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ABSTRACT

This evaluative study focused on a program of nine-week courses in English writing skills which has been part of the English curriculum at City College (California) since 1966. After a review of the historical development and the rationale for the courses, results from a student questionnaire, from a retrospective comparison of students who had taken the courses with others who had not, and from a study of enrollment patterns are presented and discussed. Implications are drawn for the local college, and a series of recommendations are made in relation to the future development of the courses. (Author/AA)

AN ADMINISTRATIVE EVALUATION OF A PROGRAM OF COURSES IN ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS AT AN URBAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Dorothy H. Bohr

A MAJOR APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECT PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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AN ADMINISTRATIVE EVALUATION OF A PROGRAM OF COURSES IN ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS AT AN URBAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Although a program of nine-week courses in English writing skills has been part of the English curriculum at City College since 1966, no evaluation has been done to assess its place and purpose in the curriculum of an urban community college. Furthermore, only limited research had been done in the past to determine its effectiveness in meeting student needs. This may be attributed to the fact that the program was proposed and accepted as an experiment in remediation and was taught mostly by the proposer. Only recently has the entire English department become involved in teaching the courses and, as a consequence, a need developed to put the program into historical perspective with a rationale for its existence. There was also a need to determine what student population the program and the individual courses currently served, and whether they met only the students' immediate practical needs or also prepared them for college-level English.

As an evaluative study, this Major Research Project attempted to answer these questions through: (a) a review of the historical development and rationale for the courses; (b) the administration and interpretation of a student questionnaire (Component One); (c) an analysis and interpretation of data as found in college records (Component Two);

(d) a statistical study to determine whether a combination of the writing skills courses could be a realistic prerequisite for English 1A (Component Three). With these questions answered, the English department at City College should have a basis for systematically examining its writing skills program, with a view toward appropriate change that is student-oriented. Furthermore, counseling about the courses should become less haphazard. Finally, the college should have a basis for determining whether this program of nine-week writing skills courses has a legitimate place in the curriculum as a remedial program.

Apart from the implications of this study for the local college, it is also the writer's hope that the information and the ideas will be useful to other institutions. Furthermore, it is hoped that this study will contribute to the literature on program evaluation.

AN ADMINISTRATIVE EVALUATION OF A PROGRAM OF COURSES IN ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS AT AN URBAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The "open door" commitment of the community colleges, while it has meant equal educational opportunities for millions who, even twenty-five years ago, would have had no access to higher education, has also brought many challenges to these institutions in their efforts to meet the needs of their diverse student population. The challenges relate to the extent and kinds of services to students, to a reassessment of curricula and teaching techniques, even to a retraining of faculty and a reshaping of faculty attitudes.

More than any other post-secondary institutions, community colleges seem to have recognized that traditional courses and teaching techniques which ignore differences in the interests and abilities of the learners cannot be successful with non-traditional students--students of varied age, background, experience, interest, and abilities. Consequently, community colleges have pioneered new ways of reaching their clientele. In the process, many have contributed significantly to innovation in curriculum and

particularly in instruction:[1] laboratories, programmed instruction, computer-assisted instruction, the use of paraprofessionals and peer tutors.

Significant among the efforts of community colleges has been their response to the needs of their students in the area of remediation. It has been estimated that thirty to fifty percent of students who enter community colleges are in need of those basic skills required for college study, and the percentage is expected to increase.[2] Consequently, most community colleges have developed courses and programs to help students acquire needed skills in mathematics, reading, and writing.

How successful have these efforts in remediation been? In general, developmental reading programs have been conducted by trained specialists in specially equipped laboratories. Studies indicate "there is little doubt that well-conducted reading programs are bringing many students up to reasonable standards in reading speed, comprehension, and vocabulary."[3] However, it has been the writer's experience that not enough effort has been made by the whole faculty

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[1]One proponent of innovation in the community colleges has been B. Lamar Johnson, and among his works on the subject is Islands of Innovation Expanding (Beverly Hills, California: Glencoe Press, 1969).

[2]Leland Medsker and Dale Tillery, Breaking the Access Barrier (N.Y.: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1971), p. 65.

[3]Ibid.

in identifying poor readers early enough so that they could be helped.

As for remedial writing courses, more seems to have been written about their failure than their success. Whereas developmental reading has been left to the experts, the tendency has been to leave the development of writing skills to English departments as a whole. Therefore, there are still faculty members who feel that remedial courses are either inappropriate on a college campus[4] or that they, the faculty, do not have the training to meet the needs of students with inadequate writing abilities. Often faculty assume that students learn best the way they themselves learned best, or faculty often perceive their primary function in terms of changing a student's performance rather than changing how a student feels about that performance. "Knowing themselves inadequate, their self-knowledge reinforced once again by the familiar surroundings of a remedial English class, their students became experienced participants ~~in~~ a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure."[5]

On the other hand, the reader must not infer that there has been no success. Those familiar with the community

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[4] Medsker's unpublished study (1967) of 57 junior colleges showed that one-fifth of the faculties believed that such courses are actually not appropriate. Ibid., p. 66.

[5] Daniel Fader, "Shaping an English Curriculum to Fit the Junior College Student," ERIC Junior College Research Review, Vol. 5, Number 10 (June, 1971), p. 2.

college campuses will recognize that the majority of the faculty are committed and anxious that their students succeed. Increasingly, graduate schools have also made strides in preparing future teachers adequately to meet the challenges and needs of students with diverse backgrounds. Greater amounts of literature are appearing in professional journals about methods that work.[6] Unfortunately, much of the evaluation is couched in rhetoric rather than data.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this major research project was therefore to make an evaluative study of the program of nine-week courses in English writing skills at City College. The intent was to test in literature and empirical data the rationale for this series of courses on an urban community college campus. In so doing, the writer not only could contribute to the institutional research in curriculum but provide the English department of the local college with current data, on the basis of which appropriate changes in the program of courses in English writing skills could be made, if changes seemed desirable, and provide the counseling staff with information so that effective counseling could take place. This study should furnish the college with a basis for determining the extent to which its program

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[6] For an example the reader is referred to "English in the Two-Year Colleges", College English, Vol. 35, No. 8 (May 1974).

of nine-week courses in English writing skills has a legitimate place in the curriculum as a developmental program[7] that attempts to meet the individual needs of its diverse student body.

RATIONALE

That institutional research in community colleges is necessary is supported in the Digest of Reports of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education. "There have been few careful studies evaluating community college policies, programs, and experiences. Very little is known about... the degree of success or failure in remedial education programs."[8] Much criticism has also been made that English departments seem to be quick to innovate, but slow to evaluate, and that "in their zeal to be 'democracy's college', community colleges have tended to initiate courses and programs in trial-and-error fashion to accommodate low-achieving students, despite the fact that very little research has been produced to demonstrate the success of remedial programs."[9]

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[7]By developmental program is meant a series of courses that attempt to help students acquire basic writing skills in a systematic way.

[8]A Digest of Reports of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1974), p. 28.

[9]J. R. Boggs, "A Developmental Research Plan for Junior College Remedial Education," ERIC REPORT ED 022479 (July, 1968), p. 1.

A search through the ERIC reports for 1973 and 1974 revealed at most three evaluative studies of remedial courses. A late 1969 report on innovative courses in thirteen community college districts showed that only one program had been evaluated.[10] Furthermore, a study of five English programs in Michigan contains the statement, "In general, no English department included in this study had done any research to give supportable answers to 'How good a job are we doing?' or 'How well are we meeting student needs?'"[11] We must agree that if departments only guess at the needs of students, then they can only guess at the effectiveness of their programs.

While there is subjective reason to believe that a program of courses in English writing skills at City College is sound according to enrollment figures, student reactions in classes, instructor observation and experience, very little evaluative data is available. As is often the case, funds and time have been limited. Furthermore, the courses were accepted by the entire English department at a time when there were no ready solutions to the problem of what to do about students who were unprepared for English 1A (college-

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[10] League for Innovation in the Community College, "What Is New in Thirteen Districts," Junior College Journal, Vol. 40 (December 1969-January 1970).

[11] John Weber, "Recommendations for Better English Instruction," ERIC REPORT 019140 (March, 1968), p. 32.

level Freshman Composition) nor of how to redesign the traditional one-semester remedial English course intended for students with common writing problems. However, at least one-half of the present college English faculty joined the staff after the writing skills courses had been accepted; and, until recently, the courses have not been taught by the entire department. It is very possible, therefore, that the rationale for the writing skills program may have been either forgotten or perhaps not even understood.

MAJOR ISSUES AND SIGNIFICANCE

If this study was to have value both for the local college and to other institutions, some major issues had to be raised. What, historically, was the rationale for the program of courses in English writing skills on this urban community college campus? How did the present program develop? What were student reactions to the courses? To what extent has the program been meeting student needs? What did we need to find out? What should we change? Answers to these questions ought to give the English department a basis for arriving at a consensus about the purposes of the writing skills courses since there seem to be conflicting views among the faculty as to whether the courses are essentially remedial in that they help students improve writing deficiencies or whether they are essentially developmental in that they can prepare students for English 1A, if students take them in some prescribed sequence. As a

result of this study, the English department should have some direction for making appropriate changes in the courses so that they can meet student needs better. Counselors too should have a better basis for advising students about the writing skills courses. It is also anticipated that other colleges will benefit from this evaluation and the recommendations which are an essential part of this major reseach project. In particular, it is hoped that this study may assist other English departments which are struggling with the problem of remediation and prerequisites for English 1A.

Chapter 2

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Until the mid-sixties, a one-semester course called English X and generally referred to as "bonehead English," was the sole remedial course at City College designed to improve student writing skills. The extent to which students benefited from this course may have been questioned for some time. However, as the college admissions policy became more and more "open" and the students on this urban community college campus became less and less homogeneous in terms of academic preparation and related characteristics, instructors began to experience frustrations and to have serious doubts about English X as a remedial course.

