ACLT 052: Academic Literacy—An Integrated, Accelerated Model for Developmental Reading and Writing

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Abstract

The current trend in postsecondary literacy is to offer developmental reading and writing coursework in an integrated, (and in most cases) accelerated, format. This move toward integration and acceleration is definitely in line with the research literature; however, many of these new courses do not reflect the curricular and pedagogical reforms necessary for student success. This article outlines ACLT 052, an integrated, accelerated developmental reading and writing course that emphasizes critical thinking. Using an academic literacy model, this course allows students to sharpen their college-level literacy skills, while also addressing the affective barriers to their academic success. The specifics of the curricular, pedagogical and assessment practices of the course are provided, along with data demonstrating the positive impact it is having on student success.

Currently, colleges across the nation are embracing integrated reading and writing courses in place of the traditional developmental reading and writing pathways. While this is a move in the right direction, very few of these new, integrated courses actually address the curricular, pedagogical, and affective barriers that have stifled the success of students in traditional developmental reading and writing courses. In addition, many instructors struggle with teaching reading and writing in a truly integrated manner. The purpose of this article is to outline the curricular and pedagogical components of *ACLT 052: Academic Literacy*, an accelerated, integrated developmental reading and writing course at the Community College of Baltimore County that allows students to sharpen their reading, writing, and thinking abilities while also learning to "understand themselves as learners who can negotiate the complex, multifaceted literacy demands of college" (Holschuh & Paulson, 2013, p. 10).

Background

The Community College of Baltimore County is a large, multi-campus institution in the Baltimore metropolitan area that serves over 70,000 students—about 30,000 of which are enrolled in college credit courses. The student body is very diverse, with most students attending part-time (66 percent). The average student age is 24 years, and they are mostly female (59 percent) and non-white (53 percent). At least 80 percent of incoming students require at least one developmental course in reading, writing, and/or math. For developmental reading and writing, the traditional sequence consists of four separate courses: RDNG 051 (5 semester hours); RDNG 052 (4 semester hours); ENGL 051 (4 semester hours); and ENGL 052 (3 semester hours). Thus, depending on their placement scores, students would need to complete up to 16 semester hours of developmental coursework before they could enroll in college-level courses. This extensive pipeline and several other factors—both external and internal to the college—led to the development of this course.

The external factors include the changes in federal financial aid guidelines, which limit the amount of time and aid that students can spend taking developmental coursework, and the Completion Agenda, where community colleges have been charged with significantly increasing the number of students who complete their degrees and certificates within a shorter time frame. Along the same lines, the Maryland Legislature recently passed Senate Bill 740, which among other things mandates that there be an option whereby developmental students can complete their developmental course requirements and take the gateway college-level course by their second semester of enrollment. In order to be in compliance with

these federal and state legislative mandates, rethinking the structure of our developmental coursework became imperative.

In terms of the internal factors, CCBC has witnessed a dramatic shift its student body. Students who enroll at CCBC are increasingly less prepared for college-level work—as previously mentioned about 80 percent of new students require one or more developmental courses. Along with this, there has been an increase in enrollment among students with documented learning differences that require special accommodations. Furthermore, CCBC students are increasingly more likely to come from less-resources backgrounds as many of our students live at or below the poverty line. Consequently, these students face great financial and life challenges that require them to juggle family and work obligations, while trying to successfully complete their coursework. Perhaps the most compelling impetus for designing this course is the success data for students taking our traditional, multi-level sequence of developmental reading and writing coursework. As indicated in Table 1, only 17 percent of these students successfully complete *English 101: College Composition* within four semesters. From this data it was concluded that the traditional developmental reading and writing course sequence had too many exit points, where students would drop out prior to completion. *Note: Students who place into our upper level developmental reading and English courses (RDNG 052 and ENGL 052) are excluded from this data since they primarily enroll in the ALP program, and are therefore, not a suitable comparison group for ACLT 052.*

TABLE 1: ENGL 101 SUCCESS RATES (TRADITIONAL SEQUENCE)

Fall 2010 Semester	Number of students Enrolled	Number of students who then enrolled in ENGL 101	Pass Rate for those who enrolled in ENGL 101	Passed rate in ENGL 101 for those in the original cohort
Students Enrolled in all combos of 051 and 052 (except for ENGL 052/RDNG 052 placements)*	711	26% (182) By Spring 2012	67% (of the 182 students from the original cohort of 711 students)	17% (122) In 4 semesters

Note: Students who place into our upper level developmental reading and English courses (RDNG 052 and ENGL 052) are excluded from this data since they primarily enroll in the ALP program, and are therefore, not a suitable comparison group for ACLT 052.

