Program Assessment and DSP Validation Study:

First-Year Writing Program and Its Pilot DSP

English Department

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Report by

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1 Introduction and Overview of The First Year Writing Program

This report displays and analyzes the direct and indirect evidence of learning assessed in the FYW Program during the 2007-08 AY. It also offers a brief validation study of the DSP portion of the program. All conclusions are meant be provisional and suggestive only, since this is only one year's worth of data, and some of the data is too limited for making conclusions based on gender-racial populations, which are discussed in these findings. However, since gender and race are important features that complicate our student populations and will be discussed in future data, it is important to offer some tentative analyses here.

1.1 The Program and Its Courses

The First Year Writing (FYW) program consists of three courses: English 5A, English 5B, and English 10. Students place themselves into FYW through a directed self-placement (DSP) model. According to Daniel Royer and Roger Gilles, the first to design, administer, assess, and publish results on directed self-placement, DSP "can be any placement method that both offers students information and advice about their placement options (that's the 'directed' part) and places the ultimate placement decision in the students' hands (that's the 'self-placement' part)" (Royer and Gilles 2). In this model, students make the placement decision based on a set of outcomes the program gives them about what each class or set of classes teach while also asking them to think about what they already know (See Appendix A: DSP placement brochure). Students place themselves into one of three options:

- **English 10: Accelerated Academic Literacy.** This is an advanced class, and students who choose this option should be very competent readers and writers, ready to read complex essays, develop research supported analyses and complete assignments at a faster pace. Generally, these students will have done a lot of reading and writing in high school. Students will learn how to further develop their critical reading abilities, and their knowledge about how to do research, as well as create complex arguments from that research. This class starts with longer assignments (5-7 pages) and will build on students' abilities to inquire, reflect, compose, revise, and edit. Finally, students who choose English 10 should feel comfortable with rules of spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

- **English 5A/5B: Academic Literacy I & II.** These courses "stretch" the reading and writing assignments over two semesters and has the same learning outcomes as English 10. The only difference is that there is more time to learn the conventions of academic writing, and student get to be with the same teacher for both courses (a full year). The first semester (Engl 5A) starts with shorter assignments and moves toward more complex reading and writing at semester's end. The second semester (Engl 5B) builds on work in 5A and leads students through longer and more complex reading and writing tasks. Students who choose this option often do not do a lot of reading and writing (in school or outside of it) or may find reading and writing difficult. In

addition, these classes will focus more on researching, citing, and include sources correctly in students writing. Students will learn to read critically and to connect their reading with their writing. Finally, these courses include more direct instruction in language choice, sentence variety, and editing.

- **Linguistics 6: Advanced English Strategies for Multilingual Speakers, then English 5A & 5B.** This class (Ling 6) assists multilingual students with paraphrasing and summarizing while also providing help with English grammar. Students who take this course need instruction that addresses the challenges second language learners face with academic reading, writing, grammar, and vocabulary. This option is for students who use more than one language, who avoid reading and/or writing in English, or who have a hard time understanding the main points of paragraphs or sections of a text. Students will learn to increase reading comprehension while they develop a broader English vocabulary. This class will help students to build language skills through short readings and writings that will prepare them for English 5A and 5B.

These three options are depicted in the brochure for advisors and students in this way:
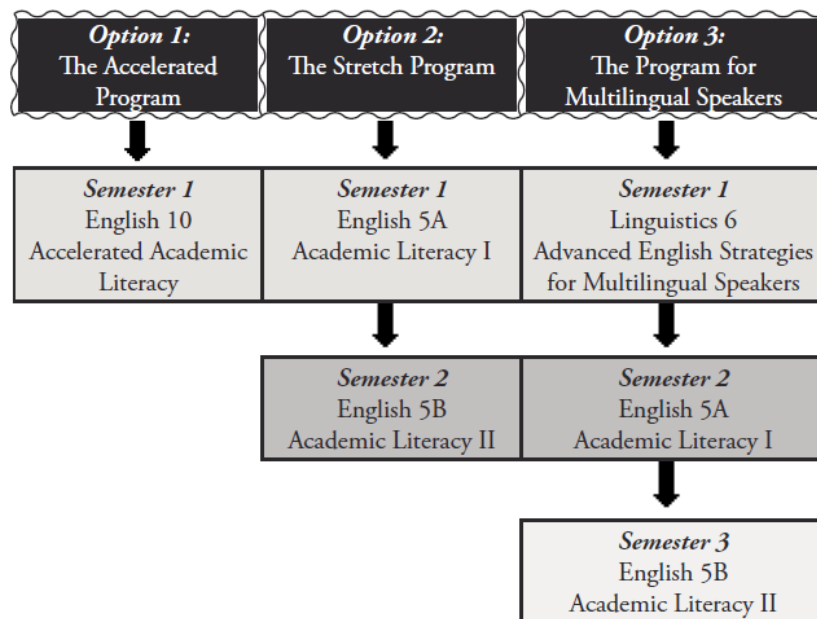
Figure 1. The three DSP options in the FYW Program.

Additionally, all courses require common sets of assignments, or projects, and a common program portfolio (see Sections 10.3 and 10.9) to be used integrally in the course. The portfolio is gathered by the program as direct evidence of student learning. The portfolio has common requirements and a common set of "course projects" that students work on and choose from. See Section 4 for a description of the portfolio and its use in program assessment.

1.2   FYW Program Philosophy and Local Issues

The FYW program works from a philosophy that understands literacy as practices sanctioned by communities, thus learning literacy effectively will demand social processes that call attention to the way academic communities and disciplines value particular rhetorical practices and behaviors when reading and writing. The FYW Program focuses students' attention primarily on academic literacy and discourse communities' practices and reflective practices (reflection on reading and writing practices and behaviors). This makes portfolio pedagogy, with its emphasis on student agency, control, selection, reflection/self-assessment, important to our program.

There are five components to the program's philosophy:

- **Literacy learning is social**. People read and write for social reasons: to engage in conversations with others, to make changes in their lives, to research or understand information. In addition, literacy users make meaning from their literacy through interactions with others.

