GLENDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ENGLISH 120 COURSE ASSESSMENT REPORT

Methodology and Participants

The grading cover sheets of thirty students were drawn at random. At least two instructors graded each final. If the two instructors disagreed as to whether the essay should pass or fail, a third reader determined the final score, and the deciding scores were averaged.

Each cover sheet was divided into five categories corresponding to the English 120 grading rubric and SLO goals, and graders marked scores of 1 to 6 in each category:

    1 = off topic or plagiarized
    2 = clear fail
    3 = marginal fail
    4 = marginal pass
    5 = clear pass
    6 = high pass

Evaluation of the scores in each category yields a general indication of skills in which students are strongest or weakest. This fall, at the request of both 120 teachers at Glendale and teachers participating in the English High School Collaborative, we eliminated the category "Responds appropriately to the essay topic" and combined it with the thesis category. We also revised the citation category to include the minimum number of reading references required and wrote a new category more accurately specifying the kind of explanation and support required of a passing essay. As a result, the cover sheet rubric has five instead of six categories.

Score Percentages

Contains a structured and focused thesis

1	3.33%
2	3.33%
3	23,33%
4	63.33%
5	6.67%
6	0%

Passed	70%
Failed	30%

Has a clear scheme or organization which includes clear topic sentences related to the thesis and smooth transitions

1	0%
2	3.33%
3	43.33%
4	40%
5	13.33%
6	0%

Passed	53.33%
Failed	46.67%

Makes reference to at least two articles and cites those references using the MLA format

1	0%
2	10%
3	33.33%
4	50%
5	6.67%
6	0%

Passed	56.67%%
Failed	43.33%

Explains ideas completely and provides adequate support, including quotes, paraphrases, and personal examples.

1	0%
2	6.66%
3	36.66%
4	46.66%
5	10%
6	0%

Passed	56.67%
Failed	43.33%

Demonstrates control of Standard English at the sentence level, with few major errors in grammar and punctuation

1	0%
2	6.66%
3	33.33%
4	50%
5	10%
6	0%

Passed	60%
Failed	40%

Overall Score Breakdown and Pass Rate:

1	0%
2	3.33%
3	40%
4	43.33%
5	13.33%
6	0%

Passed	57%
Failed	43%

Analysis

Areas of concern:

The scores for organization have shown a significant decline from spring to fall, from 73.33% passing in spring to 53.33% passing in fall.

Because of the revision we made, we essentially have two new categories which cannot be accurately compared to the previous semesters.

Recommendations:

These problems will be the focus of four means of follow-up for instructors:

--At least one "Best Practice" sharing session devoted to teaching essay organization.

--At least one session devoted to essay development and support.

--At least one session, emphasizing the teaching of grammar.

--The organization of a permanent "teaching ideas" file in both hard copy and on-line versions to accompany the new common reading texts we are in the process of putting together.

--At least one general meeting of 120 instructors to share the results and discuss the recommendations.

Commendations:

We shown some improvement in the thesis category from 63.33% passing in spring to 70% passing in fall.

We have also shown some improvement in grammar and punctuation scores from 53.33% passing in spring to 60% passing in fall.

From spring to fall semesters, we have continued to maintain the improvement in our overall pass rate from an average of approximately 52% passing in the previous two years to an average of 57.5%. This demonstrates clear progress, and we hope to maintain or improve this pass rate while keeping our grading standards consistent through further collaboration of faculty.