Assessment of Student Learning
General Education Category 1 (Communication)
2013-2014
Minnesota State University, Mankato

*Introduction*

During the 2013-2014 academic year, departments and faculty who teach courses in General Education Goal Area 1A (English Composition) and Goal Area 1B (Speech and Oral Reasoning) provided data toward the assessment of student learning in these categories. In 2014-2015, one General Education Category Course Instructor Group (GECCIG) studied the results of the two data sets.

<u>Goal Area 1A: English Composition</u>

*Background*

A previous assessment, conducted in 2006-2007, investigated findings for all seven learning outcomes of Goal Area 1A. This assessment focused more specifically on two of the goal areas within Goal Area 1A:

- Demonstrate effective research processes, including the ability to gather academic and non-academic sources and assess their quality and suitability for the writing situation;
- Integrate sources in their writing to achieve specific aims, making appropriate use of summary, paraphrase, quotation, and citation conventions.

Dr. Heather Camp, Director of the Composition Program at Minnesota State University, Mankato, summarized previous assessment findings (from 2002 and 2007) in a March 2014 report on this data (See Attached). She indicated that "students' research abilities and use of sources have been evaluated in three prior assessments. In 2007, an ad-hoc committee conducted an ENG 101 portfolio evaluation of the previous set of Category 1A competencies, including former competencies (d) and (e):

- (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."

Dr. Camp noted a few of the 2007 recommendations, which we will summarize here.

- "[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."
- In addition, Camp notes that the reviewers "found that students' analysis of sources was stronger than their citation of sources, and they noted that students appeared to be quite competent at locating and evaluating sources or to lack the skills altogether. The assessment team concluded, '[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.'"

Dr. Camp led the redesign of the rubric and the implementation of the assessment process among the composition instructors. As she describes on page 7 of her report, "Prior to the assessment, half of the teachers participated in a practice assessment session during ENG 621 wherein they applied the rubrics on the sample student papers and discussed their evaluations as a group."

Dr. Camp described the assessment process as follows. "The assessment took place on the last two days of class in the fall. Each teacher was assigned nine essays, and each essay was assessed twice. Teachers did not know whose papers they were evaluating, nor were they assigned their own students' work. Working independently, teachers rated their assigned essays in three areas: gathering of sources, integration of sources, and Works Cited. They then met with another teacher who had reviewed the same essays and discussed their ratings, working toward a consensus on their scores. Once consensus had been reached, the teachers jointly completed a SharePoint assessment form for each essay they reviewed. To conclude the assessment process, teachers submitted a paragraph summarizing the trends they saw in the portfolios related to categories (d) and (e) and identifying problems they encountered during the assessment."

*Findings*

A total of 38 course instructors were asked to provide data representing the learning of 1070 students enrolled in courses in this Goal Area. Actual student assessment represents data from 38 instructors and 162 students, or 15% of the student population whose instructors were asked to participate in the assessment process.[1] At least eighty-eight percent of students in this sample demonstrated foundational or emerging skills or better in each of the outcomes assessed. In terms of specific learning outcomes, results indicated:

- 91% of students have emerging skills in gathering sources, and 67% of students have competent or excellent skills in gathering sources
- 90% of students have emerging skills in integration of sources, and 39% of students have competent or excellent skills in integration of sources
- 88% of students have emerging skills in citation and works cited, and 52% of students have competent or excellent skills in citation and works cited

Student competence seems to be highest in gathering sources, which includes skills of using credible sources and selecting sources appropriate to the writing situation. These findings suggest students were the weakest at integrating sources, which includes such skills as dexterity of source use and representation of sources.

*Limitations*

There are seven learning outcomes for Goal Area 1A, but only two of the outcomes were measured in this assessment. Research and analytical skills formed the core of this assessment. We believe that the specific focus on two learning outcomes is laudable, and that it is appropriate to assess these outcomes at the end of a given semester.

*Recommendations*

- During the next assessment cycle, the General Education committee should be proactive in recommending the assessment of other learning outcomes in ways that complement this current study.
- We believe that the findings should be made available to other instructors who teach writing-intensive sections so they can consider how to approach these issues in their individual courses.
- In addition, we recommend that library faculty review the findings and work with composition instructors to develop meaningful ways for students to gather, integrate, and properly cite sources in a research assignment.

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[1] Dr. Camp's report indicates that 171--not 162--students were assessed.

Goal Area 1B: Speech and Oral Reasoning

*Background*

The focus of this assessment was on the following learning outcomes within Goal Area 1B:

- Understand/demonstrate communication processes through invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing and presentation.
- Analyze, evaluate, and synthesize in a responsible manner material from diverse sources and points of view.
- Select appropriate communication choices for specific audiences.
- Construct logical and coherent arguments.
- Use authority, point of view, and individual voice and style in communications.
- Employ syntax, usage and analytical techniques appropriate to academic disciplines and the professional world.

Dr. Treinen provided us with an explanation of the assessment process in Communication Studies. During the summer, Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) in the Department of Communication Studies attended a workshop or training on how to use the assessment tool for evaluating student speeches in CMST 100 & 102. Dr. Treinen, the Basic Course Director, discussed the rubric for the assessment tool with the students and explained the requirements for grading a speech using an example of a "Persuasive Speech." After viewing the speech, Dr. Treinen and the GTAs discussed how to evaluate and score it for assessment purposes.

According to Dr. Treinen, the assessment was provided and completed during the 2013 fall semester. She also stated that 11 "CMST 100" GTAs and 9 "CMST 102" GTAs completed the assessment—a total of 20 GTAs. GTAs were required to assign and grade a fifth and final speech of the semester for students in CMST 100 & 102—as a side note, Dr. Treinen stated that this speech was not a "one-shot tool" and that the high scores were probably due to the fact that students in these courses had already given four individual, in-class speeches. As in the English Composition assessment, both Communication Studies assessments were conducted at the end of the semester. The description of the assignment is uniform across both classes and all sections. GTAs subsequently evaluated student speeches, provided scores with regard to the assessment tool, and entered their evaluation and data into a University Assessment Office "set up tool."

*Findings*

A total of 29 course instructors were asked to provide data representing the learning of 1164 students enrolled in courses in this Goal Area. Actual student assessment represents data from 29 instructors and 710 students or 61% of the student population. Only 2 courses in this goal area (CMST 100 and CMST 102) are included in this assessment.