- **Reading and writing are connected processes**. In order to revise a piece of writing, students need to know how to read the rhetorical moves in a text and be able to recognize the various nonfiction genres of writing.

- **Reading and writing are academic practices of inquiry and meaning-making**. Scholars read to find out information, to test their ideas, and to then "join a conversation" through writing. Writing gives scholars a chance to think on paper, to work through and revise their ideas.

- **Reading and writing practices are shaped by and change based on the academic discipline**. Each discipline has different – often unarticulated – ideas about what folks should pay attention to when they read and how they should present their ideas in writing. This means that students need to be able to have strategies for evaluating the reading and writing processes expected of them in different disciplines.

- **Reflection and self-assessment of reading and writing practices are crucial to developing one's practices.** To be a good reader and writer, however one wishes to define it, means ultimately that a writer must be able to see her writing as a product of a field of discourse(s), which means she can assess its strengths, weaknesses, choices, and potential effects on audiences. It also means she can situate her practices in relation to a community of other readers and writers. Good writers are always good self-assessors.

1.3   Local Issues at CSU, Fresno

Because at CSU, Fresno our students come from diverse discourse communities (see Section 1.4.4 below), academic discourses can often be quite distant from the home discourses of our students, which can lead to course misplacements by standardized tests.

Additionally, many of our students lack confidence in their reading and writing abilities, as many first year students do. Our students, then, do not need simply practice at writing in academic settings. They need the right kind of practice in the right kind of environment. Ultimately, the DSP component and the FYW program's philosophy respond to at least three important issues that affect our ability to carry out our mission (see Section 2.1 below) and our students' abilities to meet our program outcomes (see Section 2.2 below). These issues are:

- the need to reduce the program's reliance on an outside, standardized placement test because it is not valid enough for our writing placement purposes (e.g., the EPT, SAT, etc.), and because in spite of their scores, the vast majority of students complete successfully their writing courses when given the right educational atmosphere, pedagogies, curriculum, and responsibilities;[1]

- the need that students have to place themselves and gain responsibility over their educational paths in the university; that is, research shows that when students feel responsible for their own choices, when they've chosen their classes, they tend to be more invested in them, and succeed in higher numbers;[2]

- the need to give students credit for all of the writing courses they take since university credit acknowledges their work, does not penalize students for wanting extra practice in writing, and reduces the institutional and social stigma of "remedial" writing courses.[3]

1.4   FYW Program Courses, Teachers, Administrators, and Students

In terms of people, the FYW Program at CSU, Fresno is diverse and large by any standards in higher education. All information in this section is gathered from the Office

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[1] The preponderance of research and scholarship in writing assessment shows that standardized tests for writing placement and proficiency are usually inadequate for local universities' varied purposes and stakeholders (Huot; White; Yancey). The two largest national professional organizations in English instruction and writing assessment (i.e., The National Council of Teachers of English, NCTE, and the Council of Writing Program Administrators, WPA) have jointly published a "White Paper on Writing Assessment in Colleges and Universities" that acknowledges this research and promotes instead a contextual and site-based approach to writing assessment, which includes placement (NCTE-WPA Task Force on Writing Assessment).

[2] DSP systems provide students with more control, agency, and responsibility for their writing courses and their work because they make the placement decision. Reviewing and analyzing several decades of research in the field of social cognitive learning, Erica Reynolds argues: "students with high-efficacy in relation to writing are indeed better writers than are their low self-efficacious peers" (91). In other words, when students have confidence about their placement, which starts with allowing them to make their own course placements, they perform better as writers.

[3] Students get credit for the GE writing requirement through taking and passing English 5B and English 10. They get elective credit for English 5A and Linguistics 6.

of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning (IRAP) and the California State University Division of Analytical Studies.[4]

1.4.1 Courses in The FYW Program

In the 2007-08 AY, the FYW Program administered about 220 sections of Academic Literacy (Engl 5A, 5B, and 10), each course enrolling 20 students (if taught by TAs) or 25 students (if taught by adjuncts or part time instructors). These numbers are up from the 2006-07 AY, in which about 144 sections were offered. For the 2007-08 AY, the initial number of course offerings were as follows:

	Engl 5A	Engl 5B	Engl 10	Total
Fall 2007	60	31	20	**111**
Spring 2008	32	62	15	**109**
Total	**92**	**93**	**35**	**220**

Table 1. FYW Program's number of course offerings in the 2007-08 AY.

1.4.2 Teachers in the FYW Program

The teachers in the program are complex as a community. FYW teachers are full time and part time adjunct faculty, and part time Teaching Associates, who are also graduate students in the M.A. in English, with a concentration in either Rhetoric and Composition, or Literature, or in the MFA program, all programs housed in the English Department. During the 2007-08 AY, there were roughly 54 total teachers teaching in the FYW program. This number is up from the 2006-07 AY, in which about 33 teachers taught in the program.

The following is a listing of the number of teachers who taught in the various aspects of our program during 2007-08 AY. Please note that the numbers below do not represent how many teachers there are in our program since a few of our teachers teach more than one kind of class, so they are tabulated more than once below. The table below shows how many different teachers teach in each segment of the program.

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[4] IRAP's Web site offers a lot of demographic information on CSUF students (http://www.csufresno.edu/irap/index.shtml), while California State University's Division of Analytical Studies compiles data on all 23 CSU campuses (http://www.calstate.edu/AS/).

	Engl 5A	Engl 5B	Engl 10
Fall 2007			
Adjunct	5	8	7
Teaching Assoc.	24	5	4
Total	**29**	**13**	**11**
Spring 2008			
Adjunct	9	6	4
Teaching Assoc.	7	23	8
Total	**16**	**29**	**12**

Table 2. Number of teachers by Course teaching FYW in the 2007-08 AY.

According to the teacher commenting project data (see Section 4.5 below), which was gathered randomly from midterm papers in the Spring 2008 semester from almost all teachers teaching in the program, the racial and gender composition of our program is predominantly female and White. Additionally, the average semesters of experience teaching of all teachers was 6.07 semesters. The median experience was 2 semesters. While the most experienced teacher had 35 semesters, the least experienced was teaching for the first time. Below is a table of the gender-racial makeup of our teachers in the Spring 2008 semester, which was typical of both semesters during 2007-08 AY (the N value below represents randomly gathered papers from teachers, not number of teachers).

