

Foundation Written Communication Assessment Project Results

Report format based on the Assessment Office's "Results Template."

Department/Program and Degree:	Foundations Written Communication (Department of English and the English Language Institute)
Assessment Project Name:	Information Literacy—SLO #3
Semester/Yr Data Collected:	Spring 2010
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Date submitted:	December 2010

Executive Summary:

A faculty team scored 94 (16%) randomly-selected student texts that Spring 2010 instructors of FW sections submitted for the purpose of program assessment. An evaluation of the texts indicated that 83% of the authors were prepared for future writing tasks: these authors supported each claim that needed backing with source material that was relevant and credible, and the author generally followed a style guide's rules for referencing. Compared to 2009 results of 54% prepared, the 2010 results showed great improvement. The improvement may be a result of better assignment design and improved information literacy workshops offered by librarians.

2009 to 2010 project modifications: After the 2009 assessment activity, the English Department Assessment Committee and the Director of the English Language Institute discussed the results and the similarities between SLO #3 and SLO #4. Because of the 2009 results and the overlap between SLO #3 and #4, the faculty responsible for FW combined the two SLOs into one and slightly modified the rubric for spring 2010 assessment.

OUTCOME(S) ASSESSED:

SLO #3: Students will be able to compose an argument that makes use of source material that is relevant and credible and that is integrated in accordance with an appropriate style guide.

Working definitions

Revising: making global changes (e.g., adding, deleting, or moving content; rewriting for a different audience; rewriting in a different tone)

Editing: making changes at the sentence level, including changes in sentence style, syntax, phrasing

Proofreading: correcting grammar, punctuation and mechanics, spelling, formatting

1. Assessment Question(s) and/or Goal(s) of Assessment Activity

What did the program want to find out?

How well are students achieving the outcome? To what extent do students

- a) use outside sources to support a claim;
- b) select germane source material;
- c) select source materials from authoritative and/or appropriate sources—e.g. experts, reviewed by experts, appropriate popular material, etc.; and
- d) follow rules for citing source material within the text and for creating a bibliography/works cited/reference list.

2. Method(s) to Gather Evidence

The Assessment Office randomly selected three students from each FW section and asked the section instructor to submit the students’ research-based papers in which students demonstrated their information literacy skills. The instructors submitted clean, ungraded copies to the English Department or emailed them to the Assessment Office.

3. Method to Evaluate

A faculty team (including graduate teaching assistants) applied a rubric (see appendix). All members of the faculty team had taught FW. The rubric was created by the English Department Assessment Committee in consultation with the department faculty, English Language Institute Director, and the Assessment Office faculty specialists.

4. Program Size & Sampling Technique

Program size=1,600 students annually complete the FW course
Sample size=94 essays, including 6 training essays
Random stratified sampling (stratified by section)

5. Criteria for Success

The criteria for success were to increase the percentage of students scoring in the “prepared” and “well prepared” categories.

6. Results

% of Students		Level of preparation for future writing tasks involving outside sources
2009	2010	
6%	17%	Well prepared
48%	59%	Prepared
26%	12%	Partially prepared
21%	13%	Not prepared

See appendix for a breakdown of the results by dimension scored.

7. Met/Not met (the criteria for success)

The criteria for success were met: more students achieved “prepared” and “well-prepared” levels of preparation in 2010 compared to 2009.

8. Conclusions and Discoveries

Overall, the faculty team who scored the texts were satisfied with the quality of student work in regards to information literacy. The improvement between 2009 and 2010 may be a result of better assignment design and an improved set of information literacy workshops offered by librarians.

9. Distribution and Discussion of Results

- a) Who distributed the results and who received results?*
- b) How did the distribution take place?*
- c) How and when did the discussion of the results take place?*

The Assessment Office compiled and distributed the results to the English Dept. Assessment Committee and the Director of the English Language Institute. The results were then reported and discussed at an open forum during the English Department Colloquium in October 2010.

10. Use of Results/Program Modifications

The English Dept. Assessment Committee and the Director of the English Language Institute agreed to assess SLO #3 again by collecting F10 papers and evaluating them in January 2011. The English Dept. Assessment Committee will survey all instructors who had taught an English FW course.

