



**Assessment Results: End-of-Year Report**  
Department of English and Foreign Languages  
College of Arts and Humanities  
January – May 2008

**Departmental Assessment Committee**

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## I. Methodology: Implementation Process

The Department of English and Foreign Languages implemented its assessment plan in the academic semester of January – May 2008. The courses selected for assessment were the core courses of the general curriculum. These were

- English 001: Pre-Basic English
- English 110: Grammar and Vocabulary
- English 114: Basic Principles of Reading and Writing
- English 115: Oral Communication and Listening Comprehension
- English 213: Advanced Reading Skills
- English 214: Advanced Composition
- English 383: Business English

The forms used in this phase of the assessment process were

- CAI-01C
- Departmental Retention Strategy Checklist
- Departmental Writing Assessment Rubric
- CAI-02C
- CAI-03C
- Departmental Activity Checklist

All full-time and part-time faculty teaching core courses during the January-May 2008 semester were involved in the assessment process.

The timetable for assessment activities was the following:

January 2008	May 2008
	Domain 2 Goal 1, Objective 2
	Domain 2 Goal 2, Objective 2
	Domain 2 Goal 2, Objective 3
	Domain 2 Goal 2, Objective 1
	Domain 4 Objective 3
	Domain 7 Objective 1

## II. Analysis of Results

### Domain 2: Meeting Student Needs

**Goal 1:** Develop students' English oral and written communication skills through excellence in teaching and effective instructional strategies

**Objective 2:** Evaluate students' ability to write clear and coherent paragraphs, essays, and business documents.

#### A. Introduction

The three core courses that focus on writing are English 114, 214, and 383. In order to assess this objective, writing samples were collected at the beginning and end of the semester from a representative sample of students enrolled in the courses. A rubric was used to evaluate pre and post samples. (See Appendix A.) A score of 70% or higher indicates mastery of writing skills. A comparison of pre and post percentages was calculated to determine gain or loss. **The expected outcome is that seventy percent of the students sampled master basic writing skills.**

#### B. Data Collection Results

The sample for English 114 consisted of a total of 120 students. The sample of English 214 consisted of 18 students who completed both the pre and post writing. The sample for English 383 consisted of 22 students.

#### C. Analysis of Results

In English 114, the mean score for the Pre-Writing was 36% where 9 out of the 120 students (8%) scored 70% or above. The mean score for the Post Writing was 66% where 71 out of the 120 students (59%) scored 70% or above. There was an increase of 51% in the score indicating mastery of skills. There was an increase of 52% of students who improved their writing skills. **The finding was that 59% of the sample obtained the expected outcome.**

In English 214, the mean score for the Pre-Writing was 79% where 16 out of the 18 students (89%) scored 70% or above. The mean score for the Post Writing was 91% where 17 out of the 18 students (94%) scored 70% or above. There was an increase of 12% in the score indicating mastery of skills. There was an increase of 2% of students who improved their writing skills. **The finding was that 94% of the sample obtained the expected outcome.**

In English 383, the mean score for the Pre-Writing was 58% where 11 out of the 22 students (50%) scored 70% or above. The mean score for the Post Writing was 72% where 13 out of the 22 students (59%) scored 70% or above. There was an increase of 14% in the score indicating mastery of skills. There was an increase of 9% of students who improved their writing skills. **The finding was that 59% of the sample obtained the expected outcome.**

## D. Conclusion and Recommendations

**Achievements:** The implementation of assessment of student outcomes in these courses will lay the groundwork for future evaluation of the writing objectives.

**Difficulties:** Professors teaching English 114 reported that the number enrolled per section exceeds 35 students. This situation does not allow for individualized instruction. There are also limited writing opportunities because of the excessive amount of correction required of the professors. The primary difficulty encountered this past semester was the sample used for English 214. Of the two groups pretested, only one was given the post-test writing.

**Overall Conclusion:** The overall results for the three courses revealed that 71% of the sample obtained the expected outcome. However, it should be noted that the sample for English 214 was an Honors section which consequently increased the average percentage. In spite of not having achieved the expected outcome for English 114 and 383 (59% for both), there was an increase in the number of students who improved their writing skills at the end of the courses.

**Recommendations:** When administering the pretest in English 114, instructions should be the same as those used in the post test. For English 383, there should be more use of the language lab to practice proof-reading, revising, and writing business documents.