In consulting the research literature on postsecondary literacy instruction, it was apparent that not only the sequencing of our courses needed to be restructured, but our curriculum and pedagogy as well. Specifically related to the lack of student success in developmental literacy nationally, Engstrom (2008) challenges the decontextualized curriculum and instructional techniques that are used in developmental reading courses. Furthermore, she urges developmental educators to focus on "restructuring how classrooms or courses are taught to meet students' diverse learning needs; engage them in an integrated rather than fragmented, disconnected curriculum; and build foundational skills for college student success" (p. 7). Similarly, Paulson and Armstrong (2010) promote developmental literacy instruction where "learners' cultural and social backgrounds are represented" and that "considers the social, cognitive, and affective aspects of learning" (p. 3). They suggest "a theoretical framework that foregrounds sociocultural models of literacy" (p. 3). This sociocultural model emphasizes a holistic approach whereby

students develop literacy skills through meaningful and relevant reading, writing and thinking activities (Gee, 2001; Holschuh & Paulson, 2013; Lankshear & Knobel, 2006; New London Group, 1996; Paulson & Armstrong, 2012; Street, 2003).

Along with the theoretical aspects of developmental literacy instruction, the current trend in developmental coursework is shortening the pipeline to college-level, credit-bearing coursework through acceleration. The primary definition for acceleration is "the reorganization of instruction and curricula in ways that facilitate the completion of educational requirements in an expedited manner" (Edgecombe, 2011, p. 4). This involves "a departure from the multi-course sequence in favor of a streamlined structure that ultimately better supports students' college-level degree program learning objectives" (Edgecombe, 2011, p. 4). Specifically related to developmental literacy courses, acceleration emphasizes academic literacy through integrated courses where developmental reading, writing, and critical thinking are taught in one course with reduced hours (Edgecombe, 2011; Hern, 2010).

ACLT 052: Academic Literacy is an accelerated developmental course that uses an academic literacy model to provide students with multiple, low-risk opportunities to practice authentic, college-level reading, writing and thinking tasks, along with the support they need for mastery. This course is unique in that it is open to any student who places into developmental reading and writing—regardless of their scores on the placement exam. Demographics for students who enroll in this class mirror those summarized earlier for the college as a whole. Furthermore, ACLT 052 reduces students' developmental reading and writing course requirements, which vary from 7 to 16 course hours, to 5 course hours—thus reducing the time and expense involved in reaching college composition and other 100-level credit courses. The focus of ACLT 052 is "practicing college." Assignments are constructed to require critical reading and thinking, along with essay assignments based on comprehension of challenging readings. The ultimate goal is for students to be able to independently read complex academic texts, critically respond to ideas and information in academic texts, and write essays that integrate ideas and information from academic texts. This is accomplished through a skill-embedded curriculum, thinking-focused pedagogy, and growth-centered assessment. Each of these components will be discussed in detail, along with success data for students who take this course.

Skill-Embedded Curriculum
In developing this course, the steering committee decided that while we would not have a set, "one size fits all" curriculum. We all felt strongly that the course would be much more effective if instructors had the freedom and flexibility to design curricula based on their individual styles, and the needs of the students. Instead, we developed guiding principles to give some common parameters for designing our individual curricula. In other words, while the curricula for the various sections of the course may vary, our adherence to the guiding principles is non-negotiable. (In fact, we developed guiding principles for the course pedagogy and assessment, which will be outlined later in this article.)

The guiding principles for ACLT 052 curriculum are:

- The curriculum for the course will not be based on the outcomes for the existing courses; this is a new course, not simply traditional reading/writing skills combined.
- The curriculum will focus on authentic college-level tasks with an emphasis on English 101 and other 100-level credit courses.
- The curriculum will allow students to "practice college" instead of working on pre-college skills.