Race/Gender of Teacher	**%**
N=106	
White females	58.49%
White males	23.58%
Latinas	7.55%
Latinos	3.77%
Other females	6.60%
Other males	0.00%

Table 3. Racial and gender makeup of FYW teachers in spring 2008.

NOTE: The term "Latino/a" is used throughout this report, as is APA or "Asian Pacific American." While these terms are not as precise as some would like, or are translations of ethnic data compiled by the university, they are meant to keep the data defragmented, and more meaningful. It is realized that both of these terms are large categories, and tend to mean, because of CSU, Fresno's student populations, those of Mexican heritage and Hmong heritage, respectively.

Additionally, when cross referencing race-gender with semesters of experience teaching, White males average more experience with 11.78 semesters, and white females, our largest group of teachers, average 4.31 semesters of experience. Latinos/as average about the same, with 2 semesters of experience.

1.4.3 Program Administrators

The program has four full time, tenure-track faculty who administer the program, and one administrative assistant, all supported by the English Department. Each faculty member coordinates separate aspects of the program (for a full list of responsibilities, see Section 10.2 below):

Dr. Rick Hansen   Director of Composition

Dr. Asao B. Inoue   Engl 5A and Assessment Coordinator

Dr. Bo Wang   Engl 5B Coordinator

Dr. Virginia Crisco   Engl 10 Coordinator

Nyxy Gee   Administrative Assistant (shared with English Department)

1.4.4 Students in the FYW Program

The total number of student enrollments in the FYW Program in the 2007-08 AY numbered 3,967 (783.6 FTE). This number is up from the 2006-07 AY enrollment, which was roughly 3,196 students. As seen in the table below, most students choose option 2 , the 5A/5B stretch program (1,762 out of 2,606, or 68%). The enrollments and completion numbers (students who passed their FYW courses) by semester are below.

	5A Enrol.	5A Comp.	5B Enrol.	5B Comp.	10 Enrol.	10 Comp.
Fall 2007	1,066	860	437	332	420	327
Spring 2008	696	557	924	794	424	331
Total	1,762	1,417	1,361	1,126	844	658

Table 4. Student enrollment and completion numbers for the 2007-08 AY.

The total annual FTE of the English Department for 2007-08 AY was 1,878, while the FYW Program (Engl 5A, 5B, and 10) was 783.6. This made the FYW Program's FTE 41.72% of the total English Department's FTE (not including the teaching loads of the tenure-track faculty listed in Section 1.4.3 above). This makes the FYW student population large, and thus complex and difficult to manage, by any departmental standard.

Using our sample data from our program survey (see Section 5.1 below), the demographics of our FYW students in the 2007-08 AY match that of CSU, Fresno at large. Below are the gender and racial groupings for First-Year (Freshman) students that the Office of Institutional Research, Assessment, and Planning (IRAP) provides (the categories are those reported by IRAP). In the two far right columns are the numbers

compiled by the self-identified questions on Midterm surveys for Engl 5A and Engl 10. Please note: the program did not gather "international" student data.

	N	Univ %	5A %	10 %
			N=580	N=253
African American	409	7.5%	9.14%	9.09%
American Indian	54	1.0%	0.52%	0.79%
Asian	1010	18.5%	20.86%	20.16%
Latino/a	1727	31.6%	39.48%	33.60%
White	1784	32.6%	28.79%	30.43%
Unknown/Other	427	7.8%	1.21%	5.93%
International	61	1.1%	N/A	N/A
			N=584	N=252
Male	2,277	41.61%	37.67%	45.24%
Female	3,195	58.39%	62.16%	48.41%
Total	**5472**			

Table 5. CSU, Fresno's first year student demographics by gender and race.

Along racial lines, Engl 10 comes closer than Engl 5A/5B to matching the university's overall racial population ratios (or percent of total students) in every category except Whites. The DSP program also places male and female students in similar ratios in both of the main options as the university gender populations; however, Engl 10's female population is 9.98% larger than the university's overall female population, while Engl 5A's female population was only 3.77% higher than that of the university's. In short, the FYW program's student populations (a product of the DSP program) have very similar racial and gender formations as those that occur in the university at large, which is complex.

To give another sense of the diversity and challenges our program faces, below are the languages spoken in homes identified by 5A and 10 students at the beginning of the Fall 2007 semester in the program survey (See Section 5.1 below).

	Engl 5A	Engl 10
	N=781	N=328
Armenian	2.96%	1.50%
Chinese	0.57%	1.00%
English	61.32%	69.83%
French	0.48%	0.75%
Hmong	8.31%	5.49%
Khmer	0.38%	0.00%
Lao	0.57%	0.75%
Portuguese	0.48%	0.50%
Punjabi	1.72%	2.00%
Spanish	21.87%	16.46%
Tagolong	0.67%	1.50%
Vietnamese	0.67%	0.25%

Table 6. Languages spoken in the homes of Fall 2007 FYW students.

2 Mission Statement, Goals, and Outcomes

In the English Department's Strategic Plan (Nov. 2000), its mission statement states:

> The English Department is dedicated to helping students develop expertise in analyzing literature and using language in a wide variety of ways: to read literature with comprehension and critical judgment; to study and evaluate literature and other writing within historical, aesthetic, and other contexts; to communicate one's ideas accurately and clearly; to perform scholarly research and construct persuasive arguments using a variety of sources; to craft language in meaningful and effective ways; to promote literacy through instruction and other activities; and to appreciate the important role that literature and language play in the contemporary world. (Principles 1 & 2)

> While the English major and the various graduate programs offered to students remain the primary concern of the English Department, the English faculty maintains a strong commitment to promoting reading, writing, and communication skills within the university community at large. Indeed, via instruction, community involvement, and a wide variety of other related activities, the English Department is essential to promoting the values of literacy, literary production, communication, and critical thinking to the larger community of which California State University, Fresno is a part. (Principles 9 & 10)

Thus the First Year Writing (FYW) program must act within these parameters.

