

**The University of Texas-Pan American
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report
Spring 2004
College: Arts & Humanities
Core Curriculum Area: Writing**

Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose

Mission Statement: The University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) serves the higher education needs of a rapidly growing, international, multicultural population in the South Texas Region. The University preserves, transmits and creates knowledge to serve the cultural, civic, and economic advancement of the region and the state. The University provides students advanced instruction in academic programs offered through innovative delivery systems that lead to professional certification, and baccalaureate, master's and doctoral degrees. Through teaching, research, creative activity and public service, UTPA prepares students for lifelong learning and leadership roles in the state, nation and world community.

Student Learning Outcomes	Means of Assessment	Criteria for Success	*Assessment Results* (Use actual data to describe annual performance.)	**Use of Results** (What change was made?)
<p>The student will demonstrate::</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. evidence of a project (the essay is focused). 2. use of documentation style. 3. integration of material from outside sources. 	<p>Scores on a research essay (project) submitted by the student at the end of the course ENGLISH 1302.</p>	<p>No criteria for success were set for the assessment because the objective set by the University of Texas System and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board was compliance, whether or not the program was addressing writing program objectives.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 50% of the students (N=93) wrote papers with a clear or solid focus, direction, or purpose. 2. 40% of the papers (N=74) showed evidence of complete or consistency in documenting sources. 3. 32% of students (N=59) wrote papers which had a "patchwork effect," which often took the form of using information from 	<p>After reviewing the results of July 2004 Writing Assessment Report, the following changes were made:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reviewed course/syllabi descriptions for English 1301 & 1302 and decided to encourage faculty to introduce "writing from sources" earlier in the semester. 2. Rewrote course goals and descriptions for

<p>4. academic integrity.</p> <p>5. use of multiple perspectives</p>			<p>one source in a chunk, followed by other chunks of information, without any interpretation of the information.</p> <p>4. 44% of students (N=81) provided signals to distinguish their ideas from the ideas incorporated from outside sources.</p> <p>5. 54% of the students (N=100) acknowledged other perspectives in their papers.</p> <p>Though less than half the students met some of the objectives, the basic criteria were met in that the writing program objectives set by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) were in fact addressed in English 1302.</p>	<p>English 1301 and 1302, focusing particular attention on the need for students to incorporate multiple perspectives in their research essays.</p> <p>3. Created workshops for faculty teaching English 1302 that focused on learning/teaching strategies to improve students' abilities to use outside sources.</p> <p>4. Met more periodically with full-time and part-time faculty who teach English 1301 & 1302 to discuss other instructional issues related to these courses.</p> <p>5. Began discussing changes to the assessment procedures and have begun planning for a spring 2006 assessment. In particular, the 2006 assessment is being changed so as to define "Criteria for Success" in a more concrete, statistical way.</p>
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*Comments: Indicate the semester/year data was collected. Describe the sample population (who and how many). Elaborate on whether the Criteria for Success was met or not.

The population for the assessment was comprised of students who were enrolled in English 1302 during the spring 2004 semester who completed a research project as one of the assignments for the course. A random sample of the research papers was used in the assessment: teachers were asked to submit the papers from every fifth student on their class rosters.

A total of 186 essays were assessed, which equaled 16% of the population who completed English 1302 in the spring 2004 semester. Fifty-seven percent (57.3%) of the students were female and 42.7% were male. Sixty-seven percent (67.2%) were classified as freshmen, 25.3% as sophomores, 6.5% as juniors, 0.5% as seniors, and 0.5% as special freshmen. The average GPA of the students at the beginning of the semester was 2.7.

The assessment team, made up of rhetoric and composition faculty in the English Department, with the approval of the Associate Vice President for Undergraduate Studies, decided to conduct an embedded assessment rather than impose an additional assignment on the sample population. In this case, the decision was made to assess the students' research essays.

The essays were read and scored by seven readers, members of the English Department's rhetoric and composition committee. These readers had earlier in the spring 2004 semester pre-tested the assessment rubric and were therefore already familiar with it. The rubric did not ask raters to assign a holistic score; rather an analytic rubric was used in this assessment, which provides specific information about such aspects as how well students incorporated material from outside sources, whether they had a clearly identifiable purpose and focus, etc. The average of the scores assigned by the two readers was entered as the student's score on each trait of the rubric.

Writing samples from the target population will demonstrate that all writing program objectives have been addressed by the end of English 1302. Program objectives were defined during the UT System assessment and refined in 2003-2004 following open forum discussions involving all writing instructors. A general rubric was developed by department writing program committees to reflect national, state, institutional, and program objectives for 1301 and 1302. As in the previous assessment, criteria for success were based upon whether the program was addressing writing program objectives or not.

**Comments: Elaborate on the changes that were made based on assessment results.