11. Assessment Modifications

Collection and scoring went well. No changes will be made.

12. Other Important Information

None at this time.

APPENDIX A: RUBRIC & EXPLANATORY NOTES

Foundations Written Communication Rubric: Information Literacy

Student Learning Outcome #3. Students will be able to compose an argument that makes use of source material that is relevant and credible and that is integrated in accordance with an appropriate style guide.

Hallmark #4: The FW course will help students develop information literacy by teaching search strategies, critical evaluation of information and sources, and effective selection of information for specific purposes and audiences; teach appropriate ways to incorporate such information, acknowledge sources and provide citations. *“Information literacy” includes knowledge of and competence using Internet as well as print materials.*

Hallmark #5. The FW course will help students read texts and make use of a variety of sources in expressing their own ideas, perspectives, and/or opinions in writing.

RUBRIC

DIMENSION	SCORE DESCRIPTORS			
	1 – Not Meeting	2 - Approaching	3 – Adequate	4 – Exceeding
A. Makes Use of Source Material	No source material supports claims. **If “1” is given, do <u>not</u> give scores on the other dimensions.**	Some source material supports claims.	For the most part, source material supports each claim.	Source material consistently supports each claim.
B. Relevancy of Sources	Source material is not relevant.	Source material is somewhat relevant.	Source material is adequate in terms of relevance.	Source material is obviously relevant.
C. Credibility of Sources	Source material is not credible.	Source material is somewhat credible.	Source material is adequate in terms of credibility.	Source material is obviously appropriate and credible.
D. Style Integration	A style guide’s rules for referencing and acknowledging outside sources are not followed.	A style guide’s rules for referencing and acknowledging outside sources are inconsistently followed.	A style guide’s rules for referencing and acknowledging outside sources are generally followed.	A style guide’s rules for referencing and acknowledging outside sources are almost always followed.

Explanatory Notes

A. Makes Use of Source Material. *Did the student include citations where they were needed?*

“Source material” is material that the student indicates is from an external source.

It is not possible to stipulate a predetermined number of sources needed. Therefore, assessors will determine how appropriate the amount of source material presented is based on the context of each individual essay.

If the student uses only sources written by or taken from the focal subject, that is insufficient because it does not meet the spirit of the Hallmarks. Examples: If President Bill Clinton is the topic, his writings and speeches are insufficient; additional external sources are needed. If author Virginia Woolf is the topic, her writings are insufficient; additional external sources are needed.

B. Relevancy of Sources. *To what extent is the source material germane?*

A “1” or “2” score may indicate that the source material (e.g., quote, statistic) is on-topic but does not directly support the claim(s).

C. Credibility of Sources. *To what extent is the source material from an authoritative source—e.g., expert, reviewed by expert, etc.?*

A wide variety of sources may be deemed credible. While the *Journal of the American Medical Association* might be appropriate to a particular argument, an article from *Maxim Magazine*, or other popular publication, or a personal interview may be credible.

D. Style Integration. *When a source is referenced, did the student follow rules for citing source material within the text and also for creating a bibliography/works cited/reference list?*

When scorers are not familiar with the style guide used, they should look for internal consistency in the text.

Other

It is important that assessors examine each essay for the aforementioned dimensions separately. For example, the Assessment Committee found that some students incorporated a good amount of relevant and credible sources in their essays, without correctly crediting them. Thus, a student might receive a high score for “Relevancy” and “Credibility,” and a low score for “Style Integration.”

APPENDIX B: RESULTS

Foundations Written Communication Assessment

Student Learning Outcome #3: Information Literacy

“Students will be able to compose an argument that makes use of source material that is relevant and credible and that is integrated in accordance with an appropriate style guide.”