Ninety-six percent of students in this sample demonstrated developing skills or better in each of the outcomes assessed. In terms of specific learning outcomes, results indicated:

- 97% of students demonstrated developing skills or better in stating a central message, and 83% of students demonstrated proficient or advanced skills in providing a clear central message. These skills correspond to the objective of selecting appropriate communication choices for specific audiences.
- 97% of students demonstrated developing skills or better in content, and 77% of students demonstrated competent or excellent skills in integration of sources. These skills correspond to the stated objectives

that students will 1) analyze, evaluate, and synthesize material from diverse sources and points of view, and 2) construct logical and coherent arguments.

- 96% of students demonstrated developing skills or better in organization of ideas in the message, and 74% of students demonstrated competent or excellent skills in organization.
- 97% of students demonstrated developing skills or better verbal expression, and 81% of students demonstrated competent or excellent skills in verbal expression. This corresponds to the objective of employing syntax, usage and analytical techniques appropriate to academic disciplines and the professional works.
- 96% of students demonstrated developing skills or better in voice and style in communications, and 64% of students demonstrated competent or excellent skills in voice and style in communications.

These findings suggest students were the weakest at using authority, point of view, and individual voice and style in communications. Students also were weaker in the integration of sources, which parallels the findings in the English Composition assessment. Student competence seems to be highest in selecting appropriate communication choices for specific audiences.

*Limitations*

- Dr. Treinen stated that there was a limited amount of time to construct the instrument for measuring the public speaking competency. Because of the timing, there were some struggles getting all the GTA on board and trained.
- In the future, this assessment also should include students from courses in POL 234, CMST 212, and CDIS 201.

*Recommendations*

1. It appears that there has been a thoughtful effort of CMST faculty to have Teaching Assistants focus on learning outcomes. This would be a useful model for other departments to follow.

2. We recommend that future assessments better align the rubric with the learning outcomes so that those who use the assessments can have all of the information in one place.

3. The results of this assessment should be shared with instructors and the Director of Teaching Assistants to continue to develop consistency in evaluation.

4. CMST faculty have recommended that 80% of students should demonstrate level 3 (proficient) for each competency area.

5. Based upon the results of the category "content," instructors need to help students develop stronger skills analyzing, synthesizing, and using supporting materials.

6. Based upon the results of the category of organization, instructors need to help students develop more effective organizational skills.

7. Based upon the category of developing skills, instructors need to help students develop stronger vocal expression when delivering a speech.

8.  Review the instrument language to insure criteria measures student learning outcomes with regard to the stated learning objectives.

*GECCIG Committee Composition*

Jacqueline Arnold (English)
Christopher Brown (Communication Studies)
Christopher Corley (History)
Sarah Kruse (Computer Information Science)
Andrea Lassiter (Psychology)

## Appendix A: General Education Goal Area 1A - Summary

| Courses in Goal Area 1A | |
|---|---|
| Included in Assessment: | Number Enrolled: |
|   ENG 101 | 1070 |
| Not Included in Assessment: | |
|   ENG 101P | 138 |
| Total Students Enrolled in a Goal Area 1A Course: | 1208 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Number of Students Evaluated: | 162 |

| Instructor Type: | |
|---|---|
|   Tenured | 1 |
|   Probationary | 0 |
|   Fixed-Term | 0 |
|   Adjunct | 5 |
|   TA | 32 |

| Course Location: | |
|---|---|
|   Mankato | 38 |
|   Off-Campus - Edina | 0 |
|   Off-Campus - Normandale | 0 |
|   Off-Campus - Other | 0 |

| Course Type: | |
|---|---|
|   Lab | 0 |
|   Lecture | 38 |
|   Lecture/Lab | 0 |
|   Seminar | 0 |

| Course Medium: | |
|---|---|
|   Face-to-Face (Classroom) | 38 |
|   Hybrid | 0 |
|   Online | 0 |

| Course Level: | |
|---|---|
|   Undergraduate - lower division | 38 |
|   Undergraduate - upper division | 0 |

| Diverse Cultures Course: | |
|---|---|
|   Purple | 0 |
|   Gold | 0 |

# General Education Goal Area 1A - Summary

| Average Score by Category: | |
|---|---|
| Category: | |
| Gathering of Sources | 2.84 |
| Integration of Sources | 2.33 |
| Citation and Works Cited | 2.56 |

| Frequency Distribution: | |
|---|---|
| Student gathered academic sources for this paper | |
| Yes | 117 |
| No | 40 |
| N/A | 5 |
| Student gathered non-academic sources for this paper | |
| Yes | 137 |
| No | 21 |
| N/A | 4 |
| Gathering of Sources | |
| 1 - Unsatisfactory | 14 |
| 2 - Emerging | 40 |
| 3 - Competent | 66 |
| 4 - Excellent | 42 |
| Integration of Sources | |
| 1 - Unsatisfactory | 17 |
| 2 - Emerging | 82 |
| 3 - Competent | 56 |
| 4 - Excellent | 7 |
| Citation and Works Cited | |
| 1 - Unsatisfactory | 20 |
| 2 - Emerging | 57 |
| 3 - Competent | 59 |
| 4 - Excellent | 26 |

Category 1A Assessment Focus:

(d)     Demonstrate effective research processes, including the ability to gather academic and non-academic sources and assess their quality and suitability for the writing situation;

(e)     Integrate sources in their writing to achieve specific aims, making appropriate use of summary, paraphrase, quotation, and citation conventions;

1. Student gathered academic sources (journals, books) for this paper.                                                    Y/N
2. Student gathered non-academic sources (newspapers, magazine articles, general audience websites) for this paper.     Y/N

| | Excellent (4) | Competent (3) | Emerging (2) | Unsatisfactory(1) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **GATHERING OF SOURCES**<br><br>**Source Credibility**<br>Based on the following:<br>• Currency<br>• Authority<br>• Bias<br>• Level<br>• Exploration<br><br>**Appropriate to the Writing Situation**<br>Sources are relevant to the paper's argument. | All sources (8) are credible **and** support the essay's focus and purpose.<br><br>Biased sources may be included, but the author justifies the use of these sources appropriately.<br><br>Sources used suggest that the student can access and evaluate sources for college-level assignments. | Most sources (5-7) are credible **and** support the essay's focus and purpose.<br><br>Biased sources may be included, but the author justifies the use of these sources appropriately.<br><br>Sources used suggest that the student usually can access and evaluate sources for college-level assignments. | Some sources (3-4) are credible **and** support the essay's focus and purpose. Most sources (5-8) are credible **or** appropriate to the essay's purpose but seldom both.<br><br>Biased sources, if used, are not justified appropriately.<br><br>Sources used suggest that the student has made some attempt to find credible and appropriate sources but is not yet proficient at evaluating and gathering sources for college-level assignments. | Few, if any, sources (0-2) are credible **and/or** appropriate for the focus and purpose.<br><br>Sources are from convenient resources.<br><br>Biased sources, if used, are not justified appropriately.<br><br>Sources used suggest that the student has not developed the resource evaluation and gathering skills needed for college-level assignments. |