2.1 Mission Statement of the FYW Program

Under the above charge, the FYW Program's mission statement is as follows:

The FYW program is committed to helping all students enter, understand, and develop literacy practices and behaviors that will allow them to be successful in their future educational and civic lives. In short, our mission is to produce critical and self-reflective students who understand themselves as reader-writer-citizens.

More specifically, through instruction, community involvement, and a wide variety of other related activities, the FYW program's mission is to:

- teach and encourage dialogue among diverse students (and the university community) about productive and effective academic reading and writing practices (i.e., academic literacy practices), which include on-going self-assessment processes of students;

- assess itself programmatically in order to understand from empirical evidence the learning and teaching happening in the program, measure how well we are meeting our program and course outcomes, aid our teachers in professional development, and make changes or improvements in our methods, practices, or philosophy.

2.2   FYW Program Learning Goals and Outcomes

Below are the program's learning goals and outcomes. There are three primary learning goals (the numbered items below) for the entire program, and eight learning outcomes (the alphabetic listed items below). Our program of courses strives to get students to:

1. Understand and practice effective, academic reading strategies, processes, and assessment of written work, including participating meaningfully in a community of readers and writers.

    a) READING/WRITING STRATEGIES: Demonstrate or articulate an understanding of reading strategies and assumptions that guide effective reading, and how to read actively, purposefully, and rhetorically

    b) REFLECTION: Make meaningful generalizations/reflections about reading and writing practices and processes

    c) COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION: Articulate or demonstrate meaningful participation in a community of readers/writers, and ethical and self-conscious practices that address the concerns of that community of reader/writers (e.g. using and giving feedback on drafts in peer response groups)

2. Understand and practice effective, academic summary, demonstrate rhetorical awareness and purpose, enter academic conversations, and make analyses and connections from/with research.

    a) ANALYSIS/MAKING CONNECTIONS: Demonstrate identifying and summarizing the academic conversation an issue relates to, structuring a

text through a controlling idea moving beyond summary, and developing and organizing ideas through explanations and interpretations of their observations and reflections on their own experiences and research.

  b) SUMMARY/CONVERSATION: Demonstrate summarizing purposefully, integrate "they say" into writing effectively or self-consciously, appropriately incorporate quotes into writing (punctuation, attributions, relevance), and discuss and use texts as "conversations" (writing, then, demonstrates entering a conversation)

  c) RHETORICALITY: Articulate or demonstrate an awareness of the rhetorical features of texts, such as purpose, audience, context, rhetorical appeals, and elements, and write rhetorically, discussing similar features in texts

  d) INTEGRATING RESEARCH: Demonstrate analyzing research to develop an argument, incorporating others' ideas (through quotations, summary or paraphrase) into writing effectively or self-consciously, and appropriately integrating citations into text (punctuation, attributions, relevance)

3. Practice appropriate language use, clarity, proficiency in writing, and citation mechanics.

  a) LANGUAGE COHERENCE: Have developed, unified, and coherent paragraphs and sentences that have clarity and some variety

All the learning outcomes listed in the following sections below fulfill these three larger goals.

2.2.1   English 5A Outcomes

Engl 5A uses six of the above learning outcomes. The capped headings below are shorthand references that connect each outcome to the program goals above.

- READING/WRITING STRATEGIES (1a): Demonstrate or articulate an **understanding of reading strategies** and assumptions that guide effective reading, and how to **read actively**, purposefully, and rhetorically

- REFLECTION (1b): Make meaningful **generalizations/reflections** about reading and writing practices and processes

- COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION (1c): Articulate or demonstrate **meaningful participation in a community** of readers/writers, and ethical and self-conscious practices that address the concerns of that community of reader/writers (e.g. using and giving feedback on drafts in peer response groups)

- SUMMARY/CONVERSATION (2b): Demonstrate **summarizing purposefully**, integrate **"they say"** into writing effectively or self-consciously, appropriately incorporate quotes into writing (punctuation, attributions, relevance), and discuss and use texts as "**conversations**" (writing, then, demonstrates entering a conversation)

- RHETORICALITY (2c): Articulate or demonstrate an **awareness of the rhetorical features of texts**, such as purpose, audience, context, rhetorical appeals, and elements, and write rhetorically, discussing similar features in texts

- LANGUAGE COHERENCE (3a): Have developed, unified, and coherent **paragraphs** and **sentences** that have clarity and some variety

2.2.2 Engl 5B and 10 Course Goals and Outcomes

There are five outcomes for Engl 5B and 10. The capped headings below are shorthand references that connect each outcome to the program goals above. Because these two courses meet the university's writing requirement, and represent the same endpoints to our program, they have the same course outcomes.

- ANALYSIS/MAKING CONNECTIONS (2a): Demonstrate **identifying and summarizing** the academic conversation an issue relates to, structuring a text through a **controlling idea moving beyond summary**, and **developing and organizing ideas** through explanations and interpretations of their observations and reflections on their own experiences and research.

- INTEGRATING RESEARCH (2d): Demonstrate **analyzing research to develop an argument, incorporating others' ideas** (through quotations, summary or paraphrase) into writing effectively or self-consciously, and appropriately integrating citations into text (punctuation, attributions, relevance)

- RHETORICALITY (2c): Articulate or demonstrate an **awareness of the rhetorical features of texts**, such as purpose, audience, context, rhetorical appeals, and elements, and write rhetorically, discussing similar features in texts

- REFLECTION (1b): Demonstrate or articulate meaningful **generalizations/reflections** about reading and writing practices and processes

- LANGUAGE COHERENCE (3a): Have developed, unified, and coherent **paragraphs** and **sentences** that have clarity and some variety

3   Curriculum Map

The following is a map to the FYW Program's curriculum. It shows the three courses we offer on the left and the learning outcomes by number at the top. The table shows whether an outcome is introduced (I), reinforced (R), or emphasized (E) in a course. This designation equates to the pedagogical priority of the course and what the program expects in the course of students, not a chronology of outcomes, per se. So while an outcome may be introduced (I) in a course, it may be labeled below as emphasized (E) if it is a main pedagogical feature of the course. The last column is the program portfolio, which is used to gather direct evidence of learning outcomes in our program in all courses. Since it is also an informal outcome itself, embodying most of the other outcomes, even teaches them to students, and is the primary method for gathering direct evidence of the outcomes in the program, it is included below.

