

## **Summary of College Skills/English Effective Practices Meetings 2015-2016 (ongoing)**

### **Overview:**

In spring 2015, faculty from College Skills, English, ESL and instructional specialists met to discuss the sequence of English classes spanning from pre-transfer to transfer level. The courses included in these discussions are English 98 and 98SL, English 120, 120AC, 120SL, English 150, English 151, and English 155. Since that first meeting in March of 2015, we have met 5 times to continue our discussion.

### **Following is a summary of our sessions.**

#### **March 25, 2015 –**

- College Skills, English, ESL, and instructional specialists met to discuss
- goals for peer review
- obstacles to our goals for students
- models for peer review
- general principles for success in improving student writing
- plans for our next meeting/retreat in August 2015

#### **August 10, 2015 –**

College Skills, English, ESL faculty, and instructional specialists met for a 7-hour retreat to pinpoint areas that we wished to discuss further and to come up with plans for continued work. We discussed the following:

- Identifying areas for improvement
- Retention and intervention
- Assessment and placement
- Assignments across the sequence
- Setting plans for our next meeting

#### **September 18, 2015 –**

Faculty met to follow up from the retreat to identify and define exit skills for English 98/98SL and English 120/120SL/120AC.

#### **October 30, 2015 –**

We held a norming session in which we each read a set of papers and gave it a score from 1 to 5. We then examined and discussed scoring to determine if we are in alignment in terms of how we view student writing. The small group that met was 70% aligned at that time. During our discussion, we began to fine-tune the identification of specific areas we need to address across the sequence (for example, expectations of grammar/mechanics at a given level, and inclusion of deeper connections between writer ideas and readings).

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**January 15, 2016 –**

We continued to identify exit skills for English 150 and discussed our goals with regards to:  
assessment and placement  
establishing prerequisites and advisories in other disciplines  
norming of expectations and grading  
curriculum revisions (course outlines of record)  
Instructional Specialist program

We also prepared a common essay prompt to be given in the same manner across the sequence during the first two weeks of class. With the common prompt, we would be able to compare “oranges to oranges” in our next norming session. Having these sample papers would allow us to examine our expectations for and responses to student abilities at each level.

Lastly, we set a date for the next norming session.

**March 25, 2016 –**

Norming session: “Name that Level.”

We examined sample essays from the common prompt that was developed and administered in January. Individually, we read and ranked the papers to guess the level. As a group we tallied our results and discussed our rankings. At this time, we discovered that we are not as aligned as we strive to be.

We reached agreement to meet again one more time during the semester for a norming session.

**April 29, 2016 –**

In this session we further examined student papers to discuss what we look for as individual instructors. This was done in an effort to come closer together in how we rate/grade exit skills.