Department of Modern Languages

Undergraduate Composition
& Creative Writing

Program Review

Completed October 1, 2008

Department Chair
Dr. Ann K. Hills
Professor of Spanish

Review Completed By
Director, Writing Programs
Kirsten Ogden, MFA
Associate Professor of English

Tenure-Track Writing Program Faculty:
Sean Bernard, MFA,
Assistant Professor of English

Dr. T. Cathy Irwin
Assistant Professor of English

CONTENTS

L: 2007 University-Wide Senior Exit Survey

I. Executive Summary

The Writing Program, housed in the Department of Modern Languages, offers the undergraduate minor in Creative Writing, as well as GE Writing Area Requirement courses in Composition. Additionally, the program offers the certificate in Creative Writing or Professional Writing and advises students who create their own majors with a writing emphasis. In the 2007-08 academic year, the writing program delivered a total of 232[1] credit hours, which represented an increase of 16 credit hours compared to five years ago. We are unable to include the increase or decrease in course offerings as compared to other programs in the College of Arts and Sciences in the past 5 years as the Writing Program took on the WRT course prefix in 2006 to further differentiate it from the English Literature program housed in the English Department, and this data has yet to be generated by the college.[2] However, due to the changes in the writing curriculum over the past five years, there has been a steady increase in the number of students enrolling into Creative Writing courses. Composition courses remain consistent with freshman and transfer student enrollment numbers.

As of the 2007-08 Academic year, the composition course sequence consists of 20 total units, of which 8 are GE Requirements, 8 are developmental prerequisites, and 4 are electives. The Creative Writing minor varies from 20 to 24 units, depending upon the level at which each student commences the program, and includes 40 upper-division units. Over the past five years, the number of majors and minors in Writing or Creative Writing has steadily increased. The most recent list of declared majors and minors in Creative Writing (or Writing-Emphasis majors) generated by the registrar's office does not reflect the number of students actively pursuing a Writing major or minor. A list combining registrar's office data and internal program data note the following: in Fall 2002, the number of declared Creative Writing Majors was 1;[3] in Spring 2008, ULV graduated 2 majors and 2 minors in Creative Writing—a doubling of the number of students in the program in the past 5 years. At end of the 2007-08 academic year, the writing program has 5 Creative Writing or Writing-Emphasis majors and 14[4] Creative Writing minors. Composition enrollment continues to be determined by our freshman and transfer student numbers. In a typical semester, 35 percent of all composition courses are taught by full-time faculty; the average composition class size is approximately 17[5] students.

The great majority of all composition students are traditional aged, first generation college students; almost all of the creative writing minors have been traditional aged, first generation college students except for a handful of students in the Campus Accelerated Program for Adults (CAPA). Writing majors and minors are officially advised by full-time faculty only.

---

[1] Compiled by viewing the Fall 2007, January 2008, Spring 2008 final course offerings for the Main Campus that came under the WRT program code. Accessed May 1, 2008.

[2] It should be noted that the most recent program review for the English Department may have figures and percentages that include ENG courses erroneously attributed to that Department rather than the Department of Modern Languages (Writing Program). Since prior to 2006 the English Department and Writing Program shared the ENG code despite being declared separate departments for over a decade, university figures did not differentiate the statistics between the two programs. Thus, the English Department's data reflects inflated enrollment numbers.

[3] Data taken from the College of Arts and Sciences Program Review Data Packet, dated 10/3/07, provided by the CAS Assistant Dean.

[5] 2007-2008 Academic Year Average

II. Findings & Action Recommendations Summary

Assessment procedures utilized in this program review included the following:

- Senior Project Assessment
- Composition Syllabi Review
- Content Analysis of Student Evaluations of Writing Courses
- Composition Courses Current Student Exit Survey
- Focus Group of Current Composition Course Students
- 2005 University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment
- Informal Interviews with exiting Creative Writing Students
- Informal Interviews with Adjunct Faculty in the Writing Program
- University-wide senior exit survey

Our **findings** suggest the following:

1. Students indicated that the composition courses have provided them with a strong foundation in written communication skills, an understanding of basic research strategies, and good mastery of the writing process. Students indicated that the creative writing courses have provided them with a strong foundation in critical reading and interpreting and analyzing literature; an understanding of and composing strategies for writing in multiple genres; a process for revising creative work; an understanding of their place as contemporary writers in their world. However, much of the assessment of writing assignments is subjective, inconsistent, or not explained to the students. The program does have a standardized rubric in place for the composition program, but not all faculty (including full-time faculty) use this rubric; additionally, some faculty have modified the rubric or have developed their own rubrics, indicating that the university-wide adopted rubric developed by the Excellence in Writing Committee needs to be revised and aligned with current student learning outcomes and performance objectives. Additionally, rubrics need to be developed for the assessment of creative writing and the assessment of the senior thesis in Writing. The most common survey comments were that students felt their writing was not assessed in a consistent manner throughout the courses in the writing program (both composition and creative writing), and that students did not understand how their written work was to be assessed by their instructors (in both composition and creative writing). Revising the writing program rubric (or developing a new set of rubrics) and *requiring* use of these rubrics will address and correct this problem.

2. Exiting Majors and Minors in the Creative Writing program reported high satisfaction with the skills and knowledge they received in the areas of writing theory, literary analysis, generating and revising strategies, and workshop techniques. All of the graduated Majors in the last five years felt their major was "extremely challenging," in that the senior thesis projects combined a critical research component with the composition of and presentation of a substantially-revised creative component. Students noted their pleasure at working one-on-one with a faculty member to select courses from throughout the university curriculum to develop an interdisciplinary, independently-created major which emphasized writing. Most of the Creative Writing majors or minors 'declared' in the Junior year, and many stressed their desire to move on to graduate school to obtain the MFA in Creative Writing or the MA in English with Creative Writing emphasis. The most common career goals were professional writing, community activism (through counseling or mentoring programs),

and teaching. Several exiting graduates suggested requiring an internship component in the program (this is currently an option, not a requirement) and making the *Prism Review* course and journal production more rigorous and professional. Thus, faculty should explore the creation of an interdisciplinary writing major financially supported by the College of Arts & Sciences and the University.

3.Students who took writing courses with full-time faculty felt they had a higher level of competence in the student learning outcomes for written communication, and also reported a higher level of satisfaction with their learning experience—including increased confidence with their own critical thinking, critical reading, and research writing skills. While the majority of students who took writing courses with part-time faculty reported a positive learning experience, many students cited a lack of consistency between concepts taught by full-time faculty and by part-time faculty, and work-load expectations of full-time faculty versus part-time faculty. Additionally, students reported inconsistency with the assignments given by full-time faculty versus assignments given by part-time faculty. These findings were supported by the syllabi review conducted by an outside examiner. The writing program has already instituted mentoring of new adjunct faculty to address these inconsistencies. Additionally, there have been steps taken in the last year to develop a default syllabus and course agenda, including scripted writing units, for new faculty. These steps now need to be extended to our returning and long-time adjuncts in order to standardize writing program practices, text adoptions, and assignments, and to more closely-align assignments with student learning outcomes and performance objectives. Finally, the percentage of composition courses taught by full-time faculty, 35%, is extremely low for a University writing program and is inconsistent with nation-wide standards of 70% or higher[6]. The Writing Program needs to hire 2 more full-time program faculty with expertise in Composition & Rhetoric in order to remedy this low percentage and increase student success in the area of written communication.

4. An overwhelming number of students reported a desire for the Writing Program to offer an upper-division composition course that would address research and writing in their disciplines. The need for such a course is supported by the 2005 University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment report. Thus, such a course should be researched, developed, and offered, with the support and encouragement of allied programs that might require or strongly encourage students in their majors to take such a course. Additionally, the program might re-present the Writing Intensive proposal that was tabled by the GE committee in 2006 due to impending GE changes that would take effect in Fall 2008.

5. The Junior-Level Writing Assessment findings indicated that completing ULV Writing Courses, taking advantage of the Learning Enhancement Center tutors, and turning in rough drafts prior to final drafts (engaging in process-driven writing) had no significant impact upon writing scores.[7] Rather than suggesting a weakness of the writing program specifically, these findings highlight an inconsistency in how writing is taught and assessed by faculty in other disciplines throughout the university. There is a need for the College of Arts and Sciences to spearhead comprehensive strategies that would strengthen writing across the curriculum at the University of La Verne. These strategies might include funding to the Learning Enhancement Center for tutors designated to writing skills; funding for the Excellence in Writing/Writing Across the Curriculum Committee to

---

[6] "Statement of Principles and Standards for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing." October, 1989. Council on College Composition and Communication. http://ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/123790.htm.
[7] Findings suggested by the 2005 Junior Level Assessment conducted by the Excellence in Writing Committee.

offer workshops for faculty; the creation of a Writing Intensive GE component with appropriate training and support for instructors across the disciplines to address writing skills in their classrooms; instruction in utilizing a university-adopted writing rubric (or set of rubrics) for the assessment of high stakes and low stakes writing assignments; funding for a Basic Skills Initiative that would target students with low-level writing skills (and perhaps Math, in partnership).

Action Recommendations
(These action recommendations were generated after deliberations of full-time and adjunct faculty.)

1. Hire two additional full-time faculty members with specific expertise in rhetoric and/or composition (and possible experience in writing center administration).

2. Develop and insure consistent use of standardized rubrics for written assessment that are directly linked to the GE Written Communications learning outcomes.

3. Develop a creative writing major to present to CAS curriculum committee and Faculty Senate.

4. Require new adjunct faculty to utilize program-developed syllabi, course agendas, and assignments for the first two semesters of each course they teach in the writing program.

5. Adopt a standardized review process for all part-time faculty members.

6. Explore adding a 300-level writing intensive course to the General Education curriculum.

7. Develop clear and consistent senior-thesis processes and expectations for majors and minors.

8. Secure standardized funding for Prism Review production.

9. Build a stronger pedagogical connection with the Learning Enhancement Center.

III. Writing Program Mission

The ULV Writing Program teaches writing as a creative and an interactive intellectual pursuit in which students think of themselves as writers who are committed to the development of their craft and to the examination of their cultures through intensive study of and production of expository and creative compositions in multiple genres and diverse modes. Students in the writing program engage texts in discussion, and students reflect upon their roles as writers and thinkers in a diverse, global, multi-ethnic, and multi-cultural world. Faculty in the writing program value a student-centered teaching environment that links writing theories with writing practices, and that encourages students to explore the connections between writing and other disciplines and activities.

IV. Program Goals and Learning Outcomes

A. The Writing Program, housed in the Department of Modern Languages, expects that at the conclusion of their GE Written Communications Area Sequence, students will to be able to:

Skill Area A: Writing Process
Outcome 1: Communicate effectively and with purpose in multiple creative and academic writing genres by applying the Standard American English fundamentals to compositions.
Outcome 2: Understand and apply the stages of the writing process to creative and academic communications: composition, organization, revision, and editing of Standard American English mechanics.
Outcome 3: Define and utilize common modes of organization in written compositions: Narration, Process, Persuasion, Comparison-Contrast, and others.

Skill Area B: Research and Reading Comprehension
Outcome 1: Use a variety of documentation styles to cite research and examples in written compositions for specific purposes and designated audiences.
Outcome 2: Critically analyze modes of writing and writing components in popular and academic texts by studying point-of-view, tone, purpose, audience in order to react, reflect, and respond in written compositions.
Outcome 3: Assess and examine differing perspectives critically; evaluate their merits and weaknesses by locating points of agreement and disagreement; use theory to guide the organization, interpretation, and presentation of written compositions

B. The Writing Program, housed in the Department of Modern Languages, expects that at the conclusion of their minor (or independently-created major) in Creative Writing, students will have learned to:

Outcome 1: Produce works of art that demonstrate an understanding of cultural expression and the importance of cultural expression to diverse audiences through demonstrated synthesis of expressive forms which communicate personal assumptions about the human experience.

Outcome 2: Examine the development of writing as a discipline throughout history by analyzing the causes of creative writing's development in academia and by demonstrating an understanding of the effects of creative writing's current professional and academic status on the literary world and on one's own development as a writer-artist.

Outcome 3: Read and critically analyze and interpret a variety of literary texts (theory based and creative); reflect upon personal processes of theory application to critical and creative compositions after synthesizing and evaluating the practices of others.

Outcome 4: Utilize appropriate technology and research methodologies to interpret and analyze how texts and text-making can illuminate the human condition, and compose compositions that synthesize the arguments and assertions being made.

V. Program Description

A. Organization

The Department of Modern Languages offers a Bachelor's of Arts degree in French, German, and Spanish, minors in the aforementioned language programs, and courses in Japanese and English-as-a-Second Language. These programs have been reviewed separately from the Writing Program. Program Chairs in languages, as well as the Director of Writing Programs, report to the Department Chair, who in turn reports directly to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The Minor in Creative Writing has been made available only on the main campus; therefore, creative writing courses offered at RCA sites will not be included in this review process. Composition courses at off-campus sites will not be included in this review process.

B. Faculty

During the 2006-2007 academic year, the Writing Program had 3.5 full-time faculty members, distributed in the following manner: 3 in Composition and Creative Writing, .5 in Composition.[8]. As a result of the retirement of Dr. Roswitha Brooks in June 2007 the program has 3 full-time Composition and Creative Writing faculty members as of Fall 2007.

The Writing Program relies heavily upon the dedication and efforts of part-time faculty. In the 2007-2008 academic year, part-time instructors taught 41 of the 58 writing courses offered (71%). This percentage is higher than other programs delivering required GE courses for the College of Arts and Sciences, according to the 2005-06 Common Data Set. Additionally, this percentage is higher than is recommended by the professional body addressing composition and creative writing in colleges and universities. *Appendix A* provides a list of writing faculty.

C. Courses

The requirements for the minor in Creative Writing include the completion of 20 upper-division semester hours and a culminating senior project (*Appendix B* describes our Senior Project Process and *Appendix C* describes our minor requirements). Student-designed majors in Creative Writing complete a minimum of 40 approved courses and a culminating senior project. (See *Appendix B).* All Creative Writing Courses have a unit value of 2 or 4, and selected Creative Writing courses are applicable to several other majors and minors on campus, including English, Liberal Studies, Theatre, and Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies. Additionally, selected Writing courses fulfill GE Area requirements in Experiential Arts, Art History, and Literature Analysis.

The General Education requirements for the Composition sequence involve the completion of 8 units in GEWE1 and GEWE2 (or the equivalent). All Composition courses have a unit value of 4. In response to a university-wide call for the elimination of 3 semester hour classes and in an effort to broaden the scope of our curriculum and satisfy the upcoming Fall 2008 GE requirements, the Writing Program undertook extensive curriculum revisions in 2004, and again in 2006 and in 2007.

---

[8] Dr. Roswitha Brooks regularly taught a single section of WRT 106 each Fall.

The Syllabus Review of GEWE1 and GEWE2 Composition Courses completed by an outside examiner (*Appendix D)* indicates that our syllabi have "very clear goals, activities, and recommended texts." Syllabi indicate that our composition courses work toward development and refinement of critical thinking, critical reading, and the writing process. Additionally, peer revision and the workshop process is integrated into almost all of our composition courses. Critical reading and research methodologies is introduced in the prerequisite composition courses and is later refined in the first-semester composition course, and mastered in the second-semester composition course.

There continues to be excellent coverage in the area of information literacy, especially the use of library and technology resources, as the variety of assignments in the last year have addressed the program's goals to incorporate hybrid instructional methods and partnership assignments with library faculty. Syllabi also reflect excellent coverage of appropriate General Education competencies, such as lifelong learning, issues of diversity and sustainability, service-learning, and values orientation. Many of these goals are not specifically reflected in the syllabi wording but are evident in responses from students and in the diverse content material used to reach learning outcomes.

Recommendations by our outside syllabi examiner for Composition courses in the GE sequence included the following:

1. **Require appropriate textbooks for each course.**
   Response: Writing Program faculty had already begun to address this recommendation prior to the syllabi review. In the Fall 2007-Spring 2008 academic year, writing faculty met and selected 2-3 optional texts for each course, and a default text for new instructors. This selection allows seasoned or experienced instructors to maintain a degree of personal selection and individuality in the classroom, but also allows skills-scaffolding throughout our composition sequence. Adjunct faculty are also asked to select a book-length text to be read throughout the semester and then utilized in the final research project for each of our courses. While the reviewer did not agree with all book-length text selections made by some adjunct faculty, the program will continue this process, offering suggestions but continuing to allow personal taste to dictate an instructor's selection of book-length texts for the preservation of instructional integrity, and full time faculty will evaluate the necessity of further curtailing choice options by the next program review.

2. **Clarify essay requirements.**
   Response: Writing Program faculty had already begun to address this recommendation prior to the syllabi review, but more needs to be done. In the last several years, changes in the composition curriculum and GE writing outcomes have left a degree of experimentation in place while seasoned and experienced instructors contributed to discussions regarding the types of essays and assignments best for each composition course. This process has involved conference attendance and specialized training of full-time faculty during the summer months, and observations and research into offerings and guidelines at comparable institutions. As a result of this process, several scripted units have been developed in the past two years, and essay modes and grammatical benchmarks have been attached to each composition course so that scaffolding rather than repetition is the norm for essay assignments.

This will be reassessed in several stages over the next 4 years, and evaluated by the next Program Review.

3. **Provide templates.**

    Response: Writing Program faculty had already begun to address this recommendation prior to the syllabi review. Syllabi examined by the outside reviewer were a random selection from the past 6 years. However, more specific syllabi templates were put in place in the last 3 years, and have been honed and refined in that time period. Despite this effort, syllabi are not collected from adjuncts early enough to make corrections to deficient syllabi, or to more closely monitor the syllabi of brand-new adjunct faculty. To remedy this, the program faculty voted this past year to implement a scripted syllabus for all adjuncts teaching a course at ULV for the first time (including seasoned adjuncts who may have been with our program for many years but may be teaching a new course). These scripted syllabi packets include scripted essay units and daily lesson plans connected to specific texts required for use by new adjunct instructors. For returning adjuncts who have been with the program many years, a closer monitoring effort will need to be put in place to address this recommendation that honors the experience of long-time adjuncts, but that maintains the consistency of Writing Program courses.

4. **Follow up with instructors not adhering to current course content outlines.**

    Response: Writing Program faculty had already begun to address this recommendation prior to the syllabi review. A mentoring process has been in place the past 3 years and includes regular observations of adjunct faculty, conferencing sessions about pedagogy strategies, and one-on-one assistance with lesson planning. Full-time faculty are dedicated to this, but the time constraints of full-time faculty often outweigh the ability to offer appropriate mentoring for all adjunct faculty. Thus, concentration has been on newly-hired adjuncts, while experienced adjuncts wait for assistance and reassessment. An extra course release, rotated among full-time faculty, or designated to the Program Director for mentoring purposes,[9] would greatly improve the Writing Program's ability to monitor all adjunct faculty and maintain the high standards of instruction in our program. Additionally, hiring two more faculty members in the Writing Program would distribute mentoring more evenly throughout all full-time faculty members and would allow for a higher percentage of courses to be taught by full-time faculty.

Conclusion: Since course outlines and long-term full-time faculty for the writing program have been in a state of constant revision the last five years as a result of numerous, yearly, reassessments and various faculty departures, it would be advantageous to implement these recommendations while halting curriculum revisions, for at least a period of three to five years, in order to give adequate time and distance so the faculty may reflect on challenges and possible improvements to the composition program.

