COORDINATOR SUMMARY
Area Z: WRITTEN COMMUNICATION II

Results reported for: Spring 2016
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Course Prefix and Number: COMM100W  Course Title: Writing for Influence

Learning Objective:
SLO 2: Students shall be able to express (explain, analyze, develop, and criticize) ideas effectively, including ideas encountered in multiple readings and expressed in different forms of discourse.

Quantitative summary
Number of sections offered during reported semester: 20
Summary includes data from instructors' reports for the following number of sections: 16
Missing reports from Ward (1), Galan (1), and LaCrampe (2).
Out of approximately 385 students assessed:
191 Mastered the SLO 2 at a high level (averaged a “B+” or better on assessment activities)
126 Mastered the SLO 2 at an average level (averaged between a “C” and a “B” on assessment activities)
20 Either failed to master the SLO 2, or did so at a marginal level (“C-” or below on assessment activities).

Qualitative assessment
1) Instructors offered the following qualitative comments about student achievements related to this learning objective.

In general instructors found that the quality of writing goes up when students are working with highly structured assignments. The more structure the better. Structure might include strict word counts, distinctive prompts, and limits on the types of words and statements that can be used. Student writing deteriorates when they merely write to fill the page.

Instructors who worked with Writing Fellows reported notable improvements in the quality of their students’ writing. One instructor reported that students “who would have fallen in the C to B range were supported by [the Fellow] and brought up into the B+ to A range.

Some instructors are planning future modifications. A minor modification includes the elimination of a roundtable-style review of final projects that an instructor tried in lieu of the usual presentation. “Students in the section that had the roundtable seemed less fluent in their expression of the different ideas they encountered in their research” while students “in the class that had the usual presentations expressed ideas well across a variety of modes.”

Significant modifications include expanding an article analysis assignment into a semester-long process that includes preparation stages and a proposal where students plan to share their chosen article’s findings and importance with an audience of their choosing, and a journey-mapping assignment to create a sense of fluency between assignments.

Several instructors are also planning assignments that introduce more ethnographic writing.