

# BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## Assessment Report For

American Language Program  
(Department)

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Dr. Bill Jiang

(Department Head)

2008-2010

(Assessment Period)

Professor Don Reilly

(Liaison)

May 20, 2010

(Date Submitted)

Program, if applicable (AAS, Interdepartmental, etc.):

American Language Program (ALP)

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1. Section of Mission & Goals ☒ and/or Core Competencies ☒ and/or Strategic Priorities ☒ to which the Intended Departmental/Program Outcome #1 refers:

Mission & Goals:

To offer academic English courses to ELL (English Language Learner) students, providing them with knowledge and skills needed to succeed in their academic, professional and personal pursuits.

Learning Objective being assessed:

Students who complete this project in Level II writing will successfully demonstrate proficiency and consistency in integrating their grammar knowledge in paragraph and essay writings.

Means of Assessment & Sources of Data:

To examine experimental groups' coherence, appropriate use of grammatical structures in writing, and integration of logic and structures.

Criteria for Success:

Compared to the cohort ten percent more of the experimental group will demonstrate improved skills in grammar and writing classes based on efficiencies in coherence, appropriate use of grammatical structures and integration of logic and structures.

Summary of Data Collected:

The data were collected from the two experimental classes and five cohort classes (3 day classes & 2 evening classes, randomly selected) who took the writing exit test in the fall 2009. There were a total of 131 students in this assessment study, with 39 from the experimental and 92 from the cohort. The writing exit test was given on December 2, 2009. In January 2010, the department chair invited five faculty members to participate in the assessment process. Four members agreed to grade the papers. One member agreed to enter the data into the spreadsheets and then to assist the chair to analyze the data. Between January and March, the assessment group met in several occasions to come up with the rubric intended to best assess the students' writing skills in coherence, appropriate use of grammatical structures and integration of logic and structures. The rubric also included several categories which were previously studied for comparison reasons. There are nine categories in the rubric: *Organization, Content, Complex Grammar Structures, Simple Grammar Structures, Vocabulary, Length/Development of Details, Fluency, Stimulate Reader's Interest, and Exceeded Expectations\**. Ten points were assigned to each category and analyses were performed on the overall performance as well as on each category.

The grading (131 students' papers total) was carried out during the three week period between mid March and early April. Each participating (faculty) member received the students' papers for grading without any knowledge of who was the instructor or which paper was from the experimental or the cohort group. Then the "grader" assigned each paper points on each of the nine categories based on his/her understanding of the rubric agreed upon during the norming session. The final result of the four member/grader team was the submission of 28 sheets filled with the numbers -- seven classes examined by four grades. After the 28 sheets were submitted, the data were then entered into the spreadsheets by the 5th member of this assessment team, and analyzed by the 5th member and the department chair. (All the data, original as well dissected and analyzed, are included in the spreadsheet format attached below.)

Item analysis shows that in all nine categories the experimental classes performed better than the cohort classes by 10%, with Length (of Writing) showing the biggest difference: 20 from cohort vs. 23 from experimental. The experimental classes also did much better in Organization with a difference of 2.9 points, Complex Grammar (Structures) with 2.3, and Better Than Expectation with 2.2.

	Organization	Content	Complex Grammar	Simple Grammar	Vocabulary	Length	Fluency	Stimulate Readers	Better Than Expectation
Cohort Group	19.1	19.4	18	19.2	19.1	20	19	19.4	18.8
Study Group	22	21.5	20.3	21.1	21	23	21	21.3	21
Difference	-2.9	-2.1	-2.3	-1.9	-1.9	-3	-2	-1.9	-2.2

The data chart above has also shown an interesting point from the categories (the first five) that were studied in 2004-2006 cycle. In that assessment study, we found a (very noticeable) weakness in grammar, especially in Simple Grammar. In this current study, students' progress in Simple Grammar is quite obvious. Simple Grammar scored the same as all other categories, although Complex Grammar is still low. In other words, students have been paying more attention to Simple Grammar (Structures) while writing in 2010 than they did in 2006. Statistical Data was collected. See Attached.