---

[9] This proposal was presented to the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences in Spring 2008 and was denied due to budget constraints and the University's current financial situation. The Writing Program will represent this request each year, as the NCTE and AWP support a reduced course load for composition instructors that will enable them to improve campus-wide writing.

D. Majors, Minors, & Participants

Majoring or Minoring in Creative Writing or Allied Fields

While the Writing Program does not have an officially sanctioned major in Writing, numerous students have taken advantage of the student-designed major option at the University of La Verne, and have devised majors that emphasize writing. Most of these majors transitioned from a Journalism/Communications Major, Theatre Major, Comparative Literature Major, or an English Major.[10] Table 1 summarizes the enrollment and graduation trends in our program during the academic years of 2004 thru 2008, including the number of majors and bachelor's degrees conferred by our program.[11] No Creative Writing majors were recorded in the previous program reviews; thus, the number of majors here shows a marked and steady increase--now equivalent to many formally-recognized majors in the College of Arts & Sciences.[12] This suggests that the Writing Program should develop a formal major housed in the College of Arts & Sciences, Department of Modern Languages, that emphasizes literature, writing, and cultural exploration in synthesis.[13]

The number of degrees conferred with a Creative Writing or Writing Emphasis major is expected to grow in the next few years due to the current number of declared majors and minors in our program (See *Appendix H*). The percentage of conferred degrees as compared to other programs in the CAS is not available, as our majors often take varied names, were erroneously included in the English Department's data, or are listed in the "Student Designed Majors" data category designated for all Student Designed Majors regardless of department. These numbers are based upon internal program data.

---

[10] Internal Program Data

[11] Not included is data relative to the BA in Liberal Arts with a Writing-emphasis or writing-concentration. This major is not currently administered by our program, but our faculty routinely serve on Senior Thesis committees for appropriate projects.

[12] Degrees Conferred majors in the College of Arts & Sciences with 5 or less between 2002-2007 include: *Anthropology, Art History, Chemistry, Comparative Literature, Ethnic Studies, French, International Studies, Peace Studies, Philosophy, Photography, Religion, Social Science, Spanish, Speech Communication, Theatre Arts* according to the CAS Program Review Data Packet dated 10/3/07.

[13] Such a major was preliminarily explored in the past year by all Modern Languages Faculty, in an effort to address the growing emphasis in a writing & literature major, and to bridge the gap perceived by administrators between the disciplines of writing and of the Modern Languages and ESL. The rough draft of this major, *Writing & Contemporary Culture (WCC)*, has been drafted. 1 student is currently majoring in WCC using the student-designed major option; her projected graduation date is Spring 2009. In Spring 2008, Writing Program faculty began discussing the possibility of a Creative Writing major, using the guidelines developed by the Associated Writing Programs. We anticipate continuing this conversation in the next two years, and developing a formal Creative Writing major to bring for Faculty Assembly vote in the next 4 years after appropriate data and appropriate faculty can contribute to the project.

Table 1: Enrollment and Graduation Trends[14]										
	2004		**2005**		**2006**		**2007**		**2008**	
	n	% of A&S	n	% of A&S	n	% of A&S	n	% of A&S	n	% of A&S
Degrees Conferred in										
Creative Writing or Writing Emphasis	0	Un-known	1	Un-known	1	Un-known	1	Un-known	3[15]	0.0
Minors or Certificates awarded in Creative Writing[16]	2	Un-known	1	Un-known	1	Un-known	2	Un-known	2	Un-Known

---

[14] Source: Internal program files.

[15] One of the three was a shared major in *Narrative Technologies* with the Art Department. Both departments worked with the student on a senior thesis project.

[16] Internal Program Data

Participating in the Freshman Composition Sequence

There is no current major or minor in Composition and Rhetoric; (although many students majoring in English for the purposes of earning the teaching certificate have expressed a desire to minor in writing or to achieve a certificate in the teaching of writing. We currently have a certificate in Professional Writing). The Composition sequence is vital to the success of students in all majors and in all colleges across the University. In order to better understand the needs of students, and to improve course delivery, the Writing Program conducts regular surveys, student tracking, and focus groups. The results of these can be found in *Appendices E, F, G*.

E. Course enrollments

Upper division WRT courses in Literature and Creative Writing were formerly labeled as ENG prior to 2006 and erroneously came under the English Department data despite the Writing Program's separation from the English department more than a decade ago. It should be noted that averaged course enrollment numbers and percentages for the English Department in the latest CAS Data Packet and the most recent English Department Program Review are inflated due to the erroneous inclusion of WRT courses. For the purposes of this program review, data for WRT courses has been extracted by the Program Director from online catalogue enrollment numbers between 2003 and 2008.

Since the changeover from the ENG to WRT prefixes in 2006, there has been confusion among English majors and minors about whether the WRT courses still count toward the English Major and the English Minor. Discussion with the English Department chair, and changes in catalogue-wording for the 2008-09 catalogue will remedy this situation, no doubt improving enrollment numbers in upper-division WRT courses in the coming years. Additionally, CAS data will now reflect the correct averages and percentages for both the English Department and the Modern Languages Department/Writing Program, since the WRT designation will clearly identify composition and creative writing courses housed in the Department of Modern Languages.

Upper Division Writing courses other than the *Introduction to Creative Writing Course* (WRT 301) are usually populated by English majors, Theatre majors, Journalism/Speech Communications majors, Liberal Arts majors, Liberal Studies majors, and Art majors. These students also comprise the majority of Creative Writing minors.[17] Writing Program faculty have been in conversation with the Theatre Department and with the Journalism Program in the past to allow certain, applicable WRT courses to serve as upper-division electives in these departmental majors, but no progress has been made. Writing faculty have also approached both departments with a "writing emphasis" option to be housed by their programs and co-administered by the Writing Program (Such as a BA in Literary Journalism or a BA in Theatre with a concentration in Playwriting or Screenwriting). There was interest, but no further progress has been made. These projects were the result of suggestions from students displeased with the "creative writing" aspect of instruction in Playwriting and Screenwriting, and in Feature Writing. The Liberal Studies program has recently added WRT 306 as an emphasis elective, and WRT 307 continues to be an elective for the Major in Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies and the Liberal Arts major. With the new GE taking effect in Fall 2008, there should be higher enrollment numbers for the upper-division WRT courses, as they will satisfy a number of new GE requirements. Additionally, the number of minors in Creative Writing will most likely improve as a result of this increased enrollment in our courses. However, the number of students in upper-division writing courses most often comes from the WRT 301 gateway course.

---

[17] Internal Program Data

Course offerings in the Writing Program are as follows: 106, 109, 110, 111 and 301[18] are offered every fall and spring semester, with 301 and 111 occasionally being offered during the January Term as well, pending freshman enrollment numbers. All but WRT 301 have multiple sections each semester as determined by the needs of incoming freshmen and incoming transfer students. These Composition courses and the entry-level creative writing course consistently show enrollment at or beyond capacity. In the past 5 years, the enrollment caps on the developmental and transfer-level composition courses have been gradually reduced to comply with NCTE, CCCC, and AWP guidelines for Freshman Composition.[19] The 301 course has maintained standard enrollment numbers for a GE Experiential Arts course over the past 5 years.

Appendix I details the current rotation schedule for Writing courses. *Appendix J* illustrates the 2007-2008 schedule of classes for Fall, January and Spring semesters, with corresponding assigned faculty and enrollments, as per the online Class Schedule accessed in June 2008 by the Writing Program Director. The averaged enrollment for all classes is approximately 17, which is slightly higher than the Fall 2006 CAS average for undergraduate courses, and significantly higher than the University average for undergraduate courses, according to the Fall 2006 *Class Size Analysis Report* from the Office of Institutional Research. Rarely do courses in the Writing program fall below 10 students (except for Writing 106—the developmental, basic-skills writing course, which is encouraged to maintain 8-10 students), and those that do are cancelled or collapsed unless necessary to the immediate graduation requirements of juniors and seniors needing a course to fulfill the major or minor.

F. Advising
Only full-time faculty members are responsible for academic advising within the writing programs. For the 2007-08 academic year, three faculty members had advisees assigned or co-assigned to them. Students are usually assigned to faculty advisors on the basis of genre/senior thesis project goals, with Professor Bernard assisting prose writers, Dr. Irwin assisting expository or experimental-genre writers, and Professor Ogden assisting poets and performance writers, and literary non-fiction writers; however, all faculty are well-qualified to assist all students, regardless of genre preferences. Occasionally, full-time faculty in other programs are asked to assist as project advisors when the project bridges disciplines. Past Co-Advisor faculty have included Ruth Trotter (Art), Elizabeth Pietrzak (Poetry), and Sean Dillon (Playwriting).

---

[18] Course Outlines are available at http://www.ulv.edu/writing
[19] Data from: ncte.org "Position statement on freshman composition;" AWP Program Director's Handbook; National Program Survey available at awpwriter.org.

VI. Assessment Procedures

Learning outcomes for this program review were assessed through the following procedures:

1. **Senior Project Assessment**

The senior project assessment was conducted by the Writing Program Director. All senior projects through Fall 2007 were assessed using a rubric built around the Student Learning Outcomes for the GE Fine Arts Area. From 2003-2007, Professor Ogden guided all but 1 of the Senior Thesis projects that came through the writing program. (Professor Eric Grekowicz evaluated one of the projects, which was re-evaluated by Professor Ogden using the same rubric). Because the Writing Program does not have an 'official' Creative Writing major, Professor Ogden consulted Dr. Zandra Wagoner, Professor Jane Dibbell, and Dr. Jonathan Reed about the guidelines and timetable for assessing senior thesis projects in 2003-04. A process of evaluation and a timetable for the senior thesis project was developed by Professor Ogden, and discussed with and approved by the Department of Modern Languages faculty in 2003. Because of the "individually-created" nature of the majors, each senior thesis project took its own form; however, several key components were required for all:

> a. An Annotated Bibliography listing at least 30 works consulted in the composition of the final project.

> b. A process-reflection 'Artist's Statement' in which the writer discusses how the project was conceived and completed, and includes theoretical and authorial influences into the composition of the project.

> c. A public-presentation of the project in which the writer made himself or herself available to questions from the ULV faculty and larger community.

> d. An appropriate-length creative or expository composition that went through at least 3 revision drafts.

Past projects have included the following: Unit-plan for the teaching of Creative Writing in the K-12 classroom; Collection of poetry; Collection of short-stories; Full-length play; Multi-genre performance text; Novel.

2. **Composition Syllabi Review**

The syllabi review was conducted by an outside examiner familiar with the teaching of composition at multiple colleges and universities. The reviewer was given a random sample of syllabi from the past 5 years and was asked to review the syllabi and make recommendations based upon the following benchmarks (taken from the ULV Faculty Handbook guidelines for syllabi construction): *Inclusion of, Clarity of, and Consistency of*

   a. Course Information;
   b. Student Expectations and Academic Policies;
   c. Assessment Strategies.

The reviewer was asked to make action recommendations after noting specific observations in each of these areas.

3. Content Analysis of Student Evaluations of Writing Courses

The purpose of the content analysis was to identify themes present in the open-ended questions of course evaluations of upper-division writing courses to help improve the Writing Program. The report was prepared by Nick Guzman in the PsyD program at the University of La Verne. Students enrolled in courses ENG 301, 304, 307, 309, 314, and 316 completed ULV course evaluations, which included several open-ended questions that requested student feedback regarding perceived strengths and areas of growth for that particular course and course's instructor. Most of the findings are specific to the Creative Writing program.

4. Composition Courses Current Student Exit Survey Report

The Composition Exit Survey Report was prepared by Shanna Treworgy, M.S., and Sarah Foroosh, M.S., students enrolled in the PsyD program at the University of La Verne. The report is based on data extracted from surveys given in four courses: English 106, English 109, English 110, and English 111. The survey was a brief two-sided questionnaire including both forced choice and open-ended questions and was administered by instructors in their own courses in the last two weeks of the Fall 2007 semester. Students were also given an opportunity to express what skills they wish would be emphasized more, as well as an opportunity to make general suggestions or comments. A total of 229 students participated in the study with 5 students indicating they took English 106, 49 students indicating they took English 109, 161 students indicating they took English 110, and 208 students indicating they took English 111 at the University of La Verne.

5. Focus Group of Current Composition Course Students

The Focus Group of Current Composition Course Students was conducted in Fall of 2007 by Shanna Treworgy, M.S., Sarah Foroosh, M.S., and Kristen Masters, M.S., after consultation with the Writing Program Director. The Focus Group questions were developed by Beatriz Amaya-Anderson, Sean Bernard, Catherine Irwin, and Kirsten Ogden, and then revised for use by the Focus Group researches. Selected students in courses taught by Amaya-Anderson, Bernard, Irwin, and Ogden were invited to participate in the focus group. Every effort was made to represent all four levels of the composition program. Students attended the focus group and were asked a series of questions by the researchers. A report was prepared based upon the student responses. A transcript of the focus group was made available as well.

6. 2005 University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment

Representatives from the Excellence in Writing committee, in consultation with the 2005 Writing Program Director (Dr. Eric Grekowicz), selected a sample of 192 writing assignments of Junior students across all campuses and colleges (except Law). These assignments were assessed by a pool of full-time and adjunct volunteer faculty using the University of La Verne campus-wide adopted writing rubric. Writing assignments were evaluated in four areas: Content, Development, Organization, and Language Use and Format.. A report was prepared by Marga Madhuri (Educ and Excellence in Writing Committee representative), Eric Grekowicz (Writing Program Director) and Aghop Der-Karabetian (Assistant Dean, CAS).

7. Informal Interviews with Exiting Creative Writing Students
From Spring 2004 through Fall 2007, the Director of Writing Programs informally questioned students enrolled in 301, 302, 303, 304, 306, 307 and 309. These conversations took place in the Program Director's office during final examination week when students came for their portfolio review, or took place during office appointments, or were based upon student responses to an email questionnaire. General strengths and weaknesses were noted, as well as suggestions for program improvement.

8. Informal Interviews with Adjunct Faculty in the Writing Program
From Spring 2005 through Fall 2007, the Director of Writing Programs informally questioned several adjunct faculty about the strengths and weaknesses of the writing program, and asked for suggestions for improvement. These conversations took place in the Program Director's office during office appointments, or over the telephone.

9. University-wide Senior Exit Survey
Students enrolled into senior seminar courses in Fall 2007 and January 2007 completed an online survey composed by Professor Kirsten Ogden and revised with assistance from Yingxia Cao (Office of Institutional Research) and Al Clark (Academic Affairs).

VII. Findings and Action Recommendations

PART A: The Writing Program, housed in the Department of Modern Languages, expects that at the conclusion of their GE Composition Sequence, students will to be able to:

Outcome A1: Communicate effectively and with purpose in multiple creative and academic writing genres by applying the Standard American English fundamentals to compositions.

Senior Project Assessment
The Senior Project Assessment included a random sampling of 5 senior projects from majors and minors in the writing program over the past 5 years. 100% of samples achieved competency or higher in each area of the rubric assessment. Additionally, 3 out of 5 projects achieved "exceptional mastery" in demonstrating mastery usage of Standard American English, and 3 out of 5 projects achieved "exceptional mastery" in organization.

Composition Syllabi Review
Syllabi indicate that, for the most part, students in all writing courses are expected to complete a variety of writing assignments that address creative and academic writing genres. However, the reviewer found inconsistencies between the types of assignments required at each level in the writing program. Thus, while the writing program is achieving Outcome 1, there needs to be consistency throughout the program in terms of the student performance objectives. It is hoped that the most recent revisions to the Course Outlines for the Fall 2008 GE changes has addressed this issue. In these new course outlines, specific types of assignments, specific skill sets, and specific writing and grammatical concepts are assigned to each level of composition courses, thus insuring scaffolding of skill sets rather than repetition.

Content Analysis of Student Evaluations of Writing Courses
Students indicated they "found voice for self-expression" and listed quite a few specific writing genres and aspects of writing composition they felt confident with after taking an upper-division writing course; these included composing a script, journaling, learning writing strategies and techniques they might use in the future, and feeling generally pleased about their development as writers.

Composition Courses Current Student Exit Survey
Students indicated general satisfaction with their abilities to produce papers that required research and appropriate 'fundamentals.' However, students did feel a desire for more research and organization to be incorporated into their courses. Additionally, students had mixed responses to the types of assignments used in their courses to achieve the A1 outcome. This indicates a need for consistency and standardization throughout the writing program's courses. Students need to understand the Student Learning Outcomes and the student performance objectives in order to understand the purposes and goals of the individual writing courses. A handful of students noted no difference between their college-level writing courses and their high school writing courses. This may indicate a need to more appropriately assess the skill set of incoming students; it may also indicate a need for instructors to be more transparent in their goals for individual assignments and classroom lessons.

Focus Group of Current Composition Course Students

Focus group respondents indicated positive feelings about their abilities to communicate effectively in composition. Major themes of being a better writer included the following: "Able to flow-write and make arguments more cohesive;" "'Brick Method:' one idea built upon the last to provide continuity and organization;" "Learned to write vividly—learned where to insert details without being fluffy." These themes indicated that students learned specific strategies they could apply to more effective communication.

2005 University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment

This assessment found that "taking the equivalent of the <u>first semester</u> writing course at ULV or at some other college was unrelated to the writing scores" and that "taking the equivalent of the <u>second semester</u> writing course at ULV or at some other college was unrelated to the writing scores." This may indicate that while students were able to communicate effectively in written compositions, the writing program courses had no effect on a student's ability to do this.

Informal Interviews with exiting Creative Writing Students

Creative Writing students offered overwhelmingly positive responses to their abilities to compose in multiple genres. While many students noted they came into the Creative Writing program interested in only a single genre, almost all students appreciated the generic, creative processes they learned for generating compositions in multiple forms.

Informal Interviews with Adjunct Faculty in the Writing Program

Adjunct faculty offered that they did work through rhetorical modes, but many noted the lack of sentence-level instruction (grammar) in their courses. Many admitted they taught no concrete grammatical skills beyond editing, while others offered that they gave a "quick overview" of major grammatical concepts but left it up to students to investigate sentence level issues in the handbook or at the LEC. The new course outlines, which attach grammatical concepts to each of the levels of composition courses, should address this issue.

University-wide senior exit survey

The writing survey respondents noted that only 32% of students taking the survey enrolled into the 110 course at the University of La Verne, and that only 45% of the student taking the survey enrolled into the 111 course at the University of La Verne. Of these students, more than two-thirds felt that their writing courses prepared them well or extremely well for writing papers in other classes. This indicates an overall positive response for students feeling they could communicate effectively in writing genres.

Outcome A2: Understand and apply the stages of the writing process to creative and academic communications: composition, organization, revision, and editing of Standard American English mechanics.

Senior Project Assessment

All projects assessed earned "Competency" or higher in all areas, indicating that the final project is evidence of a writing process that has achieved learning outcome 2. In explaining the process involved in the composition of the project, 3 out of 5 students achieved "mastery" or "exceptional mastery" indicating that students understand the processes involved in creative and

expository compositions and are able to explain them. The Senior Project Rubric should be refined to specifically reflect an assessment question geared toward the examination of "process" involved in the senior thesis project; perhaps having the student turn in stages of the senior thesis that are assessed along the way, rather than the student's process-reflection paper being the only assessment of Outcome 2.

Composition Syllabi Review
The reviewer did not specifically address this area, which may indicate that the course syllabi do not assign 'process' as a graded assignment in the writing courses. This needs to be more carefully examined by looking at a larger sample of the course syllabi and determining if they address Outcome 2 in an explicit manner on the syllabus. The course outlines clearly require processes in the assignment of compositions.

