

General Education Assessment Report
Category 1A: English 101—Composition
March 30, 2007

Committee Members

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Overview

In Fall 2006, English Department chairperson John Banschbach asked Composition Director Randall McClure to conduct the periodic review of English 101—Composition as a General Education requirement. Dr. McClure created an ad hoc committee for this assessment project including one reviewer from outside of the department (Jesseman) and several English 101 instructors (all teaching assistants).

Unlike the assessment conducted five years prior¹ that focused on the evaluation of research essays, this year's committee focused the assessment on the course competencies listed in the university's general education bulletin²:

Students will be able to:

- (a) demonstrate and practice strategies for idea generation, audience analysis, organization of texts, drafting, evaluation of drafts, revision, and editing;
- (b) write papers of varying lengths that demonstrate effective explanation, analysis, and argumentation;
- (c) become experienced in computer-assisted writing and research;
- (d) locate and evaluate material, using PALS, the Internet, and other sources;
- (e) analyze and synthesize source material, making appropriate use of paraphrase, summary, quotation, and citation conventions;
- (f) employ syntax and usage appropriate to academic writing and the professional world.
- (g) employ syntax, usage and analytical techniques appropriate to academic disciplines and the professional world.

Since these competencies reflect both the processes and products of student writing, the committee elected to expand the focus from research essays to course artifacts (any and all items produced by students during the course which includes but is not limited to research essays). In other words, the committee maintains that an artifact-based assessment allows for clearer understanding of the curriculum's effectiveness in helping students demonstrate the general education competencies/skills associated with the course.

The attention given to artifacts and competencies as opposed to products also reflects the discussion of the findings and limitations in the 2002 report. First, it was reported in the 2002 report that a survey of English 101 instructors found "students are given several opportunities to acquire each of the general education competencies." Therefore, an artifact-based approach affords the opportunity to examine students' demonstration of

¹ See Appendix A for the 2002 report.

² See Appendix B for the complete bulletin copy including the description and goal statement of MSU General Education category 1A: English 101—Composition.

these competencies without restricting the demonstration or analysis of them to a single assignment or product. Second, it was reported in the 2002 report that the four-point rubric caused “split scores” and lacked the clarity to “accommodate scorers' recognition of the great differences in quality among essays” (p. 2). While the authors of the 2002 report suggest the development of a more comprehensive six-point rubric, it would seem that a rubric-based assessment of a single product will tend to fall victim to split decisions and differences of interpretation and opinion, no matter how detailed or developed the rubric may be. For this reason and others cited throughout this document, the 2007 committee decided to attempt a competency- and artifact-based assessment of English 101—Composition as an MSU General Education requirement.

It is also argued that the use of an artifact-based approach allows students to more actively participate in the assessment process. This participation is further enhanced through this project's use of portfolio-based evaluation, here the use of electronic portfolios. Specifically, students were asked to select and then annotate any course artifacts they believed demonstrated or fulfilled each of the competencies listed above. By annotating or explaining how their coursework illustrates these competencies, students became co-investigators in a way, providing a collective student perspective on the curriculum. Further, students engaged in another form of critical thinking through this exercise by examining their own coursework (particularly their own writing in all stages and forms) and writing about it.

To assist students in selecting artifacts for their electronic portfolios as well as to assist portfolio reviewers/evaluators in measuring students' demonstrations of the competencies, the committee provided more detailed descriptions of the course competencies to all participants. Instead of adding detail or developing the rubric to apply to the competencies, the committee chose to provide more direction in understanding the competencies at the heart of the assessment project. Therefore, the competencies listed above were further defined or articulated, therefore being expanded to the following list of competencies³, and these competencies were provided to both the participating instructors and evaluators prior to the start of the Fall 2006 semester:

(a) demonstrate and practice strategies for idea generation, audience analysis, organization of texts, drafting, evaluation of drafts, revision, and editing;

- Student demonstrates different strategies for idea generation given the writing situation
 - Student brainstorms possible topics **(a1)**
 - Student performs initial research about possible topics
 - Student generates a research question, based on research
- Student demonstrates different techniques for organization of texts **(a2)**
 - Student utilizes prewriting techniques to organize text, such as outlining or chunking
 - Student organizes information as appropriate for the writing situation
 - Student demonstrates understanding of chronological, hierarchical, cyclical, and sequential order as well as implicit and explicit structures
- Student demonstrates knowledge of the writing process **(a3)**
 - Student uses prewriting, organizing, drafting, revising, and finalizing as appropriate to the writing situation
 - Student works through multiple drafts

³ These enhanced competencies are attached as Appendix C.

