2015-2016 CLASS FACT Assessment Year End Report, June, 2016

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<th>Program Name(s)</th>
<th>FACT Faculty Fellow</th>
<th>Department Chair</th>
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<td>English B.A. &amp; M.A.</td>
<td>Professor Ke Zou</td>
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[NOTE: Items A, B, C, and D are identical to your Page 2 on your Annual Report for CAPR. Please simply cut and paste from there. Item E is unique to the CLASS FACT Project.]

A. Program Student Learning Outcomes

**B.A. degree in English:**
Students graduating with a B.A. in English from Cal State East Bay will be able to:

1. analyze and interpret various kinds of texts;
2. express their understandings and interpretations in clear and cogent prose;
3. discuss at least one theoretical perspective about language and/or literature;
4. demonstrate knowledge of key English language texts in their options: Literature, Creative Writing, Language & Discourse, and Interdisciplinary Language, Literature, and Writing Studies;
5. demonstrate facility with conducting research in traditional/nontraditional ways, including library research, the Internet, and data collection and analysis.

**M.A. degree in English:**
Students graduating with an M.A. in English from Cal State East Bay will be able to:

1. analyze and interpret various kinds of texts in clear and cogent prose;
2. discuss several theoretical perspectives about literature or about applied linguistics (e.g., pedagogy, second language learning);
3. demonstrate facility with conducting research in traditional/nontraditional ways, including library research, the Internet, and data collection and analysis;
4. demonstrate the ability to learn independently.

**M.A. degree in English with the TESOL Option:**
Students graduating with an M.A. degree in TESOL from Cal State East Bay will be able to:

1. communicate effectively in the profession both orally and in writing;
2. apply information literacy principles in their work as TESOL professionals;
3. draw on knowledge of language ability to shape their instructional choices;
4. use pedagogical content knowledge appropriate for a particular group of language learners;
5. integrate principles of diversity and inclusiveness in their classrooms;
6. select life-long learning strategies to stay current in the profession.
B. Program Student Learning Outcome(s) Assessed

| B.A. # 3: discuss at least one theoretical perspective about language and/or literature. |
| M.A. # 2: discuss several theoretical perspectives about literature or about applied linguistics (e.g., pedagogy, second language learning). |

C. Summary of Assessment Process

**FOR B.A.:**
Prof. Debra Barrett-Graves assessed English 4890 *Senior Seminar in English*, a course she taught in the Winter Quarter, 2016, in terms of the students’ ability described in SLO #3. This course is a senior-level course for English majors, and it intends to develop the English major portfolio, including one written, research-based essay, along with development of and preparation for an exit exam in the degree major, part of which will focus on the individual option.

The essay and exit exam were assessed and ranked in terms of closely analyzing focus, clarity, development, organization, inter-textuality (research and use of sources), argument (complete with counterargument), rhetorical facility, and originality. There were 22 students in this class.

**FOR M.A. (1):**
Prof. Susan Gubernat conducted an assessment of English 6675 *Issues in Poetry and Poetics/Defining EROS in Lyric Poetry*, a course she taught in the Spring Quarter, 2016, to assess graduate students’ ability in SLO #2, especially their ability to discuss the classical, as well as postmodern interpretations of classical, theories of Eros, through the following three writing tasks: 1) a five-page [minimum] review of a contemporary anthology of American erotic poetry (The Best American Erotic Poems from 1800 to the Present edited by David Lehman); 2) a twelve-page [minimum] research paper on a poet of each student’s choice; and 3) a 3-hour open-book written comprehensive exam, drawing upon, as the entire course has done, the primary theoretical text, Anne Carson’s *Eros the Bittersweet*, together with emphases on Socratic theory to be found in Plato’s *Symposium*.

The course’s main required texts to be interpreted comprised poetry by Walt Whitman, Emily Dickinson, Anne Carson, James Galvin, Jack Gilbert, Louise Glück, and Reginald Shepherd: i.e. predominantly American poetry of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The students were encouraged to explore research into poetry and poets beyond the class reading, and most of them did so, in the sense that they conducted approved, independent research into the erotic nature of poetry by Edna St. Vincent Millay, Pablo Neruda, Lucille Clifton, Sharon Olds, and George Herbert, applying the theories of Carson, and Carson’s interpretations of Socratic theory, to the texts by those poets.
The students’ ability to discuss theoretical perspectives in their essays and in the written examination was also assessed, in terms of their presentation of a clear and defensible thesis, their ability to organize and present complex material in lucid prose, their convincing application of a number of theories of Eros to a close-reading analysis of a variety of poems, and their marshaling of secondary source materials, as appropriate, to either bolster theses or as counterarguments worth noting.