Content Analysis of Student Evaluations of Writing Courses
Several respondents mentioned the workshop aspect of the course as a positive aspect of the course. Additional, several students recognized the value of editing and of group work and group activities, indicating that students recall specific processes involved in creative and expository compositions at the end of their courses.

Composition Courses Current Student Exit Survey
A majority of students indicated that the writing courses prepared them for the composition of longer papers and research assignments, indicating that students understand the stages involved in such an endeavor. However, a significant portion of students also indicated they'd like a better understanding of the revision processes for writing papers, which may indicate that processes need to be more strongly emphasized in the writing assignments. Further, 37% of respondents indicated a desire for more time spent on "Writing Organization" in the writing courses. This repeats findings in other surveys, indicating that a significant percentage of students are not exiting the writing courses with a confident understanding of how to organize their compositions.

Focus Group of Current Composition Course Students
Students responded to the following question favorably: "Do you think you understand writing as a process?" Students indicated by name several of the specific processes involved in writing: "Well, there's different processes you take when writing - there's free writing, peer editing revisions, there's also when you go back and think about starting all over again or subtracting a paragraph or adding a paragraph. I think those are the processes that I used." By naming specific stages in the writing process, and even identifying a "four-step writing process" learned in class, then following up with an explanation of what these stages mean, students clearly understand and are able to apply the key components of Outcome A2. Additionally, students noted specifically that they felt one of the course goals was "to focus on writing as a process as seen by conferences and revisions," indicating that instructors were transparent in their desire for students to learn writing as a process.

2005 University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment
Findings indicated that "Submitting earlier drafts of the assignments that were evaluated was unrelated to the writing scores" and that "Utilizing the Learning Enhancement Center services or not for the assignment that was evaluated, or for any writing assignments was unrelated to the writing scores." This suggests that writing instructors may need to make process-drafts a more

integrate part of the essay assignment, and be more transparent in assisting students with specific goals for each stage of the writing process.

<u>Informal Interviews with exiting Creative Writing Students</u>
Some Creative Writing students felt the workshop component in the introductory creative writing course was too rigorous and impeded their creativity and desire to improve their writing. Students overwhelmingly approved more substantial workshopping components in the upper-division creative writing courses they took, and appreciated the mixed-creative/mixed-expository manner of the Writing Workshop course (which has only been offered once in the last 4 years since it was created in 2004). Students felt they were leaving the university with a clear method for approaching creative composition and for revising creative compositions.

<u>Informal Interviews with Adjunct Faculty in the Writing Program</u>
Many adjunct faculty felt they did not have the time to grade pre-drafts and process-drafts of essays, but most did require these pre-drafts to be turned in with the final draft of an essay, or to be peer-edited or workshopped in class prior to the final draft of an essay. Despite this, most felt confident that students exited their courses with an understanding of the writing process—although many wished for more time to conduct peer review sessions and conferencing sessions with students that would aid in helping students to master this outcome.

<u>University-wide senior exit survey</u>
Again, only a small percentage of respondents to the survey actually took the ULV Writing Program courses. Of these respondents, 22% of the 37% who enrolled into English/Writing 110 felt that it prepared them for composing longer writing projects; 27% of the 44% who enrolled into English/Writing 111 felt the course prepared them for composing longer writing projects. These responses indicate an overall positive feeling about the process-oriented aspects of writing. However, 29% of those same students wished their writing courses would've incorporated more substantial instruction in revision processes. This indicates an overall need to strengthen instruction in the stages of revision when it comes to writing compositions.

Outcome A3: Define and utilize common modes of organization in written compositions: Narration, Process, Persuasion, Comparison-Contrast, and others.

<u>Senior Project Assessment</u>
All projects assessed earned "Competency" or higher in all areas, indicating that the final project is evidence of correct utilization of rhetorical modes in written compositions. Additionally, a majority of projects earned "mastery" or "exceptional mastery" in examining the process involved in the composition of the thesis project. This examination is not only illustrative of understanding the "process" and "narrative" modes, but additionally is evidence that students are able to identify rhetorical modes utilized in their senior thesis projects, and examine the effects of the use of these rhetorical modes.

<u>Composition Syllabus Review</u>
Again, a range of writing assignments are illustrated in the syllabi for our composition courses. The reviewer noted that "many different (and appropriate) uses of writing are explored." However, the reviewer also noted "troubling disparity" in the Writing 110 syllabi, some of which relied on "three 1-2 page responses that count as 'essays'" while another instructor had 9 essays to be completed.

Additionally, the reviewer noted that appropriate textbooks weren't being used in a majority of the syllabi that were reviewed. A random sample of 20 syllabi reviewed by the Writing Program Director for this particular point illustrates that an overwhelming number of faculty are using inappropriate texts for the 109, 110 and 111 courses, and that some texts are used by some instructors for WRT 110, while other instructors use the same text for Writing 111. The last year (2007-08 academic year) of syllabi illustrates improvement in this area, mostly due to newly-hired faculty not being able to select their own texts, but the improvement is marginal.

Further, the use of literary analysis assignments (such as identifying and then composing metaphors) and 'literary' texts (such as novels or plays) in composition courses, while troubling to the outside reviewer, is not troubling to the current Writing Program Director. ULV's Writing Program has made no formal decision regarding whether or not the Student Learning Outcomes should be achieved solely through a "non-fiction based" composition program, or may continue to achieve the outcomes in a composition program which employs both literary analysis and argument/critical thinking analysis for writing assignments.

This may be a discussion the department should have at some point. I would not suggest such a discussion, however, without inviting representatives from writing-allied programs, the Learning Enhancement Center, the former Writing Program Director for our institution, and a review of the current debate among composition and rhetoric scholars on this point. Further, should the program wish to maintain a 'non-fiction based' identity, adjunct faculty might still utilize any text (fiction, non-fiction, poetry, drama, film) and apply the themes or ideas of the text to an essay that does not employ literary analysis. For example, students might read the novel Bastard Out of Carolina and explore issues of poverty in a final research paper; or students might read various versions of the *Superman* mythology and explore a research paper on defining heroes. The reviewer's clarification of essay requirements, however, is a salient one and should be discussed further.

Content Analysis of Student Evaluations of Writing Courses
A handful of students listed specific writing genres, which indicate their understanding of and ability to demonstrate and apply these writing genres in the future. Further, students noted "development of ideas/materials for use in the future" as a positive aspect of the course, indicating that students were learned concrete strategies for developing their writing through the common rhetorical modes.

Composition Courses Current Student Exit Survey
Again, 37% of students indicated a desire for more emphasis in Writing Organization. Additionally, 36% indicated a desire for more help in incorporating Research Support into writing assignments. This indicates that students may not be exiting the course with an understanding of how to organize ideas along the rhetorical modes explored in writing classes. This suggests that instructors should more explicitly define and examine rhetorical modes in the writing classes, and link these rhetorical modes to organization principles in composing essays.

Focus Group of Current Composition Course Students
Respondents didn't specifically address the rhetorical modes in their focus group responses

2005 University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment
Findings indicated "70 percent of students were at the good or excellent levels in the organization domain," indicating that students had good mastery o f organization. However, considering that

the report's findings also indicate no correlation between taking writing program courses and an improvement in writing skills, this 70 percent cannot be confidently attributed to the Writing Program.

Interviews with exiting creative writing students did not apply to this outcome.

Informal Interviews with Adjunct Faculty in the Writing Program
Adjunct faculty admitted they did not explicitly define or state the guidelines for composing in rhetorical modes. Some adjuncts shared their feelings that several rhetorical modes occur in an individual essay, and thus it's more important for students to work toward global organization rather than rhetorical-mode specific organization. This seemed less of a pedagogical stance, and more of an inability to compose engaging lessons that might instruct students in rhetorical modes. Thus, units focused on rhetorical modes, and the importance of teaching rhetorical modes as an aid to essay organization, should be shared with adjunct faculty.

University-wide senior exit survey
The survey respondents did not specifically address the common modes of organization in their responses. It should be noted, however, that 33% of respondents (of those who enrolled into writing courses at ULV) wished there had been stronger emphasis upon organization in the writing course. This is a substantial percentage and indicates that a majority of the students are not exiting the 110 and 111 courses with a good grasp of organizational strategies to employ in their papers. A more concerted effort to strengthen and assess these concepts should be made over the next 5 years.

Outcome B1: Use a variety of documentation styles to cite research and examples in written compositions for specific purposes and designated audiences.

Senior Project Assessment
All students are required to submit an Annotated Bibliography as part of their senior thesis project which reflects usage of MLA or APA citation method (appropriate to the senior thesis project). Additionally, the process-reflection essay must utilize research support in the defense of the senior thesis project. These individual elements are subjectively assessed rather than rated on a rubric scale. All 5 of the Annotated Bibliographies were completed satisfactorily with only minor errors in citation methodology. 3 of the 5 process-reflection essays effectively integrated source material in support of the project at "Mastery" or "Exceptional Mastery." These two elements should be more formally assessed as part of the senior thesis process in order to align the assignment goals with the student learning outcomes.

Composition Syllabus Review
Our composition syllabi, on the average, specify research assignments and incorporate text analysis as strategies for writing compositions. However, the outside reviewer felt that some individual instructors relied too heavily upon literary analysis as a means for research, while other instructors didn't specify the use of more complex research strategies later in the courses. Additionally, there is inconsistency in the type and level of reading assignments, with at least one instructor not using any text in the classroom other than journals that the students produce themselves. Some instructors required numerous library visits, while other instructors required one or two. Clearly, regardless of the "type" of assignment, there needs to be consistency on the expectations for research and analysis in both the 110 and 111 courses.

Content Analysis of Student Evaluations of Writing Courses
This outcome was not specifically addressed by students in their evaluations.

Composition Courses Current Student Exit Survey
22% of students indicated a desire for more experience in "Research Citation Methods;" 22% of students indicated a desire for more experience in "Using the Library;" 36% of students indicated a desire for more instruction in "Incorporating Research Support Into Your Writing." Clearly, students see research as a vital component in composing expository assignments. However, the 'fix' is not simply more visits to the library, or more assignments require research inclusion. Inclusion of "supporting details" in written assignments does not necessarily mandate formal, library research.

However, the GE Composition sequence does introduce research skills (as well as other methods for incorporating supporting details and examples for compositions), and students exit the course with an understanding of how to use library resources and how to incorporate research, generally, into their essays. This question links more specifically to student responses to further writing practice. An overwhelming percentage of students, 61%, would like more formalized writing help in upper-division courses. Additionally, 62% of students indicated preference for an upper-division, Junior-year writing course that might more specifically address discipline-specific research requirements. This should be explored and piloted to determine of upper-division practice in writing that is more specifically targeted toward exceptional mastery of research practices addresses the research instruction requests of students.

Focus Group of Current Composition Course Students
While one respondent noted that the teacher's goal was "to write with a strong argument and make good connections," students did not connect this positive 'research' outcome with specific use of documentation styles in written compositions. This observation is repeated in other reports. The assumption is that 'good research writing' must include MLA or APA (or other) modes of citation; however, the writing program maintains that 'good research writing' includes the ability to utilize external source material to support assertions with detailed examples. Thus, the writing program should work more effectively to define and clarify the goals of research writing, and to instruct students in citation methods while also deemphasizing the importance of the citation method and emphasizing the importance of each student's need to effectively utilize support in written communications.

2005 University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment
This survey found that "68 percent of students were at the good and excellent levels in the language use and format domain," indicating that students had good mastery of language usage and format (inclusion of research). However, considering that the report's findings also indicate no correlation between taking writing program courses and an improvement in writing skills, this 68 percent cannot be confidently attributed to the Writing Program.

Interviews With Exiting Creative Writing Students
found that students appreciated the research-oriented assignments of process-reflection essay and annotated bibliography as components required for their senior thesis. Even though students were completing experiential projects, many felt that the research component helped them to formulate their experiential projects and strengthened their identities as writers.

Interviews with Adjunct Faculty Members

Teachers found that most of them utilized MLA almost exclusively in their composition courses, despite the APA paper being a course outline component in Writing 111. Additionally, many adjunct faculty did not take advantage of partnership instruction with librarians, with some adjunct faculty confessing they didn't take their students to the library at all in a given semester—relying instead upon the students to figure it out for themselves. Almost all adjunct faculty admitted this should be remedied, however. Thus, employing a specific series of library skills to each composition course would alleviate this problem and would give adjunct instructors a structure for teaching research and documentation in their courses.

University-Wide Senior Exit Survey

Most respondents felt confident in their abilities to conduct research for writing assignments. However, 43% of students (of those who enrolled into ULV Writing Courses) wished for more instruction in incorporating research sources into their essays; additionally, 51% of respondents (of those who enrolled into ULV Writing Courses) wished for more emphasis in research citation methods. This has been a repeated request in several surveys used for this program review. Thus, students not only need to be made more confident in their research skills through better, more transparent instruction, but the students need to be made aware of the limits of the 110 and 111 courses and the necessity for continuing education in this area as their research tasks become more complex in their upper division courses. An overwhelming 71% of respondents wished for an upper-division writing course that focused on writing tasks in their major or discipline; and 53% requested more formalized assistance in writing for their upper-division courses. This strengthens the need for an upper-division writing course that targets juniors and seniors.

Outcome B2: Critically analyze modes of writing and writing components in popular and academic texts by studying point-of-view, tone, purpose, audience in order to react, reflect, and respond in written compositions.

Senior Project Assessment

3 of the 5 senior projects achieved "exceptional mastery" and 2 of the 5 projects achieved "mastery" in demonstrating development of effective reading and analysis skills. 3 of the 5 Senior projects achieved "mastery" or "exceptional mastery" in utilizing research support for the development of a thesis. This indicates that students were able to critically analyze and then synthesize support material in order to integrate it into their own compositions.

Composition Syllabus Review

Again, the syllabi, on average, specify a variety of research assignments and types of readings, and hone in on specific aspects of the reading assignments that will later be explored in compositions written by the students. Overall positive response to this outcome.

Content Analysis of Student Evaluations of Writing Courses

Students indicated that they felt "challenged" and appreciated the "opportunity to share and listen to others." This may indicate that students appreciated course discussions, which commonly focus on literature compositions and the critical analysis of literature compositions. Further, a majority of students noted a positive response to the "in-class discussions" which may support findings that students appreciated and learned how to critically analyze modes of writing. Students did not

specifically address the application of this understanding to their written assignments—but it can be assumed due to the course outline requirements.

Composition Courses Current Student Exit Survey
Only 15% of students indicated a desire for more emphasis on reading comprehension skills in their writing courses. This indicates that, for the most part, students in the writing program feel they're exiting the program with an ability to critically analyze, synthesize, and evaluate written texts. Further focus groups should assess this specific skill to support this assumption.

Focus Group of Current Composition Course Students
Students did not specifically address this outcome in their responses to the focus group researchers. This may be a negative aspect, however, rather than a deficiency in the focus group questions. Students were given the opportunity to share aspects of the course they felt instructors thought were important, but there was no mention of critical reading. Thus, the writing program should more strongly and effectively focus on this outcome in a transparent way—and should help students understand the course goals and outcomes.

2005 University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment
Findings indicated "77 percent of students were at the good or excellent levels in the content-specific and development domain," indicating students had good mastery of analyzing and synthesizing written material for use in their original compositions; however, considering that the report's findings also indicate no correlation between taking writing program courses and an improvement in writing skills, this 77 percent cannot be confidently attributed to the Writing Program.

Interviews with Creative Writing Students
Findings indicate that students were extremely confident in their critical reading strategies. Additionally, students felt they were able to apply varied theoretical lenses to literary texts in numerous genres. Specifically mentioned by several students was the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural text inclusions in Creative Writing courses.

Interviews with Adjunct Faculty
Findings indicate that 111 instructors felt exceptionally confident that they were teaching critical analysis and reading synthesis skills. Instructors in 109 and 110 felt less confident about how and how much they've taught critical reading strategies. This indicates a need to offer and share more specific strategies for teaching critical analysis and synthesis in writing courses.

University-wide Senior Exit Survey
Again, most respondents felt confident in their abilities to synthesize texts for the purpose of critical analysis and research incorporation. However, a majority of respondents wished for more specific emphasis on source-integration in their writing courses, and a request for further writing help in their upper-division courses.

Outcome B3: Assess and examine differing perspectives critically; evaluate their merits and weaknesses by locating points of agreement and disagreement; use theory to guide the organization, interpretation, and presentation of written compositions

Senior Project Assessment
Only 2 of 5 students achieved "mastery" or "exceptional mastery" in pulling from multiple perspectives or conveying an interdisciplinary approach through their senior thesis projects. This suggests that some students are still having difficulty utilizing differing perspectives in a critical manner. Since all full-time faculty were assigned senior thesis projects as of Spring 2008, there has been some discussion regarding the importance of this objective—"multiple perspectives"—in the completion of the senior thesis project. This desire for this performance objective will need to be reassessed by faculty in the Department of Modern Languages, and a determination made regarding how the senior thesis project can more specifically address Outcome B3.

Composition Syllabus Review:
Our reviewer noted that our program outcomes require 4 research-based essays in Writing 111 courses, but the sample syllabi reviewed had differences in the number of research-based essays required in each of the courses. A review of 20 random syllabi by the Writing Program Director just on this point revealed that an overwhelming number of 111 syllabi in the last 3 years comply with the 4 research-based essay requirement, while syllabi prior to 2005 often have discrepancies. This is good news, indicating that the gradual clarification and improvements in communication with adjunct instructors in the last 3 years has shown improvement in our courses.

Content Analysis of Student Evaluations of Writing Courses
Students noted a positive response to the "in-class discussions" and also specifically mentioned their appreciation of the "formation of community among the students" and the "respect between the students" which indicates an ability to locate points of agreement and disagreement—at least in classroom conversations. Students did not specifically address this outcome as it applies to their written compositions.

Composition Courses Current Student Exit Survey
Again, only 15% of students indicated a desire for more emphasis on reading comprehension skills in their writing courses. This indicates that, for the most part, students in the writing program feel they're exiting the program with an ability to critically analyze, synthesize, and evaluate written texts. Further focus groups should assess this specific skill to support this assumption.

Focus Group of Current Composition Course Students
Students did not specifically address this outcome in their responses to the focus group researchers. This may be a negative aspect, however, rather than a deficiency in the focus group questions. Students were given the opportunity to share aspects of the course they felt instructors thought were important, but there was no mention of critical reading. Thus, the writing program should more strongly and effectively focus on this outcome in a transparent way—and should help students understand the course goals and outcomes.

2005 University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment
Findings indicate that "77 percent of students were at the good or excellent levels in the content-specific and development domain," indicating students had good mastery of examining and

synthesizing materials for use in their original compositions; however, considering that the report's findings also indicate no correlation between taking writing program courses and an improvement in writing skills, this 77 percent cannot be confidently attributed to the Writing Program.

Interviews with Creative Writing Students
Students felt confident with their understanding of various writing theories. Students also felt confident in their abilities to apply writing theories to their own work and to the understanding of work by other writers.

Interviews with Adjunct Faculty
111 instructors felt exceptionally confident that they were teaching critical analysis and reading synthesis skills. Instructors in 109 and 110 felt less confident about how and how much they've taught critical reading strategies. None of the instructors felt they particularly addressed writing theories and practices (such as Peter Elbow , Paolo Freire etc.) or had considered incorporating such theories into composition courses. This indicates a need to reassess this learning outcome and its applicability to composition courses at ULV.

