ENGL 1010 Assessment, Test Drive 1, Summer 2013
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Plan: To evaluate a selection of student essays meeting ENGL 1010 rubric criteria in order to identify problems in the rubric, challenges for scoring, methods of reporting, etc.

Step 1: Calibration I met with Rob Koelling (Division Chair) and Jen Dare (Visiting Professor) to score sample student essays in order to calibrate my grading, identify problems with the rubric, etc. The document “Guide to ENGL 1010 Rubric” came out of this process; the Guide clarifies the interpretation of each criteria on the rubric.

Step 2: Collection and Grading Rob Koelling and Jennifer Dare each gave me electronic copies of sample essays from their courses that met the basic expectations of the rubric. I graded each essay against the rubric, and entered these numbers into an Excel spreadsheet for easier calculation, analysis, etc.

Step 3: Analysis and Reporting In the Excel spreadsheet, I averaged the scores the papers received by individual criterion, criteria category, and links to outcomes (both General Education outcomes and ENGL 1010 outcomes). I then compiled a narrative of the process, added my holistic impressions of the essays, and included a chart of the averages in each area.

Step 4: Division Discussion On Wednesday, August 21, 2013, I presented these documents to the Humanities Division. Discussion ensued. See findings and action items below.

Findings:

1. Even though the essays came from quite different contexts, the fact they met the same basic criteria (at least 5 pages, analysis, supported by at least 5 sources) was sufficient for evaluation and comparison. Conclusion: we do not need a standardized assignment, only a common assignment that meets the basic criteria above.

2. The average scores for criteria areas (content, use of sources, structure and organization, and grammar and mechanics) are within about 0.1 of each other on a 5 point scale. The average scores for outcomes are within about 0.2 of each other on a 5 point scale. The biggest differentiation can be identified when comparing averages of each criterion; scores in individual criterion ranged from 3.5-4.7.
   a. The criteria at which the papers were most successful (4.0 and higher) include: using a clear thesis to develop an argument, providing supporting information such as quotes and evidence, taking audience into consideration, using appropriately academic sources, including the fundamental components of a traditional English essay (introduction, body, etc.), and remaining comprehensible even with mechanical errors.
   b. The criteria at which the papers were least successful (3.5-3.69) include: exploring a significant topic with sophistication, summarizing/paraphrasing to
make source material clear for the reader, using strong transitions, paragraph coherence, paragraph organization facilitating logical development, and observing the conventions of standard English.

3. The findings in point 2 are consistent with my holistic impression of the papers. In general, I summarize the areas most needing improvement as 1) moving from summary to analysis, 2) using transitions and other mechanisms to accumulate evidence/analysis into a logical argument, 3) narrowing down topics to a specific and precise issue, and 4) grammar and mechanics.

**Action Items:** After group discussion, the Humanities Division made the following decisions:

1. Not to worry about tinkering more with the rubric but to move to collecting and analyzing data; the only 2 changes to the rubric are:
   a. to specify that each criterion measures the *success* of the specific skill, not simply its presence, and
   b. to replace All College Outcomes for General Education Outcomes in anticipation of NWC following the HLC’s recommendation to do away with the latter.
2. To run a larger test drive Fall 2013 in order to gather a more statistically significant group of essays and to figure out how collection and randomization will take place on a broad scale. For this larger test drive, we intend to collect papers from face-to-face classes, online classes, and concurrent enrollment classes, for a total of 4-5 classes.
3. To alert all ENGL 1010 instructors, including concurrent enrollment and adjunct instructors, about the rubric and the upcoming process so that those instructors have adequate time to ensure that course goals align with the skills the rubric measures and to begin instituting an assignment that meets the basic requirements for the rubric (at least 5 pages of analysis using at least 5 academically appropriate sources).
4. To consider putting together a professional development workshop for all ENGL 1010 instructors in which instructors perform calibration exercises in order better to understand the rubric (note: we’ll need to Skype in our off-campus teachers).
5. To keep in mind the areas needing work as we prepare for classes this term, Fall 2013.
6. To report our findings to VPAA Giraud and the Central Assessment Team.

The Division also made the following adjustments to the assessment calendar:

1. Push back full-scale assessment of ENGL 1010 to Spring 2014.
2. Develop assessment of graduating majors (English: Literature and English: Writing) this term (Fall 2013) for possible implementation in Spring 2013, and thus to
3. Push back developing outcomes and assessment tools for individual classes until we have a clear mechanism for assessing majors first. We still intend to develop assessment for ENGL 1020/2010/2017/2030 first when we get to the point of assessing individual classes because these classes fulfill the second General Education requirement in English.