- The curriculum will use whole, complex academic reading selections instead of just simple paragraphs. In light of this, we do not use traditional developmental reading and writing textbooks.
- The curriculum will address affective issues through themed units, assignments, and activities.
- ACLT 052 is not a literature course, but a critical thinking course that uses reading and writing as a vehicle for this kind of thinking.

It is important to note that while ACLT 052 does not take the traditional sub-skills approach to literacy instruction, faculty are mindful of the reading, writing, and thinking skills that students must possess if they are to be successful on college-level coursework. However, these skills are embedded in the course curriculum as opposed to being the sole focus. To determine the skills that the course should cover, we engaged in a process of backwards mapping—meaning we examined the kinds of reading, writing, and thinking tasks that students are expected to perform in college-level coursework, and we developed skills-based course objectives based on our findings. The course objectives include topics such as the reading process, using source materials, grammar, and essay organization and development. These objectives are fully delineated in the common course outline for ACLT 052 (see appendix).

The curriculum for each section of the course is organized in to thematic units—with most instructors covering 3–4 units within a traditional 15-week semester. The themes for the units are in some way related to the affective or life issues that students grapple with on a daily basis. These themes include topics such as gender, social media, racial and ethnic diversity, social justice, and relationships. For each theme, there are "essential questions" which provide the context through which students critically think about and discuss the key issues and ideas related to the theme. These key issues and ideas are explored through a variety of relevant reading selections, activities, and assignments. In addition to exploring the theme, the readings, activities, and assignments for any given unit also provide students with authentic, contextualized practice with college-level critical reading, writing, and thinking skills. Each unit culminates in a final argumentative essay where students critically engage the issues and ideas discussed throughout the unit—using textual support from the assigned reading and other academic sources to support their claims. Figure 1 presents sample unit plan that illustrates the key components of the ACLT 052 curriculum model. Once developed, each unit plan is executed using thinking-focused pedagogy. This model of pedagogy is discussed in the next section.

Thinking-Focused Pedagogy

At the core of all ACLT instruction is critical thinking. In order for such depth of thought to occur, the onus for learning is firmly placed on the students' shoulders. Instructors act as facilitators, not controllers, of academic growth. With this in mind, the guiding principles for pedagogy are:

- The pedagogy turns historical assumptions on their head; instructors do not assume that "before students can do this, they have to do that."
- All pedagogical activities, both oral and written, are centered on a given theme. This approach allows for more analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.
- The pedagogy relies heavily on active learning techniques.
- The pedagogy uses a "triage" approach to weaknesses in reading and writing which require support rather than lowering the entire curriculum to sub-skills.
- The pedagogy focuses on "growth mindset" towards students and their progress.
- The pedagogy helps grow students' sense of responsibility.

FIGURE 1
SKILL-EMBEDDED CURRICULUM

Unit 1
"We Don't Need No Education":
The Politics of Schooling

Essential Questions
- Does education really empower us?
- What purpose does education serve in our society?
- Is education truly the "great equalizer"?

Reading/Writing Skills
- Academic Habits of Mind
- The Reading-Writing Process

Texts
- "Living in Two Worlds" (Marcus Mabry)
- "Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum of Work" (Jean Anyon)
- "Against School" (John Gatto)

Essay Prompt: *Critical Analysis of Education* Horace Mann, an advocate of American public education declared that, "*education…beyond all other devices of human origin, is a great equalizer of conditions of men—the balance wheel of the social machinery…It does better than to disarm the poor of their hostility toward the rich; it prevents being poor.*" Guided by this idea, most Americans still believe that education leads to self-improvement and can help us empower ourselves—and perhaps even transform our society.

The reading selections in this unit present several different perspectives on the "politics of schooling" and offer insight on the impact of education. Using these reading selections as a lens, discuss whether or not Horace Mann's idea of education as the "great equalizer" is a myth or a reality.