University-wide Senior Exit Survey
Again, most respondents felt confident in their abilities to synthesize texts for the purpose of critical analysis and research incorporation. However, a majority of respondents wished for more specific emphasis on source-integration in their writing courses, and a request for further writing help in their upper-division courses.

PART B: The Writing Program, housed in the Department of Modern Languages, expects that at the conclusion of their minor (or independently-created major) in Creative Writing, students will have learned to:

Outcome 1: Produce works of art that demonstrate an understanding of cultural expression and the importance of cultural expression to diverse audiences through demonstrated synthesis of expressive forms which communicate personal assumptions about the human experience.

Senior Thesis Project Assessment
Only 1 of the 5 projects achieved "exceptional mastery" in illustrating development of effective writing skills the genre through distinct, unique, and original style and word choice. 4 of the 5 projects achieved "mastery" in this area. This suggests that the creative writing program is doing an excellent job of instilling in student writers an ability to use expressive forms for the purpose of communicating the human experience.

Composition Syllabi Review
Not applicable to this outcome.

Content Analysis of Student Evaluations of Writing Courses
Students mentioned their understanding of specific genres and their abilities to apply the processes of composition to these specific genres—a means of cultural expression. Additionally, students

noted positive response to in-class discussions and the atomosphere and community of the courses. This indicates an ability to communicate personal assumptions orally; however, students did not specifically address this outcome in their comments as they pertain to written compositions.

Current Composition Student Exit-Survey Report
is not applicable to this outcome.

Focus Group of Current Composition Course Students
is not applicable to this outcome.

2005 University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment
is not applicable to this outcome.

Interviews with Creative Writing students
Students noted that their perceived strength of the ULV Writing program was its incorporation of multi-ethnic and multi-cultural works of art as models of expressive forms which students might practice on their own. Students further felt that they were able to convey their own personal assumptions through their expressive art, although some shared a lesser-confidence in the ability to address diverse audiences with their work.

Interviews with Adjunct Faculty
do not apply to this learning outcome.

Interviews with Creative Writing Students
Students felt that most of their upper division writing courses did a good job of teaching them how to examine the development of writing as a discipline throughout history, and further how to apply this knowledge to the bettering of their own creative compositions. Some students named specific instructors who they felt integrated the history of creative writing into the course discussions and materials, and noted that when writing was placed within an historical context, students felt more secure in their choices as writers. This suggests that students do see the benefit of learning creative writing in context as a discipline, but that not all instructors in the writing program teach to this learning outcome in a way transparent enough for students to realize what they're learning. The student performance objectives related to this learning outcome should be reevaluated and assessed further by writing program faculty.

Interviews with Adjunct Faculty
do not apply to this learning outcome.

University-wide Senior Exit Survey
is not applicable to this learning outcome.

Outcome 2: Examine the development of writing as a discipline throughout history by analyzing the causes of creative writing's development in academia and by demonstrating an understanding of the effects of creative writing's current professional and academic status on the literary world and on one's own development as a writer-artist.

Senior Thesis Project Assessment
The senior thesis project does not explicitly measure this outcome. However, the process-reflection paper aspect of the project does ask students to explain their place in the world of contemporary writing. In measuring this aspect of the performance objective, 2 of 5 students achieved "exceptional mastery." However, the rubric should be revised to specifically address the student learning outcomes and performance objectives in the GE Fine Arts-Experiential area.

Composition Syllabi Review
is not applicable to this outcome.

Content Analysis of Student Evaluations of Writing Courses
This outcome was not specifically addressed by student comments. However, students did note their abilities to develop ideas and material for future writings, and the ability to see themselves as writers able to express themselves. It can be assumed that students have generally achieved outcome 2.

Current Composition Student Exit-Survey Report
is not applicable to this outcome

Focus Group of Current Composition Course Students
was not applicable to this outcome.

2005 University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment
was not applicable to this outcome.

Interviews with Creative Writing Students
Students felt that most of their upper division writing courses did a good job of teaching them how to examine the development of writing as a discipline throughout history, and further how to apply this knowledge to the bettering of their own creative compositions. Some students named specific instructors who they felt integrated the history of creative writing into the course discussions and materials, and noted that when writing was placed within an historical context, students felt more secure in their choices as writers. This suggests that students do see the benefit of learning creative writing in context as a discipline, but that not all instructors in the writing program teach to this learning outcome in a way transparent enough for students to realize what they're learning. The student performance objectives related to this learning outcome should be reevaluated and assessed further by writing program faculty.

Interviews with Adjunct Faculty
do not apply to this learning outcome.

University-wide Senior Exit Survey
is not applicable to this learning outcome.

Outcome 3: Read and critically analyze and interpret a variety of literary texts (theory based and creative); reflect upon personal processes of theory application to creative compositions after understanding and appreciating the practices of others.

Senior Thesis Project
In utilizing theoretical grounding for the discussion of and composition of creative texts, 3 of 5 students achieved "mastery" or "exceptional mastery," and 5 of 5 projects achieved "mastery" or "exceptional mastery" in effective reading and analysis skills, suggesting that students exit the writing program well-versed in writing theories and literary analysis as it pertains to the creative composition process.

Composition Syllabi Review
is not applicable to this outcome.

Content Analysis of Student Evaluations of Writing Courses
Students mentioned their understanding of specific genres and their abilities to apply the processes of composition to these specific genres—a means of cultural expression. Additionally, students noted positive response to in-class discussions and the atmosphere and community of the courses, as well as the practice of workshop and group activities. This indicates an ability to communicate personal assumptions orally, and possibly indicates that students are able to evaluate the practices of others (through the workshop experience); however, students did not specifically address this outcome in their comments as they pertain to written compositions.

Composition Courses Current Student Exit Survey
Again, only 15% of students indicated a desire for more emphasis on reading comprehension skills in their writing courses. This indicates that, for the most part, students in the writing program feel they're exiting the program with an ability to critically analyze, synthesize, and evaluate written texts. Further focus groups are not necessary to assess composition courses in this outcome, however, as the outcome specifically addresses Fine Art-Experiential.

Focus Group of Current Composition Course Students
was not applicable to this outcome.

2005 University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment
Findings indicated "77 percent of students were at the good or excellent levels in the content-specific and development domain," indicating students had good mastery of examining and synthesizing materials for use in their original compositions; however, considering that the report's findings also indicate no correlation between taking writing program courses and an improvement in writing skills, this 77 percent cannot be confidently attributed to the Writing Program.

Interviews with Creative Writing Students
Students noted their confidence in being able to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate a wide variety of literary texts. Additionally, students felt they could apply literary theories and writing theories to both the composition of their own original work, and to the interpretation of literary texts. A few students wished there were a more in-depth and structured cultural theory component in the creative writing courses.

Interviews with Adjunct Faculty
do not apply to this learning outcome.

University-wide Senior Exit Survey
is not applicable to this learning outcome.

Outcome 4: Utilize appropriate technology and research methodologies to interpret and analyze how texts and text-making can illuminate the human condition, and compose compositions that synthesize the arguments and assertions being made.

Senior Thesis Project Assessment
The senior thesis project does not explicitly assess the appropriate use of technology, but clearly assesses a student's ability to conduct research and to employ varied research methodologies in the completion of the senior thesis project and indicates that 100% of students achieved "competency" or higher in synthesizing research and integrating source material into the senior thesis project. The Senior Thesis rubric should be revised to more explicitly address Outcome 4.

Composition Syllabi Review
is not applicable to this outcome.

Content Analysis of Student Evaluations of Writing Courses
Students did not specifically indicate use of research in their course activities. However, the following activities listed routinely require research and/or use of appropriate technology: presentations on text; development of student lesson plans; piece reviews.

Composition Courses Current Student Exit Survey
22% of respondents request more emphasis on library usage. Use of technology was not specifically addressed in the survey, but should be added for future assessments of this outcome, since it addresses "lifelong learning" as an important component of composition courses. While students indicated a desire for more emphasis on research, it's clear that students were exposed to research methodologies, with 2/3rds of respondents feeling satisfied with the level of instruction in this area.

Focus Group of Current Composition Course Students
Students specifically mentioned utilizing technology in the presentation of weekly assignments, such as the weekly power point for vocabulary assignments. Students did not specifically mention research methodologies; however, one student did mention the teacher's interest in helping students develop well-supported arguments, which indicates research methodology instruction is happening in the classroom. The student noted the following: "I also learned how to structure an essay better. I learned how to be able to have my argument flow together through structure, which is something I could not figure out in high school. That was really nice to learn." Thus, students are making connections between the necessity of analyzing texts and then applying this understanding to written compositions.

2005 University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment
Findings indicated "77 percent of students were at the good or excellent levels in the content-specific and development domain," indicating students had good mastery of examining and synthesizing materials for use in their original compositions. Further, the 2005 University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment found that "68 percent of students were at the good and excellent levels in the language use and format domain," indicating that students had good mastery of language usage and format (inclusion of research). However, considering that the report's findings

also indicate no correlation between taking writing program courses and an improvement in writing skills, these percentages cannot be confidently attributed to the Writing Program.

Interviews with Creative Writing Students
All student respondents felt the research methodologies they learned in one-on-one sessions with their faculty advisor during the senior seminar were invaluable to their completion of the senior thesis project. Many wished for more research-based writing assignments in the creative writing courses. Some students named specific exercises in class that required the use of research in creative compositions, and these students wanted to learn even more strategies for incorporating research into creative compositions. Students felt that technology could've been utilized more effectively in their creative writing courses, and wished for 'experimental' writing assignments in the introduction to creative writing course. The writing faculty might begin to script a few units and assignments (similar to what's been done for composition courses) so that full-time faculty can share strategies for the incorporation of technology into the creative writing classroom.

Interviews with Adjunct Faculty
Adjunct faculty all requested more instruction in using technology effectively in the composition classroom. Many cited that they did not have time to learn new strategies while " on the job," but thought that one or two best practices in technology might help them begin to incorporate one new technique per semester. Many adjunct faculty also wished for 'unpacked' learning outcomes that would relate to the research components required in Writing 109, 110, and 111. Several faculty members seemed confused regarding the extent to which they should be teaching research methodologies in the classroom

University-wide Senior Exit Survey
is not applicable to this learning outcome.

Action Recommendations
(These action recommendations were generated after deliberations of full-time and adjunct faculty.)

1. Hire two additional full-time faculty members with specific expertise in rhetoric and/or composition (and possible experience in writing center administration).

2. Develop and insure consistent use of standardized rubrics for written assessment that are directly linked to the GE Written Communications learning outcomes.

3. Develop a creative writing major to present to CAS curriculum committee and Faculty Senate.

4. Require new adjunct faculty to utilize program-developed syllabi, course agendas, and assignments for the first two semesters of each course they teach in the writing program.

5. Adopt a standardized review process for all part-time faculty members.

6. Explore adding a 300-level writing intensive course to the General Education curriculum.

7. Develop clear and consistent senior-thesis processes and expectations for majors and minors.

8. Secure standardized funding for Prism Review production.

9. Build a stronger pedagogical connection with the Learning Enhancement Center.

VIII. Appendices

Appendix A – Course Instructors (Writing Programs)
for 2007-08 Academic Year

INSTRUCTOR	RANK OR TITLE	YEARS WITH DEPARTMENT
Full Time, Tenure-Track Faculty		
Kirsten Ogden, MFA	Associate Professor of English, Director, Writing Programs Department of Modern Languages	05
Sean Bernard, MFA	Assistant Professor of English, Department of Modern Languages	02
T. Catherine Irwin, Phd	Assistant Professor of English, Department of Modern Languages	02
Administrative Personnel at ULV		
Steve Kinzie, MA	Assistant Director, Learning Enhancement Center	10
Elizabeth Pietrzak, MFA	Theatre Manager, Theatre Dept.	02
David Werner, MA	Chair, English Department	30
Part-time Faculty		
Beatriz Amaya-Anderson, Phd	Faculty Fellow, *Grow Your Own* Program	06
Dennis Dirks	Part-time Instructor	10
Terence Dobkins	Part-time Instructor	06
Crystal Eubanks	Part-time Instructor	0.5
Sarah Fields	Part-time Instructor	03
Matthew Hagen	Part-time Instructor	08
James Harmon	Part-time Instructor	04
Ryan Harrison	Part-time Instructor	.5
Gloria Monteburno, Phd	Part-time Instructor	01
Carole Mora, MFA	Part-time Instructor	01
Jordan Mott, MFA	Part-time Instructor	01
Patty Wangler	Part-time Instructor	12

Appendix B: Senior Project Process

Description of the Senior Thesis Project

During the final year of academic study, the writing major or minor undertakes an independent and original project under the supervision of a faculty advisor, which culminates in the senior thesis. This project is described in the student's traditional, academic treatise (prospectus)—that is, a formal and process-oriented written account of the project plans, and the project outcome, accompanied by an annotated bibliography.

Past projects include, for example, grant proposals; editorial leadership position on a university publication; professional internship; original, creative compositions; original, creative performance; original, academic compositions; teaching unit and teaching demonstration. The project scope will be determined in consultation with the thesis advisor and with the student's academic goal (major or minor in writing). Once approved, a copy of the prospectus must be forwarded to the Director of Writing Programs.

After the project is completed, in the last weeks of the last semester of academic study, the student completes a project reflection. This reflection allows the student to examine the process employed in completing the project, and to analyze and critique his or her own work by placing the project into discourse with today's contemporary culture.

Credit, Deadlines, and Grades

During the Spring semester of the third year or the Fall semester of the fourth year, students enroll into WRT 499, a 2-credit hour course in which the student prepares the prospectus and undertakes reading and research relevant to the project. The student can then enroll into WRT 499 the following semester, for two more units, and work on the senior project and the statement of reflection.

The student must meet with the faculty advisor to determine an appropriate schedule and timeline relevant to the student's project. Once the project is completed, the student turns in the following to the advisor:

- Abstract
- Prospectus (revised, if needed)
- Annotated Bibliography (revised, if needed)
- Project (free of errors and in appropriate format for the project)
- Process-Reflection Paper

The faculty advisor will review the document and make suggestions for cosmetic changes. The final draft will be accompanied by a cover letter for the project, and must be turned in electronically. A copy will be forwarded to the Director of Writing Programs. All creative projects nominated by thesis advisors will be considered for the *Lulliloo Chapbook Award.*

Student & Faculty Checklist:

The nature and the scope of the thesis as explained in the prospectus:
- The prospectus includes a plan for independent and original work
- The annotated bibliography reflects adequate research foundation for pursuing the senior thesis project (30 or more sources)
- The process and reasoning for the senior thesis project are complementary to the student's course of study and offer the best opportunity for the student to synthesize knowledge and skills learned in coursework

The Cover Page and Abstract of the prospectus and senior thesis:
- The cover page includes the student's thesis title, student's name, student's contact information, and the name of the faculty advisor.
- The student and the faculty advisor have both signed and dated the cover page to indicate their agreement on the prospectus and the final project
- The Writing Program Director and the Department Chair have signed the cover page to indicate that they have reviewed and approved the senior thesis.

The Senior Thesis Project and the reflection paper:
- The annotated bibliography demonstrates that the pertinent literature and source materials are clearly and concisely summarized and recorded.
- The questions, ideas, hypotheses the student planned to test or answer are clearly addressed in the composition of the senior thesis, and are analyzed in the reflective paper.
- The student has selected an appropriate style and format for the thesis project and for the reflection paper.
- The student demonstrates that he or she has effective writing skills (ability to design a coherent organizational structure; mechanics and language use combine to produce a lucid and clear style appropriate to the project and to the reflection paper).
- The student's compositions demonstrate critical thinking with an awareness of the broader issues in writing/genres. The project should attest to an awareness of interdisciplinary issues that impinge the project's topic/discourse.
- The student's reflection paper demonstrates an understanding of the theoretical discourse in writing and asserts the student's ideas about writing theories.

The senior thesis and reflection paper confirms the student's ability to communicate orally. Prior to the writing of the senior thesis and reflection paper, the student meets with faculty in the program to engage in serious dialogue about writing. Following the completion of the senior project, the student orally presents the work to the ULV faculty and community and facilitates questions about the project.

Senior Thesis Rubric:

Scoring:
4= Exceptional Mastery (Demonstrates skill or property to a high degree)
3=Mastery (Demonstrates skill or property to a highly satisfactory degree)
2=Competency (Demonstrates skill or property at a minimally competent level)
1=Inadequate (Unable to demonstrate skill or property at an acceptable level)

A. Project confidently develops a thesis with appropriate research or observation as well as appropriate theoretical grounding.
4   3   2   1

B. The project makes a clear and well-supported case for the importance of the thesis/project by incorporating relevant details that enrich the document (appropriate to the genre).
4   3   2   1

C. The project pulls from more than one perspective to address the thesis adequately, and conveys an interdisciplinary or inter-area perspective.
4   3   2   1

D. The project reaches an identifiable and defensible conclusion with a unifying theme or element that is explicitly communicated through in-depth analysis and reflective commentary appropriate to the genre of the document.
4   3   2   1

E. The project demonstrates mastery usage of written Standard American English (mechanics, language use).
4   3   2   1

F. The sequencing and transitions in the content of the document and/or in the document's organization move logically toward coherence and cohesion appropriate to the genre of the document.
4   3   2   1

G. The process involved in the composition of the project is explained and uses research and documentation appropriate to the project to support reflections about the process.
4   3   2   1

H. The project illustrates development of effective writing skills in the genre through distinct, unique, and original style and word choice (appropriate to the genre).
4   3   2   1

I. The project demonstrates student's development of effective reading and analysis skills.
4   3   2   1

SENIOR THESIS ASSESSMENT TABLE

A random sample of 5 Senior Thesis Projects from Majors and Minors during the years 2003-2007 were assessed by the Writing Program Director. Please note: if a student was found "inadequate" in any area of the project, the student was required to revise until the project reached competency. Only one of the 5 samples achieved an initial "inadequate" score in one area, and the student was asked to revise to achieve competency. Only final scores are included in this table.

Areas of Assessment (Letters correspond with the rubric areas explained on the senior-thesis rubric)	4- Exceptional mastery (# of projects achieving 4)	3- Mastery (# of projects achieving 3)	2- Competency (# of projects achieving 2)	1- Inadequate
A	2	1	2	
B	1	3	1	
C	1	1	3	
D	2	2	1	
E	3	1	1	
F	3	2		
G	2	1	2	
H	1	4		
I	3	2		

Appendix C: Minor Requirements

Writing Minor and Writing Certificate (Effective Fall 2008)

Core Requirements:
For the minor, a minimum of 20 Semester hours of upper division courses is required for students beginning at the 300-level, or a minimum of 24 semester hours for students beginning at the 200 level, 16 of which must be upper division courses. For the certificate, a minimum of 12 semester hours after the completion of the GE Writing Area Requirement, all of which must be upper division.