<u>DIMENSIONS SCORED</u>	<u>BRIEF DESCRIPTION</u>
Makes use of sources	<i>The extent to which</i> source material supports claims
Relevancy of Sources	source material is germane and directly supports the claim
Credibility of Sources	source material is from authoritative sources—e.g., experts, reviewed by experts, etc.
Adherence to citation rules	sources are correctly referenced, that is, rules are followed (includes in-text citations and bibliography/works cited/reference list)

RESULTS

N=94

Calculating Total Scores

Each student text was scored by two people. The two scores were summed for a total score on each dimension and overall. When the two scorers disagreed by 2+ points, a third judge scored the text; outlier scores were discarded and three sequential scores were averaged and doubled for a total score.

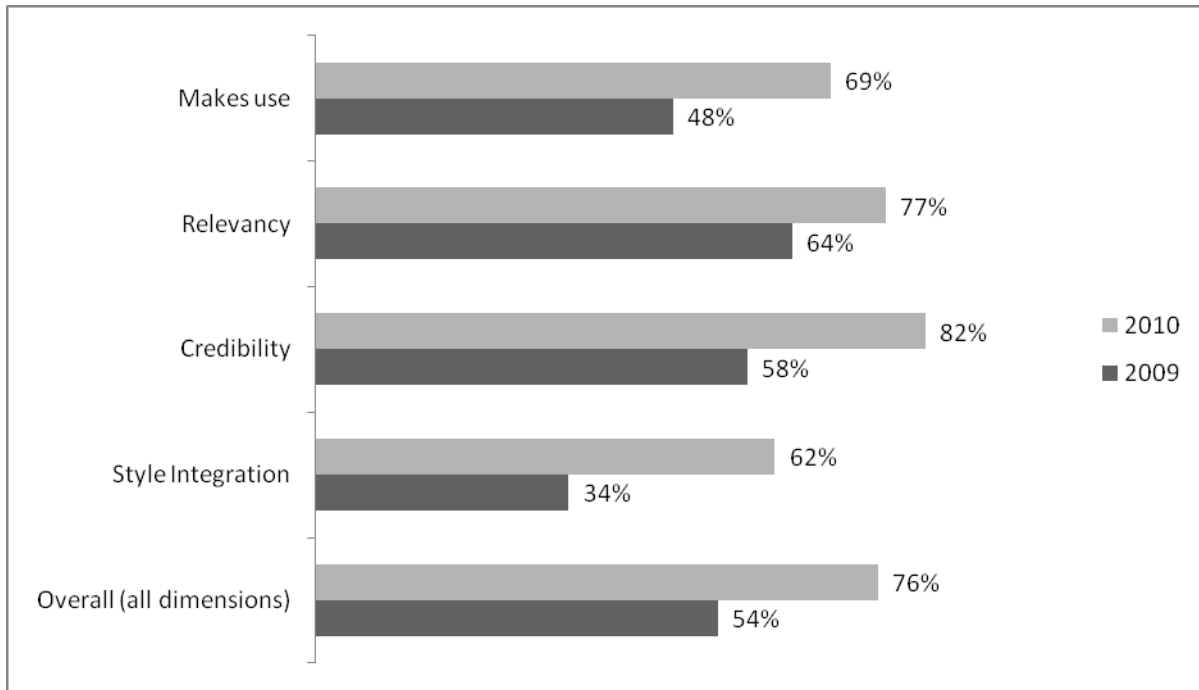
Score Correspondence to Categories

Highest possible total score on a single dimension = 8

Highest possible total score on all dimensions = 32

Single dimension		All dimensions	
Total Score	Category	Total Score	Category
8	Well prepared	30-32	Well prepared
5-7	Prepared	19-29	Prepared
4	Partially prepared	15-18	Partially prepared
0-4	Not prepared	8-14	Not prepared

FW Information Literacy Assessment
Percent of Students Deemed "Prepared"/"Well Prepared"



<u>DIMENSIONS SCORED</u>	<u>BRIEF DESCRIPTION</u>
Makes use of sources	<i>The extent to which the student</i> supplied an outside source when needed
Relevancy of sources	selected germane source material
Credibility of sources	selected source material from authoritative sources—e.g., experts, reviewed by experts, etc.
Style integration	followed rules for citing source material within the text and for creating a bibliography/works cited/reference list.