The challenge of remediation was becoming too complex for one course, due to the differences in ability and the variety of the writing problems of students. It was not uncommon that students repeated English X, some even three or four times. Yet, success in English 1A was still not achieved. According to one college survey,[12] at least 25 percent of those students who passed English X did not subsequently pass English 1A. (This may have been a conservative figure.) The whole process, therefore, seemed not only

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[12]This survey was made by a college committee in the mid-sixties. The committee's task was to study the problem of English X as related to the question of effective remediation.

expensive, but debilitating to both instructors and students. As a result, a program of nine-week courses in English writing skills was proposed and accepted by the English department in 1965 as either a supplement to or a possible alternative for English X.

A Developmental Approach.

The courses in English writing skills at City College were designed as an attempt to give the student with language deficiencies a "more positive and comprehensive study of language than was heretofore available to him, and in a short time."[13] As separate courses they covered all of the basic skills which students needed to be sufficiently prepared for English 1A; namely, spelling, vocabulary, sentence structure and rhetoric, organization, and paragraph structure. However, students could concentrate on only one aspect of composition at a time. The nine-week term for each course with the tutorial component made it possible to complete all of the courses in a short time, if a student needed them all. Still, if there were students who needed or wanted additional work or practice, they could re-enroll for credit.[14]

Contrary to the teaching approach used frequently in remedial courses, the approach here was intended to be

[13] Nona Anderson, Mimeograph Report (Sacramento City College, 1970).

[14] In actual practice, students do not repeat the same material when re-enrolling in a class, but cover more advanced material.

positive; that is, students were to be shown in a systematic way what to do rather than what to avoid. Laboratory work under the supervision of peer tutors was considered an essential part of the course work if the material was to be mastered in a short time. Such an arrangement, it was reasoned, had advantages for both the instructor and the learner. The teacher could present the material more efficiently and intensively in class if the practice and testing were confined to the laboratory. The learner could practice, at his own pace, the material presented in class, but he would engage in systematic drill under the supervision of a peer tutor who was familiar with the course, having taken it previously himself. The tutor could also provide the learner with the personal help and the needed reinforcement to encourage progress. The feedback from tutor to learner would be an essential part of this process.

Although standards were to be kept in the courses, the grading policy was to be non-punitive. Therefore, students who did not achieve satisfactorily on tests had the opportunity to review the material in the laboratory with the tutor and then to repeat the tests until satisfactory scores were achieved. Since only the passing grade was to be recorded, such a system could encourage success rather than failure.

The laboratory was considered to have advantages for the tutors also, because the tutorial process was to be an extension of the learning process not only for the tutee but

for the tutor. Even the most recent remedial student-turned-tutor could use immediately what he had learned to help others. In so doing, he could reinforce his own learning, develop confidence in his abilities, and acquire skills of working with people effectively, skills which he might use in future employment. Therefore, tutors for the laboratory were selected from the students who had been enrolled in the skills course for which they were to offer tutorial assistance.[15]

Supportive Literature.

The extent to which the use of peer tutors was a valid instructional concept is supported in literature. In an article titled "The New Student in 1973", Knoell writes that the recent trend in intensive remedial programs is not only to move away from the long term programs, but "...the assumption that tutoring is best done by 'honors' students has been abandoned on the evidence that students who are overcoming their own learning handicaps can better help students with similar problems."[16]

Moreover, a study by Ross in the Tarant County Junior College District, Texas, to determine the effect of peer tutoring on the reading efficiency and self-concept of disadvantaged community college freshmen showed that both

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[15] Ibid.

[16] Dorothy M. Knoell, "The New Student in 1973", Community and Junior College Journal, Vol. 3, No. 5 (February, 1973), p. 40.

tutees and tutors profited. However, the greatest gains in reading were made by the tutors who had been tutees and by their tutees who had the advantage of tutors who had taken the courses themselves.[17]

The success of tutoring services is also demonstrated in the case studies of special programs for the disadvantaged in 19 institutions which offered tutoring services. Students in these programs not only praised the tutorial system, but criticized programs in which tutoring was minimal. Some felt that tutoring should be continued throughout the college years.[18]

The theory that the writing laboratory with its provision for individual help and "feedback" from tutors is an essential aid to learning, and perhaps to a change in patterns of behavior, has found increasing support. In fact, universities such as the University of Oregon and the University of California at Berkeley, finding themselves with many students who are deficient in writing skills, have begun to establish or to expand writing laboratories that were once intended only for the relatively few students who

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[17]Sandra F. Ross, A Study to Determine the Effect of Peer Tutoring on the Reading Efficiency and Self-Concept of Disadvantaged Community College Freshmen (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Educational Research and Development, October, 1972).

[18]Helen S. Astin, Alexander W. Astin, Ann S. Bisconti, Hyman Frankel, Higher Education and the Disadvantaged Student (Washington, D.C.: Human Service Press, 1972), p. 113.

could not cope with freshman composition.[19]

The teaching premise underlying the program of writing skills courses -- particularly the course on sentence structure and rhetoric (English M) -- was that systematic language study is a more effective way than the traditional repetitive functional-grammar approach for aiding students who are deficient in writing abilities. This premise is supported by an experiment with a freshman class at the Illinois State-Wide Curriculum Study Center in the Preparation of Secondary School English Teachers.

One of the principal objectives of the Illinois experiment was to explore the advantages or the disadvantages of introducing freshman students to selective linguistic study. The students for the experimental class were selected at random. However, of the twenty-three students, only three were highly proficient in their use of English; two of the students were at the remedial level; three had dialect problems; and the others were average. Most of the class periods were devoted to the study of language: language as a system, written versus spoken English, language change, and so on. The objective was to free the students from the "vagueness and inexactness" of their former training. At the conclusion of the experiment, the student evaluation

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[19] Malcolm Scully, "Bonehead English", The Chronicle of Higher Education (March 17, 1975), p. 3.

indicated that ninety percent of the class considered such a language-centered course both valuable and interesting. Furthermore, some of the "poorer" students were among the most motivated participants. The conclusions arrived at were:

> In the experimental freshman course it was found that students readily understood the distinctions between oral and written conventions, structural signals, and morphemes once they were clear as to the exact relationship between oral and written English. It was their unawareness of the basic distinctions between grammar, rhetoric, usage, and oral and written English which made many of them insecure in their writing. Because they were uncertain why some structures and morphemes which they had always used were being rejected, they had no way to pre-test a sentence for its acceptability.[20]

Moreover, support for the overall departure in the writing skills courses from the traditional approaches to remediation (short intensive course work coupled with practice and tutorial assistance, a positive approach, non-punitive grading, and motivation) is found not only in theoretical literature but in systematic research.

Medsker and Tillery point out that the traditional remedial courses in the basic skills are often unsuccessful because they ignore the issues of individual learning problems and motivation.[21] These researchers found that stu-

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[20]Justus R. Pearson and James R. Reese, Project Grammar: The Linguistic and Language Preparation of Secondary School Teachers of English, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare, 1969), pp. 54-64.

[21]Medsker and Tillery, Op. Cit., p. 67.

dents in traditional remedial classes in English were not graded on individual progress but against the standards of college-level courses. Yet, the grading standards did not always seem to be consistent; there could be great differences in the success rates of multiple sections of the same course on a given campus. Such practices could do little to motivate students.[22]

Tinker supports this view and points out that many college remedial courses too often only replicate all of the weaknesses of high school courses. Improperly taught and repetitive, such courses lessen motivation.[23]

With respect to teacher attitudes, Gordon and Wilkerson point out that "being sensitive to student concerns means more than just having generalized empathy; the teacher's attitude and expectations are also of critical importance.[24]

Rosenhan in his study on "Effects of Social Class and Race on Responsiveness to Approval and Disapproval" suggests that students whose teachers believe that they will perform better actually do regardless of ability.[25] How teacher

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[22] Ibid., pp. 82-83.

[23] Irene Tinker, Response of American Colleges to the Unprepared Student (N.Y.: Center for Policy Research, 1970), p. 6.

[24] Cited in Astin, et. al., Op. Cit., pp. 32-33.

[25] David L. Rosenhan, "Effects of Social Class on Responsiveness to Approval and Disapproval", Journal of Personality and Social Psychology (September 1966), pp. 253-259.

attitudes can affect success was demonstrated in a recent study by the New York State Office of Education Performance Review. In comparing reading achievement in two schools, it was found that one of the factors in making the program at one school more effective than at the other was that the teachers in the better school displayed a more positive attitude toward student abilities.[26]

An evaluation of the first year of open admissions at City University of New York brought out the fact that while achievement test scores were predictors of academic success, the more motivated students are, the more likely they are to succeed, regardless of past achievement. Contrary to the arguments that developmental courses do nothing to prepare students for transfer courses because standards in these courses are not as high as in college-level courses,[27] there was no evidence in the evaluation of CUNY's first year that academic standards had changed despite its developmental programs.[28]

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[26] James Cass, "Schools that Make a Difference", Saturday Review (April 5, 1975), p. 49.

[27] Jerome Karabel, "Open Admissions: Toward Meritocracy," Change (May 1972), pp. 38-43.

[28] Edward Quinn, "We're Holding Our Own," Change (Summer, 1973), pp. 35-37.

Development of the Present Program of Writing Skills Courses at City College.