- Student participates in peer-review sessions
- Student demonstrates ability to revise and edit their work
- Student demonstrates awareness of audience, such as using appropriate language and style for the writing situation **(a4)**

(b) write papers of varying lengths that demonstrate effective explanation, analysis, and argumentation;

- Student demonstrates understanding of writing papers of different lengths **(b1)**
- Student demonstrates the ability to explain ideas clearly **(b2)**
 - Student writes with coherence and conciseness
 - Student develops complete sentences and paragraphs
 - Student demonstrates the level of explanation necessary for the audience
- Student demonstrates the ability to analyze material **(b3)**
 - Student demonstrates the ability to recognize logical fallacies and possible biases
 - Student uses metadiscourse as appropriate
- Student demonstrates the ability to create a solid argument **(b4)**
 - Student explains why the research question is relevant
 - Student develops a thesis statement that is clear, concise, and appropriately qualified for the writing situation
 - Student uses persuasive techniques (compromise, concession, or refutation)
 - Student has a clear organizational structure for argumentative writing

(c) become experienced in computer-assisted writing and research;

- Student demonstrates the ability to draft and revise essays using writing software **(c1)**
- Student demonstrates the ability to utilize and evaluate multiple sources on the basis of authority, accuracy, objectivity, and timeliness of sources **(c2)**

(d) locate and evaluate material, using PALS, the Internet, and other sources;

- Student demonstrates an assortment of research sources: interviews, journal articles, reputable Internet sources, print documents, etc **(d1)**

(e) analyze and synthesize source material, making appropriate use of paraphrase, summary, quotation, and citation conventions;

- Student demonstrates the ability to analyze and interact with source material **(e1)**
 - Student uses summary, paraphrase, quotations and then responds in their own language (metadiscourse)
 - Student demonstrates synthesis of multiple sources
- Student demonstrates proper usage of APA or MLA formatting for in-text citations and References, Works Cited, Works Cited and Consulted, or Bibliography pages **(e2)**

(f) employ syntax and usage appropriate to academic writing and the professional world;

- Student demonstrates appropriate sentence structures, grammar and mechanics as they pertain to academic audiences **(f1)**
- Student demonstrates appropriate sentence structures, grammar and mechanics as they pertain to professional and other audiences **(f2)**

(g) employ syntax, usage and analytical techniques appropriate to academic disciplines and the professional world.

- Student recognizes how information is structured within different disciplines (**g1**)
- Student recognizes how information is structured within different professions, organizations, and other audiences (**g2**)

Methodology

In addition to amending the focus and process of the assessment of General Education category 1A: English 101—Composition, this year’s committee chose to evaluate the course competencies through more of a holistic approach framed by the following questions:

- 1) For each competency and sub-category, does the student demonstrate this skill or competency based on the artifacts and the student’s descriptions or annotations of them as he or she chose to present them in the electronic portfolio? Yes or no?
- 2) And at what level of proficiency—developmental, foundational or comprehensive?

Answering these questions allows the assessment team to better understand what parts of the curriculum are successful and what parts, what specific skills, need attention. Further, by assessing not only the demonstration of the competencies themselves (yes/no) but also the skill or proficiency level at which they are demonstrated (developmental = needs development; foundational = adequate; comprehensive = superior), the committee can assess the amount of attention needed.

It is argued as well that a competency-based approach to assessment may be more effective at assessing the curriculum than common product-based approaches. Since products typically provide only a snapshot of the teaching and learning in a given course or set of courses, assessment projects based on products tend to provide only what a snapshot can—a single-lens view of a complex scene. Further, such approaches tend to place more emphasis on the evaluators themselves as opposed to the students and, more importantly, the curriculum. Even in cases where evaluators implement a detailed rubric and participate in “norming” sessions aimed at developing a mutual or shared understanding of the rubric, the focus often shifts from the curriculum and student demonstrations of learning, in this case their writing (and often only the end product of a process that is quite complex and some would argue just as if not more important), to the evaluators and their (mis)readings and interpretations of the rubric and how the products under examination mesh or do not mesh with it. Further, it has been argued in the literature on assessment that “norming” sessions are often characterized by concession-making rather than by their purpose to develop shared understanding. In this case, the snapshot which in itself is limited (especially in a composition course) becomes a poor source for information since interpretations of it are often clouded by contradiction caused by the tool and its (mis)representations used in evaluating the snapshot itself.

In addition to relying on a competency-based approach to assessment, the committee decided to integrate other best practices in assessment by using “blind review” during the evaluation of student work, training evaluators and including an external reviewer during the process of analyzing the assessment data. Reviewers for this assessment project were all teachers of English 101 and all had their students contribute their electronic portfolios to the assessment project; however, they were aware of neither whose students they were reviewing (unless a student indicated his or her instructor’s name as part of the

annotations on the artifacts in the portfolio, though they were discouraged from doing so) nor the results themselves posted by all reviewers until the completion of the project.

Further, the “blind” part of the review process was enhanced by the use of web-based assessment that allowed reviewers to work independently (and quickly)⁴. Other advantages of web-based assessment for this project included the ability to assess a larger number of students and minimize the time needed to do so. In the 2002 assessment, for example, the committee scored 50 essays. Through the use of web- and competency-based assessment, this year’s committee examined more than 170 electronic portfolios⁵, nearly 20% of all students enrolled in English 101 during the Fall 2006 semester. In addition, moving the assessment process onto the Internet allowed reviewers to complete their evaluations in a timely fashion. In fact, the average time for one reviewer to complete his or her evaluation of roughly 20 student portfolios (20.2 portfolios per reviewer) was 4.22 hours with a range of 1.5 to 10 hours⁶.

