Executive Summary

During this academic year the First-year Writing Program: added “genre” to the inquiry learning outcome; designed activities to integrate the HPU Census on Student Writing as a teaching tool; and privileged community-building to develop the relationships that make learning possible. Program objectives set during the 2015-2016 academic year were met. Assessment results for the “analysis” outcome show that more students were judged competent in analysis and that those assigned passing scores were also assigned higher-order criteria. Lower-order criteria such as “attentiveness” and “approach” can be assigned to strong performances, but as dominant criteria they tend to describe less developed writing. “Application” and “significance,” on the other hand, describe an advanced method and resulting implications, respectively. That they are used to describe strong performances suggests that the average performance (and/or the expectation for it) has risen this academic year.
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Enrollment and Grades, 2016-2017

English 1103 is a four-credit-hour course that satisfies HPU’s gen-ed first-year writing requirement (FYW). The English 1101 and 1102 sequence are two-credit-hour courses that “stretch” English 1103 over two semesters for non-native English speakers. All students are advised to complete the FYW requirement in either fall or spring of their first year. In 2016-2017 a total of 1283 students completed FYW.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fall 2016</th>
<th></th>
<th>Spring 2017</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ENG 1101</td>
<td>ENG 1102</td>
<td>ENG 1103</td>
<td>ENG 1101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>718</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. grade</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fall 2016 Enrollment Total: 738
Spring 2017 Enrollment Total: 545
AY 2016-2017 Enrollment: 1283

FYW Program Activities and Achievements

The FYW Program sponsors ongoing support for teaching and learning. Based on 2015-2016 assessment data, the FYW Program also saw the developments below:

● Presented and began implementing recommendations from the Composition Curriculum Committee: add “genre” to inquiry outcome; revise and condense assignment sequence; cultivate the disposition of openness.
● Created assignments and activities to integrate the Survey on Student Writing results.
● Improve analytical writing through: more time on attentiveness due to revised sequence; privileging “approach,” “complexity” and “reasoning” as criteria; sharing best practices on assignment design.

The FYW Program also responded to the election climate in the following ways:

● Shared concerns and strategies at our December meeting.
● Privileged “community building” over other concerns at the beginning of spring semester.
Developments explained below.

Presented and began implementing recommendations from the Composition Curriculum Committee.

- Add “genre” to inquiry outcome; revise and condense assignment sequence; cultivate the disposition of openness.
- AY 2016-2017 was an optional year for implementation as a few instructors opted to adopt the committee’s recommended changes in full and make their own suggestions for adoption to program instructors for full adoption in AY 2017-2018.
- Participating instructors were: Lynne Murray, Melissa Richard, Kirstin Squint, Holly Middleton.

Created assignments and activities to integrate the Survey on Student Writing results.

- The director created and shared pie charts demonstrating selected survey results. The most popular of these showed contrasting attitudes toward student preparedness among faculty and sophomores. Some instructors adopted these as teaching materials to prompt a discussion of expectations for writing among students; they were also integrated into research and presentation assignments.

Improve analytical writing through: more time on attentiveness due to revised sequence; privileging “approach,” “complexity” and “reasoning” as criteria; sharing best practices on assignment design.

- Assessment results indicate that the performance of analytical writing has generally improved from the previous year. Most instructors attribute this to the time given to careful reading in class and the opportunity for topic development and revision. Instructors were also encouraged to emphasize those criteria identified through assignment as weaknesses, and include those criteria on rubrics.

Shared concerns and strategies at our December 2016 meeting.

- Instructors noted the election (and campaign) of 2016 cultivated a tense and sometimes hostile campus climate. The “fake news” phenomenon also stoked concerns about teaching common ground and shared knowledge, usually a tacit place to begin in writing classes. At our December meeting, instructors shared their concerns and strategies used thus far; the director shared resources on having difficult conversations as well as teaching news and information literacy.
Privileged “community building” over other concerns at the beginning of spring semester.

• Looking ahead to the spring semester, instructors devoted themselves to privileging community-building the first four weeks of the semester to diminish the effects of polarization in the classroom. The director shared more resources and strategies, urging all to prioritize mutual respect and fostering the relationships that make all learning possible.
• There were no classroom incidents outside those deemed typical, so this emphasis will be carried over to AY 2017-2018.
Outcomes Assessment

Formative assessment of the Composition Program was conducted in AY 2016-2017 to improve teaching and learning of the following outcomes:

- Develop analyses through evidence-based claims;
- Adhere to conventions of Edited American Standard English (EASE)

Assessment procedure

For 2016-2017 Outcomes Assessment (OA), a stratified random sample of 70 analytical essays was selected from the fall 2016 sections of English 1103. A committee of six ENG 1103 instructors finalized and applied the rubric created during 2015-2016 to assess the outcome “develop analyses using evidence-based claims.”

Six instructors served on the OA Committee: Michele Huffman, Holly Middleton, Lynne Murray, Melissa Richard, Karen Summers, and Scott Walker. Holly Middleton chaired the committee and Melissa Richard prepared materials for assessment by removing identifying information, assigning codes, and organizing essays for readers.