Gathering of Sources Score: _____

|  | Excellent (4) | Competent (3) | Emerging (2) | Unsatisfactory(1) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **INTEGRATION OF SOURCES**<br><br>**Dexterity of Source Use**<br>Based on the following:<br>• Variety<br>• Intentionality<br>• Genuine integration<br><br>**Representation of Sources**<br>Based on the following:<br>• Accuracy<br>• Depth of representation | Student represents sources in multiple ways (quotes, summarizes, paraphrases), as appropriate.<br><br>Student quotes intentionally, to capture vivid language or succinct phrasing, or to strengthen his/her credibility.<br><br>Student prepares the reader for sources through introducing them and following them up with explanation, elaboration, or analysis.<br><br>Student synthesizes sources, bringing multiple voices together around an idea.<br><br>Student fully represents passages or central ideas from his/her sources. Context is provided. | Student represents sources in more than one way but may rely on one approach when others are more appropriate.<br><br>Student's use of quotation is less discriminate.<br><br>Student almost always introduces sources. Follow-up is relevant but may be brief.<br><br>Student integrates some sources around an idea.<br><br>Student adequately represents passages or central ideas from his/her sources. Some quotations may be treated without contextual details that would aid understanding. | Student uses a similar approach to representing sources throughout his/her essay.<br><br>Student sometimes fails to attribute sources adequately. Source language may be used without quotation marks.<br><br>Student more frequently omits lead-in material. Follow-up explanation, elaboration, or analysis is unclear.<br><br>Student generally grapples with one source at a time.<br><br>Student treats quotations in isolation. Student's summaries and paraphrases are underdeveloped. | Source use is characterized by:<br><br>Little use of sources<br><br>Quotations that are not introduced nor followed-up<br><br>Superficial or unclear summary/paraphrase<br><br>Plagiarism |

Integration of sources score: _____

|  | Excellent-4 | Competent-3 | Emerging-2 | Unsatisfactory-1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **CITATION AND WORKS CITED** | In-text citations and the Works Cited are consistent and correct. | In-text citations are consistently used but some sources are cited incorrectly.<br><br>The Works Cited contains most of the necessary information but has some errors. | In-text citations are inconsistent.<br><br>The Works Cited may be missing information and has more significant errors. | In-text citations are consistently incorrect or missing.<br><br>The Works Cited is incomplete or missing. |

Citation/Works Cited Score: _____

## Appendix B: General Education Goal Area 1B - Fall 2013 Summary

### General Education Goal Area 1B - Summary

| Courses in Goal Area 1B | |
| --- | --- |
| Included in Assessment: | Number Enrolled: |
|    CMST 100 | 715 |
|    CMST 102 | 449 |
| Not Included in Assessment: | |
|    CMST 212 | 50 |
|    CDIS 201 | 97 |
| Total Students Enrolled in a Goal Area 1B Course: | 1311 |

| | |
| --- | --- |
| Number of Students Evaluated: | 710 |

| Instructor Type: | |
| --- | --- |
|    Tenured | 0 |
|    Probationary | 0 |
|    Fixed-Term | 0 |
|    Adjunct | 0 |
|    TA | 29 |

| Student Demographics: | |
| --- | --- |
|    Undergraduate First-Time | 587 |
|    Undergraduate Transfer | 111 |
|    Undergraduate with Previous Degree | 1 |
|    Post-Secondary Enrollment (High School) | 4 |
|    Undergraduate Non-Degree Seeking | 3 |

| Course Location: | |
| --- | --- |
|    Mankato | 29 |
|    Off-Campus - Edina | 0 |
|    Off-Campus - Normandale | 0 |
|    Off-Campus - Other | 0 |

| Course Type: | |
| --- | --- |
|    Lecture | 29 |
|    Lab | 0 |

| Course Medium: | |
| --- | --- |
|    Face-to-Face (Classroom) | 9 |
|    Hybrid | 20 |
|    Online | 0 |

| Course Level: | |
| --- | --- |
|    Undergraduate - lower division | 29 |
|    Undergraduate - upper division | 0 |

| Diverse Cultures Course: | |
| --- | --- |
|    Purple | 0 |
|    Gold | 0 |

## General Education Goal Area 1B - Summary

Average Score by Student Class

| | Language | Central Message | Content | Organization | Delivery |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Special Admit (High School) | 3.14 | 3.29 | 3.29 | 3.29 | 3 |
| First-Year | 2.91 | 3 | 2.9 | 2.86 | 2.75 |
| Sophomore | 2.98 | 3.09 | 3 | 2.98 | 2.72 |
| Junior | 3.05 | 3.06 | 3.07 | 2.93 | 2.88 |
| Senior | 2.89 | 3.02 | 3.06 | 2.83 | 2.76 |
| Previous Degree | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 |

| Average Score by Category: | |
|---|---|
| Category: | |
| Central Message | 3.06 |
| Content | 2.99 |
| Organization | 2.93 |
| Language | 2.97 |
| Delivery | 2.76 |

| Frequency Distribution: | |
|---|---|
| **Central Message** | |
| 0 - Does not meet criteria for Beginning | 12 |
| 1 - Beginning | 9 |
| 2 - Developing | 101 |
| 3 - Proficient | 390 |
| 4 - Advanced | 198 |
| **Content** | |
| 0 - Does not meet criteria for Beginning | 12 |
| 1 - Beginning | 12 |
| 2 - Developing | 142 |
| 3 - Proficient | 349 |
| 4 - Advanced | 195 |
| **Organization** | |
| 0 - Does not meet criteria for Beginning | 12 |
| 1 - Beginning | 13 |
| 2 - Developing | 159 |
| 3 - Proficient | 353 |
| 4 - Advanced | 173 |
| **Language** | |
| 0 - Does not meet criteria for Beginning | 12 |
| 1 - Beginning | 9 |
| 2 - Developing | 112 |
| 3 - Proficient | 434 |
| 4 - Advanced | 143 |
| **Delivery** | |
| 0 - Does not meet criteria for Beginning | 13 |
| 1 - Beginning | 15 |
| 2 - Developing | 228 |
| 3 - Proficient | 329 |
| 4 - Advanced | 125 |