Though the evaluators for this project were teachers of English 101 therefore bringing their knowledge of the course competencies and expertise in helping students acquire the writing skills needed to demonstrate them, they still needed to be trained as evaluators for this project. Therefore, participating teachers were trained by the committee chair and external reviewer on the web-based instrument and assessment processes and protocols both formally (through hands-on sessions held in a computer classroom) and informally (through individual meetings and email correspondence)⁷.

Finally, an external reviewer was used during the analysis of the assessment data. The literature on best practices in assessment stresses the importance of triangulation when it comes to both constructing and analyzing data. Whether this triangulation comes from “double review” as is often the case (evaluator + evaluator + product) or use of insiders and outsiders as is the case in this project (students + teachers as evaluators + external reviewer), the data set here is not reliant on one lens or one view. Instead, this assessment project is built on multiplicity on several levels, including analysis of project data as it is detailed in the following section.

Analysis

The data collected for the 2007 assessment of MSU General Education category 1A—English 101: Composition is included below and is followed by a detailed analysis of this data⁸.

Key:

A1, A2, etc competency sub-categories as detailed above and included as Appendix C

⁴ To view the web-based assessment tool used for this project, visit <http://krypton.mnsu.edu/~mcclur/assessment/eval.htm>. This form is attached as Appendix D.

⁵ It should be noted that of the 202 total assessments, 172 were assessments of electronic portfolios and 30 were assessments of print documents. These 30 print assessments allowed the committee to include off-campus sections of English 101 whose instructors did not receive training in the electronic portfolio tool. The electronic portfolio tool was piloted in all (and only the) 9 on-campus sections that participated in this assessment project; however, the committee did not have the time and resources in place at the time of this project to extend the pilot to off-campus sections.

⁶ The committee determined the main reason for the size of this range was the reviewers’ level of technological skill/savvy in working with multiple websites or pages simultaneously which was essentially required for this web-based assessment.

⁷ See Appendix E for a copy of the assessment protocols for evaluators.

⁸ For a more detailed breakdown by competency and evaluator, see Appendix F.

Yes % percentage of students demonstrating the competency sub-category
D number of students with developmental skill ability for the competency
including all sub-categories
F number of students with foundational skill ability for the competency
including all sub-categories
C number of students with comprehensive skill ability for the competency
including all sub-categories
D % percentage of students with developmental skill ability for the competency
including all sub-categories
F % percentage of students with foundational skill ability for the competency
including all sub-categories
C % percentage of students with comprehensive skill ability for the
competency
 including all sub-categories

Note: The tallies and percentages for skill or proficiency (developmental, foundational and comprehensive—here marked with an asterisk “”) are for the entire competency or category (A, B, C, etc.), **not** for the first sub-category as it appears here.*

	Yes	No	Yes %	D*	F*	C*	D %*	F %*	C %*
A1	166	36	82%	50	78	74	25%	39%	36%
A2	143	59	71%						
A3	156	46	77%						
A4	167	35	83%						
B1	161	41	80%	41	82	79	20%	41%	39%
B2	184	18	91%						
B3	166	36	82%						
B4	160	42	79%						
C1	175	27	87%	40	86	76	20%	43%	37%
C2	160	42	79%						
D1	159	43	79%	53	62	88	26%	31%	43%
E1	161	41	80%	60	82	60	30%	40%	30%
E2	140	62	69%						
F1	173	29	86%	41	98	63	20%	49%	31%
F2	173	29	86%						
G1	164	38	81%	44	102	55	22%	50%	28%
G2	163	39	81%						

First, it should be noted at least 70% of students demonstrated foundational or comprehensive skill in all seven competencies:

A:	75 %
B:	80 %
C:	80 %

D:	74 %
E:	70 %
F:	80 %
G:	78 %

The competencies with the highest percentages (B, C, F, G) represent the students' abilities to write papers with different purposes and of different lengths, use computer-assisted writing and research, and use appropriate, professional and discipline-specific language and analytical techniques.

While still quite respectable in their percentages, it appears students' analyses of source material, abilities to locate and evaluate sources and demonstration of the writing process could benefit from redesigned coursework and additional attention in ENG 101.

However, the data for these three competencies (A, D, E) is somewhat perplexing as students score well on analyzing their sources (E1) but not on citing their sources (E2) which is the lowest score of any sub-category and likely due in part to the following:

- 1) inconsistent teaching on APA/MLA style
- 2) inconsistent evaluation of APA/MLA style
- 3) numerous styles of documentation available to ENG 101 instructors and students
- 4) influx of automated citation machines

In addition, the data from category D1 (the second lowest scoring sub-category on the whole) reveals a remarkable level of comprehensive skill. In fact, the highest level of comprehensive understanding in any sub-category appears here, suggesting students really understand how to evaluate and locate sources, or they do not at all⁹.

One evaluator summarizes the frustrations many ENG 101 instructors locally and nationally this way: "As much time as I spend talking to my students about sources, evaluation of sources, and using a variety of sources, it is disheartening to see that this is the one real weak area for students."