In order to finalize the glossary and rubric, committee members met several times via Google Hangout to discuss their readings of sample student work. They conducted the actual assessment in June 2017. Student essays were divided into three packets and each packet was assigned two readers on the OA committee. Readers were asked to assess each assignment in the following way:

1. Assign an Analysis score of 1-6.
2. Choose the criterion from the glossary that most informed your decision on the Analysis score.
3. Assign an edited American standard English (EASE) score of 1-6.

What do Scores Mean?

Scores associated with EASE:

6: no noticeable errors
5: 1-2 noticeable errors
4: more noticeable and perhaps consistent errors, but they do not impede meaning
3: consistent errors that impede meaning
2: errors impede meaning and damage writer’s ethos
1: unreadable

Scores associated with Analysis:

6: exceeds expectations for college writing for this outcome
5: clearly meets expectations for college writing for this outcome
4: barely meets expectations for college writing for this outcome
3: partially/almost meets expectations for college writing for this outcome
2: clearly does not meet expectations for college writing for this outcome
1: cannot be evaluated for this outcome

In both cases, the higher the score the stronger the performance. It is important to note, however, that the difference between 3 and 4 marked the distinction between work that was deemed successful/unsuccessful, competent/not competent, or passing/failing.

Once a reader made a decision regarding whether an essay had--ultimately--succeeded or failed on the outcome, they assigned a criterion from the glossary that most informed their judgment. Assigned criteria are value-neutral and always explain the reason for a judgment of success or failure. (See Appendix for complete criteria glossary).

In this way, the data can identify our program strengths and weaknesses so they can be targeted for improvement.
EASE Results

Individual students
We can approximate how many students were considered “passing” by combining both readers’ scores for each student. A combined score of 7 or higher is considered “passing.”

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“Failing”: combined score of 2-6: 26% (n = 18)
“Passing”: combined score of 7-12: 74% (n = 52)
“Distinctive” combined score of 10-12: 7% (n = 5/70)

Individual Criteria
To best determine the criteria that are driving these decisions, we look at the scores as a totality. Out of the 140 total assessments:

Scores of 1-3: 39% (n = 55/140)
Scores of 4-6: 61% (n = 85/140)

The most common criteria assigned scores of 1-3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Approach</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasoning</td>
<td>11%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The most common criteria assigned scores of 4-6:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Potential</td>
<td>22%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attentiveness</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasoning</td>
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Comparisons Between AY 2016-1017 and AY 2015-2016

Distribution of Combined Assessment Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores 2-6</th>
<th>Scores 7-12</th>
<th>Scores 10-12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016-2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>38</td>
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Difference in Combined OA Scores from AY 2015-2016 to AY 2016-2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Scores of 2-6</th>
<th>Scores of 7-12</th>
<th>Scores of 10-12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analysis N</td>
<td>-9</td>
<td>+8</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis %</td>
<td>-12</td>
<td>+12</td>
<td>-3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difference in Criteria from AY 2015-2016 to AY 2016-2017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1-3 Criterion</strong></td>
<td>%</td>
<td><strong>4-6 Criterion</strong></td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2016-2017</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2016-2017</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Approach</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Potential</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reasoning</td>
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<td>Attentiveness</td>
<td>12</td>
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**Discussion**

The year-to-year change in assessment demonstrates two improvements:

1. **More “passing” total integration scores.** Similar to the assessment results for synthesis (although not as significant), the assessment committee assigned fewer low scores resulting in more passing total integration scores, indicating more student performances in the sample were considered competent in analysis.
2. **Higher-order criteria assigned.** While the same criteria were stood out for low-scoring essays, those assigned higher scores also indicated higher-order writing skills. For example, while “development” and “potential” remain in the top four this year, “application” and “significance” replaced “attentiveness” and “approach.” Attentiveness and approach can be assigned to strong performances, but as dominant criteria they tend to describe less developed writing. Application and significance, on the other hand, describe an advanced method and resulting implications, respectively. That they are used to describe strong performances suggests that the average performance (and/or the expectation for it) has risen this academic year.
Achieving 2015-2016 Objectives

- Focus on improving student performance of approach, complexity, and reasoning in analytical writing.
  - This objective was achieved.
- Determine program implications and generative uses of survey data; present to HPU faculty through CITL.
  - This objective was achieved in terms of sharing results with HPU faculty through CITL.
- Hold more regular meetings rather than Brown Bags. This means selecting two times to hold every meeting, because there is no open hour when no one is teaching.
  - This strategy was attempted but seemed unwieldy and inefficient. Next year I'll schedule regular meetings.
- Increase number of submissions to Student Spotlight.
  - The new strategy for increasing submissions was not successful. Next year I will survey instructors about the uses of student models in their courses and ask for their suggestions.

Conclusions and Recommendations for 2017-2018

- Conduct dynamic criteria mapping to develop rubric for “reflection.”
- Continue and develop strategies for community-building.
- Experiment with and share strategies for evaluating information and fake news.
- Elicit feedback from instructors on Student Spotlight.