These six guiding principles are the foundation of what takes place in a typical ACLT class on any given day. They ensure that rigor is maintained and students are engaged. The first day, students hit the ground running and are faced with real academic tasks. Instructors realize that support will be necessary, but a sense of academic culture is planted right away. The thematic units result in student responses which frequently include references to more than one text. Students are engaged for the entire class period on assignments including producing deliverables which hold them accountable for their time and effort. Areas of student need are identified both for the majority of the class and for individuals. Instruction is then geared to the larger group and individuals as needed. In other words, instructors identify what students can do first and then move forward from that point. Students learn quickly that absences will impact their progress, excuses are not productive, and late assignments are not accepted.

A typical ACLT class could include several of the following activities: quiz on assigned homework reading, small group comprehension-based assignment, quick write on theme-related critical thinking question, mini lesson on a timely reading/writing skill, exam preparation, essay planning and drafting, peer editing, instructor-student conferencing. ACLT is a five-hour class with at least 2 hours of computer access. This allows for increased one-on-one time for teacher support in essay development and other necessary conferencing. Students are also encouraged, and sometimes required, to schedule appointments in the College Writing Center. In addition, instructors meet with students privately during office hours. Support is readily available for students who are struggling, and many take full advantage. The timid sometimes need some prodding, but eventually recognize the value of asking for help.

Figure 2 demonstrates the range of activities related to two assigned readings, "Death and Justice" by Edward Koch and "The Ghetto Made Me Do It" by Francis Flaherty. The higher level thinking required by this pedagogical approach leads to more insightful written responses. The students' reading, writing, and thinking abilities are assessed using a growth-centered approach. This model for assessment is discussed in the next section.

Growth-Centered Assessment
The third component to successful Academic Literacy instruction is growth-centered assessment. The measurement of success is correlated with the student's achievement as the semester progresses. The guiding principles which drive assessment are:

- Assessment takes a holistic approach in analyzing student work—look at content as well as grammar and mechanics.
- Assessment uses a progressive approach with more tolerance for less than perfect work early in the semester.
- Instructors provide a lot of "low-risk" opportunities to talk, think, and write before graded, higher-stakes assignments
- Instructors embrace three goals for students:
  o Independently read and understand complex academic texts,
  o Critically respond to the ideas and information in those texts, and
  o Write essays integrating ideas and information from those texts.

Growth-centered assessment requires instructor awareness of student abilities at any given time in the semester. When analyzing a student's work, demonstration of the student's comprehension through written content is foremost. To be clear, grammar and mechanical issues are not ignored, but they are relegated to a lesser significance. Most important is whether the student can clearly discuss the larger ideas and support their claims with evidence from the reading. At the same time,

FIGURE 2
THINKING-FOCUSED PEDAGOGY

The unit essay will require students to relate the selection to their prompt choice and cite specific evidence to support their argument.

Selection choices
"Death and Justice" by Edward Koch and "The Ghetto Made Me Do It" by Francis Flaherty

- Pre-Reading:
  o Free write and discussion: After reading Koch's article, what concerns you about punishment for murder and justice for victims?
  o View and discuss headlines in which young adults and teens are involved in violent crimes.
- During reading:
  o Students read and complete a series of guide questions. These should be limited and serve to enhance comprehension. Examples:
    ▪ Who is Felicia Morgan?
    ▪ What is the "ghetto defense"?
    ▪ Why was PTSD mentioned in the article?
    ▪ How do you feel about the "ghetto defense"?
- After reading:
  o Students take a quiz based on the guide questions. Instructor can decide to allow the use of notes or not.
  o In small groups, students discuss critical thinking questions and collaborate on a required product. Instructor circulates and offers assistance when needed. Examples:
    ▪ How are "cultural psychosis" and "psychosocial history" part of Morgan's defense?
    ▪ Which of the criticisms of the "ghetto defense" is the most disconcerting? Why?
    ▪ What relationship exists between the "ghetto defense" and society's responsibility?
    ▪ What implication does the "ghetto defense" have for the debate over the death penalty?
  o Discussion Board Assignment: Write a minimum of one paragraph in which you relate Koch's argument to information included in "The Ghetto Made Me Do It."

