are lexiled at 1050, so changing the passing score for the various levels is necessary. A 28 would be considered passing for English 82 while a 32 would be considered passing for English 84. The online tests ensure consistency and also include itemized scoring (necessary for SLOs). If instructors would like to continue to use hard copies, they can print the tests but will have to dispose of them properly. Currently, there are too many versions of the test and it is confusing.

We also discussed using apps that can score scantrons. Pete Marcoux shared an app he has been using called zipgrade. It costs \$7 a year to subscribe and allows the instructor to take a photo of the test and then it scores it for you. It also provides item analysis. This may be a useful back up to the potential loss of parscore.

Instructors should make sure that they are using a back up for final scoring, such as an app or an additional set of scantrons. You can have the student copy their answers onto the green scantrons.

b. SLO 3

It is not surprising that SLO 3 has an extremely low passing score. Grasping the critical thinking concepts of making inferences and finding main ideas that are implied is probably the most difficult skill. The passing rate of this SLO is very low and that is something that the department would like to act upon. We discussed getting some formal professional development on how to teach critical thinking skills.

2. 82 consistency

a. Townsend Press test (online)

For fall semester, we will not require that the instructors use the online version of the test, however it will be an option. The main drawback is that the students will no longer be able to annotate the test. The use of annotation software was discussed, but it would not work with the Townsend Press.

Rose Ann will make sure that all instructors are aware of their options for the fall SLOs, but we plan to move to online for the spring.

We discussed the need to keep the adjunct faculty informed of these changes. Emails will be sent and printed, but we hope to have an adjunct orientation and /or possibly a mentor program. Rhea expressed interest in running an adjunct orientation (possibly as a flex day workshop).

b. SLO 1 - article for annotation

To assess SLO 1, we need a common article. We can pull one of the articles from the online exam and have that printed (without the questions). Instructors will use the rubric to assess engagement. This will also give the students an opportunity to annotate an article that they will encounter again during the multiple choice final.

3. Total Reader & Townsend Press online updates

Some instructors are encountering problems with the online plus from Townsend Press. It appears to be an issue that is on the new website. Contacting the company is the best solution.

Rose Ann will forward the instructions for Total Reader to the department

4. RWB

Pete and Rose Ann are developing curriculum for an integrated reading and writing course. The model is written to support the changes that will happen as the multiple measures and the new common assessment are implemented. We anticipate that students

will be placed at higher levels than they are currently (using just the Accuplacer). We have been gathering data on current GPAs and it shows extreme inconsistencies.

The RWB class will include a co-requisite that provides additional support to students who have lower scores. The idea is to reduce exit points and eventually place all students in developmental classes only one level below college. The students that would normally be placed in English B & 82 will have the opportunity to study curriculum that is at the current RWA level, but will be given “just-in-time” remediation as a part of the co-class. Students who pass the course would move directly into English 1A (but hopefully with a co-req as well or would repeat RWA without the co.

The department unanimously approved a pilot of the class.