

**WRIGHT COLLEGE
PROGRAM/DISCIPLINE ASSESSMENT FORM**

Program/Discipline: English/Literature/Reading

Instructional Manager: Marilyn Young

Semester/Year: Fall/2007

Department Chair: Prof. Arlene Weaver

College Mission: Wright College is a learning-centered, multi-campus institution of higher education offering students of diverse backgrounds, talents, and abilities a quality education leading to baccalaureate transfer, career advancement, and/or personal development.

Program/Discipline Mission: (edited) “The English Department believes that education should stimulate creative, productive participation, foster an awareness of diverse cultures; instill the abilities to read critically and write effectively, lead to change in attitude and behavior, encourage exploration and instill desire to seek further knowledge, and foster a commitment to improving the quality of life in the community.”

A. Initial Assessment Plan

Area of Focus:

The department has chosen to focus on improving the percentage of students who are always prepared for class.

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

Evidence:

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

The Wright College English dept. conducted a survey of students in English classes that asked them to respond to several questions about their classroom preparation strategies (a copy of the survey is attached). The results of the survey revealed that students were prepared for class only 50-55% of the time. The survey also showed that only 28% of the students always read and responded to the course materials ahead of time. Needless to say, the English dept. sees this lack of student preparation as one of its most serious concerns.

Course(s) of Interest:

What courses will be involved in your plan?

The department has chosen to focus on English 101 classes taught by full-time instructors. English 101 is a Gen Ed course which links to the following cross-curricular abilities: 1) Think and read critically so that they can solve problems using appropriate information resources and reasoning processes. 2) Read, write, speak, and listen effectively so that the expectations of appropriate audiences in the academic, public, and private sectors, are met.

(revised) The complete number of assigned texts will be determined and students will write critical responses for at least 80% of the assigned texts. A checklist/gradebook will document completion of the assigned responses. A portfolio will

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collect the responses at semester's end.

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

English dept. student learning outcome #2: Students will read critically in a broad range of texts,

List each relevant SLO that this project pertains to.

Involved Faculty:

Full-time English department instructors (all participants not finalized yet)

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

**Assessment/Intervention
Process**

What: Portfolios of critical responses to texts assigned for class that were completed before class discussions and /or analysis.

Address the following questions:

What approach will be used?

Why: The portfolios of critical responses facilitate and enhance the subsequent discussion and analysis of the text (as well as providing a foundation for writing about the text.)

Why was this process selected?

How will student learning be measured?

How: The complete number of assigned texts will be determined by individual faculty; students will write critical responses for at least 80% of these texts. A checklist/grade book will document completion of the assigned responses. A portfolio will collect the responses at semester's end.

When will data collection be completed?

When: Student responses will begin as soon as the first texts are assigned. Individual student progress will be recorded in the faculty member's grade book as the semester progresses. A Midterm evaluation will check progress and record student percentages (completion) to date. Data will be collected and analyzed at the end of the semester.

Who will analyze the results?

Who: Full-time English dept faculty who participated in the project and department Assessment Coordinator.

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B. Midyear Update

Completely describe all actions that have occurred since this past August with respect to your department's Assessment Plan.

Attach any relative documents (rubrics, surveys, other assessment tools).

1. During Faculty development Week, the English department met to discuss and approve an assessment plan that addressed concerns about student's class preparation. In a survey conducted by the English Department the previous Spring semester, students revealed that they were prepared for class less than 50% of the time. The department decided to address this serious problem by using study/prep questions that would require students to read and reflect on their assignments before the class meeting or class discussion. English 101 was selected as the focus for the Fall semester. Ten fulltime 101 faculty are participating in the assessment project.
2. A follow-up meeting was held on Sept. 19 to discuss and answer questions raised about the nature of the assessment project. The questions were mostly about how to adapt our assessment instrument: a series of strategies for enhancing student preparation for class. Because there is a diversity of teaching methods/approaches to English 101, faculty wanted to make sure that they were conducting the project correctly. After discussion, a number of misconceptions and misunderstandings (due to the haste with which we had to develop our project plan) were resolved and the faculty agreed to follow a number of common criteria (see assessment plan); the details for specific classes to be worked out by the individual instructor.
3. The assessment continues with an in-class survey that will measure how close we came to meeting our benchmarks this semester.
4. Near the conclusion of the semester, the "raw data" student responses will be collected and evaluated. The evaluation will continue into the beginning of the new semester.

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

1. I'm not sure it is an obstacle, but how and how much of the assessment materials are stored/archived?

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Part C – due TBD

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

What were the results of the assessment process?

Student preparation for class improved from an average of 50% to about 85%. In one representative class, there was an average (study question) completion rate of 89%. What was noteworthy in this class was that all these students also completed the department's 101 Proficiency Exam successfully.

What was learned from the results?

What was learned was that students benefit, and classroom discussion is enhanced, by using directed reading strategies that require students to do more than a quick scan of their assignments. It is an "old-fashioned" approach (study questions) but can be linked to Reader-Response theories.

**Action Plan Based on
Results and Analysis**

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

Instructors will benefit from requiring more "prep" from their students in a way that enhances comprehension of texts by offering guided or directed reading strategies. Classes with heavy reading requirements such as Lit, would benefit from a series of required reading questions that ask (if not insist) that students be prepared for class.

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