It seems very likely that some of the skepticism which is usually expressed at departures from the traditional, as in the case of CUNY's open admissions, was also expressed in 1966 when the program of writing skills courses became part of the English curriculum. The program was innovative and experimental; very few community colleges at that time had such a program as a review of catalogs and articles on English programs in two-year colleges bears out. Since English X was still also part of the curriculum, implementation of the new courses began on a small scale -- one course each in sentence structure, spelling, vocabulary, and paragraph writing. The courses were assigned to instructors who expressed an interest in teaching them, but the development of the program was left largely to two instructors who were enthusiastic about the departure from traditional methods to the tutorial-laboratory approach. However, due to budgetary considerations, it was not possible to provide adequate space for a writing laboratory. It was also not possible to develop adequate laboratory materials for all of the courses. Initially, there was no budget for tutors. Consequently, as students completed a writing skills course, tutors were recruited for the writing laboratory from among those who were particularly interested in the program.

Despite the fact that the English department agreed in principle to the writing skills courses and had approved

them, there were some instructors who did not agree that the courses could prepare students adequately for English 1A. Some were also skeptical about sending students to a writing laboratory staffed by peer tutors who themselves were remedial students. Therefore, English X continued to be part of the English curriculum.

However, as time went by, it seemed very apparent that English X was not meeting student needs. Not only did this course bear a stigma and itself labeled the student as being deficient in skills or academic background; it was also too broadly designed to focus on specific skills. It was also too short to remedy the full range of writing problems.[29] Since an alternative existed in the program of writing skills courses, the department voted to phase English X out of the curriculum, effective fall 1971, and to implement the writing skills courses on a larger scale.

Two new courses were to be added to the existing program, one in intensive writing (English E) and one in critical reading with an emphasis on essays and ideas (English 72). These courses were intended for students who lacked experience in writing and reading or who lacked confidence in their abilities in these areas. (Table 1)

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[29] In a recent article in College Composition and Communications, No. 2, Vol. XXIV (May, 1973), John A. Higgins expresses the same view. "One three hour remedial course is just not enough for lower group students. Somehow economy oriented administrators must be made to realize this."

Table 1

Nine-Week Courses in English Writing Skills

ENGLISH

B, C, D, E, G, H, L, M, N, S, 71, 72
[WORKSHOP AND LABORATORY IN BASIC WRITING AND READING SKILLS] *Units

Prerequisites: None, unless indicated. **For native speakers of English receiving designated scores on qualifying examinations or receiving recommendation for enrollment by instructors and counselors. Courses are for potential transfer students who do not as yet qualify for English 1-A. Elimination of reading deficiencies should be first priority.

Nine weeks. Each course may be repeated once for credit upon the recommendation of the instructor.

English C-	Spelling [Three hours lecture and laboratory in class] For those who want to improve their spelling of the most frequently misspelled words.	1-1 Unit
English D-	Basics of Paragraph Structure [Three hours lecture and laboratory in class] For those who want to learn to write unified, coherent, concretely developed paragraphs.	1-1 Unit
English E-	Writing Practice [Three hours lecture: three hours laboratory] For those who lack experience in writing or who lack confidence in their writing abilities.	2-2 Units
English G-	Basics of Vocabulary and Diction [Four hours lecture-laboratory] For those who need to expand their vocabulary.	2-2 Units
English L-	Principles of Classification and Organization [Three hours lecture and laboratory in class] For those who want help with outlining, defining, problem-solving.	1-1 Unit
English M-	Basic Sentence Structure and Rhetoric I [Four hours lecture-laboratory] For those who want to improve their understanding of grammar and good sentences.	2-2 Units
English N-	Basic Sentence Structure and Rhetoric II [Four hours lecture-laboratory] Prerequisite: English M For those who want to learn how to combine sentences to improve their writing.	2-2 Units
English S-	Sentence Practice [Four hours lecture-laboratory] Prerequisite: English M and N or consent of the instructor. For those who want practice writing long sentences and combining them into paragraphs [the first step in paragraph writing.]	2-2 Units
English 72-	Critical Reading - Emphasis on essays and ideas [Four hours lecture-laboratory] For those who have no serious mechanical difficulties in reading but who need to acquire the practice and skills necessary for reading and analyzing non-fictional material.	2-2 Units

Source: Sacramento City College Catalog.

Adequate numbers of sections of the courses were scheduled to accommodate the students who were not ready for English 1A. A realistic budget for tutors was also submitted. Tutors were to be recruited from those students who had taken the courses in which they were to tutor, and additional assistance could be made available by students who were enrolled in field work courses in English at a nearby four-year institution.

Once the writing skills courses had been implemented at City College a testing instrument had to be selected for placing students in the courses they needed. While local criterion tests had been developed to measure specific skill competency, no satisfactory standardized test had been found.

However, in spring, 1973, the MCGRAW HILL EDUCATIONAL SKILLS TEST-FORM A was accepted by the English department as a possible placement test to be used as part of the orientation program for first-time entering students. The test was scored immediately following completion and made available to counselors to provide them with a test basis for placing students into English classes. It was used for a period of three semesters and then discontinued because it lacked predictive validity for placement in English 1A. Furthermore, the counseling which was based on test results did not seem to encourage greater number of students to take the writing skills courses despite the fact that many students were found to be incligible for English 1A.

Perhaps what Eley says is true: Students can usually be counseled about need for remediation only after they have failed in their original intentions.[30]

Student Reactions to the Writing Skills Courses.

In 1970, the first follow-up study was undertaken to determine student reaction to the writing skills courses. A questionnaire was sent to 2,788 students who were known to have completed one or more of the courses in the four-year period of their existence. Some 729 responses were received and tabulated. Of these, the majority of the respondents had taken either spelling or sentence structure. Four hundred and thirty-four indicated enrollment to improve writing or understanding of English; 186 to prepare for English 1A; the rest to earn extra units.[31]

Three hundred of the 729 students who responded to the questionnaire indicated that the courses improved their writing; 368 checked that the courses improved their understanding of English. Although only 299 students had used the writing laboratory, 282 found the tutorial assistance helpful.

The Writing Skills Courses are Related to Student Needs.

Also in 1970 the first attempt to study the effect of the writing skills courses in terms of success in English 1A

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[30]Earle G. Eley, "English Programs for Terminal Students" College English (Champaign, Illinois: National Council of Teachers of English, 1965), p. 99.

[31]Anderson, Op. Cit.

was undertaken by a member of the English department.[32] English X had been phased out of the curriculum but there seemed to be no satisfactory placement procedure of English 1A. The department was therefore searching for additional prerequisites to the nationally accepted standardized objective tests usually administered in high school. The study was made to determine the correlation between success in English 62 -- Sentence Structure and Rhetoric, now called English M -- and success in Freshman Composition.

The subjects were 99 randomly selected students who had passed English 62. The results indicated that 43 of the students who had taken this course had also taken English 1A. In this group, the students who had received a B in English 62 and those who had received a D had an identical mean final grade in English 1A -- 2.0 or C. Those who had received a grade of C in English 62 had a mean final grade of 2.17 in English 1A. But those who had received an A in English 62 had a mean final grade of 1.8 (D+) in English 1A. The conclusions were that a high score in English 62 was no predictor of success in English 1A. While it might have remedial value, there was no indication that English 62 was preparing students for freshman composition.

On the other hand, the researcher found that students who had completed 15 or more college transfer units with a composite grade point average of 2.0 or higher had experi-

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[32]Charles Myers, Mimeograph Report (1970).

enced success in English 1A. As a result, the department agreed to the proposal to adopt the units with G.P.A. as an alternative prerequisite to the established test scores on the nationally accepted standardized tests.[33]

However, because there was some disagreement about the results of this study and because there are some students who take the writing skills courses in preparation for English 1A, the writer, who was then Division Chair of Languages and Literature, did a controlled study as part of a practicum for the Nova University module LEARNING THEORY AND APPLICATIONS. The purpose was to determine whether there was any positive transfer of learning to English 1A as a result of the experience and skills gained in the successful completion of English E (Intensive Writing Practice). If there was any positive transfer, then English E might be recommended to the English department as a possible alternative prerequisite for English 1A.

In this study, two groups of students were compared on the basis of their achievement in English 1A. The experimental group had passed English E and had enrolled in English 1A on the recommendation of the instructors. The control group had enrolled in English 1A on the basis of completion of 15 units of college transfer courses with a grade point average of 2.0 or higher. However, the hypoth-

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[33]The American College Test, Scholastic Aptitude Test, Cooperative English Test or Iowa Tests of Educational Development.

esis that the experimental group would perform significantly better as a result of the intensive writing practice in English E was rejected on the basis of a t-test: t = .081, df = 58 or no statistical significance at the .05 level for a two-tailed test. However, further research was recommended because of the differences in grade distribution and in the mean of the final grade in English 1A, the experimental group performing better.

What Did We Need To Find Out?

Although some evaluation of the English writing skills courses at City College had been done, there were still questions. The results of the student survey (1970) did not reveal what the educational goals of the students had been. Furthermore, the results did not pinpoint how the writing skills courses had specifically helped students; to what extent students found the writing laboratory useful and for what reasons; how many students had re-enrolled in any of the courses and why; what the English goals of the students had been. Yet, answers to such questions could lead to possible change in course content and emphasis; modification of instruction, re-examination of the role of the writing laboratory and the student tutors; more informed counseling which might cause changes in attitudes about the courses.

Furthermore, while it may be true that not all of the students take the writing skills courses as preparation for English 1A, there are some who do. Therefore, it was to the

advantage of these students if a recommended sequence of the writing skills courses could be discovered or a pattern of grades that could indicate success in English 1A. A study showing a significant difference in the success rate in English 1A between those students who took English M (Sentence Structure) followed by either English D (Paragraph Structure) or English E (Intensive Writing) before enrolling in English 1A and those who enrolled only on the basis of transfer units with a 2.0 grade point might lead to an alternative prerequisite to English 1A.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Since student evaluation is considered to be an important part in the whole process of evaluation at City College, the first part of this major research project -- hereafter referred to as Component One -- deals with the analysis and interpretation of an open-ended questionnaire, designed to obtain non-directed reaction from students to the writing skills courses.