In sum, it is clear from this data that even more attention needs to be given to helping students with the research elements of the writing process. Further, this area of the composition curriculum has been an evolving problem for the last decade or more. The findings in the 2002 report, for example, noted seven common problems in the research essays of English 101 students, and six of the seven problems are directly related to source identification and use:

- 1. insufficient sources**
- 2. sufficient sources but insufficient citation**
- 3. sufficient sources in the bibliography but reliance in the essay on only one or two**
- 4. few sources or citations and much of the essay unsupported personal opinion**
- 5. failure to integrate material through quotation and paraphrase and summary, but instead a heavy reliance on quotation or the serial use of sources or even an unstructured listing of research notes**
6. no thesis, no focus, but a report on a general topic

⁹ On one hand, the polarization of the data on evaluating source material might be victim to evaluator subjectivity since some might expect students to be utilizing more traditional sources (books, journals, etc) as well as some might not be giving credit for a variety of reliable web-based resources. On the other hand, it might simply represent sloppy research practices as students are often going only with web-based/convenient sources or, most likely, a combination of the two.

7. plagiarism

The following is a list of comparisons addressing the “common problems in the unsatisfactory essays” of 2002 in light of the 2007 data:

1) “Insufficient sources.”

Competencies C2—“Student demonstrates the ability to utilize and evaluate multiple sources on the basis of authority, accuracy, objectivity, and timeliness of sources”—and D—“Student demonstrates an assortment of research sources: interviews, journal articles, reputable Internet sources, print documents, etc.”—address this issue. The 2007 study shows that 79% of students are competent in each of these areas, slightly below the overall weighted average of 80.9%.

2) “Sufficient sources but insufficient citation.”

Students scored lowest on the comparative competency in 2007, E2: “Student demonstrates proper usage of APA or MLA formatting for in-text citations and References, Works Cited, Works Cited and Consulted, or Bibliography pages.” The percentage of successful students is 69.

3) “Sufficient sources in the bibliography but reliance in the essay on only one or two.”

In 2007, 80% of students are able to “demonstrate synthesis of multiple sources” (E1b). 82% are able to “demonstrate the ability to recognize logical fallacies and possible biases” and “use metadiscourse as appropriate” (B3).

4) “Few sources or citations and much of the essay unsupported personal opinion.”

Competency B2—“Student demonstrates the ability to explain ideas clearly”—and B4—“Student demonstrates the ability to create a solid argument”—show a range of student expertise: 91% of students are able to explain themselves clearly, and 79% are able to create an argument.

5) “A failure to integrate material through quotation and paraphrase and summary, but instead a heavy reliance on quotation or the serial use of sources or even an unstructured listing of research notes.”

80% of students in 2007 showed “the ability to analyze and interact with source material” (E1) which was further specified as “Student uses summary, paraphrase, quotations and then responds in their own language (metadiscourse).”

6) “No thesis, no focus, but a report on a general topic.”

Competency B4’s specifics address this issue: explaining relevancy of research, developing a concise and precise thesis statement, using persuasive techniques, and showing structure for argumentative writing. 79% of students are competent in this area.

7) “Plagiarism.”

As noted earlier in competency E2, 69% of students are able to demonstrate proficiency in “proper usage of APA or MLA formatting for in-text citations and References, Works Cited, Works Cited and Consulted, or Bibliography pages.”

Since the 2002 report neither defines nor gives percentages for the “common problems,” a comparison of these areas may or may not reveal improvement. However, the number of students who presumably showed proficiency in 2002 (scoring either a six or a seven on an eight point scale) was thirty-three out of fifty, approximately 66%. Data from the 2007 project suggests the department has improved in teaching English 101 since 80.9% of students were deemed proficient. With more detail in the 2007 data collection and analysis, the information on the competencies and their sub-categories may now be easily compared with future studies in order to more clearly track and demonstrate student success.

In addition, it must be noted that, per the recommendation of the 2002 committee, the Department of English has moved to address the concerns listed in the 2002 report in several ways, including but not limited to the following:

- Appointment of a full-time Composition Director
- Improved training of graduate teaching assistants, especially in the areas of information and technological literacy
- Use of library information sessions
- Focus on teaching in computer environments (all sections of English 101 now meet in computer classrooms, in hybrid format or online)
- Adoption of common syllabus and text that focus on writing with and about sources through a sequence of several assignments
- Use and development of online tutorials including work on avoiding plagiarism
- Use of plagiarism detection software such as Turnitin.com
- Participation in MSU Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning faculty development programs such as the teaching certificate program and faculty learning communities
- Work with MnSCU Center for Teaching and Learning and the Center for Academic Transformation on a course redesign project aimed at improving students' researching practices

Despite these and other curricular initiatives, it is clear from the results of this study that more work needs to be done in the area of source identification and use, especially with the ongoing rapid development of web-based information.

Finally, it should be noted students have improved in the area of thesis and focus since the 2002 report. (item #6 in the 2002 report). Students are still developing the abilities related to identifying, evaluating and documenting sources; however, the data here shows an adequate level of student competency here. In fact, taking all the data into account, the average percentage of competency is a respectable 76% overall.