	1a	1b	1c	2a	2b	2c	2d	3a	Portfolio
Engl 5A	E	I	I		E	E		I	I
Engl 5B		R	R	E	E	R	E	R	R
Engl 10	R	R	R	E	E	E	E	R	I

Table 7. FYW curriculum map.

4   Direct Measures

During the 2007-08 AY, the FYW Program gathered two sources of direct evidence from students and teachers. The first source is the program portfolio, a direct source of evidence for student learning along the program's outcomes. From this source, we collected two kinds of direct evidence of learning in the program: numerical ratings and competency measures. Random portfolios were gathered in all classes and rated by independent readers during the summer of 2008. We also gathered portfolio competency measures at midterm and final times during each semester. These competency measures were determined by midterm and final readings during the semester by all teachers in the program, and only two distinctions were made in these data: "C" (a portfolio was deemed obviously competent) or N (a portfolio was deemed not obviously competent).

The second source of direct evidence is a more selective batch of random student papers with teacher comments on them from the Spring 2008 midterm portfolios in Engl 5A, 5B, and 10. The teacher comments on these papers were read and coded to understand better the kind of direct instruction students receive on their written work. These comments are direct measures not of student learning but of teaching in our program and helps us understand better the other data we gathered. Since one of the FYW program's mission statement directives is to train and develop professionally teachers, and since the effectiveness of teachers' comments on student writing is vital to the success of our undergraduates' writing, gathering data on teacher commenting is direct evidence of our program's success, pedagogical limitations, and suggests indirectly the learning occurring.

4.1   Program Portfolio: Numerical Ratings

One direct measure of student performance the program gathers is the program portfolio, which is required in all courses, Engl 5A, 5B, and 10. The portfolios are embedded in courses and used in course grading (typically, at least 30% of the course grade). The program portfolio has common requirements (see Section 10.3) and a common set of writing projects that students typically choose from when putting together their portfolios (see Section 10.9).

4.1.1   Numerical Ratings' Methods and Procedures

The portfolios were gathered randomly during the AY with only student IDs left on them for tracking. During three days in July, 2007, seven teachers and one tenure-track faculty (the Program Assessment Coordinator) from the program read and rated each portfolio along five chosen program outcomes (discussed below). IRAP took the data we created and produced information about each outcome and our students for the Program Assessment Coordinator to analyze.

NOTE: During the 2007-08 AY, random portfolios were gathered by asking all teachers to select every fifth student on their rosters for portfolio submissions. This method proved to be difficult to manage with the large number of teachers we have. Next year, 2008-09 AY, the program has changed its method for random selection. See Section 8 "Closing the Loop" for the changes made.

In order to accommodate multiple readings/ratings of a portfolio and double-check ratings of portfolios for reliability, each portfolio was read multiple times, semi-blindly, with each reader only knowing the student ID# printed on the portfolio. The process worked in this way:

- each portfolio was read and rated twice, producing 5 ratings per reader (one for each outcome), then all five ratings for each rater were averaged, producing 2 overall ratings (one per rater, two per portfolio);

- if both raters' overall ratings were grouped into the same numerical category (agreeing), then the two readers' 5 individual ratings on the portfolio were averaged to produce one set of five ratings per portfolio;

- if the two overall ratings were not both in one of the three categories (not agreeing), then a third rating was conducted;

- in cases where a third reader was used, the two sets of five ratings of the two readers whose overall ratings both fell in the same category were averaged, that is, the two readers whose overall ratings agreed were used to create the portfolio's five ratings;

- in cases where all three raters' overall ratings fell into all three different categories, those portfolios were set aside for further analysis by me.

This process satisfied the program's need to have more than one reader on a portfolio, and IRAP's need to have only one rating per outcome per portfolio.

4.1.2   Numerical Ratings' Scores and Outcomes

Each portfolio was read and rated by at least two independent, outside teachers, who teach in our program, but have not taught the student or the course section from which the portfolio in question comes. Each portfolio was rated along five chosen learning outcomes (taken from the program outcomes). The rating system is a six-point scale, with three conceptual groupings of ratings, or categories. The three categories divide the ratings into three kinds of writing: poor quality, adequate quality, and superior quality. These conceptual categories also helped in determine when readers (and their readings of portfolios) agreed. The rating scale is as follows:

1   consistently inadequate, of poor quality, and/or significantly lacking

2   consistently inadequate, of poor quality, but occasionally showing signs of demonstrating competence

3   adequate or of acceptable quality but inconsistent, showing signs of competence mingled with some problems

4   consistently adequate and of acceptable quality, showing competence with perhaps some minor problems

5   consistently good quality, showing clear competence with few problems, and some flashes of excellent or superior work

6   mostly or consistently excellent/superior quality, shows very few problems and several or many signs of superior work
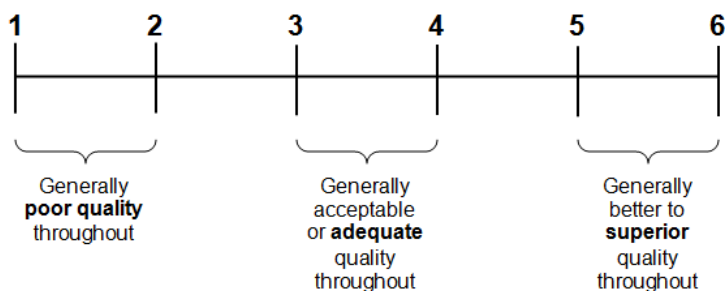
Figure 2. The possible ratings on the portfolio and their conceptual groupings.