The second part -- hereafter referred to as Component Two -- describes the findings derived from existing data. The primary purpose of this analysis was to determine what percentage of a large sample of students who had enrolled in the writing skills courses during 1973-1974 subsequently took English 1A. A further purpose was to determine whether students had taken the writing skills courses in some developmental sequence before enrolling in English 1A, and if so, with what success.

The findings supported a hypothesis that students who completed English M (Sentence Structure and Rhetoric) and English D (Paragraph Structure) and/or English E (Intensive writing) would perform significantly better

when compared to a similar group which had not completed these courses. An ex post facto study to test this hypothesis comprises the last portion -- hereafter referred to as Component Three -- of this major research project.

The first part of this chapter describes the subjects for each of the three components; the second part describes the procedures.

SUBJECTS

Component One: Questionnaire

The subjects who responded to the questionnaire were students enrolled in English C (Spelling), English D (Paragraph Structure), English M (Sentence Structure and Rhetoric), English G (Vocabulary), and English 72 (Critical Reading).[34] They were enrolled in the second nine-week session fall 1974 and were in classes taught by eight different instructors. All subjects were volunteers for this investigation and identity was kept anonymous.

Component Two: Evaluative Data

The subjects identified as having been enrolled in

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[34]Because of the letter designations used for all of the writing skills courses, with the exception of English 72, these courses are often referred to as the "alphabet courses."

at least one of the writing skills courses during the period 1971 through fall 1974 were found in computerized data available at the college. All had completed at least fifty-eight units when identified and had either been enrolled or were still enrolled in the college, as part-time or full-time students. Identity was kept anonymous.

Component Three: Ex Post Facto Statistical Study

The subjects used for the experimental groups in the ex post facto study had completed at least fifty-eight units when identified. Each had completed English 1A prior to spring 1974 and had successfully completed English M, and D or E which they took in sequence before enrolling in English 1A. Each had also completed at least fifteen units of college transfer courses with a composite grade point average of 2.0 (C) or higher. The subjects used for the control group had also completed English 1A prior to spring 1975. None had taken a course in English, but each had completed at least fifteen units of college transfer courses with a composite grade point average of 2.0 (C) or better prior to enrollment in English 1A. Both groups had been enrolled in the college as full or part-time students during the period 1971-1974. Both groups were matched on the basis of grade point average, units

earned at time of enrollment in English 1A, the year in which they were enrolled in English 1A, and instructors.

PROCEDURES

Component One: Questionnaire

In designing the questionnaire, the writer chose the unstructured response mode, despite the problems in quantification, in order to allow the respondents to give non-directed responses. Specific information being sought through the six open-ended questions was: why students had enrolled in the writing skills courses; whether the students intended to re-enroll, and if so, for what reasons; how helpful students found the writing laboratory to be and why; what part students found to be the most valuable part of each course; what recommendations students could make to improve the courses; how many students intended to enroll in another English course, which one, and for what reasons.[35]

Several factors had to be considered in selecting the participating classes. First of all, it was necessary that the student group be representative of the student population in the writing skills courses. In order to prevent bias, it was also highly desirable that the student group

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[35] A sample questionnaire is included in the APPENDIX A, pp. 75-76.

be in classes taught by several instructors. Furthermore, since the writing laboratory is a mandatory component only for English G, English M, and English 72,[36] an adequate representation of the students using the writing laboratory had to be insured. Because the writing skills courses are short-term (nine weeks), sufficient time had to be allowed before the questionnaire was administered so that students could respond with some degree of certainty about their experiences in the classes. Certainly, the administration of the questionnaire could not interfere with the plan of instruction. Finally, in order to keep similar the conditions under which the questionnaire was to be administered, the evaluation was to be completed during a class rather than a laboratory hour.

In light of these factors, it was determined that the questionnaire be given in the largest of each of the writing skills courses being offered in the second nine-week session of fall 1974. However, since attendance in the last week of the semester tends to be erratic and since participation was to be voluntary, the original plan was later modified to include more than one section of English M so that the sample of students using the writing laboratory would be adequately representative; and more than one section of

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[36] Since English N and English S are extensions of English M (Sentence Structure) and are new courses, they are taught by arrangement in the writing laboratory. For these reasons it was decided not to include them in this study.

English D since these classes all had small enrollments. Also, one instructor's plan did not later permit a sampling of students in English E as had originally been intended.

The date for the administration of the questionnaire was decided in individual meetings between the writer and the participating instructors. In these meetings, the purpose of the evaluation and the questionnaire format was also discussed. Specific directions were given by the writer for administration of the questionnaire.[37]

In order to find out what the educational goals of the students in the writing skills courses were, the students were asked to state their major on the questionnaire. It was anticipated that majors could fall into one of three categories: undeclared, transfer, or occupational.

For purposes of tabulation, the writer identified and coded major categories for the responses given to question 1, "I took this course because___." In general, the coding posed no problems. However, some assumptions made by the writer relative to coding need to be clarified.

Although it is known from interviews with English instructors and counselors that both of these groups recommend the writing skills courses to students on the basis of some need as indicated by class performance or test results, students generally seem reluctant to admit that they need

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[37]The extent of administrative responsibilities and the limitations of time prevented the writer from personally administering the questionnaire.

help with basic English skills.[38] Therefore, in tabulating the results, the writer felt reasonably secure that comments such as "I needed English" could be interpreted to mean that a recommendation for enrollment in a specific writing skills course had been made to the students.

On the other hand, such responses as "I didn't know how to write a paragraph," or "To get help with spelling," seemed to indicate to the writer that the student had primarily enrolled in a course to acquire a basic skill. Therefore, these responses were tabulated under this category.

Two comments, "curiosity" and "interest", while they could be the actual reasons for enrollment in a particular writing skills course, might also mean that the students needed units and that the units were the primary reason why the student chose the course. The writer, therefore, included these reasons under the category "units."

The responses to question 2, "I intend/do not intend to repeat this course because ___" were tabulated under the headings "Intend To Repeat," "Do Not Intend To Repeat," and "Not Sure." Only one major reason could be identified for those students who intended to repeat the course in which they were enrolled. However, those students who did not intend to repeat the course in which they were enrolled gave various reasons. Therefore, these were coded and summarized in a table.

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[38]The reader is referred to p. 21, Chapter 2 of this study.

Since the writing laboratory is not mandatory for English D (Paragraph Structure) and English C (Spelling), only those students who were enrolled in English M (Sentence Structure and Rhetoric), English G (Vocabulary), and English 72 (Critical Reading) could respond to question 3, "I found the writing laboratory very helpful/somewhat helpful/of no help becuase ____." Answers were tabulated according to the three possible choices. Then the reasons why these students found the writing laboratory helpful to the degree which they indicated were identified, coded and summarized in a separate table.

The responses to question 4, "The most valuable part of this course was ____," were for the most part readily identified. However, it should be noted that answers such as "I learned something," or "I got self-confidence," or "I got help for classes in which writing is required" seemed to indicate to the writer that the student had made improvement; therefore, these responses were tabulated under the category "Improvement Made."

Question 5, "This course could have been more helpful to me if ____," was formulated primarily to obtain information from the students that could indicate areas in which instruction and/or counseling might need improvement. Since it was expected that there would be a variety of responses, no precoding was attempted by the writer. In tabulating the responses, however, the writer first listed the items by course together with the number of respondents. Then a

comparison was made to determine whether there were responses that were common to all of the courses and in what percentage. These were identified, coded, and summarized in a table.

In question 6, the students were given a choice of responding either to (a) "After this course I intend to take English ___ because" or (b) "After this course I do not intend to take another English class because ___." The question was asked to determine to what extent the writing skills courses were serving as steps toward a long-range goal; to what extent one of the courses helped to identify the need for another in the series of courses; and to what extent students perceived the courses as sequential or developmental. In tabulating the responses, the writer dealt with the first and second part of the question separately. The courses which students indicated as their next English goal were identified first and tabulated. Then the reasons were identified, coded, and tabulated. Finally, the reasons given in response to the "b" part of the question were identified, tabulated, and summarized in a separate table.

Component Two: Examination of Evaluative Data

In an effort to find out what percentage of the students who had taken one or more of the writing skills courses subsequently took English 1A, and in an effort to discover whether there might be a recommended sequence in the writing skills courses that could indicate success (C or

better) in English 1A, the writer examined the evaluative data from which the graduation lists for fall and spring 1974-1975 were compiled. This data was readily available to the writer and included a substantital as well as a representative sample of the student population - students whose names ranged from A to Z, a total of 2850. These students had completed fifty-eight units and were or had been enrolled in the college as either full or part-time students.

The data included the English courses which each of these students had taken, as well as the year of enrollment and the grade received in each course. In examining the data, the writer used charts for recording purposes. Whenever a writing skills course was located in the student's data, it was noted together with the grade received and the semester and year of completion. If the student subsequently enrolled in English 1A, the grade received as well as the semester and year of enrollment were also recorded under the appropriate headings on the charts. Furthermore, the units earned at enrollment in English 1A were also recorded. The student was identified only by the major. This procedure enabled the writer to discern a sequence and a pattern of grades without too much difficulty once the investigation had been concluded.