# General Education Goal Area 1B - CMST 100 Summary

| Average Score by Category - CMST 100 | |
|---|---|
| Category: | |
| Central Message | 3.11 |
| Content | 3.03 |
| Organization | 2.94 |
| Language | 2.98 |
| Delivery | 2.73 |

| Average Score by Student Class - CMST 100 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Central Message | Language | Content | Organization | Delivery |
| Special Admit (High School) | 3.25 | 3.25 | 3 | 3.5 | 3 |
| First-Year | 3.07 | 2.91 | 2.96 | 2.87 | 2.74 |
| Sophomore | 3.12 | 2.99 | 3.02 | 2.98 | 2.69 |
| Junior | 3.19 | 3.13 | 3.18 | 2.96 | 2.88 |
| Senior | 3.03 | 2.85 | 3.12 | 2.79 | 2.67 |

| Average Score - CMST 100 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Central Message | Language | Content | Organization | Delivery |
| CMST 100 A | 3.21 | 3.21 | 2.93 | 3 | 2.41 |
| CMST 100 B | 3.27 | 2.87 | 3.2 | 2.83 | 2.73 |
| CMST 100 C | 2.93 | 3.07 | 2.89 | 3.04 | 2.79 |
| CMST 100 D | 3.25 | 2.96 | 2.93 | 3.11 | 2.07 |
| CMST 100 E | 2.55 | 2.38 | 2.83 | 2.76 | 2.55 |
| CMST 100 F | 3.22 | 3.47 | 3.38 | 3.53 | 3.25 |
| CMST 100 G | 3.41 | 3.38 | 2.97 | 3 | 2.62 |
| CMST 100 H | 3.59 | 3.04 | 3.04 | 3.33 | 2.56 |
| CMST 100 I | 3.1 | 2.79 | 3 | 2.76 | 2.83 |
| CMST 100 J | 3.15 | 3.56 | 3.74 | 3.19 | 3.44 |
| CMST 100 K | 3.07 | 2.93 | 3.04 | 2.96 | 2.75 |
| CMST 100 L | 2.81 | 2.96 | 2.81 | 2.93 | 2.93 |
| CMST 100 M | 3.03 | 2.69 | 2.93 | 2.59 | 2.52 |
| CMST 100 N | 3.23 | 3 | 3.23 | 3.1 | 2.9 |
| CMST 100 O | 3.43 | 2.93 | 3.13 | 2.97 | 2.8 |
| CMST 100 P | 2.47 | 2.6 | 2.3 | 1.97 | 2.47 |
| CMST 100 Q | 3.67 | 3.67 | 3.67 | 3 | 3.67 |
| CMST 100 R | 2.61 | 2.9 | 2.48 | 2.45 | 2.68 |
| CMST 100 S | 3.5 | 2.91 | 3.5 | 3.36 | 2.91 |
| CMST 100 T | 3.28 | 2.83 | 3.28 | 3.14 | 2.55 |

# General Education Goal Area 1B - CMST 100 Summary

| Frequency Distribution - CMST 100: | |
|---|---:|
| **Central Message** | |
| 0 - Does not meet criteria for Beginning | 12 |
| 1 - Beginning | 4 |
| 2 - Developing | 65 |
| 3 - Proficient | 298 |
| 4 - Advanced | 168 |
| **Language** | |
| 0 - Does not meet criteria for Beginning | 12 |
| 1 - Beginning | 7 |
| 2 - Developing | 81 |
| 3 - Proficient | 329 |
| 4 - Advanced | 118 |
| **Content** | |
| 0 - Does not meet criteria for Beginning | 12 |
| 1 - Beginning | 8 |
| 2 - Developing | 103 |
| 3 - Proficient | 254 |
| 4 - Advanced | 170 |
| **Organization** | |
| 0 - Does not meet criteria for Beginning | 12 |
| 1 - Beginning | 9 |
| 2 - Developing | 118 |
| 3 - Proficient | 269 |
| 4 - Advanced | 139 |
| **Delivery** | |
| 0 - Does not meet criteria for Beginning | 13 |
| 1 - Beginning | 11 |
| 2 - Developing | 184 |
| 3 - Proficient | 243 |
| 4 - Advanced | 96 |

# General Education Goal Area 1B - CMST 102 Summary

| Average Score by Category - CMST 102 | |
|---|---|
| Category: | |
| Central Message | 2.9 |
| Content | 2.87 |
| Organization | 2.91 |
| Language | 2.94 |
| Delivery | 2.86 |

| Average Score by Student Class - CMST 102 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Central Message | Language | Content | Organization | Delivery |
| Special Admit (High School) | 3 | 3.33 | 3.67 | 3 | 3 |
| First-Year | 2.92 | 2.79 | 2.73 | 2.83 | 2.75 |
| Sophomore | 2.96 | 2.98 | 2.89 | 2.96 | 2.91 |
| Junior | 2.89 | 2.81 | 2.86 | 2.89 | 2.89 |
| Senior | 2.95 | 3 | 2.95 | 2.9 | 2.9 |
| Previous Degree | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 |

| Average Score - CMST 102 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Central Message | Language | Content | Organization | Delivery |
| CMST 102 A | 2.81 | 3.04 | 3.08 | 3.04 | 2.58 |
| CMST 102 B | 2.58 | 2.92 | 3 | 2.67 | 2.92 |
| CMST 102 C | 2.58 | 2.84 | 2.37 | 3.05 | 2.89 |
| CMST 102 D | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.4 | 3.1 | 3.3 |
| CMST 102 E | 3.04 | 2.8 | 2.84 | 2.72 | 2.84 |
| CMST 102 F | 3.33 | 3.33 | 3.33 | 3 | 3 |
| CMST 102 G | 2.79 | 2.92 | 2.71 | 3.04 | 2.88 |
| CMST 102 H | 3.27 | 3.14 | 3 | 3.05 | 3 |
| CMST 102 I | 2.82 | 2.68 | 2.73 | 2.59 | 2.77 |

# General Education Goal Area 1B - CMST 102 Summary

| Frequency Distribution - CMST 102: | |
|---|---|
| **Central Message** | |
| 0 - Does not meet criteria for Beginning | 0 |
| 1 - Beginning | 5 |
| 2 - Developing | 36 |
| 3 - Proficient | 92 |
| 4 - Advanced | 30 |
| **Language** | |
| 0 - Does not meet criteria for Beginning | 0 |
| 1 - Beginning | 2 |
| 2 - Developing | 31 |
| 3 - Proficient | 105 |
| 4 - Advanced | 25 |
| **Content** | |
| 0 - Does not meet criteria for Beginning | 0 |
| 1 - Beginning | 4 |
| 2 - Developing | 39 |
| 3 - Proficient | 95 |
| 4 - Advanced | 25 |
| **Organization** | |
| 0 - Does not meet criteria for Beginning | 0 |
| 1 - Beginning | 4 |
| 2 - Developing | 41 |
| 3 - Proficient | 84 |
| 4 - Advanced | 34 |
| **Delivery** | |
| 0 - Does not meet criteria for Beginning | 0 |
| 1 - Beginning | 4 |
| 2 - Developing | 44 |
| 3 - Proficient | 86 |
| 4 - Advanced | 29 |

# ORAL COMMUNICATION RUBRIC (Simplified form)

**Definition:** Oral communication is a prepared, purposeful presentation designed to increase knowledge, to foster understanding, or to promote change in the listeners' attitudes, values, beliefs, or behaviors.