ACLT instructors strive to identify which composition skills students already possess, both as a class and as individuals, and then continually advance their levels of mastery. In order to accomplish this integrated reading and writing challenge, the instructor will provide a variety of lesser value activities for added practice or understanding before an essay is assigned and evaluated. These may include journals, blogs, short question/answer responses, small group collaboration, etc. Ultimately, students are guided to read and understand typical college-level selections, identify the major content of those readings, and write well informed essays which are supported by those same readings.

Assessment of reading comprehension takes place throughout the reading process. Pre-reading activities may include a discussion of a topic or major concept of the reading, an engaging video clip, or a combination of thought provokers. The pre-reading goal is to tap into existing knowledge of the class and individuals. During reading, guided activities are usually assigned to assist the student with comprehension and assess engagement with concepts. These can range from assigned questions to dual-entry journals or other written task. Post-reading assessments vary as well: quizzes, postings online, group collaborations, to name a few. Finally, a major essay is the culminating demonstration of comprehension.

Writing assessment usually starts with some level of prompting leading to a response which requires integration of content from the reading and critical thinking. In order to be successful, students must demonstrate engagement with the ideas presented in the readings. At the same time, the instructor also assesses emergent skills and identifies possible areas for improvement. While not equal in significance, the instructor would also be aware of strengths and weaknesses in tone, audience, organization, sentence structure, grammar and mechanics. Assistance takes the form of "triage" for the developing writer. Comments will include specific encouragements: "Your opening example is clever and thought provoking!" rather than "Great job!" Suggestions are equally specific: "The second sentence of this paragraph would make a much better topic sentence than this one" instead of "This topic sentence is vague." Weaknesses involving diction, grammar, and punctuation are taught in context, on both the individual and group level. Instruction always focuses on the most pressing identified needs first. For example, during drafting and revising, an instructor may do a mini-lesson on comma splices because most of the class is using them, and also have a discussion about sentence variety with an individual or small group.

Figure 3 demonstrates a typical student response along with the types of comments that as ACLT 052 instructor would make. In summary, growth-centered assessment focuses on where the students are in their reading, writing, and thinking development and then moving them forward from that point to success in the higher academic forum.

Instructor Preparation

ACLT instructors are members of either the Reading or English disciplines and therefore possess credentials for their particular areas. A few may have a dual background, but those are the exception. As a result, cross training is essential. An initial workshop concentrates on the model's theory and guiding principles. In addition, during the first semester of teaching ACLT, instructors are required to attend monthly Faculty Inquiry Group sessions. These sessions focus on identified needs and concerns instructors are experiencing as they grapple with the challenges of teaching the class. Topics can include incorporating reading strategies, eliciting higher thinking responses, grading essays, and using portfolios as well as common issues the group brings to the table. First time ACLT instructors are also matched with an experienced mentor instructor who is readily available to offer guidance and support on a more daily basis.

FIGURE 3
GROWTH-CENTERED ASSESSMENT

Student Response and Instructor Feedback

Writing prompt and response
Choose one concept from Paolo Freire's "The Banking Concept of Education" and relate it to one of the other assigned reading selections. Ideas could include: banking education, problem posing education, humanization, and consciousness.

In "The Banking Concept of Education," Paolo Freire favored the problem-posing method of education. This meant the students needed to be a part of what they are learning. It also relates to the world around them. People need to be a part of the world and not just in the world. This is also something that Frederick Douglas realized. He was just another slave, but then he educated himself. He knew he had to do something with his knowledge so when he learned the word "abolish" and he became an abolitionist and a key person in the freedom of slaves. Everyone needs to learn to be a part of their surroundings and not just in them.

Instructor feedback
- Strengths:
  - Student demonstrates some understanding of challenging reading
  - Student cites the concept of problem-posing while incorporating the more complex sub-concept of consciousness.
  - Student can synthesize and apply ideas from multiple texts

- Weaknesses:
  - Student cites the concept as problem posing while incorporating the sub-concept of consciousness.
  - Student uses an awkward and wordy construction in the sentence, "He knew he had to do something with his knowledge …"
  - Student would benefit from instruction in sentence structure variety.