Component Three: Ex Post Facto Statistical Study

Since English X, the one semester remedial course for

students who were not qualified for English 1A, was phased out of the English curriculum at City College, no single English course or series of courses has served as a prerequisite to English 1A. Instead, the English department has determined as prerequisites: (a) a satisfactory score on one of the nationally accepted college placement tests;[39] or (b) the completion of fifteen college transfer units with an overall grade point average of 2.0 (C) or better. Yet, the program of writing skills courses was developed not only to accommodate those students who needed to concentrate on one basic writing skill at a time and so to remedy in some systematic way the number of writing deficiencies they had, but the courses were also intended as an alternative avenue to English 1A, at least for some students. Furthermore, the College Catalog states that the courses are "for students almost ready for English 1A."[40]

The findings in a previous study undertaken by the writer and the findings resulting from the examination of evaluative data on students (Component Two) led to the hypothesis that students who successfully completed English M (Sentence Structure and Rhetoric) and English D (Paragraph Structure) and/or English E (Intensive Writing Practice)

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[39] A.C.T., S.A.T., I.T.E.D. usually taken in high school, and during 1973-1974 the McGraw Hill Educational Skills Test administered to all first time entering students at Sacramento City College.

[40] The reader is referred to Table 1, p. 20.

with a grade of C or better in sequence[41] before enrolling in English 1A would perform significantly better when compared with a group of students who were also initially ineligible for English 1A, but who took no English course before enrolling in English 1A on the basis of the unit prerequisite.

Further support for this hypothesis comes from the evaluation reported from other community colleges. At Golden West College, for example, at least one half of the students who completed the first course in an intensive two-course sequence, 9 weeks each course, were found to be eligible for English 1A as judged by a committee of English faculty on the basis of a writing sample. Furthermore, the reported follow-up studies indicated that these students were more successful in English 1A than students who were initially eligible for English 1A. Interestingly, this first course is similar to English M at City College in that there are no writing assignments and content mastery is tested objectively. The Golden West course also teaches students to recognize errors in English sentence patterns.[42] Moreover, English departments at community colleges have been experimenting with the block course approach in

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[41] By sequence is meant one course followed by another in the same semester or in the following semester.

[42] For this information the writer is indebted to a colleague who shared it after a personal visit to Golden West in 1969.

remedial instruction, and apparently with some success.[43] A need for realistic prerequisites for English is supported not only by the dissatisfaction of many members of the English department at City College, but by related literature. A study of the placement practices for English 1A in California Community College points out that in general, the English faculties were dissatisfied with English placement procedures and were looking for alternatives.[44]

The statistical study which comprises component three of this major research project was the first attempt to determine the effectiveness of English M, English D and/or English E in preparing students for English 1A. It was hoped that the results could give the local English department and other English departments some evaluative data for reassessment of current prerequisities and placement practices for English 1A.

The defined population was taken from available computerized evaluative data. The experimental group consisted of 42 students who were identified in a group of 2850 students as having successfully completed English M and English D and/or English E in sequence prior to enrolling in English 1A. The control group was searched out of the same data and

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[43] One example is Santa Rose Community College in California.

[44] Robert Clark, "A Survey of English Placement Practices in California Community Colleges," Unpublished Report Reedley College, 1973.

also limited to 42 students, but the control group had no English prior to enrollment in English 1A. Both groups were initially ineligible for 1A and had enrolled on the basis of the 15 unit prerequisite. Both groups had an overall grade point average ranging from 2.0 to 2.9. Care was exercised to keep the unit range (transfer units completed at time of enrollment in English 1A) similar as well as the year range (semester and year of enrollment in English 1A). Since there has been no change in the English faculty, it could be assumed that the students were distributed among the same instructors and had therefore experienced a similar learning environment. The proportion of women to men is equal.

Due to the ex post facto nature of the study, a true design was not possible. The design was therefore a criterion design, C being eligibility for English 1A, X being successful completion of English M, English D and/or English E in sequence and O_1 and O_2 being the dependent variable: success in English 1A as determined by the final grade in this course.

$$C_1 \; X \; O_1$$

$$C_2 \quad O_2$$

Data Analysis

A t-test was run by computer to analyze the comparative success in English 1A of the experimental and the control group at the .10 level for a one-tailed test.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

Component One: Questionnaire

The student sample that responded to the questionnaire totaled 129 or 60 percent of the number of students to whom the questionnaire was to be administered.[45] The lack of greater response may be attributed to one or both of the following reasons. First of all, student attendance tends to be generally erratic during the last week of a semester; therefore, some students were absent on the day that the questionnaire was administered. Then, response was on a voluntary basis, and some blank questionnaires were returned, which indicated that a few students chose not to respond.

The academic majors which the respondents indicated on the questionnaire were classified as undeclared, occupational (two-year programs), and transfer. The numbers of students identified in each category are as follows: undeclared - 47 or 36 percent of the respondents: occupational - 43 or 33 percent of the respondents; transfer - 39 or 30 percent of the respondents.

While the percentage of undeclared majors was somewhat higher than either the occupational or the transfer category,

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[45] 216 represented 62 percent of the 344 students who were enrolled in the various sections of the writing skills courses, second nine-week period, fall 1974.

no one group greatly outranked another by percentage. The implication seems to be that the writing skills courses are serving a cross-section of the student population in terms of educational goals.

Table 2 shows the tabulated responses to question 1. The results indicate that the majority of the students polled were enrolled in a writing skills course as a result of an identified need to acquire a basic skill. Only 19 percent stated they had enrolled specifically to prepare for English 1A. A small percentage, 11%, enrolled because they needed units, and 2% had other reasons: sympathetic instructor (1%); and graduation requirement (1%). Only 3 students, or 2%, did not respond to the question.

These results seem to support those of the 1970 follow-up questionnaire which also showed that the majority of the respondents had enrolled in a writing skills course primarily to improve their understanding of English and/or their writing ability.

Table 2

Reported basis for enrollment in a writing skills course

	N	%
To Acquire a Basic Skill	59	46
To Prepare For English 1A	24	19
Recommendation of An Instructor of Counselor	17	13
Units	14	11
To Prepare for College Courses Which Require Writing	9	7
Other	6	4
Sympathetic Instructor	2	
Graduation Requirement	1	
No Comment	3	

Source: Student Questionnaire - Question 1: "I took this course because _____."

Of the 129 students who participated in the student opinion survey, 25, or 19%, stated that they intended to repeat the writing skills course in which they were enrolled; 98, or 76%, did not intend to repeat the course; 2, or 1% were not sure; 4, or 3% did not respond to question 2, "I intend/do not intend to repeat this course because ____." Those students who intended to repeat the course gave only one reason, that they needed more help in the subject or more practice in mastering the material of the course. The

students who did not intend to repeat the writing skills course in which they were enrolled stated various reasons. These are illustrated in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Reported Reason For Intention Not To Repeat A Writing Skills Course

Reason	N	%
Sufficient Help or Practice In Subject	26	26
Now Taking Course For The Second Time	14	14
To Repeat Has No Value	8	8
Intend To Take English 1A	19	19
Intend To Take Another Skills Course	13	13
Course Has No Value	8	8
Academic Plans Do Not Permit Repeating The Course	7	7
Total	95	95*

*Four or 5% of the respondents who did not intend to repeat the writing skills course in which they were enrolled did not state a reason.

Source: Student Questionnaire - Question 2: "I intend/do not intend to repeat this course because ___."

Those students who did not intend to repeat the course because it had no value claimed that the course was either too difficult or not very helpful. Those who stated that there would be no value in repeating the writing skills course felt that their performance was satisfactory. In fact, one might expect that if a student were passing (C or better), there would be no need to take the course again. Some authorities even caution against the practice of allowing students to repeat remedial courses, stating that such a policy deludes students.[46] However, there are a few students for whom a one-time exposure is apparently not sufficient even if they are passing, which a cursory examination of data supports. Furthermore, the results of the questionnaire show that 24, or 19%, of the respondents intended to re-enroll because they needed or wanted more help or practice. Besides, 17% of the respondents were already enrolled for the second time. However, it is possible that they did not complete the requirements of the course the first time and had consequently re-enrolled to remove a grade of "Incomplete."[47]

Although the results do not indicate that students repeat the writing skills courses merely for the sake of

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[46]John Weber, On. Cit., p. 34.

[47]According to one instructor, students usually receive an NC (No Credit) grade because they do not complete the work. In a class of 42 students who were enrolled in English M, for example, 10 had received an NC grade because they did not complete the course requirements.

"easy" units, there may be this possibility. So, whether the English department is justified in permitting students to repeat any of the writing skills courses once for credit on recommendation of the instructor, if the student has completed the course satisfactorily (C or better), seems to be a debatable question.

Tables 4 and 5 illustrate the responses to question 3, "I found the writing laboratory very helpful/somewhat helpful/of no help because ____."

Table 4

Degree of Usefulness of Writing Laboratory

	N	%
Very Helpful	34	40
Somewhat Helpful	39	46
No Help	11	14
Total	84	100

Source: Student Questionnaire - Question 3: "I found the writing laboratory very helpful/somewhat helpful/ no help because ____."

Table 5

Reasons for Perceived Degree of Usefulness of Writing Laboratory

Very Helpful			Somewhat Helpful			No Help		
Reason	N	%	Reason	N	%	Reason	N	%
Help From Tutors	19	15	Help From Tutors	20	16	Didn't Go To Laboratory	5	4
Opportunity To Practice Material Presented in Class	5	4	Practice Materials Available	6	5	Waste Of Time	6	5
			Place To Study	3	2			
Total	24	19	Total	29	23	Total	11	9

*Ten respondents gave no reason why they found the laboratory very helpful and ten respondents gave no reason why they found the writing laboratory somewhat helpful. (23% of total number responding.)

Source: Student Questionnaire - Question 3: "I found the writing laboratory very useful/ somewhat useful/no help because _____."

The results indicate that 86% of those students who were in those writing skills courses which have a required hour each week in the writing laboratory, in addition to class time (English M, G, and 72), found the writing laboratory helpful. However, some specific observations made by the respondents are worthy of note: the laboratory was often noisy and crowded; the tutors were sometimes unable to explain the material adequately; the tutors were sometimes not interested in the students. These same observations were also made by those students who found the writing laboratory a "waste of time." Still, the fact that the majority of the users found the tutorial assistance of value lends support to the continued use of peer tutors.