*Evaluators are encouraged to assign a <u>Does not meet criteria</u> to any work sample that does not meet Beginning level performance.*

|  | Does not meet criteria for Beginning 0 | Beginning 1 | Developing 2 | Proficient 3 | Advanced 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Central Message** The main point or thesis. *Outcome: d* | --- | Central message is implied but not explicitly stated. Message is not supported by the content or related to the audience. | Central message is stated, but not clear, repeated, completely supported or related to the audience. | Central message is clear and consistent with the supporting material. Speaker relates the message to the audience. | Central message is compelling and supported by the content of the speech; it is repeated and adapted to the audience as appropriate to the context. |
| **Content** The support and reasoning. *Outcome: c,e* | --- | Insufficient variety and amount of evidence used and lacks credibility. Visual media* are distracting or missing when necessary. | Speaker's conclusions supported but not entirely justified. Sources lack credibility and variety. Visual media* are lacking. | Different types of support are used and cited. Support adequately justifies speaker's position. Visual media* are used as appropriate. | Speaker integrates credible evidence from multiple, cited sources and uses various types to support position. Visual media* are compelling. |
| **Organization** The clear arrangement of ideas. *Outcome a* | --- | The organization is minimally observable and inconsistent within the presentation. | The organization is intermittently observable in the introduction, body, and conclusion. | The organization is clearly and consistently observable throughout the introduction, body, and conclusion. | The organization is cohesive and compelling throughout the introduction, body, and conclusion, and makes the presentation. |
| **Language** Effective verbal expression *Outcome g* | --- | Language choices are unclear, ineffective, and inappropriate to audience. | Language choices are mundane and commonplace and may lack clarity or compelling expression. | Language choices are thoughtful and generally support the effectiveness of the presentation. | Language choices are memorable, compelling and enhance the effectiveness of the presentation. |
| **Delivery** Effective nonverbal expression. *Outcome f* | --- | Delivery detracts from the understandability of the presentation, and speaker appears uncomfortable. | Delivery makes the presentation understandable; speaker appears tentative. | Delivery makes the presentation interesting, and speaker appears comfortable. | Delivery makes the presentation compelling, and speaker appears polished and confident. |

* Visual media may not be required for all presentations.

# 2013-2014 Assessment Report

Minnesota State University, Mankato Composition Program

3/24/2014

# Contents

# Executive Summary

During the 2013-2014 academic year, several components of the English Composition Program were assessed. Assessment data included the following:

- a direct assessment of ENG 101 student writing
- composite student evaluation scores from ENG 100, 101, 103, and 136
- survey results on teachers' experience in the Composition Program

Taken together, this data sheds light on student performance, teacher performance, and teacher experience. Recommendations pertaining to each area are summarized below.

## Student Performance

This year, thirty-eight Composition teachers participated in a direct assessment of writing from ENG 101. This assessment gauged students' achievement of two competencies from General Education Category 1a:

- Competency (d) demonstrate effective research processes, including the ability to gather academic and non-academic sources and assess their quality and suitability for the writing situation;

- Competency (e) integrate sources in their writing to achieve specific aims, making appropriate use of summary, paraphrase, quotation, and citation conventions.

Assessment findings indicate that most students are integrating academic sources and non-academic sources into their research essays. Nearly two-thirds of students displayed excellent or competent skills in their ability to gather sources for their papers, with about a third achieving an emerging or unsatisfactory performance. These numbers were flipped for integration of sources, with 38% achieving exemplary or competent ratings and 63% receiving emerging or unsatisfactory ratings. Student performance landed in between for Citation/Works Cited, with about a 50/50 split between 4's and 3's vs. 2's and 1's.

The latter results challenge last year's assessment of Citation/Works Cited, which suggested that a greater portion of students were excellent or competent in this skill area, while reinforcing the finding of poor student performance in integration of sources.

Based on these findings, the following actions are advised:

- Share this data with the Composition Program teachers.
- Encourage teachers to be more thorough in their work with students on source integration, and to emphasize the technicalities of citation.
- Develop more teaching resources around summary, paraphrase, quotation, citation, and plagiarism.
- Make source use a greater focus in the TA workshops.

- Maintain the curricular sequence emphasizing the use of sources and develop strategies for introducing methods for source use across the course.


**Teacher Performance**

Composite student evaluation scores were calculated for ENG 100, 101, 103, and 136 for spring 2013 and fall 2014 semesters. On the whole, the evaluation scores were strong for developmental writing courses and satisfactory for ENG 101. Notably, composite scores for ENG 101 slipped into the "3's" range for "Course as a whole," "Use of class time," and "Amount you learned in the course." Overall, student averages in ENG 101 landed more often in the "3" range than they did last year (4 in spring vs. 1 in spring last year; 2 in fall vs. 1 in fall last year).

Based on these findings, the following actions are advised:

- Monitor the student evaluation scores for ENG 103/104, particularly in relation to ENG 100.
- Integrate new content into the TA workshops in an attempt to increase "amount you learned in the course."
- Explore alternative ways of chunking class time in order for students to feel that the period is used productively.

**Teacher Experience**

A survey was distributed to Composition Program teachers to better understand their experience in the Composition Program.

Composition teachers indicate that they benefit from:

- clear, achievable, and meaningful course competencies
- access to teaching resources
- satisfactory technology support
- sufficient office supplies
- clear knowledge of relevant policies and procedures
- clear communication about Composition-related matters

Teachers also report feeling encouraged and motivated to improve as teachers.

Composition teachers expressed more neutrality about the:

- community of belonging extended by the Composition Program (27% neutral, 12% dissatisfied)
- computer lab setup (27% neutral, 4% dissatisfied)
- professional development opportunities provided to them (31% neutral, 8% dissatisfied)

A greater proportion of Composition teachers reported dissatisfaction with the office environment (12% neutral, 34% dissatisfied).