The program learning outcomes rated in the above procedures were (see Section 2.2 above for a description of each):

1a. READING/WRITING STRATEGIES

1b. REFLECTION

2b. SUMMARY/CONVERSATION

2c. RHETORICALITY:

3a. LANGUAGE COHERENCE

4.1.3   Numerical Ratings' Sample Size

The total number of each set of portfolios (N values) used in compiling the information in this section are listed below. While the portfolio sample is relatively small compared to the number of students in the program (see Section 1.4.4), making it impossible to make conclusions on racial or gender formations occurring, the overall findings are suggestive and promising. Subsequent years' data will be used to validate the findings of this first year's program assessment. While Engl 10 portfolio findings are included below, unfortunately, there were few Engl 10 portfolios gathered, making the findings questionable (as the N values for Engl 10 below indicate).

Option 2: The Stretch Program
N= 86   Engl 5A midterm portfolios
N=43   Engl 5B final portfolios

Option 1: Accelerated Program
N=18   Engl 10 midterm portfolios
N=9   Engl 10 final portfolios

Table 8. The sample size of numerically rated portfolios.

4.2   Program Portfolio: Numerical Ratings Analysis

Because the purpose of this report is to assess the learning in the FYW Program and validate the DSP decisions, most of the data and analyses in this section on the numerical ratings of student portfolios are delineated by the two DSP options. Below are the data and analyses that align with each DSP option offered in our program. The first section shows the most commonly chosen option (#2), the Engl 5A and 5B track chosen by 68% of students, or 1,762 students in the 2007-08 AY (see Section 1.4.4 above for more enrollment numbers). The portfolios rated in this section uses 5A and 5B sections from the entire year and shows learning growth through the academic year. The second section below shows data from portfolios of students in option 1, Engl 10 (chosen by 844 students), which gathers data from the entire year but represents only one semester's worth of growth in portfolios.

4.2.1   Numerical Ratings for Option 2 (Engl 5A/5B Students)

The numerical ratings for the Engl 5A midterm portfolios and the Engl 5B final portfolios are used to create a pre and post assessment of student learning, directly assessing the

learning in option 2 of the program. The following table shows the five outcomes rated in each portfolio across the top, and the six possible ratings in the leftmost column. Each row provides the N-value by outcome and percentage of the total ratings by outcome. Since the numbers are small and only suggestive, the more significant findings from these data are the averages for each outcome (located at the bottom of the table).

Rating Score		Strategies		Reflection		Summarizing		Rhet		Lang		Overall	
		5A middle	5B Final	5A middle	5B Final	5A middle	5B Final	5A middle	5B Final	5A middle	5B Final	5A middle	5B Final
1	N	6		6		1		5				1	
	%	7.0%		7.0%		1.2%		5.8%				1.2%	
2	N	27	7	22	6	27	7	33	8	17	5	17	2
	%	31.4%	16.3%	25.6%	14.0%	31.4%	16.3%	38.4%	18.6%	19.8%	11.6%	19.8%	4.7%
3	N	9	9	6	8	19	7	18	13	17	3	34	16
	%	10.5%	20.9%	7.0%	18.6%	22.1%	16.3%	20.9%	30.2%	19.8%	7.0%	39.5%	37.2%
4	N	37	20	44	21	31	20	27	17	40	24	26	16
	%	43.0%	46.5%	51.2%	48.8%	36.0%	46.5%	31.4%	39.5%	46.5%	55.8%	30.2%	37.2%
5	N	6	5	5	6	4	5	2	3	9	5	7	8
	%	7.0%	11.6%	5.8%	14.0%	4.7%	11.6%	2.3%	7.0%	10.5%	11.6%	8.1%	18.6%
6	N	1	2	3	2	4	4	1	2	3	6	1	1
	%	1.2%	4.7%	3.5%	4.7%	4.7%	9.3%	1.2%	4.7%	3.5%	14.0%	1.2%	2.3%
Total	N	86	43	86	43	86	43	86	43	86	43	86	43
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean comparision (one-way ANOVA)													
Average		3.15	3.67	3.34	3.77	3.26	3.81	2.90	3.49	3.58	4.09	3.28	3.77
Significance		Sig(0.012)		Sig(0.037)		Sig(0.009)		Sig(0.003)		Sig(0.011)		Sig(0.006)	

Table 9. FYW DSP option 2 portfolio ratings by outcome.

For option 1 students, the outcome with the highest average ratings at both the 5A midterm and 5B final was language coherence (outcome 3a), while reflection (outcome 1b) achieved the second highest 5A midterm ratings, while summarizing/conversation (outcome 2b) received the second highest 5B final ratings. The average movement, or average growth, in ratings from the 5A midterm to the 5B final taken from the above table is as follows:

Outcome	Average Movement
Strategies (1a)	.52
Reflection (1b)	.43
Summary/Conversation (2b)	.55
Rhetoricality (2c)	.59
Language Coherence (3a)	.51

Table 10. Average movement by outcome in portfolios from option 2 students.

Along all measured outcomes, the average ratings improved by at least half of a point (except in one case, "reflection") from 5A midterm portfolios to 5B final portfolios. Additionally, the average overall ratings for portfolios improved from 3.28 to 3.77, a move up by .49 points.

Rhetoricality

The outcome in which there was the most improvement or movement in portfolios was "rhetoricality" (outcome 2c), or students' abilities to articulate or demonstrate an awareness of the rhetorical features of texts, such as purpose, audience, context,

rhetorical appeals, and elements, and write rhetorically, discussing similar features in texts. In other words, students taking option 2 averaged a 2.90 rating in "rhetoricality" at 5A midterm and improved that rating to 3.49 by the 5B final, an improvement of over half a point (.59) on a six point scale. It happens also that both of these averages were the lowest averages of all outcomes. So while 5A/5B students made the most movement along rhetoricality (2c), they started with lower average scores and ended with lower average scores than any other outcome measured.

Additionally, in "rhetoricality," a significant number of students' portfolios moved from the category of "poor quality" (the first category containing ratings 1-2) to the next conceptual category, "adequate" (the middle category containing ratings 3-4). To see this important movement from poor to adequate writing quality in average ratings, consider which scores received the most hits in each conceptual category. Below shows the percentage of ratings by conceptual category given to portfolios.