Required Core:

WRT 406 Writing Theory and Practice, *or*	(4)
CMPL 390 Critical Theory: Approaches to Literature	
WRT 499 Senior Seminar in Writing	(2-4)

Electives:
Creative Writing Emphasis
WRT 201 Introduction to Creative Writing (4)
WRT 302 Experimental Writing Genres (4)
WRT 303 Poetry Writing (4)
WRT 304 Fiction Writing (4)
THAR 360 Playwriting and Screenwriting I (4)
THAR 460 Playwriting and Screenwriting II (4)

Professional Writing Emphasis
WRT 300 Writing for the Visual Arts (4)
WRT 311 Composing in Digital Environments (4)
WRT 314 Language Structures (4)
THAR 365 Desktop Publishing for Theatre (2)

Electives Common to Both Emphases:
WRT 209 Introduction to Writing Workshop (2)
WRT 305 Prism Review Staff (2-4)
WRT 307 Special Topics in Writing & Literature (4)
WRT 309 Writing Workshop (2-4)
WRT 324 Literary Non-Fiction Writing (4)

Appendix D: Composition Syllabi Review

Genevieve Kaplan
660 W. Bonita Ave. #29B
Claremont, CA 91711
(909) 399-0868
genevieve.kaplan@gmail.com

June 13, 2008

SYLLABUS REVIEW FOR 2008 WRITING PROGRAM REIVEW
DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES

SYLLABUS REVIEW FOR 2008 WRITING PROGRAM REIVEW
DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES

General Observations

Writing 110 and Writing 111, according to their Course Content Outlines, have very clear goals, activities, and recommended texts. By looking solely at the course syllabi, it seems that most courses (thought not all) are following the Course Content Outlines and achieving the goals of the University of La Verne Writing Program. When disparities do occur, they appear to be mainly related to poor textbook choice or due to a misunderstanding of essay (length and quantity) requirements.

Analysis of Syllabi

Inclusion of, clarity of, and consistency of Course Information

Overall, the syllabi reviewed include appropriate course information, including instructor contact information, class meeting times, and course descriptions. For English 110, all five syllabi reviewed clearly stated the course number, course name, and instructor name and contact information. However, one 110 syllabus neglected to include any sort of course description, and two syllabi did not list class meeting times. Most problematically, one 110 syllabus (Hagen) had some formatting and spacing issues, making information hard to locate (and reflecting poorly on the credibility of the instructor); the same syllabus also appeared to include part of an English 109 syllabus instead of completing the 110 syllabus.

The six English 111 syllabi reviewed consistently included the course number, course name, and instructor name and contact information on the first page. One 111 syllabus did not include class meeting times (and one indicated the class meets only for 50 minutes each week— is this possible?). All 111 syllabi included an adequate course description, though only three included the prerequisite information for Writing 111.

Inclusion of, clarity of, and consistency of Student Expectations and Academic Policies

Of the six 110 syllabi, one omitted any sort of Plagiarism policy, but all were clear about student expectations and university policies. Books were listed appropriately on all 110 syllabi, but no indication was made as to how the books might be acquired (ie, available at the ULV bookstore). Two 110 syllabi did not require a writing handbook. One syllabus (Menendez) takes a rather negative tone; the instructor writes "It is *theoretically* possible for everyone who participates, comes to class prepared, tries his/her best on writing assignments, and turns in work on time to pass this course (italics mine).

For the 111 syllabi, two omitted the Plagiarism policy. Books were clearly listed, but one syllabus did not indicate the authors for the necessary textbooks, and one syllabus (Wangler) listed a writing handbook as the only required text in the course (this seems problematic!). All 110 & 111 syllabi reviewed were clear about student expectations and appropriate behavior.

<u>Inclusion of, clarity of, and consistency of assignments and assessment strategies</u>

I was impressed by the variety of assignments given in these two courses—many different (and appropriate) uses of writing are explored. The Course Content Outline suggests students should complete 4-6 essays in Writing 110, and at least 2 essays should be in the 5-7 page range. It is here that I begin to see some troubling disparity in Writing 110. One course (Geaghan) does not require any longer essays, instead relying on three 1-2 page responses that count as "essays"; one (Werner) requires nine essays.

In Writing 111, four essays should be research-based, according to the Course Content Outline. One 111 syllabus (Jagannathan) indicates that only three essays are required in the class, and only two are research-based; another (Fields) requires an autobiographical essay and only three research papers. One 111 syllabus omits a daily schedule entirely, and another makes no mention of the requirement of library research, but on the whole the 111 syllabi appear to introduce students to research and research methods (if leaning a little too heavily on the literary approaches) in an inspiring manner.

Recommendations

1. **Require appropriate textbooks for each course.** For 110, be sure that a standard composition reader, as well as a writing handbook, is selected. Consider limiting the use of additional textbooks (Really, what is *Catch-22* doing in a Writing 110 course?). In 111, be sure the instructor chooses core textbooks that inspire research (rather than literary analysis) as well as an appropriate writing handbook.
2. **Clarify essay requirements.** While essay requirements are clearly stated in the Course Content Outlines for both Writing 110 and Writing 111, they are not being followed by individual instructors. Make it clear to individual instructors when their essay requirements are too harsh, too lenient, or inappropriate for the course.
3. **Provide templates** of up-to-date syllabi to encourage courses that clearly follow the Course Content Outlines. A template that could be easily downloaded and modified by individual instructors would encourage the inclusion of necessary elements like the course description or academic integrity information; additionally, including a sample daily schedule with essay due dates and other pertinent information might help to clarify the essay requirements for each course.
4. **Follow up with instructors** who are not adhering to current Course Content Outlines.

Appendix E – Content Analysis of Student Comments in Course Evaluations of Writing Courses

University of La Verne

Writing Program:

Content Analysis of Student Comments in Upper Division Writing Course Evaluations

Submitted to: Prof. Kirsten Ogden
               March 11, 2008

By: Nick Guzman
               Psy.D. Program in Clinical-
               Community Psychology, ULV

Supervised by: Aghop Der-Karabetian

Purpose
The purpose of the content analysis was to identify themes present in the open-ended questions of course evaluations to help improve the Writing Program.

Method and Procedure
Students enrolled in courses ENG 301, 304, 307, 309, 314, and 316 completed course evaluations, which included several open-ended questions that requested student feedback regarding perceived strengths and areas of growth for that particular course and course's instructor. These course evaluations were completed between the Fall term in 2004 and the Spring term of 2006. Student responses to these open-ended questions were analyzed and grouped into themes to provide the Writing Program a glimpse of the students' perceptive of what works well for the program and what areas might need attention.

Highlight of Findings
The following tables summarize both the students' responses and the themes extracted from them. Each question is presented in a separate table with themes and corresponding responses that contributed to the themes (Tables 1, 2, 3, and 4).

Strengths of the Writing Program:
- The quality of the instructor assigned to the course: Preference of instructor characteristics included ability to stimulate students' interest in the content designated by the course, perceived supportiveness, and instructor's enthusiasm for teaching the material, as well as passion for the material itself.
- The quality of the course activities, especially in-class discussions: Course activities promoted healthy student interactions, which made the course appealing to the student.
- Acquisition of skills, knowledge, and the development of the student as a writer.

Areas that need attention
- Ensuring good structure and organization in the courses.

Overall, the evaluation of the Writing Program based solely on the students' feedback in their courses suggests that the program is successful in meeting its learning objectives.

Table 1

Course Evaluation Open-ended Question #1:
What were the most satisfactory aspects of this course?

Themes Student Responses	# of Responses	%	Themes Student Responses	# of Responses	%
Development as a Writer	(13)		*Quality of Student Interaction*	(7)	
• Review of language skills	2	15	• Favored group work/group activities	2	29
• Development of comfort in one's			• Favored atmosphere of the class	1	17
own writing	1	8	• Favored class participation	1	17
• Learned to expand oneself	1	8	• Favored formation of community		
• Development as a writer	4	31	among the students	1	17
• Students felt challenged	3	23	• Respect between the students	1	17
• Development of ideas			• Opportunity to share and listen		
1 8			to others	1	17
• Fueled passion for writing	1	8			
			Course Activities	(26)	
Quality of the Instructor	(31)		• Workshops	3	12
• The instructor in general	8	26	• The workload	1	4
• Instructor was knowledgeable	3	10	• Impromptu writing assignments	2	8
• Instructor was helpful, supportive,			• Opportunity to write interesting papers	1	4
and encouraging	4	13	• Development of student lesson plans	1	4
• Provided constructive feedback	4	13	• Literature texts	1	4
• Made everyone feel comfortable	1	3	• Lectures	1	4
• Made the material enjoyable to learn	5	16	• Editing	1	4
• Instructor's attitude	1	3	• Activities were interesting/fun	3	12
• Ability to sustain students' interest	1	3	• Use of materials	1	4
• Method of instruction	1	3	• In-class discussions	5	19
• Utilization of different teaching			• Journals	1	4
methods	1	3	• Piece reviews	1	4
• Was fair	1	3	• Activities (unspecified)	1	4
• Respectful	1	3	• Presentations on text	1	4
			• Hands on experience	1	4
Ability to Express Oneself	(9)		• Review of assignments	1	4
• Freedom of expression/creativity	3	33			
• Freedom to choose what to write	4	44	*Course Structure/Demands*	(3)	
• Found voice for self-expression	2	22	• Flexibility of course to accommodate		
			needs outside the classroom	1	33
Acquisition of New Knowledge/Skills	(13)		• Adequate time to complete work	1	33
• Opportunity to experiment			• Course structure	1	33
/Try something different	3	23			
• Developed a broad range of			*Preparation for the Future*	(5)	
knowledge	1	8	• Development of ideas/material to		
• Learned how to create a script	2	15	use in the future	3	60
• Learned great exercises	1	8	• Preparation to write for a movie		
• Learned new strategies/techniques	4	31	or play	1	20
• Learned a great deal	1	8	• Provided a foundation for future		
• Amount of applicable work			writing	1	20
exceeded student's expectations	1	8			

Note. Number in parentheses represents total number of responses for that specific theme.

Table 2

Course Evaluation Open-ended Question #2:
How can this course be improved?

Themes Student Responses	# of Responses	%
Improve Structure/Organization	(12)	
• More organization/structure/specific deadlines/a set agenda	11	92
• Provide a syllabus	1	8
No Suggestions	(29)	
• Needs nothing	20	69
• Good as it is/Don't change anything	9	31
Increase in Course Activities/Materials	(4)	
• Opportunity to observe a screen/stage play	1	25
• Have more in-depth lectures	1	25
• Provide text on how to write and develop ideas	1	25
• More time spent on grammar and sentence structure	1	25
Style Changes Concerning Instructor	(3)	
• Provide lecture prior to assigning assignments	1	33
• More feedback on writing	1	33
• Instructor have more realistic expectations of students' performance	1	33
Administrative Changes	(5)	
• Funding for release of printed version of Prism Review	1	20
• Meet more often than once per week	2	40
• Allow course to count for Literature credits	1	20
• Require freshman to begin at a lower level course	1	20
Increased Emphasis	(3)	
• More variety in writing genres	1	33
• More writing	1	33
• More emphasis on mainstream literary nonfiction	1	33
Decreased Emphasis	(4)	
• Remove the reading of interviews	1	25
• Less peer reviewing	1	25
• Less reading	1	25
• Less emphasis on theatre	1	25

Note. Number in parentheses represents total number of responses for that specific theme.

Table 3

Course Evaluation Open-ended Question #3:
What were the most satisfactory teaching attributes of this instructor?

Themes Student Responses	# of Responses	%	Themes Student Responses	# of Responses	%
Instructor's Demeanor	(30)		*Teaching Competence*	(23)	
• Delightful	1	3	• Provided great lectures/discussions	2	9
• Positive/Enthusiastic	6	20	• Knowledgeable, experienced, and well trained	14	61
• Personality	5	17	• Effective classroom management	1	4
• Patient	3	30	• Presented material in a smooth and concise manner	1	4
• Energetic/Passionate	10	33	• Professional	1	4
• Good sense of humor	3	30	• Utilized different teaching techniques/activities/examples	4	17
• Humble	2	7			
			Teaching Effectiveness	(9)	
Supportive	(37)		• Lessons useful for the future	4	44
• Caring/Understanding/Encouraging	13	35	• Expanded students' development of knowledge and skills	2	22
• Helpful	7	19	• Challenged students	2	22
• Offered good advice/suggestions	4	11	• Stimulated creativity	1	11
• Involved/Invested/Available	2	5			
• Promoted self-esteem	2	5	*Flexibility*	(8)	
• Role model/Mentor	2	5	• Fair/Unbiased	1	13
• Promoted freedom of expression	3	8	• Allowed students to take the lead on discussions	1	13
• Offered useful feedback	4	11	• Openness/Open minded	3	38
			• Flexible/Creative	2	25
Sustains Interest	(16)		• Utilized feedback from the students	1	13
• Made the class/material/learning fun	13	81			
• Motivated students	2	13	*Organized*	(2)	
• Provided food	1	6	• Prepared/Organized	2	100

Note. Number in parentheses represents total number of responses for that specific theme.

Table 4

Course Evaluation Open-ended Question #4:
What can the instructor do to improve his or her teaching effectiveness?

_____

Themes Student Responses	# of Responses	%
_____	_____	_____
Improve Structure/Organization	(9)	
• More structured/organized	8	89
• Work on larger pieces of writing from the beginning of the course	1	11
No Suggestions	(36)	
• Nothing	29	81
• Good as is/Don't change anything	6	17
• Don't know	1	3
More Course Activities/Materials	(4)	
• More formal lectures	1	25
• Use more material/handouts	2	50
• More workshops	1	25
More Emphasis	(2)	
• Greater focus on a variety of genres	1	50
• More focus on instructor's style and less reliance on books/materials	1	50
Administrative	(6)	
• Be more accessible to students	1	17
• Offer more feedback	1	17
• Have more realistic expectations of students	1	17
• Have readings on Friday nights so more students can attend	1	17
• Allow instructor to teach more liberal studies programs	2	

Note. Number in parentheses represents total number of responses for that specific theme.

University of La Verne

Writing Program
Composition courses

Current Composition Student Exit-Survey Report

March 13, 2008

Submitted To: Prof. Kirsten Ogden
Associate Professor of English
Modern Language Department
University of La Verne

Prepared By: Shanna Treworgy, M.S.
Sarah Foroosh, M.S.
Psy.D. Students
University of La Verne

Supervised By: Aghop Der-Karabetian, Ph.D.,
Professor of Psychology, Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences
University of La Verne

Purpose

The purpose of this survey was to evaluate students' perceptions of the effectiveness of their course work in the Writing Program.

Method and Procedure

Four courses were surveyed, including English 106, English 109, English 110, and English 111. The survey was a brief two-sided questionnaire including both forced choice and open-ended questions. Students were also given an opportunity to express what skills they wish would be emphasized more as well as an opportunity to make general suggestions or comments. A total of 229 students participated in the study with 5 respondents indicating they took English 106, 49 respondents indicating they took English 109, 161 respondents indicating they took English 110, and 208 indicating they took English 111 at ULV. The questionnaire was administered during the fall semester of 2007.

Highlights of Findings

The findings are summarized in Tables 1 - 6.

Participants mentioned many positive aspects of ULV's Writing Program as well as some issues that need attention.

• The Learning Enhancement Center seems to be underutilized due to the need to schedule appointments weeks in advanced and difficulties finding the Center. Students seemed to find the tutors helpful for the most part and their answers varied in regards to what areas of development were focused upon.

• Students were mixed in their evaluation of their writing courses, some finding them helpful and others did not differentiate the curriculum from previously taken high school classes.

• Some students found their professors to be effective and helpful even mentioning some by name, while other students expressed dissatisfaction with their teachers.

• Number of students mentioned having a set theme in their course that they were instructed to write about. Some students expressed the desire to have more creative freedom to write papers on topics of their own choosing.

• More than one-third of students expressed the wish to have courses emphasize more strongly incorporating research support in their writing as well as writing organization.

Table 1

How well have the following courses that you passed at ULV prepared you for research procedures for writing papers in other courses?

Class	n	Mean	SD	% of Respondents Who Did Not Take This Course at ULV
English 106	5	4.0	.0	97.8
English 109	47	3.8	.8	79.5
English 110	161	3.7	1.0	29.7
English 111	207	3.9	1.0	9.6

Note. All courses were rated generally favorably with means of 3.7 and above. The highest mean was for English 106 with a mean of 4.0. A rating of 1.0 indicated that respondents felt that the course did not prepare them for research and writing papers in other courses. A rating of 5.0 indicated that respondents felt that the course prepared them extremely well for research and writing papers in other courses.

Table 2

How well have the following courses that you passed at ULV prepared you for longer papers or research assignments (7 pages or more)?

Class	n	Mean	SD	% of Respondents Who Did Not Take This Course at ULV
English 106	5	3.8	.5	97.8
English 109	49	3.3	.9	78.6
English 110	159	3.2	1.1	30.6
English 111	208	3.8	1.1	9.2

Note. All courses were rated generally favorably with means of 3.2 and above. The highest mean was for English 106 and English 111 with a mean of 3.8. A rating of 1.0 indicated that respondents felt that the course did not prepare them for research and writing papers in other courses. A rating of 5.0 indicated that respondents felt that the course prepared them extremely well for research and writing papers in other courses.

Table 3

Which skills do you wish your writing course had emphasized more strongly?

Skill	Percent of Respondents Who Indicated "Yes"	Total # of Respondents to Question
Grammar	19.2	229
Basic Editing Skills	19.2	229
Reading Comprehension	15.7	229
Writing Organization	37.1	229
Revision Processes for Writing Papers	26.6	229
Research Citation Methods Such as MLA or APA	22.7	229
Using the Library	22.7	229
Incorporating Research Support Into Your Writing	36.7	229

Table 4

Question	Percent of Respondents Who Indicated "Yes"	Total # of Respondents to Question
Would you like more formalized Writing help in your upper-division Courses (such as writing tutoring, A writing workshop, or a writing lab)?	61.6	226
Would you like an upper-division Writing course in the Junior year that Focuses upon writing for your major Or discipline, such as Business Writing, Writing for Administrators, or Writing For the Education Major?	62.4	225
Did you take advantage of the Learning Enhancement Center's Writing Tutors During your ULV Writing Courses by Attending more than one tutoring session In a given semester?	14.4	226

Table 5

General themes provided for the question: "If you took advantage of the Learning Enhancement Center's Writing Tutor services, how useful did you find that assistance?"

- Not very helpful or effective
- Not focused on what I needed
- Basic editing
- Focused on major problems of paper
- Somewhat helpful
- Helped with structure and flow of paper
- Helped organize and analyze ideas
- Helped with editing and form new ideas
- Assisted with citations
- Proofreading with a tutor allowed student to notice own mistakes
- Helped with grammar and organization of paper
- Productive for each assignment but didn't help overall writing skills
- Very useful, even more than teacher assistance at times

Note. Responses to this question were provided by 17.2 percent of respondents (N=229).

Table 6

General themes found within responses for the "General Comments" section

_____

- English 111 was very thorough and prepared me for future courses
- English 110 and 111 were both helpful
- Nothing new learned from English 110 or 111 since high school
- More preparation needed prior to English 111.
- Excellent English professors and curriculum at ULV
- Courses are challenging yet effective
- Courses need to be more organized
- Helped develop writing skills
- Classes were great and interesting
- Need better professors
- More activities in class so that grade would not depend on writing assignments as much
- Courses were less informative than high school AP English course
- More prepared for longer assignments in higher courses
- Have more tutors available to accommodate walk-in appointments at the Learning Enhancement Center
- Unsure about location of Learning Enhancement Center
- Should write papers on topics that pertain to current social issues
- Writing courses that focus on a theme are easier to be become interested in
- I did not have a strong understanding of the theme my writing course was focused on and was unable to support my arguments.
- I do not feel that I am getting what I pay for
- Peer editing is good but should be supervised by the teacher
- It might have been helpful to have writing courses for specific majors, especially in the sciences
- If the courses are going to have a theme over the semester, the theme should be listed in the course list during registration so that a student may pick a class best suited to their interests and learning desires
- Writing one 30 page paper on a single topic in a GE course is ridiculous
- I wish the writing topic was more free and open and allowed more creativity
- We do not really talk about how we write or go over mistakes in class.
- The teachers have different grading policies. Teachers need to collaborate on grading policies to help be prepared for the next level.
- Classes were vague and general

Writing Program
Composition Exit Questionnaire

Writing: Composition Exit Questionnaire

Dear Writing Student: Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. This writing questionnaire asks about your experience with the following ULV Courses: English 106, English 109, English 110, English 111.

