

Reading Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

September 24, 2015

Agenda

1. English 84 SLO results

English 84 used a new version of the Townsend Press last spring to assess SLOs. Additionally, the questions were categorized in order to separately assess each SLO. As a result, most students failed all three SLOs. The passing rates for spring English 84 SLOs at 75% were:

SLO 1 = 73.95 % SLO 2 = 60.37% SLO 3 44.15%.

Suzanne reran the numbers using a 70% passing rate which changed the results.

SLO 1 = 79.33% SLO 2 = 74.24% SLO 3 52.30%

It isn't surprising that the lowest and most concerning score is SLO 3. The third SLO requires students to use critical thinking skills which is always the most challenging. This information is extremely useful and should be addressed by the department. Future meetings, consistency projects and strategy sharing should be focused on instruction of this SLO.

2. English 84 test question categories

We discussed the possibility of moving questions into different categories for the English 82 exam. The vocabulary in context questions would be moved to SLO 2 and placed under comprehension. This change is recommended because vocabulary in context is one of the comprehension skills covered in the class. We also looked at some of the questions that were placed under SLO 3 as a part of the critical thinking category and discussed moving them to SLO 2. Currently, some of the questions in SLO 3 actually assess the student's ability to find supporting details in the text (a comprehension strategy).

As a result of changing the categories, two things will occur:

1. SLO 1 will not be assessed
2. SLO 3 will contain very few questions

To address these concerns, we looked at the COR and discussed creating changes in SLO 1 (based on the learning outcomes).

3. COR for English 82

The COR lists “study skills” as one of the learning objectives. Although we all agree that instructors should be encouraged to include study skills in their pedagogy, they should not be a learning objective. Teaching study skills should definitely be a course recommendation, and all instructors should be encouraged to include them in their course materials.

The Course Outline of Record also mentions the reading process. As it stands, assessing this process is not currently addressed in our SLOs. Teaching students the reading process is a critical component of the class. This outcome has not been addressed in our SLOs because it is difficult to assess. However, it was proposed that we change SLO 1 to address this outcome and assess it using the Townsend Press.

Instructors will be given a master copy of the assessment and will be required to make consumable copies to give to their students as the exit exam. Students will be required to annotate as they read. Instructors will then use an annotated passage to assess SLO 1 (the reading process).

4. Next steps for 84 & 82 exit exams

English 82 is being assessed this semester. The current priority is to update the test and re-categorize the questions. The test is being lexiled and taken by all advisory committee members. We will meet after the assessment has been taken to discuss the current version and make changes.

All 82 instructors will be given the new version for final exams. A small “pilot” group will be instructed to try grading an annotated passage. We will then assess the results and create a “norming” session for all instructors in the spring.