Recommendations to Improve Artifact- and Electronic Portfolio Based Assessment

The participating teachers and evaluators noted some additional features of using artifacts instead of a single product in conducting this assessment, and these features could be seen as limitations to some degree:

- One artifact could qualify for multiple competencies
- All artifacts had to be electronic
- Students were unsure what to upload
- Students did not describe or annotate artifacts well
- Students uploaded inappropriate artifacts
- Students did not upload enough to demonstrate competency, even though they may have been proficient

The 2007 project achieved the specificity which the 2002 project did not have, yet future projects should work to improve execution of this artifact- and electronic portfolio based approach. The above concerns can be addressed through the use of model portfolios (now available upon the completion of this project) that provide sample artifacts appropriate for each competency as well as the use of screencasts that show students how to create their electronic portfolios and upload artifacts to them. It is likely students' demonstrations of competency will improve, even without any curricular changes, when they better understand the assessment tool and process.

Recommendations for General Education Category 1A

Similar to the recommendations made in the 2002 report, this committee suggests the development of a two-semester composition sequence, with the second four-credit course (English 102) focused on researching and writing in the age of the Internet. It is argued this course be designed to serve as a transition for students from the development of the general writing skills (ENG 101) to the development of discipline-specific researching and writing skills (writing-intensive courses aka MSU General Education category 1C) and therefore tailored to the demands and conventions of colleges, departments, programs and areas of study similar to the "learning community" sections now common in ENG 101. In addition, the committee suggests that ENG 101 (and ENG 102, if approved) be required for junior standing, as prerequisites for 1C courses, and for admittance to all degree programs. The committee certainly recognizes the potential staffing and other implications of this recommendation on the university, the Department of English and the current General Education structure and curriculum; therefore, other recommendations are included here.

If the above first recommendation cannot be immediately implemented, the committee believes a one- or two-hour co-requisite course in information literacy should be attached to English 101. Past discussions have explored the possibility of KSP 105 for this purpose. Of course, there are implications here for the KSP and library faculty. However, the committee believes the development of this course could also be tied to concerns expressed by the 2002 & 2007 GECCIG committees on category 1C (writing-intensive courses) as well as instructors of writing-intensive courses throughout this institution by staffing KSP 105 with faculty from across campus, much like it is currently done in FYEX 100. Since English 101 is not a co- or pre-requisite course for many writing-intensive courses and since many students do not take or have the opportunity to take writing-intensive courses in their majors, KSP 105 could provide faculty from any discipline to work with students and the development of their (discipline-specific)

research skills, perhaps in learning community-format similar to some sections of FYEX 100 and ENG 101.

Finally, the committee suggests that the Department of English consider the adoption of the more defined competencies used in this assessment project. The committee believes these competencies will assist instructors and curriculum designers in helping students demonstrate the general education objectives of the course, especially since the course is taught almost exclusively by teaching assistants and adjunct instructors and without sacrificing academic freedom that remains a core value within the department and across the institution.

General Education 1A Assessment Report 2002 (Appendix A)

English Department General Education Assessment Report
English 101, Freshman Composition
March 29, 2002

In Fall 2001, the department created an ad hoc committee to assess its freshman composition program: John Banschbach (chair, department assessment committee), Michelle Friederichs (faculty), Cassandra LaBarion (teaching assistant), Tara Moghadam (teaching assistant), Anne O'Meara (department chair), Anne Rusch (faculty), Roger Sheffer (director of teaching assistants). All members of the committee were teachers of English 101.

The committee collected research essays, the assignment that involves most of the general education competencies for freshman composition, from 10% of the students enrolled in English 101. The students were selected randomly according to the final digits of their tech i.d. numbers. Instructors collected the essays and made copies before grading the essays, giving the copies to the committee. The collection occurred throughout the last half of fall semester, according to the due dates established by the instructors for that assignment.

The committee used holistic scoring to evaluate the essays. The committee members were trained by the assessment chair in the use of the rubric (attached) on January 9, 2002; they scored the student essays on January 10.

The numerical results of the scoring were as follows:

Score	Number of essays receiving that score
8	0
7	5
6	28
5	0
4	10
3	6
2	1
1	0

The rubric is a four-point rubric, scores of 3 and 4 given to successful essays, scores of 1 and 2 given to unsuccessful essays. Each essay was scored by two raters. An essay's final score is the sum of the two individual scores. Essays that initially received a 5 or a "split score," where one rater found the essay successful and a second rater did not, were scored a third time by the assessment chair.

The committee met on February 20th to analyze the results and to make recommendations.

I. The common problems in the unsatisfactory essays are these:

- A. insufficient sources
- B. sufficient sources but insufficient citation
- C. sufficient sources in the bibliography but reliance in the essay on only one or two
- D. few sources or citations and much of the essay unsupported personal opinion
- E. a failure to integrate material through quotation and paraphrase and summary, but instead a heavy reliance on quotation or the serial use of sources or even an unstructured listing of research notes
- F. no thesis, no focus, but a report on a general topic
- G. plagiarism

II. The committee's recommendations and comments are as follows:

- A. Teachers of freshman composition need to devote more instruction to
 - 1) the integration of source material through quotation, paraphrase and summary,
 - 2) the development of a focus or thesis for research essays,
 - 3) the rhetorical analysis of sources (the audience and purpose of the source).This recommendation will be incorporated into the training of teaching assistants.
- B. The committee agreed that students are not as prepared to master the skills of research papers as they need to be, and discussed the benefits of a two-semester freshman composition requirement.
- C. The rubric should be revised into a six-part rubric, both to sharpen the distinction between successful and unsuccessful essays and to accommodate scorers' recognition of the great differences in quality among essays receiving scores of 3.