#### 6. Use of Results:

The results will be reported to the ALP faculty in the fall 2010. We will use the findings to help us make some "structural" changes that have been discussed for some time, that is, placing more emphasis on the integration of grammar and writing. More discussion will be held as to how to better integrate grammar and writing, and whether we should still have the same number of hours of grammar in each level as now, and how we can make ALP students' transition to college composition classes and other classes a smooth and successful one.

The goal to be achieved in Level 3 writing classes is to produce effective writers who can apply their acquired grammatical knowledge in their writing so that they can succeed in their academic, professional and personal pursuits.

#### **\*Definition of the category titles:**

**Length:** Put number of words

**Fluency:** Reader's comprehension of ideas is solid and smooth, at least is part because of effective use of academic vocabulary and connections among ideas.

**Simulates Response:** Reader is engaged with ideas without necessarily focusing on structures used. Reader's interest in ideas is strong enough to cause silent response to the writer

**Exceeds Expectation:** Reader is unaware of 'level' of student while reading

# **BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

## **Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report**

**Assessment Report for (Department or Program): ALP**

**Academic Department Chair: Dr. Bill Jiang**

**Assessment Period: 2012 (Follow-up to 2008-2010 report)**

**Submitted by: Bill Jiang (with Brian Altano, Harold Kahn, Milena Christov, Gemma Figaro & Leah Saliba)**

### **1. Intended Outcome (Goal):**

The purpose of this project is to see if the 2008-2010 Assessment Project recommendations of “placing more emphasis on the integration of grammar and writing” have helped our Level II students improve their writing in the (same) nine categories: Organization, Content, Complex Grammar, Simple Grammar, Vocabulary, Length, Fluency, Stimulate Reader Interest, and Exceed Expectations.

### **Goals:**

Students should learn more and write better when their teachers place more emphasis on the integration of grammar and writing.

### **2. a) Program goal(s) to which the intended outcome is related.**

1. Promote the integration of grammar and writing to improve students’ writing.
2. Understand and use grammar and vocabulary correctly in written and oral production.
3. Learn to “be articulate” while expressing themselves in their writing assignments.

### **b) General Education Requirement(s) to which the intended outcome relates:**

#### **1. Written and Oral Communication - (Communication)**

Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

#### **9. Ethical Reasoning and Action**

Students will understand ethical issues and situations.

### **c) Section(s) of the Strategic Plan to which the intended outcomes relate:**

**Goal 1: We will improve student engagement and student success.**

- 1.1 Improve students' success in college level classes.
- 1.2 Make ALP students better and more effective writers.
- 1.3 Help ALP students to succeed in their academic, professional and personal pursuits.

**3. a) Means of assessment:**

The writing exit tests from Level 2 in the spring semester were examined and graded by four teachers, and the data were entered and sorted by the 5<sup>th</sup> teacher.

Before grading, the teachers/graders participated in the discussion and the norming practice. The rubric for this study was the same one as used in the assessment project 2009-2010.

**b) Sources of data:**

The writing samples were from the writing exit tests for Level 2 in the spring semester of 2012. There were a total of 10 classes with 121 students. Four classes were taught by full-time teachers and six classes were taught by part-time teachers.

**c) Desired result:**

(Direct measure)

Students in the assessment project 2012 were expected to perform better than the cohort group in 2009-2010.

Students in the assessment project 2012 were expected to perform as well as the study group in 2009-2010.

**4. Summary of Results:**

As shown in Table Two, students taught by full-time teachers as well as part-time teachers did better in 2012 than in 2009-2010.

As shown in Table Two, students taught by full-time teachers as well as part-time teachers didn't perform as well as the study group in 2009-2010.