Rating Category	5A Midterm Portfolio	5B Final Portfolio
Poor Quality	44.19%	18.60%
Adequate Quality	52.33%	69.77%
Superior Quality	3.49%	11.63%

Table 11. Option 2 portfolio ratings on rhetoricality by conceptual category

More 5B final portfolios received "adequate quality" ratings (scores of 3-4) than 5A midterm portfolios. While each set of categories for each kind of portfolio still produces a typical bell curve, the 5B curve is more dramatic in the middle and more evenly distributed on either ends, thus a more conventional bell curve. This shows that most of the program's students are learning one of the key program outcomes, as demonstrated in the curriculum map in Section 3 "Curriculum Map" above. Another improvement seen above is in poor quality ratings. They make up 44.19% of all ratings on 5A midterms, but only 18.60% of 5B finals. Clearly learning is occurring along the dimension of rhetoricality, and most students leave 5B scoring adequate or superior in rhetoricality.

Summary/Conversation

The next closest outcome in which there was improvement was "summary/conversation" (outcome 2b), or students' abilities to demonstrate summarizing purposefully, appropriately incorporate quotations into writing, and discuss and use texts as "conversations." Along this outcome, portfolio ratings improved from an average score of 3.26 (5A midterm) to 3.81 (5B final), an increase of .55. While on average students remained in the 3 score range, the low to mid range of "adequate quality," they did improve over half of a point. And like rhetoricality, most students leave 5B scoring adequate or superior in summary/conversation.

Summary/conversation also shows a similar bell curve distribution in both sets of portfolio ratings as those seen in rhetoricality. And again, the 5B final portfolios receive

more adequate ratings and fewer poor quality ratings. Additionally, just like rhetoricality, superior quality ratings of this outcome more than doubled (see the table below).

Rating Category	5A Midterm Portfolio	5B Final Portfolio
Poor Quality	32.56%	16.28%
Adequate Quality	58.14%	62.79%
Superior Quality	9.30%	20.93%

Table 12. Option 2 portfolio ratings on summary/conversation by conceptual category.

These averaged ratings and distributions suggest that our students in option 2, develop adequately along the two core outcomes in our program, "rhetoricality" and "summary/conversation." As shown on the curriculum map in Section 3, these two outcomes also are the two most emphasized in the program, especially in option 2 (Engl 5A and 5B). This suggests that students are leaving the program with adequate to superior competencies in the most crucial practices we ask of them.

Reflection

The outcome that improved the least was "Reflection" (outcome 1b), with a positive movement of .43, the lowest of all five outcomes measured; however, except for Language Coherence (outcome 3a), the average ratings started (at 3.34) and ended with higher averages (at 3.77) for reflection. One way to read this data is to see no appreciable improvement in the quality of reflection in student writing. Both average scores are in mid range of adequate scores; however, when considering these ratings by conceptual category, as seen in the table below, students appear to be doing fine in reflection practices.

Rating Category	5A Midterm Portfolio	5B Final Portfolio
Poor Quality	32.56%	13.95%
Adequate Quality	58.14%	67.44%
Superior Quality	9.30%	18.60%

Table 13. Option 2 portfolio ratings on reflection by conceptual category.

The distributions are almost exactly the same as the previous outcomes' distributions. More than half of the scores move out of the poor quality category. The middle category is most dramatic, and the superior quality category doubles.

In each analysis above, FYW students appear to be learning adequately along every outcome measured. In fact, in every outcome, rates of 1 (the lowest score possible) for 5B students disappear. Overall ratings of portfolios also show this score pattern, and 95.3% of all portfolios received adequate or superior overall ratings. When viewing the portfolio data for option 2 through the lenses of the average ratings, the average movement, and

the movement of ratings between conceptual categories, particularly those from the poor quality to adequate quality, students appear to be developing along all outcomes measured. Additionally, FYW students appear to improve their writing competencies along the two most emphasized outcomes in our curriculum for Engl 5A and 5B.

4.2.2 Numerical Ratings for Option 1 (Engl 10 Students)

The numerical ratings for the Engl 10 midterm and final portfolios are used to create a pre and post assessment of student learning, directly assessing the learning in the DSP option 1 of the program. The following table shows the five outcomes rated in each portfolio across the top, and the six possible ratings in the leftmost column. Each row provides the N-value by outcome and percentage of the total ratings by outcome. Since the numbers are small and only suggestive, the more significant findings from these data are the averages for each outcome (located at the bottom of the table).

NOTE: Since the numbers are even smaller than those gathered for option 2, the data shown below may not offer significant findings for Engl 10 (option 1); however, at its face, the findings seem to be accurate based on data presented later in this report.

Rating Score		Strategies		Reflection		Summarizing		Rhet		Lang		Overall	
		10 middle	10 Final	10 middle	10 Final	10 middle	10 Final	10 middle	10 Final	10 middle	10 Final	10 middle	10 Final
1	N	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
2	N	3	0	4	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
	%	16.7%	0.0%	22.2%	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%	0.0%
3	N	7	2	6	0	3	0	5	0	3	1	10	0
	%	38.9%	11.1%	33.3%	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	27.8%	0.0%	16.7%	5.6%	55.6%	0.0%
4	N	5	4	6	6	7	5	5	6	8	4	5	7
	%	27.8%	22.2%	33.3%	33.3%	38.9%	27.8%	27.8%	33.3%	44.4%	22.2%	27.8%	38.9%
5	N	2	2	1	3	5	2	6	2	5	2	2	2
	%	11.1%	11.1%	5.6%	16.7%	27.8%	11.1%	33.3%	11.1%	27.8%	11.1%	11.1%	11.1%
6	N	1	1	1	0	0	2	0	1	2	2	0	0
	%	5.6%	5.6%	5.6%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%	0.0%	5.6%	11.1%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	N	18	9	18	9	18	9	18	9	18	9	18	9
	%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Mean comparison (one-way ANOVA)													
Average		3.50	4.22	3.39	4.33	3.78	4.67	3.83	4.44	4.33	4.56	3.44	4.22

Table 14. FYW DSP option 1 portfolio ratings by outcome.