As a second method of assessment of the freshman composition program, instructors were surveyed as to the kinds of assignments they give and the methods of instruction they use to help students achieve the general education competencies assigned to freshman composition. An important finding of the survey is that students are given several opportunities to acquire each of the general education competencies.

Respectfully submitted,

John Banschbach for the English 101 Assessment Committee

General Education Goals and Competencies for English (Appendix B)

Category 1: Communication

Goal: To develop writers and speakers who use the English language effectively and who read, write, speak, and listen critically. At a base, all students should complete introductory communication requirements early in their college studies. Writing competency is an ongoing process to be reinforced through writing-intensive courses and writing across the curriculum. Speaking and listening skills need reinforcement. There are multiple opportunities for interpersonal communication, public speaking and discussion.

Part A: English Composition

(requires one course, 3 credits or more, with a grade of at least a "C")

Goal: To develop writers who use the English language effectively and who read and write critically. This course will require faculty-critiqued writing. Writing competency is an ongoing process which needs to be reinforced throughout the curriculum.

Students will be able to:

- (a) demonstrate and practice strategies for idea generation, audience analysis, organization of texts, drafting, evaluation of drafts, revision, and editing;
- (b) write papers of varying lengths that demonstrate effective explanation, analysis, and argumentation;
- (c) become experienced in computer-assisted writing and research;
- (d) locate and evaluate material, using PALS, the Internet, and other sources;
- (e) analyze and synthesize source material, making appropriate use of paraphrase, summary, quotation, and citation conventions;
- (f) employ syntax and usage appropriate to academic writing and the professional world.
- (g) employ syntax, usage and analytical techniques appropriate to academic disciplines and the professional world.

Refined Competencies (Appendix C)

(a) demonstrate and practice strategies for idea generation, audience analysis, organization of texts, drafting, evaluation of drafts, revision, and editing;

- Student demonstrates different strategies for idea generation given the writing situation
 - Student brainstorms possible topics
 - Student performs initial research about possible topics
 - Student generates a research question, based on research
- Student demonstrates different techniques for organization of texts
 - Student utilizes prewriting techniques to organize text, such as outlining or chunking
 - Student organizes information as appropriate for the writing situation
 - Student demonstrates understanding of chronological, hierarchical, cyclical, and sequential order as well as implicit and explicit structures
- Student demonstrates knowledge of the writing process
 - Student uses prewriting, organizing, drafting, revising, and finalizing as appropriate to the writing situation
 - Student works through multiple drafts
 - Student participates in peer-review sessions
 - Student demonstrates ability to revise and edit their work
- Student demonstrates awareness of audience, such as using appropriate language and style for the writing situation

(b) write papers of varying lengths that demonstrate effective explanation, analysis, and argumentation;

- Student demonstrates understanding of writing papers of different lengths
- Student demonstrates the ability to explain ideas clearly
 - Student writes with coherence and conciseness
 - Student develops complete sentences and paragraphs
 - Student demonstrates the level of explanation necessary for the audience
- Student demonstrates the ability to analyze material
 - Student demonstrates the ability to recognize logical fallacies and possible biases
 - Student uses metadiscourse as appropriate
- Student demonstrates the ability to create a solid argument
 - Student explains why the research question is relevant
 - Student develops a thesis statement that is clear, concise, and appropriately qualified for the writing situation
 - Student uses persuasive techniques (compromise, concession, or refutation)
 - Student has a clear organizational structure for argumentative writing

(c) become experienced in computer-assisted writing and research;

- Student demonstrates the ability to draft and revise essays using writing software

- Student demonstrates the ability to utilize and evaluate multiple sources on the basis of authority, accuracy, objectivity, and timeliness of sources (Clines and Cobb 9-10)

(d) locate and evaluate material, using PALS, the Internet, and other sources;

- Student demonstrates an assortment of research sources: interviews, journal articles, reputable Internet sources, print documents, etc

(e) analyze and synthesize source material, making appropriate use of paraphrase, summary, quotation, and citation conventions;

- Student demonstrates the ability to analyze and interact with source material
 - Student uses summary, paraphrase, quotations and then responds in their own language (metadiscourse)
 - Student demonstrates synthesis of multiple sources
- Student demonstrates proper usage of APA or MLA formatting for in-text citations and References, Works Cited, Works Cited and Consulted, or Bibliography pages

(f) employ syntax and usage appropriate to academic writing and the professional world;

- Student demonstrates appropriate sentence structures, grammar and mechanics as they pertain to academic audiences
- Student demonstrates appropriate sentence structures, grammar and mechanics as they pertain to professional and other audiences

(g) employ syntax, usage and analytical techniques appropriate to academic disciplines and the professional world.

