English Department
Composition SLO Results – Spring 2010

Eng 1B – Write essays that synthesize information to support analysis or argument.

Spring 2010 results = 83% of students met this outcome (14 sections reported)
(Fall 2009 = 89% of students assessed met this outcome)

Eng 1A – Write essays that deliberately connect audience and purpose in a variety of genres.

Spring 2010 results = 81% of students met this outcome (27 sections reported)
(Fall 2009 = 77% met this outcome)

Eng 450 – Write essays to specific audiences in a variety of genres.

Spring 2010 results = 82% of students met this outcome (27 sections reported)
(Fall 2009 = 76% met this outcome)

Eng 550 – Write compositions to specific audiences using an appropriate voice for those readers.

Spring 2010 results = 85% of students met this outcome (8 sections reported)
(Fall 2009 = 85% met this outcome)

Eng 500 – Identify and model the structure of various kinds of writing.

Spring 2010 results = 88% of students met this outcome (6 sections reported)
(Fall 2009 = 90% met this outcome)

Our plan is to regularly revisit these outcomes, but the frequency with which we do so will depend on the number of students meeting the outcome:

- 85% or higher = maintain, revisit in 3 years
- less than 85% = needs improvement, revisit in 1 year
- less than 60% = emergency, serious action required
Suggestions for Composition SLO Results

The following is a list of suggestions to improve the outcomes listed above, compiled from the responses to the instructor survey conducted at the beginning of this semester: The suggestions tended to fall into three main categories.

1. Include an “Audience” section in assignment prompts themselves

   - Integrate audience and voice in prompts for each assignment by specifically indicating the audience on essay prompts, for example:
     
     Write a paragraph describing your room to a relative or friend who hasn’t visited you in a while. Use words from your descriptive words lists or thesaurus that create a dominant impression of your room, and are appropriate to your audience.

   - Help students be more successful in synthesizing information to support analysis or argument by stating this as a goal on research-based essay prompts.

   - Check out the prompts on file at the Writing Center for ideas for including an audience section in your assignment prompts. You might work with colleagues to share ideas or to revise your prompts in terms of audience.

2. Take time in class to consider audience more deliberately in relation to the assignments through writing, discussion, or both, especially when introducing the assignment.

   - Consider having writing assignments that require students to think more in depth about a variety of audiences, academic and non-academic, or start students out by identifying specific audiences for them, and have students write two versions of an essay for different audiences.

   - As a component of each assignment, have students specifically identify the characteristics of the intended audience (age, gender, family status, etc.). Have students do some freewriting on who their actual intended audience is for their research paper, and discuss ways that tone and purpose are influenced by audience.

   - Assign the students DLAs at the Writing Center that specifically target issues of audience and writing.

3. Incorporate new activities/lectures to emphasize audience during the writing process.

   - Use television commercials directed at various audiences (seniors vs. teens, moms vs. dads, golf fans vs football fans) to help students hear differences in tone.

   - Create a portfolio system where students further review, revise, and edit their major projects at the end of the semester.

   - Have the students convert their essays into presentations for their classmates, emphasizing the class as the audience for the presentations.
- Teach a variety of writing styles (summary and explanation, analysis, evaluation, etc.). This presents more opportunities for the students to consider issues of audience.
- Provide students with an exercise that helps them adjust tone to match purpose and audience using examples from their own writing.
- Point out and discuss the students’ use of quotations as evidence of their ability to communicate with an appropriate audience.
- Create and employ research modules/lessons/activities that focus on finding “quality” information.