Based on these findings, the Composition Director should monitor the effects of in-process activities that may impact the lower-scoring areas on the survey. In particular, the Director should gauge the success of:

- the Outstanding Adjunct Faculty Award (encouraging adjunct professional development).
- the Innovation in Teaching Award (encouraging teaching assistant professional development).
- additional professional development funds (encouraging professional development).
- the department chair's communication efforts with adjunct faculty (facilitating a community of belonging).
- the establishment of the Contingent Faculty Committee (facilitating a community of belonging).
- an evaluation process for adjunct faculty (facilitating a community of belonging).

## Student Performance

### Background
This year, the Composition Program conducted a direct assessment of ENG 101 students' research essays. The assessment gauged students' achievement of General Education Category 1a competencies (d) and (e):

*Research Processes*
(d)     demonstrate effective research processes, including the ability to gather academic and non-academic sources and assess their quality and suitability for the writing situation

*Use of Sources*
(e)     integrate sources in their writing to achieve specific aims, making appropriate use of summary, paraphrase, quotation, and citation conventions

Notably, students' research abilities and use of sources have been evaluated in three prior assessments. In 2007, an ad-hoc committee conducted an ENG 101 portfolio evaluation of the previous set of Category 1A competencies, including former competencies (d) and (e):

(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.

In their analysis of this data, the assessment team remarked, "[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." They found that students' analysis of sources was stronger than their citation of sources, and they noted that students appeared to be quite competent at locating and evaluating sources or to lack the skills altogether. The assessment team concluded, "[It] is clear from this data that even more attention needs to given to helping students with the research elements of the writing process."

In 2002, an ad-hoc committee conducted an assessment of ENG 101 research essays. In this assessment, readers evaluated the gathering and use of sources, among other areas. The assessment team identified the following deficiencies in students' research processes and use of sources:

- Insufficient sources
- Sufficient sources but insufficient citation
- Sufficient sources in the bibliography but reliance in the essay on only one or two
- Few sources or citations and much of the essay unsupported personal opinion
- 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 use of research notes
- Plagiarism

And in 2012, twenty TAs participated in a pilot assessment of their research-based writing skills. While the assessment had serious methodological flaws, the findings nonetheless suggested that students' facility with citation was significantly stronger than their ability to integrate sources into their writing, with 64% achieving exemplary or competent ratings in citation/works cited vs. 34% for integration of sources.

This year, the Composition Program sought to take the 2012 assessment process full scale while correcting for many of the shortcomings of the pilot process. In particular, the aim was to:

- strengthen the validity of assessment findings through evaluating complete samples of student work;
- include random samples of student writing from the majority of ENG 101 sections;
- improve communication between the Composition Director and Composition teachers around the assessment process;
- modify the assessment rubric so that it reflected the levels of competence displayed in student work;
- test out a procedure for managing discrepancies between teachers' evaluations of student work;
- experiment with a new mechanism for gathering, storing, and manipulating the data gleaned from the assessment.

**Procedure**

Thirty-eight ENG 101 teachers participated in this assessment, reviewing a random sample of one hundred and seventy-one essays derived from ENG 101. While the essays varied in length and subject, all required students to gather and assess sources and incorporate them into their writing.

In preparation for the assessment, the Composition Director modified last year's assessment rubrics for competency (d) and (e) and selected two essays at different levels to be used for training purposes. Prior to the assessment, half of the teachers participated in a practice assessment session during ENG 621 wherein they applied the rubrics on the sample student papers and discussed their evaluations as a group.

The assessment took place on the last two days of class in the fall. Each teacher was assigned nine essays, and each essay was assessed twice. Teachers did not know whose papers they were evaluating,

nor were they assigned their own students' work. Working independently, teachers rated their assigned essays in three areas: gathering of sources, integration of sources, and Works Cited. They then met with another teacher who had reviewed the same essays and discussed their ratings, working toward a consensus on their scores. Once consensus had been reached, the teachers jointly completed a SharePoint assessment form for each essay they reviewed. To conclude the assessment process, teachers submitted a paragraph summarizing the trends they saw in the portfolios related to categories (d) and (e) and identifying problems they encountered during the assessment.

## Results & Analysis
*Rubric Data*

Table 1
Source Type Data

| n=171 | Yes | No | N/A |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Student gathered academic sources (journals, books) for this paper.** | 123 (72%) | 43 (25%) | 5 (3%) |
| **Students gathered non-academic sources (newspapers, magazine articles, general interest websites) for this paper.** | 146 (86%) | 21 (12%) | 4 (2%) |

Table 2
Source Use Data

| n=171 | Excellent (4) | Competent (3) | Emerging (2) | Unsatisfactory (1) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Gathering of Sources** | 42 (25%) | 69 (40%) | 45 (26%) | 15 (9%) |
| **Integration of Sources** | 7 (4%) | 58 (34%) | 88 (52%) | 18 (11%) |
| **Citation and Works Cited** | 26 (15%) | 62 (36%) | 60 (35%) | 23 (13%) |

The results indicate that most students are integrating academic sources (72%) and non-academic sources (86%) into their research essays. Nearly two-thirds of students (65%) displayed excellent or competent skills in their ability to gather sources for their papers, with about a third (35%) achieving an emerging or unsatisfactory performance. These numbers were flipped for integration of sources, with 38% achieving exemplary or competent ratings and 63% receiving emerging or unsatisfactory ratings. Student performance landed in between for Citation/Works Cited, with about a 50/50 split between 4's and 3's vs. 2's and 1's.

The latter results challenge last year's assessment of Citation/Works Cited, which suggested that a greater portion of students (64%) were excellent or competent in this area, while reinforcing the finding of poor student performance in integration of sources.

*Teacher Commentary*
Teachers generally identified gathering of sources as a strength. They made comments like "Most of the students were able to gather academic and non-academic sources successfully," "Most of my essays used credible sources, often academic," and "In comparison to last year's assessment, I saw a lot more students using academic sources from library databases. Popular sources seemed to be used even less than the academic sources in general."

Other teachers highlighted the weaknesses within source gathering. One teacher observed, "Most students showed an ability to use academic database search engines, such as Academic Search Premier and EBSCO. Some students relied on non-academic websites, such as About.com, blogs, Huffington Post, and other sites without credentials." Another commented, "A few students failed to use any academic sources. A few used completely inappropriate sources, such as 'Goodreads,' or a single quote from an online database of quotes, or something from About.com."

