



# ***Institutional Learning Outcome Assessment Report***

**Learning Outcome Assessed:** ILO #6, Written Communication

**Assessment Semester:** Fall 2018

**Assessed By:** SLAC (Student Learning and Assessment Committee)

- Fall 2018 members: Ryan Brown (Chair), Jacques Desjardins, Hannah Dworkin, Heather Mathews, Matthew Siegel, Rachel Vandagriff

## **Learning Outcome Definition**

[Written Communication is:] The ability to express information and ideas using the written word across multiple platforms and genres. This includes audience awareness, the ability to present and successfully defend an original thesis, and a mastery of spelling and grammatical conventions.

## **Means of Assessment**

### *Rubric creation*

- Five criteria: Context and Purpose (A), Content Development (B), Genre and Disciplinary Conventions (C), Sources and Evidence (D), Syntax and Mechanics (E)
- 1-4 scale (4 = highest), "0" for no evidence

### *Collecting examples*

- 24 papers from HMS 110 (Introduction to College Writing) - i.e., freshman, first semester
- 16 papers from upper-level MHL 516 (J.S. Bach), 534 (Da Ponte Operas), 536 (Music & Politics)

### *Assessment rubric calibration*

- Same paper reviewed simultaneously by complete committee
- Attempts to reach scoring consensus
- Feedback on rubric, which was adjusted accordingly



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*Assessment process*

- Met biweekly throughout semester
- 2-3 reviewers per paper; discussion to reach consensus on rubric score

*Collation and analysis of data*

- Papers anonymized, ELL noted
- SLAC Chair/ALO analyzed results (below)

**Summary of Evidence**

<i>UG Student population (40 ttl reviewed, ~20%)</i>	<i>Avg. Combined Score</i>	<i>Avg. A (Context)</i>	<i>Avg. B (Content)</i>	<i>Avg. C (Genre)</i>	<i>Avg. D (Sources)</i>	<i>Avg. E (Syntax)</i>
<i>Freshman<sup>1</sup> –ALL</i>	1.72	1.94	1.75	1.61	1.26	2.04
<i>Freshman–ELL (1)</i>	1.10	1.50	2.00	1.00	0.00	1.00
<i>Freshman–non-ELL</i>	1.74	1.95	1.75	1.63	1.29	2.07
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<i>Upper level–ALL</i>	2.37	2.33	2.27	2.27	2.47	2.53
<i>Upper level–ELL<sup>2</sup> (3)</i>	1.27	1.67	1.33	1.00	1.33	1.00
<i>Upper level–non-ELL</i>	2.65	2.50	2.50	2.58	2.75	2.92
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<sup>1</sup> First semester, first assignment (diagnostic)

<sup>2</sup> Total of four ELL students assessed, which is ~6% ELL UG population



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<b>TOTAL COMBINED AVG.</b>	2.05	2.14	2.01	1.94	1.86	2.29
<b>TOTAL ELL</b>	1.18	1.58	1.67	1.00	0.67	1.00
<b>TOTAL NON-ELL</b>	2.65	2.50	2.50	2.58	2.75	2.92

It is clear that our undergraduate ELL population struggles the most with Written Communication, which is intuitive (1.18 vs. 2.65). However, it also shows that their written communication skills are not improving at the same rate as native speakers: freshman ELL average 1.10, freshman native average 1.74, upper level ELL average 1.27, while upper level native average 2.65 - a 0.91 increase for native speakers, but only a 0.17 increase for ELL.

Freshman of all types struggled with the Sources criterion, but generally did well with Syntax. Most upper level students also did well with Syntax and much better with Sources than their undergraduate peers.

**Criteria for Success (Benchmark)**

Success at SFCM with Written Communication means a “3” average for all upper level undergraduates, including ELL. This means an average increase of .63.

**Use of Results (Suggestions for Improvement & Planning)**

Several changes have already been made prior to the artifacts that were assessed, including:

- Revised College Writing curriculum
- More writing assigned in upper level MHL, including additional instruction regarding sources and evidence

Additional proposals include:

- Working with Student Life to improve social integration of ELL students, which should help with their language skills.



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- Creating a third-year College Writing touch-up for those evaluated to be in need during their second year. Credits for this would be deducted from upper level electives.