

Office of Academic Planning and Assessment

A Report of the English Course-Level Assessment
2014-2015

Description of English Course-Level Assessment

Each spring semester writing samples from freshman, sophomore, and senior English writing enhanced courses are collected, reviewed, and evaluated against a common, internally developed rubric by the faculty within the Department of English. In addition to being used by the faculty within the Department of English as part of their on-going programmatic assessment, these data will be utilized by the members of the core curriculum committee to help evaluate student written communication.

The student data presented within this report reflect student performance regarding the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's Core Learning Objective of Communication Skills (THECB, 2016). The THECB (2016) defines Communication Skills as "effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication." Data from these assessments may therefore be used to address one element of the broader concept of Communication Skills, the element of written communication. These data should therefore be used in conjunction with other data to fully understand student knowledge and ability with regards to this Core Learning Objective.

Methodology

A total of 323 course-embedded English writing samples from 2014-2015 were collected and evaluated by Department of English faculty. The following is a listing of courses from which writing samples were collected:

ENGL 1301 – Composition I
 ENGL 1302 – Composition II
 ENGL 2332 – World Literature I: Before the Seventeenth Century
 ENGL 2333 – World Literature II: The Seventeenth Century and After
 ENGL 4335 – Studies in Rhetoric
 ENGL 4339 – Literature of Diversity
 ENGL 4360 – The British Romantic Movement
 ENGL 4367 – History of the English Language
 ENGL 4376 – Tudor and Stuart Drama
 ENGL 4387 – 20th Century Literature of England, Ireland, and the Commonwealth
 ENGL 4000 – unspecified

Results

Papers were scored by the English Department faculty using a locally developed, holistic writing rubric. Each rubric is tailored specifically to its course level, meaning that scores from each course level stand alone and should not be compared to each other. Each rater could give the paper a score of 1-4. The scores from each rater were added together to provide a total score for the paper, ranging from 2 to 8. Essays scoring from 2-4 were deemed unsatisfactory, essays scoring 5-6 were deemed competent, and essays scoring 7-8 were deemed excellent. Table 1 represents the average student score at each course level.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Student Writing in Course-Embedded English Assessment for 2014-2015

Course Level	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1000-level (Total)	229	5.07	1.49
ENGL 1301	55	4.89	1.49
ENGL 1302	174	5.12	1.50
2000-level	60	5.42	1.28
4000-level	34	5.26	1.58

At each course level, the average student scores were above a 5, indicating that students were generally writing at a competent level. When the student scores for 1000-level course are broken down by type (i.e., ENGL 1301 and ENGL 1302), students in ENGL 1301 averaged below a 5, but ENGL 1302 students averaged above a 5. A breakdown of the percentages of students scoring a 5 or higher, indicating competent work, is also revealing, 63.64% of students enrolled in ENGL 1301, 64.94% of student enrolled in ENGL 1302, 76.67% of students enrolled in a 2000-level English course, and 73.53% of students enrolled in a 4000-level English course. Cross tabulations of how many students receiving each score, by course type, are provided in Table 2 with percentages provided in Table 3.

Table 2

Student Writing Scores by Course Type for 2014-2015

Student Score	ENGL 1301	ENGL 1302	2000-level	4000-level
2	3	6	1	1
3	10	19	2	5
4	7	36	11	3
5	13	44	18	11
6	14	36	16	6
7	8	22	9	5
8	0	11	3	3

Table 3

Percentage of Student Writing Scores by Course Type for 2014-2015

Student Score	ENGL 1301	ENGL 1302	2000-level	4000-level
2	5.45%	3.45%	1.67%	2.94%
3	18.18%	10.92%	3.33%	14.70%
4	12.73%	20.69%	18.33%	8.82%
5	23.64%	25.29%	30.00%	32.35%
6	25.45%	20.69%	26.67%	17.65%
7	14.54%	12.64%	15.00%	14.70%
8	0.00%	6.32%	5.00%	8.82%

References

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. (2016). Elements of the Texas Core Curriculum.
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