Table 6 shows what the respondents to the questionnaire considered to be the most valuable part of the writing skills course in which they were enrolled.

Table 6

Most Valuable Part of Writing Skills Course as Perceived by Respondents

	N	%
Content of the Course	50	38
Method of Instruction	28	21
Improvement Made By Student	24	18
Programmed Text	7	6
All Aspects of the Course	5	4
Laboratory	4	3
Total	118	90*

*6% of the participants did not respond to the question. The remaining 4% were not sure of the value of the course.

Source: Student Questionnaire - Question 4: "The most valuable part of this course was _____."

Of the 118 students who responded (129 possible) 38% considered the content to be the most valuable part of the course; for example, learning sentence patterns for meaning, learning to structure a paragraph, learning new words and meanings. Twenty-one percent referred to the method of instruction; that is, lecture, class discussion, explanation. Four percent could not single out any particular aspect and considered the entire course to be valuable. While most of the responses seem to indicate that students saw merit in the course in which they were enrolled, the most significant response and the one toward which the question was intended might well be "improvement made." Yet, only 18% of the respondents considered the improvement made in mastering a particular skill as the most valuable part of the course.

Table 7 illustrates the student responses to question 5, "This course would have been more helpful to me if ____."

Table 7

Distribution by courses of student opinion as to how writing skills courses could have been more effective

Student Opinion	English Course C	D	G	M	72	N	%
Course "great" as is	2	12	5	14	3	36	28
No Comment	2	7	-	10	-	19	15
Nine Weeks Not Long Enough	2	2	2	9	3	18	14
More Personal Help From Instructor and/or Tutors	2	1	-	5	-	8	6
More Writing	-	3	-	4	-	7	5
Other	4	11	4	19	3	41	32
Total						129	100

Source: Student Questionnaire -- Question 5: "This course would have been more helpful to me if ____."

Although 36 or 28 percent of the respondents found the writing skills courses in which they were enrolled satisfactory, and 19 or 15 percent chose not to comment for some unknown reason, the rest of the respondents stated an opinion as to how the course could have been more effective.

Despite the fact that some of these opinions are limited to 3 to 6 percent of the students who responded, some might have implications for instruction and others for counseling.

Besides the references to tutors and writing practice as indicated in Table 7, the following comments should be noted: more concentration on word meanings as well as spelling in English C; improved materials and/or text in English C, G, M, and 72; more grammar in English M and D. In addition, students expressed such concerns as: "If I had a better background for the course" (English 72); "If I understood English better" (English M); "If I had taken the course earlier" (English D).

While the results suggest a review of course content, and materials used in the courses, as well as an examination of present tutor services -- including the number of tutors -- they also suggest some needed direction in counseling. It is entirely possible that the students who wished they had understood English better were not native speakers of English and therefore should have been advised about the English Second Language courses. Furthermore, objectives have been written for the courses and made available to English faculty and the counseling staff.[48] Perhaps additional efforts must be made to make students aware of the content and the expectations in the courses. More than that, better ways must be found for referring students to

[48]The reader is referred to the Appendix B, pp. 78-84.

the courses they need. "There is mounting evidence that in a community college the counselor's the pivotal staff member in a remedial program."[49]

Table 8 shows the responses to the first part of question 6a, "After this course I intend to take English ___."

Table 8

Distribution by courses of next English goal of students enrolled in English C (Spelling), English D (Paragraph), English G (Vocabulary), English N (Sentence), and English 72 (Critical Reading).

Present English Courses	Next English Goal														
	1A	1B	C	D	E	G	N	N	71*	Bus. Engl.	Not Sure	None	No Comment	N	%
Engl. C	3					1			2	1	2	1	2	12	9
Engl. D	17	2	1	1	6		1			1	2	2	1	33	26
Engl. G	4		1			1					3	2	1	11	8
Engl. N	18	1	1	6	1	2	7	2	2		9	3	6	58	45
Engl. 72	8				2		1			1	1	1	1	15	12
Total														129	100

*English 71 - Developmental Reading (Reading Skills course)

Source: Student Questionnaire - Question 6a: "After this course I intent to take English ___."

[49] William Moore, Jr., Against the Odds (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1970).

As for the reasons students gave for their next English goal (the second part of question 6a "because"), 42 of the 48 students who planned to take English 1A stated that it was required; 4 felt prepared as a result of their experiences in English D; 1 student liked English; and 1 student wanted to learn to write. The reason given for enrollment in English E was to get writing practice in preparation for English 1A. The same reason was given for enrollment in English D. Those students who planned to take English C or G or M had either spelling or vocabulary deficiencies or needed to understand the structure of a sentence. Two students recognized the need for a reading skills course, but none of the respondents planned to take the reading course that is considered part of the writing skills program since it deals with organization and ideas and demands writing.

The results of question 6a seem to point out a contradiction. In responding to question 1, only 19 percent of the students claimed that they had enrolled in a skills course to prepare for English 1A, yet 37 percent of the respondents indicated this course as their next English goal when responding to question 6. It may be that some of those students whom the writer had identified as being advised into a skills course by a counselor or an instructor because they "needed English", had really been unprepared for English 1A. As a result, 37 percent might be a more realistic figure than 19 percent in determining how many of

the respondents to the questionnaire had been enrolled in a skills course to prepare for English 1A.

Only 8 students responded to question 6b, "After this course I do not intend to take another English class because _____." Of these, 4 students stated that they had already completed the breadth requirement for graduation; 1 student couldn't fit English into his program; 1 student claimed that English was of no help; and 1 student stated that he was not prepared for more English.

On the whole, the results of question 6a and 6b do not reveal any planned sequence in the English goals of the students. In fact, 16 of the respondents were not sure at the end of a course whether they needed more English or which course they should take next, if they did need more. Furthermore, if the stated English goal was English 1A, the students, for the most part, did not seem to be moving toward any developmental sequence which could lead them to their desired goal with some assurance of success. Instead, the English goals of the respondents seem largely to be determined by requirements, felt needs, even misconceptions about what a given course might do for them.

Component Two: Analysis of Evaluative Data

Despite the fact that the program of writing skills courses has replaced English X as the remedial program at City College, none of the courses has ever been a prerequisite for English 1A as was the case for English X. Inter-

views with members of the department reveal an agreement that the courses have merit because they fulfill a need in helping students overcome writing deficiencies. Furthermore, the small class size (enrollments are limited to 25 students per section), in the opinion of the English instructors, permits the individual help which many students seem to need in order to improve. Additionally, grades can be based on the progress which a student makes since student success is not measured against the standards of English 1A. This non-punitive grading together with the individualized help, in the opinion of the instructors interviewed, help make some students feel better about themselves and their abilities, which may be one of the advantages of the writing skills courses. "Courses such as English E (Intensive Writing Practice)," says Instructor B, "are giving students self-confidence because they get immediate results -- direct question, direct answer, feeling. All writing is done in class, and we take the student where he is and bring him up. Students are being asked to write about things relevant to them. There is more emphasis on communication, self-expression, what to do."[50]

The percentage of students that need courses in writing skills is at present difficult to estimate since entry test-

[50]This opinion was expressed to the writer by a senior member of the English department.

ing has been discontinued on the college campus.[51] However, enrollments in the courses seem to be increasing. Records indicate that 368 students enrolled in 18 sections for the first nine weeks fall 1974, but 451 enrolled in 16 sections for the first nine-week session in spring 1975; the second nine-week session spring 1975 drew 467 students. The total for the two nine-week sessions spring 1975 seem equal to the enrollment in English X in the last semester that the course was offered.

Whether the writing skills courses only provide minimal background in essential literacy, or whether they can prepare students for English 1A has been an unresolved question in the English department at City College. Yet, we know that there are students who take the writing skills courses to prepare for English 1A. English instructors have been recommending these courses to students who are having difficulties in English 1A. Counselors have also been recommending the courses to students who find themselves ineligible for English 1A on the basis of test results or previous academic performance. The results of the questionnaire show that at least 37 percent of the respondents had enrolled in a writing skills course to prepare for English 1A. Furthermore, at least 10 percent of the students who enrolled

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[51] During the three semesters that the McGraw Hill Educational Skills Test was given to first-time entering students at City College, 66 percent of the students tested fell, below the 50%, on measures of reading comprehension and basic writing skills.

in English 1A in fall 1974 indicated that they had previously taken at least one of the writing skills courses.[52]

An examination of evaluative data on a sample of 2850 students revealed that 408 students had been enrolled in at least one of the writing skills courses during the period 1971-1974. Of these, 229 took only one course; 179 took more than one, and 224 or 54 percent of the 408 subsequently took English 1A. As in the case of the questionnaire results, there did not seem to be, for the most part, any prescribed pattern or developmental sequence in which students enrolled in the courses. Yet, few members of the English department, it seems, would argue that a course in sentence structure and rhetoric followed by a course in paragraph and intensive writing could not prepare a student for English 1A.

In examining the data, the writer discovered 48 students in the total of 408 who took English M (Sentence Structure and Rhetoric) and then English D (Paragraph) and/or English E (Intensive Writing). Of this number, 8 students did not pass English 1A. However, these 8 also did not pass both of the writing skills courses. On the other hand, the 42 students who took English M and then English D and/or E in sequence and successfully passed each course (C or better) also successfully passed English 1A. This sequence appears to adequately prepare students for the English 1A experience.

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[52] This percentage was derived from English registration enrollment data.