Student Success Data
Since the initial pilot of just five sections in spring 2012, ACLT 052 has grown exponentially and the student success data has been promising. It is important to note that the overwhelming majority of ACLT 052 students (about 85 percent) placed into our lowest level of developmental reading. Thus, the success data reflects the achievements of our most at-risk students, as opposed to the students who place at the higher level. For fall 2012, 2013, and 2014 there was a 58 percent success rate in ACLT 052. This success rate has been maintained despite the increase in sections and students enrolled. In addition, this success rate is comparable, and in some cases higher, than the success rate for the traditional RDNG 051 course. The major difference is that students who complete ACLT 052 are now eligible to enroll on credit courses, while students who complete RDNG 051 must complete up to three additional developmental reading and writing course prerequisites.

Although ACLT 052 pass rates are important, the true indicator of the success of ACLT 052 is in how many students go on to enroll and pass ENGL 101 and other credit courses. As indicated in Table 2 (see p. 20), students who take ACLT 052 pass ENGL 101 at close to double the rate and in half the time of those students who follow the traditional developmental reading and writing course sequence.
As mentioned earlier in the article, only 17 percent of students in the fall 2010 cohort in the traditional pipeline complete ENGL 101 in four semesters. On the other hand, 28 percent of the fall 2012 and 27 percent of the fall 2013 ACLT 052 cohorts passed ENGL 101 within two semesters. These data indicate that the integrated, accelerated approach to developmental reading and writing is much more conducive to student success than the traditional, multi-level class sequence.
In addition to ENGL 101 pass rates, data are being collected to examine accumulation of credits, retention rates, and graduation rates for students who enroll in ACLT 052. These data are disaggregated by various demographics, such as race, gender, and ACCUPLACER scores. This will allow for any trends among subgroups to be identified.

Note: Students who place into our upper level developmental reading and English courses (RDNG 052 and ENGL 052) are excluded from this data since they primarily enroll in the ALP program, and are therefore, not a suitable comparison group for ACLT 052 students.

Strengths and Challenges
Academic Literacy has serendipitously become the "go to" class for students who test into developmental reading and writing. Students recognize the benefit of completing their requirements in those areas and moving quickly to the credit classes. Since assumptions about what students can or cannot do are ignored, instruction becomes more positive and focuses on what is already achieved so that further growth can take place. Because the rigor of the class challenges them, students are more engaged. They frequently comment that the class demands college behaviors, so they more readily identify as college students. Instructors also enjoy the role of facilitator over pedant. Every ACLT instructor has a "goose bumps" story in which they were moved by a student's achievement. Every ACLT class is different; one never knows if that day's discussion will morph into something unexpected or create a new focus for the next class. Such fluctuation prohibits instructors from "turning on autopilot" while interacting with a class. This interdependency of student ability, instructor guidance, and rigorous mental activity produces quality preparation for credit level class. On the other hand, Academic Literacy has provided some challenges to overcome. The collaboration of two disciplines comes with various concerns about focus of instruction. Once instructors recognize that both disciplines are significantly equal in this model, those issues usually disappear. In addition, this paradigm is very different from the

way many seasoned instructors have been teaching reading and/or writing. Many are used to controlling the design of their class, often focused on insuring total comprehension or writing mechanics. Some feel insecure in their ability to teach the unfamiliar discipline. Therefore, instructors teaching ACLT for the first time need to be trained and mentored. Another challenge is quality control of rigor in all ACLT classes. Required portfolios and their content demonstrate what took place during the semester. The model demands critical thinking and engagement; these non-negotiables are the foundation for growth and credit-level preparedness, the ultimate goals of the guiding principles.

Student and Faculty Response and the Future of ACLT

The response to ACLT 052 has been overwhelmingly positive. Already, students in large numbers are self-selecting ACLT over stand-alone classes. While they admit that the course is challenging, they all report that the course themes and readings are interesting and relevant, and that the assignments and activities are preparing them for the rigors of credit coursework. In addition, faculty much prefer to teach ACLT 052 over the traditional, stand-alone courses—with many citing the curriculum and pedagogy of ACLT as being more in line with what they perceive as their role as a college professor. The faculty also express their amazement in the ability of developmental reading and writing students—most of whom placed at the lowest levels—to read, write, and think with such sophistication. For many, their experiences teach ACLT 052 have revolutionized how they approach the other courses they teach. They all report higher expectations and increased rigor in all of their courses.