A few teachers commented that students seemed to rely on "convenient" sources and to use them to provide surface-level information on the topic. One teacher's comments illustrate this sentiment, "Students use sources that present introductory material rather than in-depth discussion on a topic. It is as if they are just getting to know the topic as well and don't get to those higher level discussions with their sources."

The most frequently mentioned challenges revolved around integration of sources. Teachers noted that students failed to adequately contextualize, introduce, and follow-up their sources, falling short of a true integration of sources. They commented that students need more practice conveying the credibility of their sources to their audience and at translating quotations into summaries and paraphrases.

The general consensus around citation seemed to be that students were frequently making small technical errors (including formatting), either in in-text citation or the Works Cited. The larger problem that was noted by some teachers was the tendency to "patchwrite"—to lift language from their sources for their summaries or paraphrases instead of quoting it or using their own phrasings.

## Recommendations
Based on these findings, the following actions are advised:

- Share this data with the Composition Program teachers.
- Encourage teachers to be more thorough in their work with students on source integration, and to emphasize the technicalities of citation.
- Develop more teaching resources around summary, paraphrase, quotation, citation, and plagiarism.
- Make source use a greater focus in the TA workshops.
- Maintain the curricular sequence emphasizing the use of sources and develop strategies for introducing methods for source use across the course.

# Teaching Performance

## Results and Analysis

Student course evaluations were gathered for ENG 100, 101, 103 and ESL 136 for spring 2013 and fall 2013 semesters. Composite scores are provided below.

Table 3
Teaching Assistant Student Evaluation Composite Scores
Developmental Composition

|  | Spring 2013 ENG 100 (n=108) | Spring 2013 ESL 136 (n=31) | Fall 2013 ESL 135 (n=41) | Fall 2013 ENG 100 (n=73) | Fall 2013 ENG 103 (n=142) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The course as a whole | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.2 |
| The instructor's contribution to the course | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 4.4 |
| Use of class time | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.6 | 4.4 |
| Instructor's interest in whether the students learned | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.5 |
| Amount you learned in the course | 4.2 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.4 | 4.2 |
| Evaluative and grading techniques | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.6 | 4.6 | 4.3 |
| Clarity of student responsibilities and requirements | 4.4 | 4.3 | 4.5 | 4.7 | 4.3 |
| Course organization | 4.5 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.7 | 4.4 |
| Instructor's contribution to discussions | 4.6 | 4.3 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 4.6 |
| Instructor's use of examples and illustrations | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 4.4 |
| Quality of questions or problems raised by the instructor | 4.4 | 4.3 | 4.4 | 4.7 | 4.3 |
| Student confidence in instructor's knowledge | 4.5 | 4.4 | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.3 |
| Instructor's enthusiasm | 4.4 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 4.4 |
| Encouragement given to students to express themselves | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 4.8 | 4.4 |
| Answers to student questions | 4.6 | 4.5 | 4.7 | 4.8 | 4.4 |

Table 4
Teaching Assistant Student Evaluation Composite Scores
Composition

| | Spring 2013 ENG 101 (n=584) | Fall 2013 ENG 101 (n=726) |
|---|---|---|
| The course as a whole | 3.9 | 4.1 |
| The instructor's contribution to the course | 4.1 | 4.3 |
| Use of class time | 3.9 | 3.9 |
| Instructor's interest in whether the students learned | 4.2 | 4.4 |
| Amount you learned in the course | 3.7 | 3.9 |
| Evaluative and grading techniques | 3.9 | 4 |
| Clarity of student responsibilities and requirements | 4 | 4.2 |
| Course organization | 4.1 | 4.3 |
| Instructor's contribution to discussions | 4.3 | 4.5 |
| Instructor's use of examples and illustrations | 4.2 | 4.4 |
| Quality of questions or problems raised by the instructor | 4 | 4.2 |
| Student confidence in instructor's knowledge | 4.2 | 4.2 |
| Instructor's enthusiasm | 4.1 | 4.4 |
| Encouragement given to students to express themselves | 4.1 | 4.3 |
| Answers to student questions | 4.1 | 4.4 |

On the whole, the evaluation scores were satisfactory, particularly on the developmental level. One comparison worth making is the ENG 100 vs. ENG 103/104 scores. In fall 2013, ENG 100 scored better than ENG 103 in every category. Because this is the first semester that ENG 103 has been offered, it's unclear if this is a random occurrence or if this pattern signals something about the course itself. This is an area to monitor in the future.

Overall, student averages in ENG 101 landed more often in the "3" range than they did last year (4 in spring vs. 1 in spring last year; 2 in fall vs. 1 in fall last year). "The course as a whole," "Use of class time," and "Amount you learned in the course" have tended to be lower-scoring areas.

**Recommendations**

Based on these findings, the following actions are advised:

- Monitor the student evaluation scores for ENG 103/104, particularly in relation to ENG 100.
- Integrate new content into the TA workshops in an attempt to increase "amount you learned in the course."
- Explore alternative ways of chunking class time in order for students to feel that the period is used productively.

# Teacher Experience

In spring 2014, an online survey was distributed to Composition teachers to gauge their satisfaction with their preparation, support, and overall experience in the Composition Program. One Likert question was posed, with space provided to elaborate, if desired.

**Results and Analysis**

Responses to the Likert portion of the survey question are provided below.

Table 3
Composition Teacher Survey

| N=26 | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The learning objectives set for my Composition course are clear. | 62% (16) | 31% (8) | 8% (2) | 0% | 0% |
| The learning objectives set for my Composition course are achievable. | 42% (11) | 54% (14) | 4% (1) | 0% | 0% |
| The learning objectives set for my Composition course are meaningful. | 54% (14) | 42% (11) | 4% (1) | 0% | 0% |
| The Composition Program has provided sufficient teaching resources to allow me to teach effectively. | 42% (11) | 42% (11) | 15% (4) | 0% | 0% |
| The Composition Program has informed me of department/university policies and procedures related to my course. Additional information on these topics is accessible to me. | 42% (11) | 46% (12) | 12% (3) | 0% | 0% |
| The Composition Program has provided a forum for exchanging teaching ideas with others. | 38% (10) | 42% (11) | 12% (3) | 8% (2) | 0% |
| The Composition Program has provided a community of belonging for me. | 31% (8) | 31% (8) | 27% (7) | 12% (3) | 0% |
| My office environment allows me to fulfill my teaching assignment effectively. | 23% (6) | 31% (8) | 12% (3) | 19% (5) | 15% (4) |
| I have access to the supplies I need to fulfill my teaching assignment effectively. | 23% (6) | 58% (15) | 15% (4) | 4% (1) | |
| The classroom lab setup supports student learning. | 19% (5) | 50% (13) | 27% (7) | 4% (1) | |
| The technology support provided to me | 35% (9) | 54% (14) | 8% (2) | 4% (1) | |