1. What is your major?

2. How well have the following courses that you passed at ULV prepared you for research procedures for writing papers in other courses?
1= Not Prepared   4= Extremely well prepared   N/A= Did not enroll in that course or took
                                                    the course at another institution.

Writing/English 106	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**N/A**
Writing/English 109	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**N/A**
Writing/English 110	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**N/A**
Writing/English 111	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**N/A**

3. How well have the following courses that you passes at ULV prepared you for longer papers or research assignments (7+ pages or more)?
1=Not Prepared   4= Extremely well prepared   N/A= Did not enroll in that course or took
                                                    the course at another institution.

Writing/English 106	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**N/A**
Writing/English 109	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**N/A**
Writing/English 110	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**N/A**
Writing/English 111	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**N/A**

4.Which Skills do you wish your writing course had emphasized more strongly? Circle all that apply:

Grammar
Basic Editing Skills
Reading Comprehension
Writing Organization
Revision Processes for Writing Papers
Research Citation Methods such as MLA or APA
Using the Library
Incorporating Research Support into your Writing

5.Would you like more formalized writing help in your upper-division courses (such as writing tutoring, a writing workshop, or a writing lab)?

YES   NO

6. Would an upper division writing course in the Junior year that focuses upon writing for you major or discipline, such as Business Writing, Writing for Administrators, or Writing for the Education major, help improve your writing?

YES   NO

7. Did you take advantage of the Learning Enhancement Center's Writing Tutors during your ULV Writing Courses by attending more than one tutoring session in a given semester?

YES   NO

8. If you took advantage of the Learning Enhancement Center's Writing Tutor services, how useful did you find the assistance?
Please Explain   OR   **N/A:**
_____
_____
_____
_____

9. We welcome any general comments you have about your writing courses at the University of La Verne:
_____
_____
_____
_____

10. If you would like the results of this survey, and if you don't mind us contacting you for further information and clarification, please include your full name, mailing address, email address, and telephone number. We appreciate your feedback here. Thank you!
_____
_____

_____

Appendix G: Focus Group of Current Composition Course Students

Writing Program of the University of La Verne

Focus Group of Current Students

January 22, 2008

Submitted To: Kristen Ogden
Associate Professor of English
Modern Language Department
University of La Verne

Prepared By: Shanna Treworgy, M.S.
Sarah Foroosh, M.S.
Kristen Masters, M.S.
Psy.D. Students
University of La Verne

Supervised By: Aghop Der-Karabetian, Ph.D.,
Professor of Psychology, Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences
University of La Verne

Table of Contents

Purpose

To gather information on the opinions of students enrolled in the Writing program. The data gathered from the focus group is part of a larger effort to gather various types of feedback on the program. Data from this focus group is intended for use in developing and improving the program.

Methods

Participants

Focus group participants included four students, three were currently enrolled in WRT 110 and one in WRT 106 of the Writing Program at the University of La Verne. Three participants were female and one male. Participants were recruited for participation in the focus group by faculty of the Writing program.

Instrument

During the focus group, participants were asked seven key questions along with follow up questions as needed by focus group facilitators. The seven key questions were developed by various faculty within the writing program. Focus group facilitators met with professor Ogden of the writing program to discuss the intent of each question as well as to develop appropriate follow up questions. A protocol of questions was developed from this meeting and was used to guide the focus group (see Appendix A).

Procedure

Participants met in a classroom at the University of La Verne. Participants were asked to read and sign an informed consent form prior to participating in the group (see Appendix B). Lunch was offered during the group as reword for participation. Facilitators introduced themselves and discussed the purpose and format of the focus group with participants. Participants were verbally notified of limits to confidentiality as well as efforts that would be taken to maintain participant anonymity including removing participants names from all resulting products of the focus group. One primary facilitator asked participants the key questions as well as follow up questions. A second facilitator wrote general themes from participant responses on an easel as well as asked follow up questions. This process encouraged participants to ensure that facilitators accurately understood and recorded their responses. A third facilitator documented the dialogue on a word processor. The focus group was audio taped for later transcription (see Appendix C).

Coding and Analysis

Participants responses were coded using a verbatim transcript of the audio tape of the focus group. Responses to the questions were summarized into concise thematic statements and later reorganized into principal patterns that emerged across responses. These patterns for each question were then organized in tabular format (see tables 1-7)

Results

The transcription of the focus group was analyzed by two separate readers for themes. The major themes of participants' responses for all 7 questions are documented in Tables 1-7.

Table 1

Major Themes of Question 1 Participant Responses: Do you feel like you understand how to be a better writer since completing your respective writing course?

Participants felt that they are better writers since completing their respective course

Learned how to free-write
      Understand how to be open minded in writing
      Able to better avoid writers block

I can edit appropriately

Able to make connections between different mediums to facilitate analytical writing

Learned how to use grammar appropriately

Learned to write vividly
      Learned where to insert details without being fluffy
      Improved use of adjectives and specific examples

Improved ability to structure essays
      Able to flow-write and make arguments more cohesive
         Learned how to use transition sentences
      Learned to write an introduction paragraph
      "Brick Method:" one idea built upon the last to provide continuity and organization

Access to resources
      Teachers were available
         Rapid email response
         Available for after class help

Conferences were helpful
      Teacher supervised
      Peer feedback
      Focus on specific improvements

Table 2

Major Themes of Question 2 Participant Responses: Compared to high school writing, what do you now feel are the most important writing concepts and skills?

Writing vividly

      Create a memory for the reader

      Elicit a connection from the reader

      Use more details to guide reader

Writing level and range of topics are similar to Advanced Placement high school courses, however students are currently better able to focus since enrolled in fewer classes in college

      Less busy work now than in high school

      More effort required in college courses

Greater focus on grammar in college than in high school

      Teacher stressed proper grammar in all written work/interactions unlike in high school

Much practice making connections and essay writing, which led to a final product

      All assignments were useful and purposeful

      "It all made sense, everything flowed forward"

      The goal of assignment was clearly stated by the instructor

Editing each paragraph of essay for focus to improve flow and clarity.

      Learned to regain focus and avoid becoming sidetracked

      High school classes were focused on content rather than grammar or length of assignment

      Use techniques such as reading the paper backwards to look for appropriate connections

---

Table 3

Major Themes of Question 3 Participant Responses: Have you written papers, either short or long, in other classes? How has what you've learned in writing class translated to your other classes and subjects? Have you used any outside resources such as peer editing?

Not currently enrolled in other classes that require writing

Have been able to relate skills learned to other classes

    Use detailed writing skills to history class assignment

    Focused each paragraph on a different author in sociology class assignment, which

    impressed teacher

Overall students believed that they would use these writing skills in future coursework and felt better prepared because of it

Students expressed that their peers agreed that the writing skills learned were useful in future courses

Some students use LEC tutors as an outside resource

    Tutors were helpful, useful, and available

    Tutors were able to indicate where specific work was needed

No outside resources needed since teachers were available to discuss each essay by both email and meetings

---

Table 4

Major Themes of Question 4 Participant Responses: Do you think you understand writing as a process? How is writing a "process" and how do you use "process" in your writing?

Free writing is part of the writing process

Peer editing is used in the process

    A lot of feedback is provided

    Peer editing conferences involved process of moving parts, changing, or rewriting essay

Revision as a process

    Subtract and add paragraphs

    Consider starting the essay over

    Techniques for revision: print paper out in large font and cut and past different

    paragraphs to improve flow

Brainstorm ideas before beginning writing

    Write out a list of ideas, highlight connections between ideas, write and outline, form a

    thesis statement, then begin writing

Edit as go along to reduce the need for later revisions

Developed personal writing process in high school and continued it in this class

Learned a four step writing process

    In class journal assignments helped to brainstorm ideas for papers, get teacher feedback and

    grade, group conferences, revision and turn in final draft

        Helpful to have multiple sources of feedback especially teacher's

        In class journals helped to save time on writing introductions to papers

---

Table 5

Major Themes of Question 5 Participant Responses: What do you think were your instructor's goals for the course and how did you know?

Developed class goals

    Teacher asked us to assess ourselves as writers

    Two class goals agreed upon: learn how to structure writing and work on flow

    This was helpful

Teacher's goal was to work on grammar

    Grammar was stressed and taught regularly in class

    Spent one hour of class focusing only on grammar of essay

Teacher's goal was to focus on writing as a process as seen by conferences and revisions.

Teacher goal was to write how you talk, or use your own style, to better connect with reader

    This improves student's ability to write, converse, and discuss essays

Teachers goal was to write with a strong argument and make good connections

    "She didn't tell us this, but I think that by being invested in what we were writing about, made us want to write the paper. And by being passionate about what you are writing about you are fueled to go farther and make more connections and do better. And I appreciated that."

Teacher goal was vocabulary

    Had weekly power point presentations by students to learn ten new words every week

    leading up to a vocabulary test

Peer conferences were helpful in improving writing

    Having a second reader is helpful in finding flaws you can't see, to get new ideas, and get new stylistic ideas

---

Table 6

Major Themes of Question 6 Participant Responses: How Could the Course Content be Improved, Taking Into Account the GE Goals of the Course?

Seeing the GE rubric is helpful to:

    Learn to improve essays and meet all points of assignment

    Understand where you lost points on assignments

    Understand professor's expectations if get rubric before turning in assignment

    Compare student's ratings of their work to the professor's rating for each assignment

    "Letter to the editor" assignment was helpful for students to rate themselves on the requirements for each assignment

The Writing Program could be improved

    Provide more examples of how to develop writing ideas

    More instruction on MLA and APA formats either in class or offer workshops

    Teachers should have consistent expectations and standards for all students

No improvement needed

    Goals are being met in terms of organization, variety of activities, developing style

The teacher was effective and enjoyable

Table 7

Major Themes of Question 7 Participant Responses: Compared to your other courses, how rigorous was the work expected for writing class?

More time consuming than other classes

    Peer editing each classmate's essay in conferences to provide feedback was time consuming

        "But I don't think [peer conferences] being time consuming was a bad thing; it was

        beneficial and definitely helped our papers.

    Multiple steps involved in the writing process

    Meeting with teacher

    Staying up-to-date with assignments

    Regularly assigned homework

    Spent approximately 4 to 6 hours per week on tasks

Class was difficult because previous writing education was poor and high school courses were taken a long time ago.

Class was not difficult

    Love of writing

    Had a desire to improve paper so willing to spend more time on assignments

---

Recommendations

Continuation of successful program implementation

1. Overall the program evaluation indicated that the Writing Program improved students' understanding of the writing as a process and writing techniques, ability to structure essays, ability to flow write, development of personal style, as well as overall improvements in written work.
2. Overall, students described in class peer conferences to be helpful in getting peer and teacher feedback, learning revision techniques, finding flaws that writer can not see, and obtaining new stylistic ideas. It is recommended that peer conferences continue to be used as a teaching tool in all writing program classes.

Program improvements

1. Student's particularly appreciated and benefited from teacher's availability. It is recommended that teachers continue to be accessible by email, after class help, and thorough, rapid feedback on assignments.
2. Student's would likely benefit from regular exposure to the GE goal rubric to better understand the teacher's expectations for assignments and improve their writing process to meet all goals of the assignment.
3. More instruction could be provided to students on MLA and APA formats either through workshops or in class instruction.
4. Two students expressed a desire that teachers hold all students accountable for assignment and to similar expectations.
5. It is recommended that students have choice in the topics of their writing assignments. Having passion on a subject may increase the student's motivation for and connection to assignments.

Improvements on teaching writing as a process

1. All students seemed to know a variety of components of the writing process, however, expressed the development of individualized styles of writing processes. Students may benefit from help in identifying, labeling, systematizing, and honing their own personal writing process.

Appendix A

Writing Program Question Outline

1) Do you feel like you understand how to be a better writer?
- o <u>Follow Ups</u>:
  - ▪ *What have you learned/honed?*
  - ▪ *In what ways do you feel your writing has improved compared to week 1.*
  - ▪ *Do you feel there are any specific strategies you have learned in your class*
- o <u>Looking for</u>: confidence in writing, specific strategies students learned/use that help to be a better writer (ex. revise or pre-write),

2) Compared to high school writing, what do you now feel are the most important writing concepts and skills?
- o <u>Follow Ups</u>:
  - ▪ *What are some specific examples of what you now consider to be the most important concepts.*
  - ▪ (If nothing is recalled prompt with:) *Does anything come to mind in terms of the writing process?* (looking for anything beyond grammar)
- o <u>Looking for</u>: In high school look for surface skills but in college looking for reading skills, more complex analysis, audience considerations, tone, revision, incorporating details and source material.

3) A: Have you written papers, either short or long, in other classes? B: How has what you've learned in writing class translated to your other classes and subjects?
- o <u>Follow Ups</u>:
  - ▪ *What specific writing skills do you use for writing assignments in other classes?*
- o <u>Looking for:</u> specific strategies for writing they have used in other classes, research strategies. (Such as incorporating peer editing, revision, source materials)

4) Do you think you understand writing as a process? How is writing a "process" and how do you use "process" in your writing?
- o <u>Follow Ups</u>:
  - ▪ *Define "process"*
  - ▪ *How is writing a process?*
  - ▪ *How do you use the writing "process"*
- o <u>Looking for:</u> specific process techniques such as pre writing, outlines, rough drafts, feedback, revision, content revision, or language revision only.

5) A: What do you think were your instructor's goals for the course? B: How did you know?
- o <u>Follow Ups</u>:
  - ▪ *If the student doesn't know, leave it there as this is useful info.*
  - ▪ *What do you think you were supposed to learn and how would it be useful?*

- o Looking for: if the instructors share the outcomes with students so students know why it will help them. Instructor should be saying "today we will work on X which will help you with Y."

6) How could the course content be improved, taking into account the GE Goals of the course?
- o *** Go over list of GE goals with the group. Be careful not to get bogged down on each one but rather highlight the general goal. ***
- o Follow Ups:
    - ▪ *What specifically could be improved or changed?*
- o Looking for : Students input on the goals and what they wish they had more or less of. Maybe students will discuss the readings or paper requirements. Generally ask students how goals could better be met without altering the goals themselves.
    - ▪ Ex: GE goals say it has to be X # papers. So if students say "less papers" point out the goal and ask if they would like less papers of a certain type etc.

7) Compared to your other courses, how rigorous was the work expected for Writing class?
- o Follow Ups:
    - ▪ *How is the work load compared to other classes you are taking?*
        - • *Compared to other classes, do you think you spend more or less time.*
    - ▪ *How do you feel the grading of writing assignments relates to grading of writing assignments in other classes?*
    - ▪ *How challenging was the work?*
    - ▪ *How do you feel your feedback on your writing in this class compares to in other classes? (quality/type/timeliness of feedback)*

Appendix B

Consent to Participate in Writing Program Focus Group

You were invited to participate in a focus group by the director of the writing program. It will be conducted by doctoral students from the Department of Psychology Program Evaluation Research Group at the University of La Verne under the guidance and supervision of Aghop Der Karabetian, Ph.D. Information gathered from this focus group will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the writing program to meet its objectives.

PROCEDURE

The focus group shall consist of 7 to 10 student volunteers and 3 doctoral researchers meeting to discuss specific areas of concern. The doctoral students shall present approximately 7 questions for discussion among the group. Responses of the student participants shall be audio recorded and in noted in written form for future analysis by the researchers. A transcript of the audio recording, with both students' and instructors' identities removed, will be provided to the Writing Department. The audio recording will be destroyed once a transcript is made. First names of individuals shall be used to refer to instructors and each other to maintain anonymity of all involved. Name cards will be provided for participants to use in focus group meeting.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Although is it unexpected, your participation in this focus group may pose some minimal risk. Questions asked may elicit some degree of distress from some participants. Should you (as a participant) experience distress during the focus group, you are urged to call the University of La Verne Counseling Center (909-593-3511 ext. 4831) to make an appointment with a mental health professional.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR COMMUNITY

Participants may use this opportunity to reflect on their experiences and gains/losses from their enrollment in the writing program. As a participant, you may find validation and reward by speaking to these experiences and in your efforts to improve the program's effectiveness.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

The focus group is expected to last approximately 60 minutes. All participation is voluntary and participants are free to withdraw at any time. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this focus group.

PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

Participants will be provided a catered lunch during the focus group meeting as compensation for their participation.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information obtained as a result of participation in the focus group that can be used for identification purposes shall remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by de-identifying all records without means of direct association between you and the information you provide during the focus group.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the process or results of this focus group, you may contact Aghop Der Karabetian, Ph.D. at 909-593-3511 or at the Department of Psychology, Hoover Building, University of La Verne, 1950 Third Street, La Verne, CA 91750.

CURRENT ENROLLMENT

In which Writing course are you currently enrolled (check one)?

109 _____   110 _____   111 _____   Other (specify) _____

SIGNATURE OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I agree to participate in this focus group. I have been given a copy of this consent form.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant or Legal Representative   Date

Appendix C

Transcript for the University of La Verne Writing Program Focus Group
Held on December 6, 2007
Facilitators: Kristen Masters, Shanna Treworgy, & Sarah Faroosh

Facilitator Introduction:

Thanks for coming I'm going to be asking some questions and I've asked my colleagues to jump in with questions they have. The director of the writing program has asked us to evaluate the program…

Reflect on each others answers, maybe one of you will say something that the other one thought, and we can add that one also.

I'd like to introduce what our roles will be real quick. I'm Shanna, and I'm going to be writing some of the themes down and Kristen is going to be asking questions and Sarah will be writing down what we're saying. Also, we're just going to be using first names that will be eliminated form the transcript. So if you want to use a teacher's first name you can. They will be reading what they answers are but won't know who said what. We will take out any identifying themes, Also, we are not with the writing program, we are with the psych dept.

Have either of you ever been in a focus group before?

Two Students: No

Facilitator: Do you have any questions?

Student: No.

Student: It's all pretty straight forward.

Facilitator: Are you guys in the same classes?

Student: No.

Student: No, another girl in my class was supposed to come, her name is X but I don't know.

(New person joins focus group late and is oriented individually by the second facilitator)

Okay I'm going to give you some of the schpeel about who we are and what we're each doing. We have been asked to conduct this focus groups on behalf of the writing program. What they would like to see is how they can improve the writing program. They have goals and they want to see if they are meeting their course goals and how they can improve the program to better meet the course goals. I'm going to be asking some questions and some follow-up questions. We are de-identifying people so we will to communicate by first name only. You can use your teacher's first names if you know them and they are going to be receiving a written transcript but all of the identifying information will be removed, so basically they won't know who said what.

Facilitator QUESTION 1: Do you feel like you understand how to be a better writer?

Student: Well, basically what she stressed was free writing and just enables you to be more open-minded and not have writers block.

Facilitator: Do you feel this has helped you?

Student: This helped me a lot and I've allowed myself to use free writing and allows me to keep writing and writing and allows me to not think about the actual criteria of writing. So it allows me to flow write and from there you go into the editing process and well the other procedures that go along with writing.

Student: My professor focused on movies, she stressed a lot about making connections, that was amazing that really helped me be a better writer because now I can see connection between written works and film, and short stories, and all sorts of stuff. So now I can make connections and talk about it analytically instead of in a summary.