In 2012, when ACLT was first introduced, five sections were run over three campuses. As of fall 2015, ACLT 052 is fully scaled, with 55 sections being offered across the college. These sections are running at full capacity—serving just under 1,000 students. Reading 051, the lowest level stand-alone class, has been reduced to five classes over three campuses. Conceivably, this level may disappear altogether. The number of Reading 052 classes has also seen a decrease in number although not as significantly. The rapid growth of ACLT has happened organically and what was developed as an "option" for students has become a major component of the developmental program.

TABLE 2: ENGL 101 SUCCESS RATES FOR ACLT 052 COMPARED TO TRADITIONAL SEQUENCE				
SEMESTER & GROUP	ENROLLED	ENROLLED IN ENGL 101	PASS RATE IN ENGL 101	PASSED ENGL 101 OR ORIGNINAL COHORT
Fall 2012				
Enrolled in ACLT (except for ENGL 052/ RDNG 052 placements)*	118	45% (54)	61%	28% (33) in 2 semesters
Fall 2013				
Enrolled in ACLT (except for ENGL 052/ RDNG 052 placements)*	212	49% (104)	55%	27% (57) in 2 semesters
Fall 2010				
Enrolled in all combos of 051 & 052 (except for ENGL 052/ RDNG 052 placements)*	771	26% (182) by Spring 2012	67%	17% (122) in 4 semesters

APPENDIX
Common Course Outline
ACLT 052
Academic Literacy
5 Contact Hours

The Community College of Baltimore County
Description
ACLT 052—5 billable hours, 0 credits—Academic Literacy provides intensive instruction in critical thinking, reading, and writing in preparation for English 101 and other 100-level courses. Using theme-based readings from a variety of genres, coursework will emphasize independent reading of complex academic texts, critical response to ideas and information in academic texts, and writing essays that integrate ideas and information from academic texts.

5 billable hours, 0 credits; 5 lecture hours per week
Prerequisite: To be eligible for enrollment in ACLT 052, students must be placed into ENGL 051 or ENGL 052 and RDNG 051 or RDNG 052.

Overall Course Objectives
Upon completion of this course students will be able to:
1. use pre-reading strategies to facilitate understanding of texts
2. read actively and critically, and effectively use textual annotation
3. identify and deconstruct abstract ideas found in complex academic texts
4. formulate and explain valid inferences based on information from texts
5. write and evaluate arguments for validity and credibility
6. synthesize ideas and information from multiple sources and varying points of view
7. write well-organized, unified, coherent essays with a clear, purposeful thesis statement
8. support ideas with adequate and varied evidence
9. tailor language to address a specific audience and
10. detect and correct major grammatical and mechanical errors.

Major Topics
  I. Academic literacy and academic discourse
 II. The reading-writing process
III. Organization
 IV. Critical reading, writing, and thinking
  V. Reader response
 VI. Using source materials
VII. Writing and evaluating arguments
VIII. Grammar, punctuation, spelling, and usage
 IX. Audience awareness

Course Requirements
Grading/exams: Students must achieve a minimum overall average of 70 percent. Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member but will include the following:

1. At least one research-based project requiring the synthesis of three or more sources.
2. At least one in-class writing assignment.
3. At least one presentation.
4. At least one technology-based assignment.

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5. At least four (4) essays, worth 40 percent of the final grade, comprised of a minimum of four (4) paragraphs that make a convincing argument, and demonstrate critical analysis of academic texts.
6. A common end-of-semester portfolio assessment, worth 30 percent of the final grade, which will include:
    a. Two (2) previously submitted essay assignments—revised as necessary
    b. Final Essay
    c. Self-reflection

Assignments 1–5 can be combined.
Written Assignments: Students are required to utilize appropriate
academic resources.

Other Course Information
This course fulfills the requirements of Reading 051, 052 and English 051, 052. This course is partially taught in a computerized environment.

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