### **Domain 2: Meeting Student Needs**

**Goal 2:** Increase student retention by providing effective attention to the general and particular needs of students enrolled in the core courses.

**Objective 2:** Identify existing departmental strategies.

#### A. Introduction

As a faculty, retention strategies were being used informally. There were no written departmental policies regarding the same. **The expected outcome is that a limited number of well-articulated strategies exist.**

#### B. Data Collection Results

In a brainstorming session, the Assessment Committee created a departmental checklist to identify retention strategies (See Appendix B.) The faculty was given the checklist to identify the retention strategies that they use. Ten professors completed the checklist.

## C. Analysis of Results

Of the eight strategies on the checklist, one hundred percent of the professors identified orientation to students and individualized instruction during office hours as the strategies most used. Ninety percent of the professors used tutorial referrals and assessment techniques (CAI-02C). Twenty percent did not acknowledge meetings with Student Support Services as a retention strategy at all.

## D. Conclusions and Recommendations

**Achievements:** There is a departmental checklist that identifies retention strategies.

**Difficulties:** There were no written instructions for the checklist which would give a qualitative measure for the objective.

**Overall Conclusion:** The instrument utilized did not reveal whether the retention strategies identified were well- articulated.

**Recommendations:** The checklist should be revised and clear written instructions should be given in order to measure the expected outcome.

## **Domain 2: Meeting Student Needs**

**Goal 2:** Increase student retention by providing effective attention to the general and particular needs of students enrolled in the core courses.

**Objective 3:** Evaluate the effectiveness of departmental strategies.

### A. Introduction

In order to assess this objective, the department director and the Department Retention Committee had to analyze the retention checklist and grade summary reports as well as the form CAI-02C. **The expected outcome is that seventy percent of the faculty uses varied assessment strategies to retain students.**

### B. Data Collection Results

Ten professors participated in the sample. Of the 38 assessment techniques listed on CAI-02C, 10 were identified by the faculty as the ones most frequently used. Ninety percent of the faculty use assignments, exams, and group and collaborative work; eighty percent use oral reports, open or structured questions, and written work; and seventy percent use graphic organizers, pre/post tests, interviews, and oral presentations. Other assessment techniques identified by the faculty included content outlines, rubrics, self-evaluation, portfolios, and reflective journals.

The number of students enrolled in core courses during the January-May 2008 semester was 1,544 students. There was a total of 145 withdrawals. The retention rate for these courses was 91%.

### C. Analysis of Results

One hundred percent of the faculty uses 73% of the aforementioned techniques to retain students. Based on the retention rate for the January-May 2008 semester, these assessment techniques are effective. The expected outcome has been accomplished successfully.

### D. Conclusions and Recommendations

**Achievements:** Through the use of the CAI-02C, the department has been able to identify a varied list of assessment techniques used in the retention of students.

**Difficulties:** Not all the assessment techniques listed in CAI-02C are pertinent to our content area in the general curriculum.

**Overall Conclusion:** The department is aware of and uses varied assessment techniques,

**Recommendations:** The department should continue offering professional development activities which focus on the use of other assessment techniques that are relevant to the different core courses.

## **Domain 2: Meeting Student Needs**

**Goal 2:** Increase student retention by providing effective attention to the general and particular needs of students enrolled in the core courses.

**Objective 1:** Interpret statistical data regarding registration and retention of students enrolled in core courses.

### A. Introduction

In order to assess this objective, the department director had to analyze the grade summary reports (See Appendix C) submitted by full and part time faculty teaching the core courses. In addition, the form CAI-03C was used. **The expected outcome is that there will be an increase of 5% in student retention as compared to the previous academic year.**

### B. Data Collection Results

The number of students enrolled in core courses during the January-May 2008 semester was 1,544 students. There was a total of 145 withdrawals. The retention rate for these courses was 91%.

### C. Analysis of Results

Although the retention rate was high (91%), a comparison of the expected outcome with the previous academic year cannot be done because the Department Assessment Plan began in the January-May 2008 academic semester.

### D. Conclusions and Recommendations

**Achievements:** Although there is no point of comparison, the high percentage of retention is significant for core courses in English.

**Difficulties:** There was a lack of statistical information regarding retention from the Banner system. Due to this, the director had to rely on departmental grade summary reports handed in by the professors. It was also difficult to receive information from part-time personnel as this was the first time that the process was followed.

**Overall Conclusion:** No conclusion can be drawn at this time due to lack of comparative information.

**Recommendations:** The department needs reliable statistical information and analysis from the administrative offices that deal with retention.