- Student recognizes how information is structured within different disciplines
- Student recognizes how information is structured within different professions, organizations, and other audiences

**MS Word Version of Web Form
(Appendix D)**

Assessment of Learning Outcomes

Student evaluation form

Student ID:

Evaluator:

Assessment Outcome A

demonstrate and practice strategies for idea generation, audience analysis, organization of texts, drafting, evaluation of drafts, revision, and editing

Demonstrates

Level

- Student demonstrates strategies for idea generation given the writing situation
 - Student brainstorms possible topics
 - Student performs initial research about possible topics
 - Student generates a research question, based on research

- Yes
- No

- Student demonstrates different techniques for organization of texts
 - Student utilizes prewriting techniques to organize text, such as outlining or chunking
 - Student organizes information as appropriate for the writing situation
 - Student demonstrates understanding of chronological, hierarchical, cyclical, and sequential order as well as implicit and explicit structures

- Yes
- No

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student demonstrates knowledge of the writing process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student uses prewriting, organizing, drafting, revising, and finalizing as appropriate to the writing situation ○ Student works through multiple drafts ○ Student participates in peer-review sessions ○ Student demonstrates ability to revise and edit their work 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student demonstrates awareness of audience, such as using appropriate language and style for the writing situation 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Assessment Outcome B

write papers of varying lengths that demonstrate effective explanation, analysis, and argumentation;	Demonstrates	Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student demonstrates understanding of writing papers of different lengths 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="text"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student demonstrates the ability to explain ideas clearly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student writes with coherence and conciseness ○ Student develops complete sentences and paragraphs ○ Student demonstrates the level of explanation necessary for the audience 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student demonstrates the ability to analyze material <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student demonstrates the ability to recognize logical fallacies and possible biases ○ Student uses metadiscourse as appropriate 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student demonstrates the ability to create a solid argument <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student explains why the research question is relevant ○ Student develops a thesis statement that is clear, concise, and appropriately qualified for the writing situation ○ Student uses persuasive techniques (compromise, concession, or refutation) ○ Student has a clear organizational structure for argumentative writing 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
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Assessment Outcome C

become experienced in computer-assisted writing and research;	Demonstrates	Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student demonstrates the ability to draft and revise essays using writing software 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="text"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student demonstrates the ability to utilize and evaluate multiple sources on the basis of authority, accuracy, objectivity, and timeliness of sources (Clines and Cobb 9-10) 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Assessment Outcome D

become experienced in computer-assisted writing and research;	Demonstrates	Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student demonstrates an assortment of research sources: interviews, journal articles, reputable Internet sources, print documents, etc 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="text"/>

Assessment Outcome E

analyze and synthesize source material, making appropriate use of paraphrase, summary, quotation, and citation conventions;	Demonstrates	Level

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student demonstrates the ability to analyze and interact with source material <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Student uses summary, paraphrase, quotations and then responds in their own language (metadiscourse) ◦ Student demonstrates synthesis of multiple sources 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="text"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student demonstrates proper usage of APA or MLA formatting for in-text citations and References, Works Cited, Works Cited and Consulted, or Bibliography pages 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Assessment Outcome F

employ syntax and usage appropriate to academic writing and the professional world;	Demonstrates	Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student demonstrates appropriate sentence structures, grammar and mechanics as they pertain to academic audiences 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="text"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student demonstrates appropriate sentence structures, grammar and mechanics as they pertain to professional and other audiences 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

Assessment Outcome G

employ syntax, usage and analytical techniques appropriate to academic disciplines and the professional world.	Demonstrates	Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student recognizes how information is structured within different disciplines 	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="text"/>

- Student recognizes how information is structured within different professions, organizations, and other audiences

Yes

No

Submit

Evaluator Protocol (Appendix E)

From: McClure, Randall W

Sent: Monday, December 18, 2006 12:55 PM

Subject: IMPORTANT: Update on E-Portfolio Pilot Assessment Project

Jessica, Cat, Darren, Phil, Michael, Bronson, Natalie, Todd, Sarah and Jenny:

Here's the information that you need to complete our competency-based assessment of English 101 using the ELGG electronic-portfolio system:

- 1) I will be sending you a separate message containing your "evaluator code/number" the list of user names to conduct your part of the assessment. There actually is a method to this madness (80s reference for DarrenJ), so please do not trade or share your list with the other members of the project team.
- 2) To get started, visit the web home for ELGG at <http://www.elgg.net>.
IMPORTANT: Please make sure to login to the site. You will NOT be able to view students' folders/files without logging in.
- 3) Next, take one user name and retype the ELGG URL to include the user name (For example, the user name "freddie" would read <http://www.elgg.net/freddie>).
- 4) Next, click on the "Files" link on the **right-hand side of the screen**.
IMPORTANT: Do NOT click on the "Your Files" at the top of the screen as this link will take you to your files, not the student's files.
- 5) Next, choose one of the student's file folders and scan through the artifacts (essays, drafts, peer reviews, notes, etc.) that the student has chosen to upload as his/her demonstration of that competency as well as the student's annotations of the artifacts.
- 6) Next, open up a separate browser window (In Internet Explorer, you do this by clicking on "File" → "New" → "Window") and go to the online evaluation form at <http://krypton.mnsu.edu/~mcclur/assessment/eval.htm>.
- 7) Next, browse through the student's folders and files and complete the online form.
IMPORTANT: Make sure to click "submit" at the bottom of the evaluation form screen. If you leave a field empty, then the form will prompt you to click the "back" button to fill in the missing field. Again, make sure to click "submit" to upload your assessment.
- 8) Once you have successfully completed the online evaluation form for a student, then the form should reset for the next student.
- 9) To move onto the next student, repeat steps #3-8 above.