Student: It was a lot around grammar you get a sense of more vivid fiction and more grammar and stuff and learn to be a better writer.

Facilitator: I think I hear all of you saying that the course has helped you to be a better writer, correct?

All Students: Yes

Facilitator: Have any of you experienced some of the improvements the others mentioned?

Student: Free writing and making connections. I've always been a good grammar student so I didn't really learn anything new about grammar but she did talk about it.

Student: I think my teacher did do a lot of grammar and how it's very important but we did this like at the end. She made sure that we could write, free write. Free writing was the major goal of the class not grammar. Grammar was important but not the major goal, a minor one.

Facilitator: Are these the things that you think have most improved since your first week in the program or has there also been something else?

Student: Yeah with the writing, making the connection between the books we've read and what we've written.

Student: I also learned how to structure an essay better. I learned how to be able to have my argument flow together through structure, which is something I could not figure out in high school. that was really nice to learn.

Facilitator: What specifically about the structure?

Student: How to make an introduction paragraph and then how to go into different points in the argument and a way to make one point flow into another using transition sentences. That became

really clear this semester. My professor was really great about emailing and staying after class and really help.

Student: My teacher focus on the "brick" method, where one brick has to fit the next brick and that made me understand how my sentences had to flow and yet have the same main idea. It helped with structuring.

(Another student joins the focus group late and is oriented individually by Shanna).

Facilitator: The question that we have is do you feel you understand how to be a better writer as a result of the writing course you are in.

Student: I definitely feel like I'm a better writer I feel like I learned more in that class than I ever have. He focused a lot on writing vividly. We had conferences with the teacher and with the group and every conference was to better your essay. And each conference he gave us a list of things to focus on. One of those things was being vivid. So our group would focus on being vivid and say, can you do it here, here, and here. And I think the whole class, especially me , learned where to insert those details without being fluffy.

Facilitator: What do you mean by "vivid."

Student: Make the reader be able to picture what they are reading, by using adjectives and specific examples; rather than a general event, like this one time, this happened. He also really focused on grammar. That was really stressed throughout the class and I think the whole class would agree.

Facilitator Question 2: Compared to high school writing, what do you now feel are the most important writing concepts and skills?

Pause…

Facilitator: What are some specific examples of what you now think are important writing concepts?

Student: Like what might be different now than in high school?

Facilitator: Yes. Compared to high school what do you think are the most important concepts.

Student: I guess…from my experiences, the way she said about connections. If you connect with what you're trying to say to the reader and now the reader, as they are reading it, knows that connection…so when you are writing you are trying to connect so that when the reader reads it they will have a memory of what they experienced. So they will remember it as well as your writing. So for me its like the connection part of it. You could generalize it, like, like one day we went to the store, but it's a whole different experience when you describe it more like 'we got out of the car, and looked at the store.' It's a whole different experience and you connect more. So guiding people through the writing process, they get interested more.

Student: I took a lot of AP courses in high school so the writing level was about the same for me, and those courses really helped me out for college. We talked a lot about connection and analyzing

and stuff like that. But high school writing gets swallowed up by everything else, so its less important. But here with less classes and here I can focus more on writing more here than I could in high school. I was more focused this year on this writing class. But the writing level was the same for me.

Facilitator: So it sounds like you were able to focus more on writing in college because you didn't have as much you had to do?

Student: Yea. The writing level was the same for me senior year as it is now because of my AP classes.

Student: Also one of the goals of the class is to engage the reader. Keep them entertained, to make it so they want to read the whole thing. So give a lot of details and experience so that they can really relate to this.

Facilitator: Is that similar to what was said about connecting to the reader?

Student: Oh yeah.

Student: As far as grammar I don't think my high school teachers stressed the whole need to be grammatically correct. I think that they kind of would say you're in high school now, you should know this by now. My teacher this semester just would not allow to write our own style if it was not grammatically correct. It needed to be fixed. He would say, "you need to write grammatically correct essays and emails to everyone, so from here on out no matter what your style is, if it is not grammatically correct it needs to be." And this was not emphasized in high school.

*Facilitator: So a much greater emphasis on correct grammar and n*ot accepting anything less than good grammar.

Student: Also, in classes now, there is less busy work, like in high school English there were a lot of random worksheets and random readings that never even got picked up. In my writing class we will watch a movie and write an essay, then watch another movie and write another essay making different connections every time. It seemed like everything we did in class was working towards what we would eventually turn in. And it all made sense, everything flowed forward. Nothing we did in that class did not help. There was no busy work, everything had a purpose. She very clearly said you're going to do this and this is what you're going to get from it. Everything was explained very clearly.

Student: Also in my class for our essays, we went over each individual paragraph and decided whether or not it was focused. And that was something that really helped the essays to flow together and to make sense. Sometimes you get sidetracked and leave a point. We had to make sure everything was focused.

Facilitator: The pieces that you were looking at, were they examples or your own essays?

Student: We had to write our own essays and then we would go through each paragraph and decide together if it was focused or not. Each individual paragraph.

Facilitator: And that was not a focus in high school? How was it in high school?

Student: In high school they weren't too strict with the content or the organization of it and here, I really learned to stay on point and I didn't learn that in high school - they didn't care about that. As long as you had three pages and the assignment needed to be three pages it was okay.

Student: My experience in high school was very different; it was basically…no matter how grammatically incorrect it was, or even if the paragraphs weren't right, at least we were getting to the point. It wasn't about grammar and stuff. No matter how long it was or if there were grammar errors just as long as the teacher knew what you were trying to say, they were okay with it.

Student: In high school it was really easy to BS your papers because that's all they wanted. But here because each paragraph had to be focused you really had to think about it and put effort to connect your papers.

Facilitator: So in high school you had to get to your point somewhere within the paper whereas here you have to get to the point in every paragraph.

Student: She also used a lot of structure of um reading your paper backwards. So going to the end of your essay go from the last sentence and read it backwards and see if they connect like that and if they don't connect than obviously it needs more work.

Student: For example, when you read your conclusion you should wrap up your whole essay so by reading your conclusion, each sentence of your conclusion, you should be able to look say with each paragraph above it, "this is this, this is this, this is this."

Facilitator: Would you say that the phrase "more focus on coherent structure" represents what you are saying?

Two Students: Yes.

Facilitator: QUESTION 3: Have you written papers, either short or long, in other classes? How has what you've learned in writing class translated to your other classes and subjects?

Pause…

Facilitator: So what specific writing skills that you have learned in this course have you used in other courses.

Student: I think I have yet to see that happen because my only other course is a math course and we don't have to write essays.

Student: In my history class we have to write essays for all of our tests and my teacher really emphasized showing specific events in time rather than for example I wouldn't summarize WWII, I would say this happened and this happened in WWII. And my history teacher thought I was [great?] – using specific examples has really helped.

Student: I have a sociology class and we are always talking about different sociologies and anthropologies and stuff like that so I was able to focus each paragraph on a different author. By doing that my sociology professor is impressed. That was something I was taught in the course here.

Student: I have French and math classes and I don't really write in those classes.

Facilitator: For those of you who don't have another class right now that you write in, do you think you will use these skills in future classes?

Student: Oh yeah. I have been talking to other friends and they say they use this and that, I feel really grateful that I am in this Writing class now so that I can use the skills later. So I feel better prepared for other classes that I'm going to take later in college.

Facilitator: Have you used resources on campus? Such as peer editing?

Student: I use a lot of the LAC tutors, they are very helpful, they read your paper and tell you where you need help at. They are very useful and always there and they will read your paper even if they are math tutors and try to help you.

Student: My teacher has been so helpful I haven't needed it. I can always go to her for anything. I could even email her and she is really good about getting back right away and meeting after class and stuff so I haven't really needed it.

Student: I have had the same experience with my professor she's really good with emails.

Student: I have met with my teacher three times this quarter…semester. We had three different papers due and I met with him each time and was completely willing to sit with me for an hour if I wanted to, to go over every point in my essay to help. That really helped me so I didn't really go to the LAC either.

Student: Yeah.

Student: That's LEC, not LAC (someone correcting Facilitator's writing on the board)

Facilitator: Are there any other skills that you learned in your Writing Course that have used in other classes or plan to use in other classes that we have not yet talked about?

Students: (No response – all)

Facilitator QUESTION 4: Do you think you understand writing as a process? How is writing a "process" and how do you use "process" in your writing?

Student: Well, there's different processes you take when writing - there's free writing, peer editing revisions, there's also when you go back and think about starting all over again or subtracting a paragraph or adding a paragraph. I think those are the processes that I used.

Facilitator: Can you restate the specific steps of the process you mentioned?

Student: Yeah…free writing, peer editing, and then from there revision, and then basically from there decide if you want to start all over again or just to make it better.

Facilitator: So by peer editing do you mean 'getting feedback?'

Student: Yeah a lot of feedback.

Student: Yeah I learned that if I put a point here and actually answered it over there, then…well what I used to do is I would print out my paper pretty big like in 14 point font and if I needed to move a part I would actually cut out that part and put it there. Its kinda like using a puzzle to make sure everything fit. That's my method of making sure everything flows.

Student: I'm a very organized person and so I like to brainstorm everything before I start writing. I'll have like 4 or 5 pages of ideas and then I go back through and highlight what makes sense and the connections I can make from the different ideas and then kind of like write an outline type thing and then form a thesis statement from there and move on from there to actually start writing. I edit as I go along so when I am done with my paper I don't have to edit as much.

Facilitator: So you have your own process that works for you?

Student: Yeah, I developed it through high school and through this class.

Student: Like for me, at first I didn't really know the writing process. But then through the class, well we have conferences every time we turn in an essay. So I got feedback from my colleagues and that really helped me out. They would tell me what was wrong with it and maybe move things around to change it or maybe even rewrite the whole thing.

Student: Also my teacher, before we even started, before he gave the assignment, we had journals everyday at the beginning of class and our journal would be directly related to the upcoming writing assignment. So for example, if our assignment was on some experience you had in kindergarten he would say, "so name some experiences you had in kindergarten," so we would already have to start thinking about it. And so he led us up to the assignment and so then we would write our first draft and turn it into him and he would give it back to us with his grades on it and everything. And then we would revise that and then get into group conferences and they would revise it, and then we would get it back and revise it again before we actually turned it back into our teacher. So it was like a four-step process to finally get the final draft to turn in.

Facilitator: So you had multiple sources of feedback and received lots of ideas for revision before you ever even turned in your final draft?

Student: Yeah. And even one was his [the teacher's] ideas, which really helped.

Facilitator: And I guess the journal writing helped you establish and get an idea of what you were going to write about ahead of time? So the Journaling helped?

Student: Umm hmm. Definitely. See one of the journals he said, write a potential introduction to this topic. And so I wrote it out and then he gave us the assignment and I was like, great! I was able to copy and paste because it was just right. That saved me half an hour because I could just copy and paste.

Facilitator QUESTION 5: What do you think were your instructor's goals for the course and how did you know?

Student: I guess from my teacher… our goals basically…were for our whole class… she gave us this sheet about what we think about ourself as a writer. And it told us like 'do you think you free write? Do you think you are a good writer? Do you think that you can improve.' All of a sudden, as a group…for us, we all agreed that our essays and the way we wanted to write. Cause all of us thought that our ideas were all over the place. We would answer here and then go sidetrack over here, so our goal basically was learning how to structure and flow together. And that just helped me and I continue to use that now in everything.

Facilitator: was that an overall class goal?

Student: Yeah. We asked what do we want to improve on… ourselves as a writer or how we want to write or what could we learn differntly? So as a whole class, we wanted to work on structure and flow.

Facilitator: It sounds like your instructor's goal was for you to establish your own goal.

Student: Yes.

Student: I think my teacher's goals were grammar. He stressed it every day in class, okay maybe not every day. About once every two days he taught us new things, new grammar principles. Every essay we wrote we needed to go over it for an hour and just focus on grammar don't look at content or anything else, just the grammar. His second goal was to view writing as a process, which he showed us through conferences and revisions.

Student: We particularly had grammar reviews on an extremely regular basis.

Facilitator: A couple of you have brought up peer conferences as being really helpful. What specifically is helpful about these conferences in terms of improving your writing?

Student: For me, if you read your own paper, you think it sounds great. If you are reading your own essay over and over you think it's perfect and you covered everything. Other people find flaws you don't see.

Student: Also you get new ideas. You have you own individual style of writing and you could be just focused on that. But everyone could have different styles and they could give you ideas. It can add so much to your essay.

Student: Another goal that our instructor tried to focus on was write how we talk. If you are able to do that you are able to connect more with the reader. You're writing as you regularly talk and it kind of makes you better as a writer because there are different styles and if you find one that is right for you, you are able to make a better essay, or converse, or talk to people about their essays.

Student: My professor's goal was to have student in the entire class be able to write a paper with a strong argument and good connections. Because every paper we did we had to make a descision about what we were going to write about. We had to pick a side and find a way to argue it. She stressed a lot to find your own voice and what you want to write about. She didn't tell us this, but I think that by being invested in what we were writing about, made us want to write the paper. And by being passionate about what you are writing about you are fueled to go farther and make more connections and do better. And I appreciated that.

Student: My professor focused on vocabulary; there were two presentations a week on Power point, and we presented on about 10 new words a week. At the end there was a big test on vocabulary with 180 words. So yeah, every student would do a presentation on a list of 10 words to present on once every semester.

Facilitator QUESTION 6: How could the course content be improved, taking into account the GE Goals of the course?

(Kristen hands out goals, explains what they are, and says look at these briefly)
(Kristen reads the question)
(Participant asks her to repeat)
(Kristen repeats the question)

Student: I think that they already getting us into understanding all of these parts because everything we mentioned earlier says a little bit about the different parts of the assignment. So all the different activities with different books, talking about ourselves, and like organization and the things they've been telling us about repeatedly, developing a style that fits who you are. Like all these things kinda fit but they haven't stressed it out a lot but we knda know it. So it think to improve it they should show us other examples of how people came up with ideas to open up more ideas. That would help out a lot.

Facilitator: So it would help you to develop new ideas and perspectives. Have you seen this (indicates paper with goals on it to group) before?

Student: No.

Student: This is the paper that comes back with every single one of my essays. So it is very familiar to me. So she puts this on the back of our paper and this is how she grades our essays. So like 25% and 25% (pointing at sheet of goals) and she makes little notes on the bottom saying what we did right and if we wanted to write a revision what would make it better. So this is very familiar to me. I would say that the Writing Program should do a workshop on APA and MLA style because we didn't go over that in detail. I mean I know my papers are in MLA format because that is the thing I learned senior year in high school, but I have no idea about the other formats, like APA, which I am sure I will encounter later in my college career. So it might be helpful to have a workshop on how to do it or how to explain it or how to find it in writers reference manual. And maybe have like the 109 and 110 teachers go over it in a little more detail because it's a very confusing format if you don't know what you are doing so people are more clear on what to write.

Student: I feel like my teacher under content and development "completed all parts of the assignment" well I feel like my teacher had higher expectations for some students and had lower expectations other ones, which is understandable. But I think he could emphasize students' needs who meet all part so of the assignment. For some, they had to hit all the points but for the ones who didn't write as well, they didn't have to. And I know that because we did peer editing and so I read their essays and I read his comments on their essays. So I feel like he should emphasize more that all parts of an assignment need to be met by everyone.

Student: We have the same professor so I was thinking the same thing. But I'm trying to think of some other things as well.

Facilitator: Do you see this happen on all of the goals on the sheet?

Student: I was just thinking of hitting all parts of the same assignment because I know that all students aren't at the same writing level and I think it would be unfair to grade someone at a level they are not at… but as far as the assignment goes, each student should be held accountable to the assignment.

Facilitator: Two of you have said that you see this rubric of goals in your class but I'm curious if the other of you two do as well? Do you see this (the rubric) in your class or something like this?

Students: 2 say yes, 2 say no.

Facilitator: I guess I'm wondering if seeing this helps?

Students: All say yes.

Student: Its definitely helpful to have this at the end of your paper and have the teacher explain to you why you lost points. She made it very clear, the reasons why you did not get a better grade, but that you can improve on this in your next essay. As a result my essays have gotten gradually better throughout the semester.

Student: Also if we had this, we could make sure we hit all of these points and make sure we fulfilled it even before we turn it in.

Student: Mine would have to have this (rubric) turned in, and you yourself would have to go through it and say 'did I complete all parts of this assignment?' So sometimes you would explain why you think you met all of the parts and then on the other side she would put her own opinion of this. So it helps you compare how she thinks you did and then how you think you did which makes you do better.

Student: Umm… I don't which question it goes under, but our teacher had us write a letter to the editor for every essay that we wrote. He didn't give us this (rubric) but gave us the outline or content requirements for the specific assignment and our cover sheet for the essay. Had to be a letter to the editor stating every way we met the content requirement of the assignment.

Facilitator: The question we have is this: Given that these are the goals (points to rubric) what could they do differently to help you accomplish them?

Student: The letter to the editor already helped. He's already doing it and it really helps. This helps him to meet these goals?

Facilitator: Is there anything in the course content you would you change in any way?

Student: I really enjoyed my teacher; he did a great job.

Facilitator QUESTION 7: Compared to your other courses, how rigorous was the work expected for Writing class?

Student: I definitely spent more time in that class than other classes, part of it is because writing is a process and we had to spend time on each of those processes. Cause say for history you write a paper and that's that you get a grade. But for this there were 4 or 5 different steps and probably every class meeting we had something to take home to work on. It was more time consuming but not hard.

Student: It was challenging because I had graduated a long time ago and coming from a high school that didn't do much reading and math. It was hard for me because I had to think back how to structure essays. It was a challenge for me. Compared to other classes, I am only taking math and accounting II, this was much harder because I had to make sure I was meeting the standards of them because I hadn't done it in a while. It was hard but also more time consuming cause there was a lot of time spent finding people to read your paper or meeting with the teacher and making sure that I was on track.

Student: I love writing, so it wasn't a challenge because I enjoyed it. I spent more time in my math class. I love it [writing] so it wasn't a challenge and didn't take more time - probably the same amount of time as I took in math class. I had a math tutor and spent a lot of time there but I would spend as much time on writing and rewriting because I wanted to make my paper better.

Student: My class was time consuming but not challenging. I would spend 4-6 hours a week. At conferences we would have to take our colleagues' essays home and give them feedback and that was probably the most time consuming thing.

Student: Yeah, we had to write a full evaluation giving feedback on everyone in your group's essays and that was very time-consuming. There were like 4 or 5 people in your group. So you had to spend an hour on each of their essays which they were also doing for you. But I don't think it being time consuming was a bad thing; it was beneficial and definitely helped our papers.

Facilitator: Does anyone have anything else to add? Anything else you would like to comment on that we may not have asked you about the Writing Program.

 (No response).

Well thank you very much for participating!