## **Domain 4: Human Resources**

**Goal:** Support academic excellence and institutional commitment of the departmental faculty and staff.

**Objective 3:** Determine the degree of participation of full-time faculty and staff in institutional activities.

### A. Introduction

In order to assess this objective, the department director and faculty had to complete a department checklist (See Appendix D.) that indicated their attendance at institutional and departmental activities. In addition, other pertinent information was taken from the Addendum and Form VPAA 902-107. **The expected outcome is that seventy percent of the faculty attends 75% of institutional activities.**

### B. Data Collection Results

The number of full-time professors that participated in the sample was nine. A total of 26 activities were identified for the 2007-2008 academic year. One hundred percent of the faculty attends 77% of the activities defined as institutional.

### C. Analysis of Results

The results exceed the expected outcome both in percentage of faculty attending activities as well as the number of institutional activities attended.

### D. Conclusions and Recommendations

**Achievements:** The department has a dedicated faculty that supports institutional activities.

**Difficulties:** No data was collected from the staff.

**Overall Conclusion:** The department does not need improvement in this area and is expected to continue meeting this objective.

**Recommendations:** For the following semester, an appropriate activity checklist will be created for departmental staff.

## **Domain 7: Administration and Finances**

**Goal:** Support curricular, extracurricular, and professional activities that promote student, faculty, and staff involvement in the academic encounter through effective administrative and financial processes.

**Objective 1:** Identify the administrative and financial resources that support departmental activities.

### A. Introduction

The department director identified the curricular, extracurricular, and professional activities that promote student, faculty, and staff involvement as the English Olympics, the newsletter *Let's Chat*, and professional development activities such as the Puerto Rico TESOL Convention and the Annual College Board Conference. These are the activities that directly impact the core courses. Sources used to collect data include college and department budget reports, expenditure reports for some of these activities, and other external resources.

**The expected outcomes are**

- 1. the assigned budget adequately supports department activities;**
- 2. the administrative offices and personnel adequately support department activities; and**
- 3. there is limited support.**

### B. Data Collection Results

The total cost of the English Olympics was \$1890 (excluding the salary allotted for the professor's release time for one semester which is \$1325.00). The budget assigned for the activity was \$400.00, and the College of Arts and Humanities also contributed \$400.00. Additional funding was necessary, and through the

donations of external resources, the department was able to obtain \$1090 to cover the 2008 English Olympics.

The publication of *Let's Chat* relies on the contribution of the professor assigned to the task (who received release time for one semester in the sum of \$1325). In addition, it is supported by the work of the lab technician and department secretary. The cost of materials and printing was absorbed by the departmental budget assigned to the allotments for paper and duplication.

The budget assigned to professional development activities is \$500 for the academic year. This budget is for both the English and Foreign Language programs. During the 2007-2008 academic year, the registration cost for attendance at professional activities was \$995 for ten professors (\$330 for PR TESOL and \$665 for the College Board Convention). The department director requested additional financial aid from the administrative offices of the President and the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

#### C. Analysis of Results

The assigned departmental budget does not adequately support the aforementioned activities. For each of them, the department had to request additional funding from the institution and/or solicit from external resources. The administrative offices and personnel adequately support these activities with human resources and financial aid when available. The findings show that there is limited support.

#### D. Conclusions and Recommendations

**Achievements:** Despite the limited funds, the department has been able to accomplish curricular, extracurricular, and professional activities that promote student, faculty, and staff involvement. The involvement of all faculty and staff (with or without compensation) is a testament to their commitment to the department and institution.

**Difficulties:** The budget of the department for student activities (\$800) is divided between the English (\$400) and Foreign Language (\$400) programs. The money allotted for the English activities has to be divided between the English Olympics and *Let's Chat*. External funding for the Olympics varies from year to year, and this past year less money was raised due to inflation. The budget assigned to professional development activities is \$500 for the academic year. This budget is for both the English and Foreign Language programs. Of this amount, \$100 was used for two professors to attend a French conference. The department has had to rely on the availability of resources from other institutional units.

**Overall Conclusion:** There is not enough funding to meet the expected outcomes.

**Recommendations:** If the department is to continue supporting curricular, extracurricular, and professional activities that promote student, faculty, and staff

involvement in the academic encounter, it will need more financial backing. In addition, financial reports should be submitted for all curricular, extracurricular and professional activities.