There were seven students in the class. One of them did not complete the research assignment and received an “Incomplete” grade for the course, due to extenuating personal circumstances.

FOR M.A. (2):
Prof. Sarah Nielsen conducted an assessment of English 6608 Supervised Composition Teaching, a course she taught in the Spring Quarter 2016, to assess graduate students’ ability specified in SLO #2 too. English 6608 is an internship class in which the graduate students are paired with an experienced composition teacher. As interns, the graduate students attended each meeting of the composition class they were assigned to, and assisted their mentor teacher in the ways presented as follows: 1) feedback on student papers (written and in one-on-one conferences); 2) lesson planning and assignment design; 3) supporting and leading instructional activities in the classroom. In addition to their internship experience, the students wrote weekly reflective teaching journals and attended regular class meetings to discuss their internships and reading assignments. Seven students enrolled in this class.

Besides, the students were required to read two books: 1) First Time Up: An Insider’s Guide for New Composition Teachers and Misunderstanding the Assignment: Teenage Students, College Writing; and 2) the Pains of Growth. The two books address a range of theoretical perspectives on learning in general, learning to write, learning to teach, and composition pedagogy: schema theory, constructivism, language socialization, expressivism, feminism, reader response, critical pedagogy, reflective practice, process approach, and student-centered teaching.

The final course portfolio was used for assessment, which includes the following documents:

- Narrative account of internship experience
- CV
- Mentor-intern working agreement
- Sample student papers with comments
- Sample lesson plans
- Sample teaching journal
- Feedback from students
- Self-assessment essay
All the documents were reviewed for evidence of an awareness of theoretical perspectives on learning in general, on learning to write, on learning to teach, and on composition pedagogy. The narrative accounts, self-assessment essay, and sample teaching journals were especially rich in the explicit connections they made between theory and practice. Sample lesson plans and student papers with comments were very helpful in understanding more about how new teachers apply theory to their classroom practice.

All but one student in this course demonstrated the ability to discuss two or more theoretical perspectives on learning (general, writing, and/or teaching) and composition pedagogy in their narrative and reflective writing assignments. For example, one student discussed a successful teaching event in which he drew upon the students’ existing knowledge about popular culture (schema theory) to help them begin to generate ideas for an upcoming rhetorical analysis paper (process approach). Another student who couldn’t move beyond descriptions of what he did in the classroom also seemed not to have done any or much of the course reading. Even for those students who did draw on theory implicitly or explicitly, there was a narrow range of theoretical perspectives in evidence in the teaching portfolio assignments, with schema theory, process approach, and reflective practice being the most frequently discussed.

All of the students in the course showed an emerging ability to apply theory (especially process approach and student-centered teaching) to their classroom practice. This is not surprising, as their classroom practice was guided by an experienced mentor teacher. The most common patterns here were using well-structured small group work to increase student involvement in the learning process and linking classroom activities to a specific essay assignment at a specific time in the writing process for that assignment.

D. Summary of Assessment Results

FOR B.A.:
The exit exam of English 4890 yields the following results:

20 students earned an A
1 student earned a B
1 student (outlier) didn’t finish the exam and earned a C

95%
5%

With a new component incorporated in this class, which has students research and report on individual literary periods, plus practice passage explications completed and discussed in class, the responses on the exit exam improved vastly, culminating in the improved scores of 95% to the grade of A, and 5% to the grade of B.

An outlier exists in the data collected, and it has been excluded due to the failure to finish the exit exam.
FOR M.A. (1):
The results of the three written assessments of English 6675 reveal a range of student achievement:

Review of the anthology:
4 A’s (includes plus and minus) 58%
2 B’s (includes plus and minus) 28%
1 C (includes plus) 14%

Research essay:
5 A’s (includes plus and minus) 72%
1 B (includes plus and minus) 14%
[1 Incomplete 14%]

Written Examination:
3 A’s (includes plus and minus) 43%
3 B’s (includes plus and minus) 43%
1 C (includes plus) 14%

FOR M.A. (2):
The overall portfolio grades of English 6608 are listed below:

4 As
1 A-
1 B

Although most of the students in this course engaged with theory through the assignments included in their portfolio, Prof. Nielsen would have liked to see more explicit linking of theory and practice and a wider range of theoretical perspectives discussed. Since the weekly reflective teaching journals are a key assignment for making links between theory and practice, Prof. Nielsen intends to restructure the prompt for the teaching journals, moving away from a very general, very open-ended prompt for every journal towards a sequence of prompts, which would still allow lots of flexibility in student responses, but invite students more directly to engage with theory as they reflect on their classroom experiences.

E. Suggestions and Recommendations for the CLASS FACT Project in the Future

None at this time.

Thank you for your hard work for the past year, and have a Great Summer!