Obviously, this set of directions make the process seem much more complicated than it is, but hopefully our recent meeting to review the online evaluation form and these directions will help you in completing your part of the assessment project. If you have any questions along the way, don't hesitate to ask me.

Please try to complete your part of this assessment project by Tuesday, January 16th. Also, please send me an email when you have finished so I can check you off of my list. Thanks again for your willingness to participate in this project and please do enjoy your break when you are not reviewing students' e-portfoliosJ.

Randall

**Breakdowns by Competency and Evaluator
(Appendix F)**

Assessment Outcome A

- Students will demonstrate and practice strategies for idea generation, audience analysis, organization of texts, drafting, evaluation of drafts, revision, and editing

<u>Evaluator</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Developmental</u>	<u>Foundational</u>	<u>Comprehensive</u>
1	63%	37%	41%	24%	35%
2	86%	14%	16.5%	67%	16.5%
3	87%	13%	23%	65%	12%
4	97%	3%	6%	6%	88%
5	46%	54%	41%	35%	24%
6	94%	6%	6%	22%	72%
7	82%	18%	17%	31%	52%
8	71%	29%	26%	39%	35%
9	60%	40%	48%	26%	26%
10	93%	7%	20%	60%	20%

Assessment outcome B

- Students will write papers of varying lengths that demonstrate effective explanation, analysis, and argumentation.

<u>Evaluator</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Developmental</u>	<u>Foundational</u>	<u>Comprehensive</u>
1	85%	15%	12%	47%	41%
2	78%	22%	16.5%	67%	16.5%
3	81%	19%	35%	41%	24%
4	100%	0	0	25%	75%
5	94%	6%	18%	35%	47%
6	93%	7%	6%	28%	66%
7	80%	20%	17%	52%	31%
8	79%	30%	5%	52%	43%
9	70%	30%	43%	22%	35%
10	83%	17%	37%	37%	26%

Assessment Outcome C

- Students will become experienced in computer-assisted writing and research

<u>Evaluator</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Developmental</u>	<u>Foundational</u>	<u>Comprehensive</u>
1	82%	18%	18%	59%	23%
2	86%	14%	28%	61%	11%
3	88%	12%	23.5%	53%	23.5%
4	97%	3%	0	19%	81%
5	91%	9%	12%	35%	53%
6	89%	11%	11%	33%	56%
7	78%	22%	22%	43%	35%
8	65%	35%	22%	48%	30%
9	65%	35%	39%	17%	44%

10	97%	3%	17%	53%	30%
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Assessment Outcome D

- Students will become experienced in computer-assisted writing and research

<u>Evaluator</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Developmental</u>	<u>Foundational</u>	<u>Comprehensive</u>
1	76%	24%	23.5%	53%	23.5%
2	78%	22%	28%	56%	16%
3	82%	18%	18%	70%	13%
4	94%	6%	12.5%	12.5%	75%
5	82%	18%	18%	6%	75%
6	78%	12%	22%	11%	67%
7	83%	17%	30%	30%	40%
8	65%	35%	35%	17%	48%
9	61%	39%	39%	9%	52%
10	90%	10%	23%	43%	34%

Assessment Outcome E

- Students will analyze and synthesize source material, making appropriate use of paraphrase, summary, quotation, and citation conventions

<u>Evaluator</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Developmental</u>	<u>Foundational</u>	<u>Comprehensive</u>
1	56%	44%	35%	53%	12%
2	86%	14%	39%	50%	11%
3	74%	26%	35%	41%	24%
4	88%	12%	12%	69%	19%
5	76%	24%	18%	35%	47%
6	83%	17%	6%	39%	55%
7	63%	37%	35%	39%	26%
8	72%	28%	26%	30%	44%
9	59%	41%	44%	26%	30%
10	88%	12%	37%	37%	26%

Assessment Outcome F

- Students will employ syntax and usage appropriate to academic writing and the professional world

<u>Evaluator</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Developmental</u>	<u>Foundational</u>	<u>Comprehensive</u>
1	76%	24%	18%	70%	12%
2	94%	6%	11%	83%	6%
3	79%	21%	29%	59%	12%
4	100%	0	0	31%	69%
5	76%	24%	18%	47%	35%
6	86%	14%	17%	33%	50%
7	91%	9%	9%	52%	39%
8	83%	17%	17%	39%	44%
9	70%	30%	39%	30.5%	30.5%
10	97%	3%	33%	47%	20%

Assessment Outcome G

- Students will employ syntax, usage and analytical techniques appropriate to academic disciplines and the professional world.

<u>Evaluator</u>	<u>Y</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Developmental</u>	<u>Foundational</u>	<u>Comprehensive</u>
1	76%	24%	18%	76%	16%
2	15%	25%	39%	61%	0
3	88%	12%	24%	71%	5%
4	100%	0	0	12.5%	87.5%
5	92%	8%	12%	88%	0
6	92%	8%	6%	39%	55%
7	87%	13%	13%	48%	39%
8	72%	28%	22%	35%	43%
9	57%	43%	44%	39%	74%
10	93%	7%	30%	47%	23%