As for the pattern of grades, there seemed to be a closer relationship between the grade received in English D or E and the grade received in English 1A than the grade received in English M and the grade received in English 1A. The mean M grade of the group of 42 students was 2.92; the mean D or E grade was 2.41 and the mean 1A grade was 2.36. A similar relationship was found when the mean English M grade of the 41 students (in the group of 224 who took at least one of the writing skills courses before enrolling in English 1A) who were identified as having enrolled in 1A without D or E was compared with their 1A grade: mean English M grade = 2.91 and the mean English 1A grade = 2.26. Furthermore, the mean English D grade of the group of 46 students who were identified in the 224 group as having enrolled in English 1A without taking English M was 2.52 while their mean English 1A grade was 2.38. Accounting for the closer relationship between the D or E grade and the 1A grade would certainly be difficult; however, one factor might be the nature of the courses: learning to identify sentence patterns and their rhetoric as opposed to using the patterns in writing assignments. Another factor might be the assigned laboratory hour for English M in addition to the class hour, during which students have the opportunity to practice and to get help from peer tutors.

Component Three: Ex Post Facto Statistical Study

In this study the following hypothesis was tested: students who successfully completed English M and English D and/or English E in sequence before enrolling in English 1A would perform significantly better in English 1A when compared with a group of students who took no English course prior to enrollment on the basis of the unit prerequisite (successful completion of 15 college transfer units with an overall grade point average of 2.0 or higher). Two groups of students, found in the same evaluation data, were compared on the basis of their achievement in English 1A. The experimental group had successfully completed English M and English D and/or English E in sequence before enrolling in English 1A. The control group had taken no English prior to enrollment. Both groups were initially ineligible for English 1A and had enrolled on the basis of the unit prerequisite. Care was exercised to keep the groups similar with respect to instructors, learning environment, sex, semester and year of enrollment in English 1A. Furthermore, t-tests were computed to determine whether the experimental and control groups were similar with respect to units earned at time of enrollment in English 1A and with respect to overall grade point average. The results of the t-tests are presented in Tables 9 and 10.

Table 9

Means and SDs and T Value of Unit Values for Experimental and Control Groups.

Group	N	Mean	Sd	t Value	
Experimental	42	23.4524	10.4909		
Control	42	28.1429	12.8169	1.83529	N.S.

Table 10

Means and SDs and T Value of GPA Scores for Experimental and Control Groups.

Group	N	Mean	Sd	t Value	
Experimental	42	2.52286	.400433		
Control	42	2.5169	.284466	.07	N.S.

Once determined that the groups were matched, a third t-test was computed to test the hypothesis. The results given in Table 11 showed no significant difference in the mean English 1A grades between the experimental group who completed English M and English D and/or E in sequence with C or better and the control group who had no English in college prior to enrollment in English 1A. Therefore, the hypothesis that the experimental group would perform significantly better was rejected.

Table 11

Means and SDs and T Value of English 1A Grades of Experimental and Control Groups.

Group	N	Mean	Sd	t Value	
Experimental	42	2.30952	1.11504		
Control	42	2.2619	1.12747	.194615	N.S.

However, in computing a correlation coefficient to determine how the cumulative grade point average of the experimental group correlated with the English 1A grade, a positive correlation was found: the cumulative grade point average correlated .40 with the English 1A grades. On the other hand, an examination of the control group revealed a negative relationship of -.057 between the cumulative grade point average and the English 1A grades.

Although the observed correlations cannot prove that successful completion of English M, English D and/or English E has any effect on the English 1A grade or the cumulative grade point average, there may be a suggestion of a relationship warranting further analysis or study. Furthermore, while the ex post facto study showed no significant difference in the mean English 1A grades between the experimental and the control groups, the observed correlations, nevertheless, seem to suggest that the successful completion of the English M, English D and/or English E sequence might be as valid a prerequisite to English 1A as the current 15 unit prerequisite.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the results of the student questionnaire (Component One of this study) are limited to the group of students which responded, they should give the local English department some perspective at least about the student population that enrolls in the writing skills courses. It seems to be a population with different goals but with one basic need: to acquire writing skills. Yet, there is a question whether students are being helped as efficiently as they might be. Some of the responses indicated the need for more efforts to make students aware of the courses as instructional support services early enough to help prevent possible difficulties.

The first recommendation is therefore that criterion-based tests of English skills be developed through a joint effort of the English faculty and the counseling staff. The tests should have the advantage of ease in scoring and administration so that they could be given on specified dates before registration to all first-time students at the college. Whether the results should be used as a basis of placement in English 1A for those students who wish to enroll in this course is another question. However, the results could be used diagnostically to give students some assessment of strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, they would give counselors a basis for advising students to

enroll in specific writing skills courses, or reading courses, depending on the needs.

A second recommendation is that the testing service be made available to students throughout the semester. Students who encountered difficulties in college courses because of writing problems could be referred to this service by their instructors at any time during the semester. Appropriate courses in reading and writing skills could be recommended to students. A system of referral could be the beginning of a campus effort to help students succeed in college, particularly those who might "drop-out" in face of problems arising as a result of basic skills deficiencies.

A third recommendation is that at least one section of English be scheduled as an open laboratory period. (Precedent has already been established by the instructors in reading.) This procedure would permit students to enroll in a writing skills course by arrangement at any time during the semester, as soon as writing problems became apparent. However, such a system would also presuppose the development of self-paced modular units to permit students to finish at least one part of a writing skills course with credit.[53] Therefore, a fourth recommendation is that time and funds be regularly budgeted for this purpose.

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[53] According to the literature, not all colleges grant credit for remedial or developmental course work. Still, the advantage of credit is not to be overlooked. It can be a factor in motivation which is sometimes necessary for success.

A diverse student population further implies that one text or set of instructional materials or even emphasis might not be suitable for students with varied educational goals. The results of the questionnaire suggest a need for review of texts and materials for some of the courses. Instructors in occupational areas also criticize English departments for the lack of relevant material for their students in many English courses. Consequently, a fifth recommendation is a systematic review by a committee of texts and materials in the writing skills courses with respect to suitability and relevance to a heterogeneous student group.

While most of the respondents to the questionnaire who used the writing laboratory appreciated the tutorial assistance, there were some concerns about the attitudes of the tutors, the inability of the tutors to answer questions or to correct tests adequately. Since tutoring is considered to be an extension of the learning process for the tutor as well as the tutee, a sixth recommendation is that immediate steps be taken to improve the system of supervision of and assistance to the tutors.

Whereas the nine-week term for the writing skills courses offers flexibility and options to students, the results of the questionnaire also indicate that a percentage of students in each of the writing skills courses that was sampled found the nine weeks too short. A small percentage of the respondents was even re-enrolled for the second time

because more practice or help was needed. Therefore, a seventh recommendation is that departmental investigation relative to the length of the courses take place and that consideration also be given to the question of the option to repeat any of the courses for credit if a student is doing passing work (C or better). According to one instructor, at least, the mix of first-time students in a course and continuing students in the same class section often poses impediments to effective instruction for all of the students. Classes should certainly be surveyed so that student opinion could be a part of the general discussion and re-assessment process.

Furthermore, the results of the questionnaire suggest that, for the most part, there is no planned sequence in the English goals of the students. A few students were even uncertain whether they needed more English. Therefore, an eighth recommendation is that there be more departmental commitment and effort on the part of individual English faculty members to advising students about future English goals. Perhaps, in-service sessions about the commitment of the "open" community college must be a part of that process. Whatever the sentiments of individual instructors might be relative to the appropriateness of remedial or developmental instruction in a college curriculum, these courses are an integral part of community college offerings.[54]

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[54]Weber, Op. Cit., p. 34.

An examination of the evaluative data (Component Two of this study) also indicated that students may have taken the writing skills courses for various reasons. However, more than half of the students who were found to have been enrolled in at least one of the writing skills courses during the period 1971-1974 had subsequently enrolled in English 1A. Moreover, 88 percent of a group who had successfully passed English M and English D and/or English E in sequence had also successfully passed English 1A. Therefore, a ninth recommendation is that the English department study the possibility of a block of writing skills courses as a pre-requisite to English 1A. A part of the study should include the present offerings in the program: the extent of overlap; the advisability of revison or restructuring of some of the courses; and the phasing out of unproductive courses.

Although the statistical study did not reveal that students who took English M and English D and/or English E performed any better than students who enrolled in English 1A on the basis of the unit pre-requisite, it did show that there was no significant difference in the performance of the two groups. The fact that the cumulative grade point average of the experimental group correlated .40 with the English 1A grades suggests that the developmental English M and D and/or E sequence seems just as justifiable as a prerequisite to English 1A as the completion of 15 college transfer units with an overall grade point average of 2.0

or better. In fact, a recommended block or sequence of writing skills courses designed to help students attain certain writing competencies seems even more justifiable as a pre-requisite to English 1A when one considers that some of the 15 units of college transfer work might be in such unrelated areas as physical education, which the writer discovered was often the case. A tenth recommendation is therefore that there be a review of existing pre-requisites to English 1A. Yet, before such review can begin, it seems there must be an agreement on writing standards and competencies which must be consistently and uniformly applied. This is no easy task since English departments generally are having difficulties as to agreement on what constitutes "good writing."[55]

In general, the results of all three components of this major research project support the continuance of the program of courses in English writing skills. The literature is also supportive of their rationale. There seem to be no negative labels on the courses: they are open to anyone who needs help with specific writing skills. The courses also seem to prepare students for English 1A if they are taken in some prescribed sequence. However, evaluation of the courses must be an on-going process, not only in terms of

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[55]In an article in the Chronicle of Higher Education by Malcolm Scully titled "Bonehead English" (March 17, 1975), the head of the Association of Departments of English stated that "at present we don't have a standard definition of the term good writing."

relevancy to the students enrolled, but in terms of what happens to the students who take the writing skills courses. While follow-up studies of occupational programs is mandated in California for occupational programs, not many such studies are routinely done in the so-called academic areas. Follow-up evaluation is consequently an eleventh recommendation.