**General Results:**

Analysis of the data indicates that students write better when teachers place more emphasis on the integration of grammar and writing. Students taught by full-time teachers seem to have performed better than students taught by part-time teachers. The study group in 2009-2010 performs the best of all the groups.

#### **5. Recommendations for modifications:**

We recommend that emphasis on the integration of grammar and writing be continued, and that part-time teachers participate more in such discussions and related activities.

We recommend that all ALP teachers be informed of the importance of integrating grammar and writing, and that both areas: “structural” and “being articulate” be part of our writing curriculum.

#### **6. Actions taken based on recommendations:**

Based on the above recommendations, most of which also appeared in the assessment project 2009-2010, we should find more ways to further improve ALP students’ writing skills, and help ALP students succeed once they have left the program.

Assign a number from "1" to "10" ("10" being the highest) to each cell below.

Use "5" as average for a Level 2 student when assigning a number.

Group X

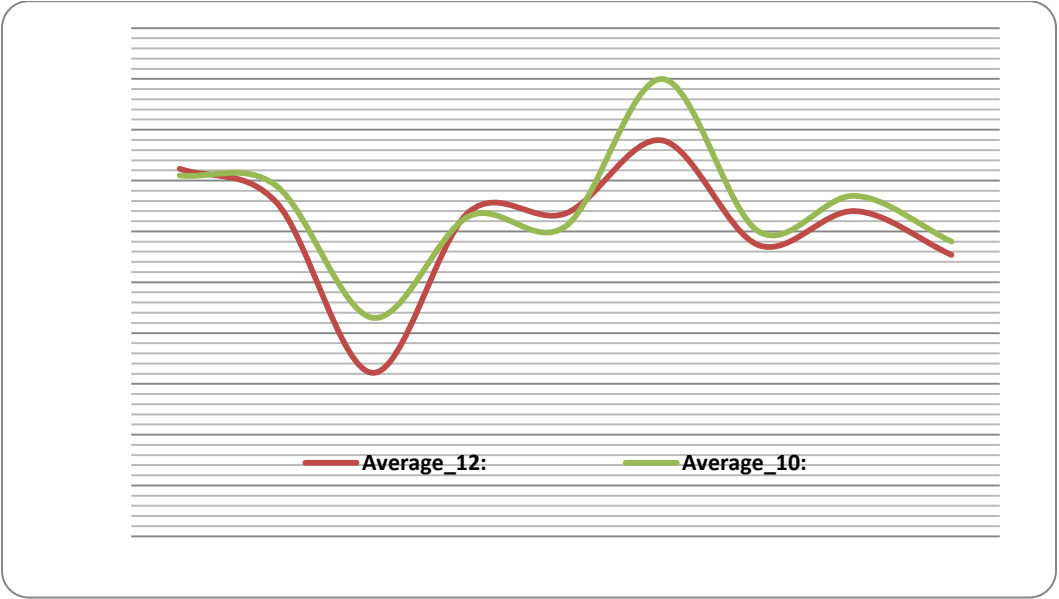
**"Structural"**

		Organization	Content	Complex Gr	Simple Gr	Vocabulary
		1	2	3	4	5
Average_12:		20.62	20.29	18.61	20.19	20.18
Average_10:		20.55	20.45	19.15	20.15	20.05
Cohort Group_10		19.1	19.4	18	19.2	19.1
Study Group_10		22	21.5	20.3	21.1	21
Adjunct_12		20.27	19.94	17.99	19.86	19.73
Full Timers_12		20.96	20.63	19.23	20.53	20.63

***"Being Articulate"***

Length/Development of Details	Fluency	Stimulate Reader Interest	Exceed Expectations
6	7	8	9
20.90	19.86	20.20	19.77
21.5	20	20.35	19.9
20	19	19.4	18.8
23	21	21.3	21
21.05	19.38	19.87	19.40
20.74	20.35	20.53	20.13

**Table One: All Groups 2010 vs. All Groups 2012**



**Table Two: Data Dissected -- Four Groups Compared**

