

MEMORANDUM

TO: Liz Largent, Dean of Student Development
Gloria Barton, Dean of Admissions/Registrar

CC: Dr. Brenda Harrison, Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs
Alan Stringfellow, Associate Registrar

FROM: Susan VanSchuyver, Dean of the Division of Arts and Humanities

DATE: 10/31/2006

RE: Recommendation of Class Sequence

The General Education Writing Assessment Committee made up primarily of Arts and Humanities faculty members has made the following recommendation:

The College should recommend students complete their developmental writing and reading course sequence(s) and ENGL 1113: English Composition I in consecutive semesters following the first semester they enroll. Also, the College should strongly encourage students to enroll in ENGL 1213: English Composition II immediately after completing ENGL 1113: English Composition I.

According to the assessment data, after evaluating 678 total essays, 445 students (65.6%) achieved competency in writing, while 233 (34.4%) did not. As a result, the General Education Writing Assessment percentage fell below the goal of 70% competency. In an attempt to attain and succeed significantly beyond the competency goal, the committee has made the above recommendation.

The reasoning of the committee was some students completing College Writing II wait more than one semester before enrolling in English Composition I. Also, some English Composition I students wait multiple semesters before enrolling in English Composition II. The same is true of students breaking the cycle between College Writing I and II and Reading I and II. It is the belief of the General Education Writing Assessment Committee that course sequences would improve writing competencies and thus increase the success of our students. Since the Math Department requires a similar design for their math sequences (within a year, with strong encouragement for immediate continuation), the Language Arts Department would like to do the same to improve student performance and retention.

The Language Arts Department will look at adding a prerequisite similar to that on the developmental math and General Education math courses, perhaps going to the Curriculum Committee this spring. However, if counselors and advisors would stress this recommendation now, we believe that would help enable students to reach the writing competencies, would improve course completion rates, and would help to prepare our students for academic success.