While the process of evaluation means to examine and to judge, if one applies the dictionary definition of the term, it must also be a process designed to improve. A part of this process necessitates an on-going form of communication between all those involved.[56] That it can be such a process has been the experience of the writer in the course of writing this major research project. Already proposals are being prepared by members of the English department to change the placement practices for English 1A. How much effect the discussions between the writer and the individual members of the department, including the Chair, have had in stimulating internal evaluation is difficult to assess. Yet, the writer has been assured that the discussions have had some positive effect. The true test will be when the completed study is presented to the college and to the department.

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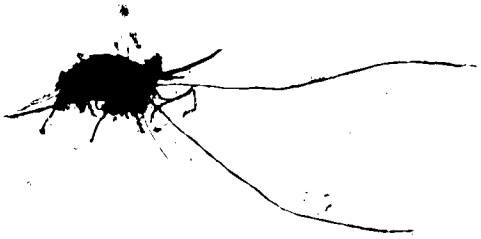
[56]For an informative article on the meaning of evaluation the reader is referred to Toni Howard, "Evaluation and the Centipede", Future Talk (Office of the Chancellor - The California State University and Colleges, March 1974), pp. 1-4.

However, it is also the writer's goal that this study will have broader implications than just for the local college. Hopefully, it will encourage other community colleges to embark on a similar process of evaluation, one which is designed to improve instruction and which will promote an on-going form of communication between all those involved -- faculty and administrators. It is also hoped that the information and recommendations can assist other English departments in arriving at some solution to the almost universal problem of remediation as well as the problem of satisfactory prerequisites for English 1A.



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APPENDIX A

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: Will you take a few moments to answer the following questions. Your responses will be used as part of a study to help us improve instruction. Answer each question as completely as you can. It is not necessary to sign your name.

Course No. _____

Student's Major _____

1. I took this course because

2. I intend/do not intend to repeat this course because . (Circle one)

3. I found the writing laboratory very helpful/somewhat helpful/of no help because (Circle one)

4. The most valuable part of this course was

s course would have been more helpful to me if

(Answer either (a) or (b). Do not answer both.)

6. (a) After this course, I intend to take English because

(b) After this course, I do not intend to take another English course because

APPENDIX B

ENGLISH C (Spelling) - 9 weeks - 1 unit - 3 hours per week.

Purpose: For those students who have serious trouble with spelling.

Emphasis: Study of the words that research has found to be most often misspelled.

Objectives:

1. To read and pronounce each word carefully.
2. To memorize and apply the major basic spelling rules.
3. To become familiar with the more difficult but less applicable spelling rules.
4. To learn how prefixes and suffixes affect the meaning and spelling of words.
5. To learn the meaning of each word studied.
6. To demonstrate the mastery of the words studied making perfect scores on 25 word tests.
   Note: These tests are taken at the students' convenience in the Writing Lab or in the Learning Center. They constitute one fourth of the grade and may be taken as many times as necessary to attain a perfect score.
7. To demonstrate the mastery of the words studied on two 100 word tests, which constitute the mid-term and the final.
   Note: These tests together with attendance count as three fourth of the grade.

Note to the Counselors: Strongly motivated students who need help with spelling may sign up anytime during the semester for English C. Arrangements are to be made in the Writing Lab. After an orientation session with the Laboratory Instructional Assistant, students will work individually on the major spelling problems in a programmed text. The lab will provide pre-tests to help the students decide where to place their major emphasis. They will take a test after the completion of each chapter. One unit of credit will be given upon the satisfactory completion of the sixteen chapters in the text. This option is not for students with serious spelling problems or second language problems.

ENGLISH D (Basics of Paragraph Structure) 9 weeks - 3 hours per week -(unit

Purposes: For students who lack experience in writing and want a good foundation by beginning at the paragraph level. Not recommended for those who have serious problems with the basic mechanics of English.

Objectives:

1. To learn to write unified, coherent, concretely developed paragraphs; emphasis is on exposition.
   a. Topic sentence
   b. Structure of the paragraph
   c. Directness
   d. Concrete, precise diction
2. To progress to the writing of longer papers in order to get practice in making proper transitions between paragraphs.

Methods: Workshop - (May be preceded by lecture, demonstration, and practice exercises). Each student works on a series of short papers from one to several paragraphs long. Students write only on topics about which they have real information and are encouraged to think of writing as communication and not as drill.

The papers are frequently evaluated: problems are dealt with as they arise; the papers are under almost constant revision and are considered finished only when both the teacher and the student agree that they communicate clearly and coherently.

ENGLISH E (Writing Practice) - 9 weeks - 6 hours per week - 2 units

Purpose: For those students who lack experience in writing or who lack confidence in their writing abilities. Not recommended for students with serious grammar or writing problems.

Approach: Tutorial - 6 hours of class time permits individualized instruction and in-class correction of papers.

Writing Experiences:
1. Text assignments on individualized basis
2. Prescribed assignments - group and/or individual basis
3. Additional writing assignments or drills on an individual basis
4. Rewriting to achieve a satisfactory version

Objectives:
1. To acquire confidence in one's ability to write
2. To become motivated to write for the sake of improvement and not for the sake of grade.
3. To become motivated to examine the work of others and to learn from the experience.
4. To improve in writing at one's own rate
5. To learn to identify with one's own writing
6. To learn to recognize one's progress.

Note to the Counselors: Recommended for those students who are not sufficiently prepared to write on the level expected in English 1-A.

ENGLISH G . (Vocabulary) - semester course* - 2 units

Purpose: An intensive, systematic approach to vocabulary study for those students who need to expand their vocabulary but who have average reading ability.
NOTE: Students with reading problems are advised to take a course in basic reading skills concurrently or prior to taking English G.

Objectives: 1. To enable the student to understand his language.

2. To increase proficiency in the use of English.

Units studied:

I. Use of the Dictionary
   A. History of English
   B. Spelling
   C. Pronunciation
   D. Grammar
   E. Definition and derivation

II. Latin Derivatives
   A. Roots
   B. Prefixes

III. Greek Derivatives
   A. Roots
   B. Prefixes

IV. Vocabulary Expansion
   A. Descriptive words
   B. Action words
   C. Rhetoric
   D. Name words

V. Advanced Word Study (Individual Basis)

*Beginning Fall, 1974, this course will be a 9-week course.

ENGLISH M (Basic Sentence Structure and Rhetoric I) - 3 hours per week and 1 additional hour in the Writing Laboratory to be arranged - 2 units

Purpose: For those students who have a weak background in grammar.

Approach: Lecture-Laboratory. Students use a programmed text and have access to tutoring services in the laboratory.

Objectives: To demonstrate on unit tests the mastery of 4 units on sentence structure and patterns: rhetoric and usage.
NOTE: Each unit test has four alternate tests, permitting retake of the test if score is low - after review - and only the top score on the alternate tests counts toward the final grade.

Units Learned:

1. English as a syntactical language; word order determines meaning.
   A. Structures: subject, predicate, noun phrase, verb phrase, adjectives, adverbs, prepositional phrases.
   B. Rhetoric: Clarity and emphasis.
   C. Usage.

2. Seven basic sentence patterns
   A. Rhetoric: brevity, rhythm, devices of sound, figures of speech
   B. Usage (ads, politics, literature).

3. Compounds of structures in units one and two; rhetoric and usage (political speeches)

4. Noun substitutes
   A. Noun slots in English sentences - single words and phrases that act as noun substitutes; their rhetoric and usage.

ENGLISH N (Basic Sentence Structure and Rhetoric II) - 3 hours per week and 1 additional hour in the Writing Laboratory to be arranged 2 units.

Purpose: For those students who have a weak background in English Grammar.

Prerequisite: English M

Approach: Same as for English M

Objectives: Same as for English M

Units Learned:

1. Variants on basic sentence patterns; the rhetoric and usage of each: negatives, questions, rhetorical questions, imperative sentences, expletives, inverted forms, exclamatory sentences, passives.
2. Adjectives - single word, phrases, clauses-and methods for combining sentences with adjectival structures. Rhetoric and usage.
3. Adverbs - single word, phrases, clauses-and alternates open in revising sentences. Rhetoric and usage.
4. All inflections in English.
   A. Review of transformations for combining sentences
   B. Review of rhetorical principles.

ENGLISH 72 (Critical Reading) - 9 weeks - 3 class sessions and 1 lab hour per week - 2 units

Purpose: For those students who have no serious reading and writing disabilities, but who lack experience in reading.

Objectives:

1. To read non-fiction paragraphs and to learn how to summarize them.
2. To read progressively longer non-fiction material and to learn how to summarize the readings.
3. To learn how to read holistically (to learn that the whole of a non-fiction work is more than the sum of its parts).
4. To learn to overcome poor reading habits
5. To learn to write short summaries of the material read.

Note to the Counselors: Recommended for those students who are not sufficiently prepared to read the type of material read in English 1-A.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ms Dorothy H. Bohr received her B.A. degree from the State University of New York, Albany campus, with a major in Latin and German. Before receiving her M.A. in English from the California State University Sacramento, she did graduate work in Classics at Columbia University where her major advisor was the late, renowned Classicist, Dr. Moses Hadas, and also at the University of California in Berkeley.

Before moving to California, she taught Latin and German for three years at Walton Central High School in Walton, New York. Since 1956 she has been at Sacramento City College where she taught German until 1969. In that year she was appointed Division Chair of Languages and Literature and continued to teach German and then English As A Second Language. In 1974 she was appointed Associate Dean of Instruction.

Ms Bohr is married to Dr. Russell Bohr, senior professor of Art History at the California State University Sacramento. They have an eleven year old son.