Appendix H: Program Advisees

WRITING PROGRAM ADVISEE UPDATE
2007-2008[20]

STUDENT NAME	ID NUMBER	ADVISOR	Major/Minor
Beni, Alyse	10884214	Irwin	Minor in Creative Writing
Bicknell, Kristopher	10887639	Bernard	Minor in Creative Writing
Cabello, Lilia		Irwin	Minor in Creative Writing
Chavez, Sylvia	10885657	Bernard	Major in Creative Writing
Dormois, Nick	10889215	Bernard	Minor in Creative Writing
Frederick, Michael	10887486	Bernard/Dillon	Minor in Creative Writing (Playwriting)
Gonzales, Jaclyn	10284931	Ogden	Major in Creative Writing
Guitierrez, Michael	10930080	Bernard	Minor in Creative Writing
Hill, Matt		Trotter/Ogden	Major in Narrative Technologies
Hobbes, Cassie	10967327	Irwin	Minor in Creative Writing
Howard, Amber	10108209	Irwin	Major in Creative Writing[21]
Izaguirre, Matt	10965734	Bernard	Major in Expository Writing
Kerrins-Torres, Tom	10843563	Ogden	Minor in Creative Writing
Konrad, Erin	10885668	Irwin	Minor in Creative Writing
Martinez, Diane	10923056	Irwin	Minor in Creative Writing
Mendivil, Brianna	10849786	Ogden	Major in Creative Writing
Moreno, Marlain	10108809	Bernard	Major in Writing & Contemporary Culture
Ramirez, Maritza	10966639	Bernard	Minor in Creative Writing
Sebestyen, Megan	10965734	Bernard/Irwin	Major in Literary Journalism
Serrano, Adriana	10888359	Bernard	Minor in Creative Writing
Wahba, Noor	10971628	Irwin	Minor in Creative Writing
Woloschuk, Katarina	10886803	Irwin	Minor in Creative Writing
Zepeda, Adriana	10848160	Bernard	Major in Creative Writing[22]

---

[20] By May 30, 2008, Professor Ogden announced she was taking a position at another institution, and all of her advisees were assigned to Professor Bernard or Dr. Irwin, appropriately. This list was compiled by combining the officially-declared list offered by Lee Knous in the Registrar's Office, with internal program documents. All students on this form have signed a Major or Minor declaration form and have met with an advisor in the Writing Program.

[21] Internal program records show this student has left the university due to financial aid issues.

[22] Internal program records show this student has left the university due to financial aid issues.

Appendix I: Course Rotation Schedule

Courses offered every semester:

WRT 106 Writing Essentials (formerly 'Communication & Writing Skills')
WRT 109 Introduction to Expository Writing (formerly 'Intro to College Writing)
WRT 110 College Writing A
WRT 111 College Writing B
WRT 301 Introduction to Creative Writing (Writing 201 as of Fall, 2008)
WRT 305 Prism Review Staff

Courses offered once every 3 semesters:
WRT 307 Special Topics in Writing and Literature
WRT 309 Writing Workshop

Courses offered every 2-3 years on a rotation basis:

WRT 302 Experimental Writing Genres (formerly 'Diverse Discourses in Writing')
WRT 303 Poetry Writing
WRT 304 Fiction Writing
WRT 306 Writing Theory & Practice
WRT 324 Literary Non-Fiction Writing

Courses offered as needed (sometimes as Directed Studies)

WRT 199 Independent Study in Writing
WRT 311 Composing in Digital Environments
WRT 314 Language Structures
WRT 399 Independent Study in Writing
WRT 499 Senior Seminar in Writing

Appendix J – Schedule of Classes, 2007-2008 Academic Year

Course	Instructor	Enrollment
FALL 2007		
Writing 106: Communication & Writing Skills	Ogden	7
Writing 106: Communication & Writing Skills	Ogden	6
Writing 106: Communication & Writing Skills	Kinzie	7
Writing 109: Intro to College Writing	Ogden	12
Writing 109: Intro to College Writing	Montebruno	16
Writing 109: Intro to College Writing	Dobkins	14
Writing 109: Intro to College Writing	Dobkins	14
Writing 109: Intro to College Writing	Irwin	16
Writing 109: Intro to College Writing	Mora	11
Writing 109: Intro to College Writing	Irwin	14
Writing 110: College Writing A	Werner	13
Writing 110: College Writing A	Wangler	18
Writing 110: College Writing A	Wangler	18
Writing 110: College Writing A	Harmon	17
Writing 110: College Writing A	Harmon	19
Writing 110: College Writing A	Harmon	23
Writing 110: College Writing A	Amaya-Anderson	19
Writing 110: College Writing A	Hagen	15
Writing 110: College Writing A	Bernard	19
Writing 110: College Writing A	Hagen	14
Writing 110: College Writing A	Montebruno	20
Writing 110: College Writing A	Bernard	19
Writing 111: College Writing B	Dirks	18
Writing 111: College Writing B	Dobkins	21
Writing 111: College Writing B	Mott	14
Writing 111: College Writing B	Dobkins	19
Writing 111: College Writing B	Dobkins	22
Writing 111: College Writing B	Hagen	19
Writing 301: Introduction to Creative Writing	Ogden	12
Writing 302: Diverse Discourses in Writing	Irwin	5
Writing 305: Prism Review Staff	Ogden	3
January 2008		
Writing 111: College Writing B	Ogden	17
Writing 301: Introduction to Creative Writing	Bernard	5
Writing 499: Senior Seminar in Writing	Ogden	1
Spring 2008		
Writing 106: Communication & Writing Skills	Amaya-Anderson	6
Writing 109: Intro to College Writing	Harrison	14
Writing 109: Intro to College Writing	Dirks	8
Writing 110: College Writing A	Harrison	14

Writing 110: College Writing A	Werner	13
Writing 110: College Writing A	Dobkins	20
Writing 111: College Writing B	Wangler	18
Writing 111: College Writing B	Bernard	19
Writing 111: College Writing B	Irwin	19
Writing 111: College Writing B	Mott	17
Writing 111: College Writing B	Mott	17
Writing 111: College Writing B	Montebruno	17
Writing 111: College Writing B	Hagen	18
Writing 111: College Writing B	Hagen	21
Writing 111: College Writing B	Harmon	20
Writing 111: College Writing B	Dobkins	18
Writing 111: College Writing B	Dobkins	19
Writing 111: College Writing B	Harmon	20
Writing 111: College Writing B	Amaya-Anderson	17
Writing 111: College Writing B	Mora	18
Writing 111: College Writing B	Montebruno	11
Writing 111: College Writing B	Hagen	14
Writing 301: Introduction to Creative Writing	Bernard	16
Writing 305: Prism Review Staff	Ogden	6
Writing 306: Writing Theory & Practice	Irwin	7
Writing 499: Senior Seminar in Writing	Ogden	2

Appendix K: 2005 University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment[23]
Writing
2005

University-Wide Junior-Level Writing Assessment

Report Prepared by: Marga Madhuri (Educ), Eric Grekowicz (ModLang) and Aghop Der-Karabetian (Psych), April 2006

Conducted by: ULV Assessment Committee, in conjunction with the Excellence in Writing Committee

Summary

A sample of 192 randomly selected writing assignments of Junior student across all campuses and colleges (except Law) was assessed using a rubric evaluating four areas: Content Specific, Development, Organization, and Language Use and Format. Findings showed no differences between colleges and campuses sites, no relationship of scores to where first and second writing courses were taken (ULV or elsewhere), utilization of the Learning Enhancement Center, and submission of earlier drafts. Women scored higher than men in all areas, higher GPAs and earlier times of taking the first writing course predicted better writing scores, European Americans scored higher than Latino Americans and the other combined group in Organization and Content-Specific areas, and Native speakers scored higher than non-native speakers only in the Content-Specific area. About one-in-three students scored at the fair and poor levels in Organization and Language use and Format. Action recommendations focus on Organization and Language mechanics, and continued training for faculty.

Learning Outcome:
Through the General Education writing courses, and writing assignments across the curriculum students will learn to write well in the areas of development, organization, and language use.

Purpose
• Gather assessment information on upper-division writing using actual student writing samples from class assignments
• Compare competency by colleges
• Compare Traditional Main campus, CAPA (Main campus adult), and RCA (off-campus adult) populations
• Determine need (if any) for improvement

Procedure
• Sample of actual Junior-level class writing assignments across the institution were collected.
• Samples came from almost every major in Business, Education, and Arts and Science colleges, as well as from the Main campus traditional, CAPA, and RCA sites.

---

[23] Complete report available from the ULV Curriculum Committee Website, .pdf

• Identified courses within each major with a high probability of written assignments
• Adjuncts who taught at on and off campus sites were told about the project at their yearly workshop meeting, and volunteers were solicited
• Coordinated with the provost's office to gather papers from identified courses
• Culled a random sample from the submissions, leaving out submission with missing information or courses with missing documentation such as description of assignments, etc.
• Students submitted a "blind" copy of their papers to their instructors, attached to an assessment questionnaire. The questionnaire included items inquiring about their history of writing courses, attitudes about writing, and study skills related to writing assignments • Instructors submitted their packet of student papers, with an instructor-specific questionnaire that described the nature of the assignments and how they supported the writing asignment
• Altogether 192 randomly selected student writing-submissions with accompanying self- report questionnaires were used in this project

Student Self-Report Questionnaire (Attached)
• The self-report questionnaires attached to each writing sample inquired about kinds of prior writing instruction (where and when), confidence in writing, need for additional support, value of clear and strong writing, composition process, scaffolding, use of the Learning Enhancement Center, and demographic information including department and campus location
• The questionnaire was drafted by the members of the writing assessment committee, followed by several revisions. Also, it was presented to the Assessment Committee for revisions and suggestions
• The instructor also completed a questionnaire indicating type of writing support offered to the students throughout the course and suggestions about how ULV can help to support instructors with writing projects

Scoring
• A call for full & part-time instructors interested in scoring was sent out through Email
• Instructors who had shown interest in writing (by attending workshops or meetings of the Writing Committee) were targeted specifically
• Scorers were offered $25 per hour, lunch & snacks as incentives
• A grading panel was created, comprised of individuals from all ULV units (except Law who did not participate in this assessment project). The panel was composed of 8 scores:
  >3 Arts & Sciences
  >2 Business
  >1 Education
  >1 Representative from LEC
  >1 Librarian
• Two days, 9 am - 3 pm, were set-aside for scoring, and the actual time to the scoring of 192 papers was 10 hours
• The panel normed the ULV writing rubric using sample student papers from multiple disciplines by comparing their scoring of the papers. During the scoring process the rubric was re-normed several times. The rubric (Attached) measured four areas of writing: Content-specific, Development, Organization, and Language use and Format using a -point scale (excellent = 4, good = 3, fair = 2 and poor = 1)

Summary of Findings
1. Taking the equivalent of the first semester writing course at ULV or at some other college was unrelated to the writing scores (Table 6, 7, 8)

2. Taking the equivalent of the <u>second semester</u> writing course at ULV or at some other college was unrelated to the writing scores (Table 6, 7, 8)

3. <u>Utilizing the Learning Enhancement Center</u> services or not for the assignment that was evaluated, or for any writing assignments was unrelated to the writing scores (Table 6, 7, 8)

4. <u>Submitting earlier drafts</u> of the assignments that were evaluated was unrelated to the writing scores (Table 6, 7, 8)

5. In a multiple regression analysis predicting the total writing score, the only significant predictions of higher writing scores were higher GPAs and earlier years of the 1st semester writing course

6. 77 percent of students were at the <u>good or excellent</u> levels in the <u>content-specific</u> and <u>development</u> domain

7. 70 percent of students were at the <u>good or excellent</u> levels in the <u>organization</u> domain.

8. 68 percent of students were at the <u>good and excellent</u> levels in the <u>language use and format</u> domain.

9. Women scored higher than men on all writing categories (Table 1)

10. There were no differences between different campus locations (Table 2)

11. There were no differences between different colleges (Table 3)

12. European American students scored higher than Latino American and combine other groups only in the Organization and Content-specific areas (Table 4)

13. Native speakers scored higher than non-native speakers only in the Content-Specific area (Table 5).

Action Recommendations
1. Focus writing improvement efforts in the areas of language mechanics and organization
2. Reactivated the Excellence in Writing Committee
3. Conduct a follow-up survey of faculty about their practices in support of student writing and their needs for support
5. Train faculty to use rubrics to assess writing assignments
6. Create workshops to support faculty
7. Train faculty in peer revision & to teach students to use rubrics
8. Collect rubrics randomly and periodically for ongoing assessment

University of La Verne

Writing Program

Senior Exit Survey Results

2007

Report Prepared by: Yingxia Cao, ULV Office of Institutional Research, and Kirsten Ogden, Director, Writing Programs.

Conducted by: ULV Office of Institutional Research

Summary & Procedure
A survey questionnaire was composed by Kirsten Ogden (Modern Languages), Al Clark (Academic Affairs) and Yingxia Cao (Office of Institutional Research) for the purposes of creating an online exit survey. Students enrolled into senior seminar courses were asked to complete the online survey at their convenience. The survey was conducted in January 2007.

Purpose
• Gather information from graduating seniors regarding their experiences in the ULV Writing Program.
• Assess student perceptions of the program's learning outcomes and student performance objectives.
• Determine need (if any) for improvement

Summary of Findings
Many of the students who completed the survey were transfer students who did not enroll into ULV writing courses, or were RCA and CAPA students who took the online form of Writing 111. The respondent sample was small, and not targeted to students who took Writing courses at ULV. However, several key points can be extracted from the report and turned into recommendations.

- Most students felt that Writing 110 and Writing 111 prepared them "extremely well" for research and writing in other ULV courses.
- A bulk of students felt that Writing 110 and Writing 111 prepared them "extremely well" for their senior thesis projects.
- A majority of students wished their writing courses had stressed research methodologies and research citation methods, closely followed by organization.
- A majority of students would like an upper-division writing course beyond Writing 110 and Writing 111. Additionally, a majority of students wished for a writing course focused in their discipline.

Action Recommendations
- Incorporate more research instruction into writing courses, or develop an upper division course that focuses on research instruction and writing.
- Investigate the creation of discipline-specific, upper-division writing courses to be taught by writing faculty or co-taught by writing faculty and discipline-based instructors.
- Investigate how 'organization' is taught in composition courses and whether students are able to apply organization to their essays.

Table 1: (Q2)

Writing Program Senior Exit Survey 2007: "How well did the following courses that you passed at ULV prepare you for research procedures and for writing papers in other courses?" (1=Not Prepared; 5=Extremely well prepared)

	N	% Did not enroll	% 1,2,&3	% 4&5
English 106:	93	92	3	5
English 109:	91	91	1	8
English 110:	96	64	9	27
English 111:	95	56	11	34

Table 2: (Q3)

Writing Program Senior Exit Survey 2007: "How well did the following courses that you passed at ULV prepare you for composing your senior thesis project and other longer writing or research assignments?" (Total N=99; 1=not prepared; 5=extremely well prepared)

	N	% Did not Enroll	% 1,2, &3	% 4&5
English 106:	92	93	3	4
English 109:	90	92	1	7
English 110:	96	63	15	22
English 111:	94	56	17	27

Table 3: (Q4)

Writing Program Senior Exit Survey: Which Skills do you wish your writing courses had emphasized more strongly? Select all that are applicable.

	N	% Selected
1. Grammar	79	14
2. Basic Editing Skills	79	19
3. Reading Comprehension	79	19
4. Writing Organization	79	33
5. Revision Processes for Writing Papers	79	29
6. Research Citation Methods (MLA/APA)	79	51
7. Using the Library	79	23
8. Incorporating Research Sources into your writing	79	43

Table 4: (Q5-Q8)
Writing Program Senior Exit Survey

	N	% Yes
Q5. Would you have liked more formalized writing help for your upper-division courses?	92	53
Q6. Would you have liked an upper division writing course that focused upon writing for your major or discipline?	93	71
Q7. Did you take advantage of the Learning Enhancement Center's Writing Tutors during your ULV writing courses by attending one or more tutoring sessions in a given semester?	91	30
Q8. If you took advantage of the Learning Enhancement Center's Writing Tutor services, how useful did you find the services?	29	% Somewhat useful: 7 % Useful: 45 % Extremely useful: 48

Writing Senior Exit Survey
Q9: We welcome any general comments you have about your writing courses at the University of La Verne:

Positive Comments:
- English 110 was by far, the class I learned the most in…111 were helpful with the research aspects. I think my biggest issues was that the classes ere online and I was too far away to conveniently use the school services that were offered.
- I actually tested out of all the university's writing requirements, and I was the English/Writing tutor in the Learning Enhancement Center for two years. Since I was a business major, and therefore subject to very little writing assignments.
- I attended ULV at the Vandenberg AFB location for my upper division classes. All my lower level classes were taken at a different institution. The instructors were wonderful at the ULV VAFB campus. They made any written assignments painless.
- I cannot answer with any authority or experience as I did not take English GE courses at ULV.
- I did not enroll in that course at ULV. I took this at another institution
- I did not take any writing courses at ULV
- I did take Management 480 communication in management, which was a very good writing course for management-style communications. I needed help in my academic writing for style. How to smoothly transition thoughts and quotes into my paper.
- I enjoyed all the English and writing courses I took at ULV-the professors are very talented and helpful.
- I enjoyed my writing classes they were informative. I would have loved to take a business writing course.
- I feel that even though English was not my major, I truly enjoyed the exercises and techniques used by the professors.
- I think everything was fine and instructors explained writing techniques and standards well.
- I was a distance learned though ULV online. I did take the Business Communication class with Dan Davis, which I found extremely helpful in preparing me for my senior project.
- I was very successful through the writing courses I was enrolled in. The LEC helped me very much when I needed to writing my senior thesis.
- Questionnaire does not apply to me as I took my English courses at college of the canyons
- Research method was good writing prep for the senior thesis.
- sorry, but I never took any of those classes mention at the start of the survey
- Sorry, I did not take any of these English classes
- Sorry I was a CAPA student and was not required to take any further writing courses as I took them 20 years ago as a traditional undergrad.
- I have never had a bad ULV experience.
- I believe that both ENG 110 and 111 prepared me for all of my major classes. I did not have need for a lot of writing in my major, but when I did, I had the skills I learned from my English classes to help me complete my task at hand.

<u>Negative comments:</u>

- As a freshman, I think the English professors should pay more attention to the students, and be more helpful, and give great feedback on the students as they work on long papers. Because some of us as freshmen are not exposed to these types of long papers.
- Courses may need to be more in depth
- ENG 111 online is a bad idea!! Online, this course was difficult to understand. There was too much paperwork and the most critical parts of the course were lost in the mess.
- I attempted to take Research writing online last winter, to prepare for my senior seminar, and the teacher was obnoxious, rude, unprofessional, and unapproachable. He lost 98% of his students in the first two weeks and no one asked why! I filed a complaint.
- I believe that any university graduate should know their basic grammatical skills. From my classroom experiences, I still heard students using wrong grammar when speaking in class. That could imply that their writing skills are affected by how they speak.
- I think losing key faculty members like Eric Grekowicz and Steve Westbrook was unfortunate for the English department at La Verne. We need more professors who are passionate for the craft, but not so overzealous that they turn students off to writing.
- Need to have a preview of previous course in the beginning. Before starting class. As a student, sometimes we forget about what was learned in the previous class time.
- Thank you for the great education! One thing that could be improved is the online course notes/lectures. I took a class at Rio Hondo College with Dr.Wetsman. He had video and audio lectures as part of his Anthropology class. They were really helpful.
- The professor I had for English 110 was great! I learned so much and really felt my writing skills improved. However, English 111 was a waste of my time. I did not learn a thing and could have gone perfectly fine without it.
- This class was an obvious ploy to get another $1700 from your students. There was no need to split it from research methods. I wasted my time in both classes, and several of my fellow students agree.
- With regard to biology majors, there are given a student manual that discusses writing scientific reports. In addition, we were also required to take a year long course in which any questions we had about our research and thesis were answered.
- I think that videos of actual class lectures that could be viewed on blackboard really add to the learning.
- I don't think any English course taught me grammar as well as my journalism class did

Acknowledgments