

English 1C Committee Minutes
October 19, 2020 – 2:00 P.M.

Present at 1C Committee:

1. Shane Ochoa
2. Erica Brenes
3. Jeffrey McMahon
4. Jennifer Annick (not present)
5. Tom Cody
6. Mora Mattern (not present)
7. Robin Arehart
8. Stephanie Burnham
9. Dana Crotwell
10. Pete Marcoux
11. Elizabeth Walker
12. Stephen Peluso (not present)
13. Cathleen Daniel

1C committee for a meeting for October 19 at 2 pm.

Objectives:

One. Explain how we will improve problems that show up in the 1C SLO assessment that I record in Nuventive.

Two. Give 1C instructors a bank or toolbox of solutions for pressing problems we face as we try to maintain the rigor of 1C.

Three. Make the case that 1C needs to be 4 units and see how this new 1C would change the SLOs. Pete says we need to submit data to show students aren't meeting objectives in reading comprehension, syntax and grammar, and integration of sources in their writing. Increasing units increases the cost for the students, which has an effect on equity.

Tom makes the case that we have to prove that to make 1C fulfill its objectives we need to include more of the following:

Problem 1: Grammar and Sentence Structure

Grammar and sentence structure skills are far below reasonable expectations for a 1C student. We don't want to lose the students by giving them dry grammar lectures.

Solutions: Some of my colleagues have created "Unit Zero," a brushup of basic writing to help students transition from 1A to 1C.

Some instructors are having success sending video links to students.

We may want a grammar bank in the Canvas Commons.

Shane talks about “Just in Time Remediation or Teaching,” emphasizing clarity over grammar terms.

Shane has a bank of handouts, and he wants to make his own YouTube videos. Shane’s grading rubric, style and conventions, is in the service of clarity.

Erica integrates grammar into the lesson so that it’s not an isolated lesson. The word grammar can be a trigger and lack meaning if not integrated into the lesson.

We can study syntax from writers and break down the sentence in different ways to show different meanings.

Pete has students record themselves reading the essays and they send a recording on their phone to Canvas. They read the entire essay. There are Canvas apps so recording is due with the essay.

We should also promote the Writing Center to our students. Workshops are being formed that avoid technical jargon.

Problem 2: Reading Comprehension

Instructors are observing that many students are having difficulty summarizing and analyzing arguments presented in essays. How will we address the problem of deficient reading comprehension?

Solutions: One of my colleagues at the recent 1AS meeting cited a Louis Menand New Yorker article claiming that 40 pages of reading a week for young people leads to exponential improvement in reading comprehension. This is great looking forward for our students, but it doesn’t help with the current problem.

Shane recommends video essays to give students listening experiences as ways of improving their comprehension.

Pete has some links about strategies that work for reading comprehension. Pete has a presentation that shows how to use digital tools, some on Canvas, to help students improve their comprehension.

Dana assigns 70-80 pages in both 1A and 1C. Students and instructors pick apart the prompt and make sure they are addressing its points.

Problem 3: Conspiracy Sites

Some instructors are getting essays using sources from conspiracy sites. One example is that many students saw the crackpot video Plandemic was a legit source.

We are encouraging students to examine opposing views but not troll views, those views from people who are not fair players.

Pete presents the idea of a resource literacy component that we could do with the library.

Cathleen suggests that we should limit sources to designated databases.

Problem 4: Integration of Sources

Instructors are pointing out that many essays are poorly cited and that students need a review on integrating sources into their essays. Does this go in the same category as “Unit Zero”?

Problem 5: Plagiarism Harder to Crack in Online Courses

Some instructors are observing success in their fight against plagiarism by creating highly customized essay prompts. Of course, this matter of making prompts goes beyond English 1C.

Problem 6: What course content changes will we see if 1C is upgraded to 4 units?

If 1C gets upgraded to 4 units, how will that affect our course content and the writing load we give our students?

Agenda Looking Ahead:

Increase the units. Don't focus on 4. Emphasize time students are in class.

What are our concerns to make 1C expanded?

1. Address reading comprehension and reading requirements.
2. Address special need students.
3. Address sentence structure, clarity, and eloquence.
4. Address credible research in the age of conspiracies and trolls.
5. Create a 1C Welcome Pack with sample assignments and avoid the “Wild Wild West.” We can share our work on Canvas.
6. Let us look at the course outline as our main focus. What kind of time do we need to address the course outline.
7. We'll do one more meeting for Fall of 2020.
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