| | Strongly Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| enables me to fulfill my teaching assignment effectively. | | | | | |
| I know where to take teaching-related problems, when they arise. | 46% (12) | 50% (13) | | 4% (1) | |
| My teaching-related problems have been handled promptly and fairly. | 46% (12) | 35% (9) | 19% (5) | | |
| Communication about composition program-related matters is clear and timely. | 46% (12) | 42% (11) | 12% (3) | | |
| The feedback I receive on my teaching (e.g. through course evaluations/observations) helps me improve as a teacher. | 31% (8) | 42% (11) | 23% (6) | | 4% (1) |
| I am satisfied with the opportunities for professional development that are available to me. | 23% (6) | 38% (10) | 31% (8) | 8% (2) | |
| I feel valued as a Composition teacher. | 31% (8) | 42% (11) | 19% (5) | 4% (1) | 4% (1) |
| I feel encouraged and motivated to become a better teacher. | 42% (11) | 42% (11) | 8% (2) | 4% (1) | 4% (1) |

The survey also provided space for teachers to comment on their Likert responses. These responses can be found in Appendix A.

Based on responses to the Likert survey, Composition teachers indicate that they benefit from:

- clear, achievable, and meaningful course competencies
- access to teaching resources
- satisfactory technology support
- sufficient office supplies
- clear knowledge of relevant policies and procedures
- clear communication about Composition-related matters

Teachers also report feeling encouraged and motivated to improve as teachers.

Composition teachers expressed more neutrality about the:

- community of belonging extended by the Composition Program (27% neutral, 12% dissatisfied)
- computer lab setup (27% neutral, 4% dissatisfied)
- professional development opportunities provided to them (31% neutral, 8% dissatisfied)

A greater proportion of Composition teachers reported dissatisfaction with the office environment (12% neutral, 34% dissatisfied).

A number of teacher comments focused on the challenges of the computer lab classrooms, including the inability for students to talk to one another, the distractions supplied by the computers, and the tight

space of the labs (preventing teachers from circulating the classroom and working one-on-one with students).

A few other comments addressed the ineffectiveness of the office work space, whether due to slow computers, lack of space, or inappropriate remarks by others sharing the office.

**Recommendations**
Based on these findings, the Composition Director should monitor the effects of in-process activities that may impact the lower-scoring areas on the survey. In particular, the Director should gauge the success of:

- the Outstanding Adjunct Faculty Award (encouraging adjunct professional development).
- the Innovation in Teaching Award (encouraging teaching assistant professional development).
- additional professional development funds (encouraging professional development).
- the department chair's communication efforts with adjunct faculty (facilitating a community of belonging).
- the establishment of the Contingent Faculty Committee (facilitating a community of belonging).
- an evaluation process for adjunct faculty (facilitating a community of belonging).

In addition to these areas, the composition director, department chair, and dean should work together over the summer to explore solutions for the computer lab and office setup complaints.

## Appendix A: Comments from Composition Teacher Survey

- The lack of working computers in the TA lounges is still an issue. The ones that do "work" are VERY slow and often times do not allow TAs to print.

- Technology available to students in the classroom is more of a distraction than a learning tool. Because there are computers at every desk, it is very difficult to make eye contact with all of my students. We are also unable to workshop papers because there is no place for the students to gather. When we do group activities, I am unable to monitor their conversations and help their discussions because the aisles are too tight and they fill the whole space. The room is extremely awkward.

- There should be some regular classrooms available for English 101 instructors who DON'T want to teach in computer labs. My students don't use the computers for coursework often. The monitors function as barriers that block the students from seeing each other's faces during discussions. They hinder familiarity--and therefore the exchange of ideas--by isolating each row from the other rows. Getting a rigorous discussion going in a class like that is impossible. When they can see each other's faces, they can jump in (without having to raise their hand to speak) with responses and rebuttals, because they can take social cues from each other's faces. In a computer lab, most of those social cues are obscured, so the discussion becomes stilted; each comment falls flat instead of getting batted around for a while. Once I had discussion outside. We sat in a circle on the grass. It was the best discussion I ever had. I would gladly trade computers for that kind of free and open discourse. It's the most effective way to disseminate critical thinking skills to the largest number of students.

- Sometimes it might be nice to meet with my students in a place where computers are less prominent. I'm not always sure about my opportunities for professional development, although we did cover the topic a little in the TA workshop. I feel like the Composition program has offered invaluable support and a sense of community. It is, in every way that is important, exactly what I need.

- I think the online resource for Composition teachers is a wonderful site for information and resources. Thank you to Dr. Camp for keeping this up for us.

- More information about identifying and handling plagiarism would be useful. The university policy seems to give individual instructors some leeway, but I think I would prefer a clear set of instructors that all composition teachers must follow. (It's possible that this exists, and I just don't know about it.) Adjunct offices are too small for two instructors at a time. This has been a problem in the past. My biggest challenge has been to teach effectively in the computer labs. AH 327 especially is too small for group work away from computers. It's also awkward to try to reach students sitting in the corners because space is so tight, which generally means they receive less feedback during class. Also, my tech complaints are rarely addressed before the end of the class session, even when I call support at the beginning of a 2-hour class.

- There is excess importance placed on student evaluations by freshman students that has caused immense anxieties to several teaching assistants. This has led to the creation of a demoralizing and stressful atmosphere in the English department offices. The department ought to send out a reassuring email to the teachers.

- "My office environment allows me to fulfill my teaching assignment effectively." The work environment in the TA office is often uncomfortable and unprofessional. Three of the men in office 206 have sexually inappropriate conversations and it makes a lot of the women there uncomfortable. (Conversations about their preferences in pornography, masturbation, female public hair, and statements like "Isn't all rape romantic?") I don't like being in that office, so I try to do most of my work in the library.

- As an online composition instructor this survey was a bit off context, but I did the best I could. I suggest more opportunity for dialogue between teachers (TA's) to discuss real world teaching problems going on at MSU.

# Appendix B: Accuplacer Data

Jan. 13, 2013-Jan. 10, 2014

|  | Eng 101 | Eng 100 | ESL 135/136 | Total |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reading Comprehension | 320 | 430 |  | 750 |
| ESL Reading/ESL Writing | 34 |  | 121 | 155 |
| Total | 354 | 430 | 121 | 905 |