

**English Department Minutes**  
**November 12, 2015**

**Attendees: J. Annick, G. Armao, S. Bachmann, D. Breckheimer, B. Budrovich, R.A. Cerofeci, M. Cheung, T. Cody, S. Corbin, D. Crotwell, K. Degnan, A. Gallagher, B. Halonen, C. Henson, L. Hong, B. Isaacs, B. Jaffe, B. James, J. Jung, M.A. Leiby, R. Lewitzki, J. Madden, P. Marcoux, J. McMahan, S. Merz, C. Nagao, C. Page, B. Peppard, J. Sandor, A. Sharp, C. Somin, D. Thompson, L. Welsh, R. Williams, Tom Lew (Dean), Elise Geraghty (Associate Dean)**

1. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 1.1 Grade Forecasting due by tomorrow, Friday, November 13.
- 1.2 Janet Madden's brown bag: November 19, Thursday, 1:00 to 2:00 in H-311 on Reading and Resistance and "microaggressions."
- 1.3 Meet Your Senator Day: November 19, Thursday, 1:00 to 2:00, outside Humanities building.

2. SLO UPDATE (Kevin Degnan).

- 2.1. Assessment reporting rosters will be printed and delivered next week.
- 2.2. Rachel Williams noted that English 1AH (Honors) is being assessed this semester, and she will be contacting the faculty teaching it with more information.

3. CONSISTENCY PROJECT UPDATES (Deb Breckheimer)

- 3.1. The English Department has requested Student Equity Plan funding for the upcoming proposed English 1A Consistency Project and the continuation of the English A Consistency Project, both of which focus on increased student success for the SEP's identified target populations (African American, Latino, and Pacific Islander).

4. CURRICULUM (Tom Lew)

- 4.1. The Academic Strategies department recommends cross-listing Academic Strategies courses, most of which are tied to reading and writing skills, with English courses to make the courses more visible to registering students who would benefit from extra academic support to increase chances of success in the English sequence (as well as courses across campus).
- 4.2. With new state-wide emphasis on moving students through the sequence faster, encouraging students to take a complementary support class makes sense. Cross-listing will also help counselors identify and recommend courses that could help students succeed in other courses.
- 4.3. Tom Lew called for a vote of the proposal, and the English department voted unanimously to cross-list Academic Strategies courses with English.

5. STUDENT EQUITY PLAN (SEP) UPDATE

- 5.1. The Humanities division submitted ten proposals for SEP funding:
  - 5.1.1. English A/1A Consistency Projects: \$21,000
  - 5.1.2. English 82 Consistency Project: \$18,500
  - 5.1.3. ESL Consistency Project: \$7,700
  - 5.1.4. Paraprofessionals to Facilitate Access to ESL Classes: \$4,800

- 5.1.5.Spanish 52A/B Consistency Project: \$9,140
- 5.1.6.Instructional Support for Target Groups in Spanish 1 and 2 Classes: \$27,000
- 5.1.7.Embedded tutors (two tutors) for English B and A: \$125,000
- 5.1.8.Classroom Tutor Office Hours in the Writing Center: \$30,000
- 5.1.9.Readers for English 1A: \$13,600
- 5.1.10. Check In System for Writing Center (CI Track): \$4,000

5.2. Discussion regarding the study on the impact of the second tutor (5.1.7) addressed the fact that the numbers don't show an immediate improvement in success rates for students who had access to two in-class tutors. The faculty discussed why they believe that the positive impact of the second tutor wasn't/isn't immediately apparent:

- 5.2.1. The faculty teaching courses using two tutors found the second tutor extremely helpful and feel strongly that the students benefitted from the extra help. Bruce Peppard notes that the second tutor allows him more one-on-one time with each student, allowing a focus on more nuanced aspects of quality writing rather than basic triage. Peppard feels that the lower grades are a natural consequence of the higher standards (meaning in line with the Course Outline of Record) that he is able to demand of the students. In other words, he's delivering more quality instruction and therefore expects more of the students, which is to show solid readiness for success in the subsequent course.
- 5.2.2. Other instructors similarly noted that the Consistency Projects, which have been underway since 2012, have brought the instructors' focus to the Course Outlines of Record and have encouraged the creation of department-wide rubrics and norming to ensure that all instructors are holding students to consistent standards of rigor and applying consistent standards to instruction. One positive effect of the Consistency Project is that faculty are able to discuss issues they face in terms of student readiness at the beginning of the semester of, for example, English 1A, and bring this information to the English A instructors. This has led to a more consistent application of assessment in terms of determining a student's chance of success in the course he/she is being passed into.
- 5.2.3. Another point that came up was the frustration faculty feel when they know that students have and do improve under the two-tutor model, but the improvement doesn't always lead to a P [passing grade] and therefore is not recorded or measured. The faculty feel that this is "lost data" even though it exists. Students who are closer to a P shift up to a P more readily than those who start the semester with more academic deficiencies. The students in the latter group do improve, but again, this improvement does not always render them ready for success in the next level. The faculty will discuss ways to capture this data to show improvement even if the improvement doesn't lead to a pass that semester.

## 6. COMMON ASSESSMENT INITIATIVE: CCCAssess Preview (Tom Lew)

Tom discussed the Common Assessment Initiative, which comes from the Chancellor's Office and has been in the works for about two years. Tom explained that the new method is more of a matrix, a "decision tree," than it is a test and that multiple measures are emphasized. There will be a test, but high school GPA and the grade in the last most relevant course will be emphasized. Self-placement will also be considered. We anticipate that El Camino will be switching to the new system in about two years, so

volunteers were called for as we will need faculty input and participation because the impact on our division will be significant.

- Volunteers for Common Assessment Task Force:
  - Rachel Williams
  - Susan Corbin
  - Briita Halonen
  - Elena Savina