The average movement, or average growth, in all ratings from the 10 midterm portfolio to the final portfolio taken from the above table is as follows:

Outcome	Average Movement
Strategies (1a)	.72
Reflection (1b)	.94
Summary/Conversation (2b)	.89
Rhetoricality (2c)	.61
Language Coherence (3a)	.22

Table 15. Average movement by outcome in Portfolios from students in option 1.

Along three of the five measured outcomes, the average ratings improved by at least .72 points from midterm to final portfolios. Additionally, the average overall ratings for the portfolios improved from 3.44 (midterm) to 4.22 (final), a move up by .78 points.

Similar to option 2 ratings, option 1's average ratings show all average scores for each outcome improving; however, option 2's average ratings start and end higher and average higher movement (except in one case). This difference is perhaps due to the kind of students who choose Option 1, the accelerated program. According to our literature that helps guide students' decisions, this course is for students already prepared in most way for academic writing. This accounts for their higher midterm portfolio scores.

Reflection

The outcome with the most growth in average ratings was "reflection," receiving an average midterm score of 3.39 and a final score of 4.33, a jump of .94 points in one semester. The midterm average rating was the second lowest average outcome midterm score of all five outcomes measured. When compared to option 2's 5A midterm average score (3.34), this category shows a similar starting point, so students in option 2 seemed on average to grow more in reflection. However, considering the distribution of ratings grouped in conceptual categories, a different conclusion can be made.

Rating Category	10 Midterm Portfolio	5A Midterm Portfolio	10 Final Portfolio	5B Final Portfolio
Poor Quality	22.22%	32.56%	0.00%	13.95%
Adequate Quality	66.67%	58.14%	66.67%	67.44%
Superior Quality	11.11%	9.30%	33.33%	18.60%

Table 16. Option 1 portfolio ratings on reflection by conceptual category compared to option 2 ratings.

As shown in the comparative table above, the distributions by conceptual category move in the same directions as all other outcomes discussed thus far for both options. Interestingly, option 1 ratings move more dramatically to superior quality on average (from 11.11% to 33.33%), but the average adequate numbers remain constant.

Summary/Conversation

The next closest outcome in which there was improvement was "summary/conversation" (outcome 2b), the same pattern found in option 2 portfolios. Along this outcome, portfolio ratings improved from an average score of 3.78 (midterm) to 4.67 (final), an increase of .89 points. On average students moved from the 3 score range, the low to mid range of adequate quality, to the 4 score range, the high range of adequate quality.

Summary/conversation also shows a similar bell curve distribution in both sets of portfolio ratings as those seen in rhetoricality in option 1. And again, the 10 final portfolios receive a high number of superior quality ratings (44.44%) and no quality

ratings. Additionally, similar to rhetoricality, superior quality ratings for this outcome jumped up 16.66% in one semester (see the table below).

Rating Category	10 Midterm Portfolio	5A Midterm Portfolio	10 Final Portfolio	5B Final Portfolio
Poor Quality	16.67%	32.56%	0.00%	16.28%
Adequate Quality	55.56%	58.14%	55.56%	62.79%
Superior Quality	27.78%	9.30%	44.44%	20.93%

Table 17. Option 1 portfolio ratings on summary/conversation by conceptual category compared to option 2 ratings.

Additionally, it's important to note that there are no portfolios rated 1 or 2 in the final group of 10 portfolios (the "poor quality" group in the table above), and exactly like the reflection outcome above, the number of portfolios that receiving adequate quality ratings remained exactly the same.

Language Coherence

Option 1 students developed the least in "language coherence" (outcome 3a) as measured in their portfolios, developing or growing from an average rating of 4.33 (midterm) to 4.56 (final). The average midterm scores for language coherence, or students' abilities to have developed, unified, and coherent paragraphs and sentences that have clarity and some variety, were the highest of all option 1 outcomes measured. In fact, in their midterm portfolios Engl 10 students had the highest average language coherence rating of all students in options 1 and 2, which may account for the noticeable lack of development at final (.22). There appears to be less room for growth along this dimension in option 1 students.

Rating Category	10 Midterm Portfolio	5A Midterm Portfolio	10 Final Portfolio	5B Final Portfolio
Poor Quality	0.00%	19.77%	0.00%	11.63%
Adequate Quality	61.11%	66.28%	55.56%	62.79%
Superior Quality	38.89%	13.95%	44.44%	25.58%

Table 18. Option 1 portfolio ratings on language coherence by conceptual category compared to option 2 ratings.

In the comparative table above, not only are the distributions among conceptual categories almost exactly the same as those in the previous option 1 outcomes, having no ratings of 1 or 2 (poor quality portfolios), and a high number of superior quality ratings (44.44%), but the comparisons to option 2 portfolio ratings are similar.

4.3 Program Portfolio: Competency Measures

During each semester in the 2007-08 AY, we collected portfolio competency measures (i.e., pass or fail statistics of portfolios) at midterm and final times from readings of portfolios in all courses. All teachers in the program participated in the readings (they were mandatory), and only two distinctions were recorded on each portfolio: C (a portfolio was competent) or N (a portfolio was not competent). These readings occurred during week 8 and week 16 of each semester, in which teachers came together to read portfolios, and each session was facilitated by the appropriate Coordinator of each course (5A, 5B, or 10), while the entire administration was overseen by the Director of Composition.

The portfolios used to determine competency measures were all students in the program during the 2007-08 AY, thus the portfolios used in the numerical ratings set discussed in Section 4.1 "Program Portfolio: Numerical Ratings" above were a subset of these. The program portfolio has common requirements (see Section 10.3) and a common set of writing projects that students typically choose from when putting together their portfolios (see Section 10.9). For comprehensive data tables on the competency measures presented in this section, see Section 10.11 below.

4.3.1 Competency Measures' Methods and Procedures

Each Engl 5A portfolio reading administration started with approximately an hour of training and "norming." Everyone reviewed the program outcomes and some portfolio theory for reading in this special way. Next all teachers read together several sample portfolios (collected from the teachers ahead of time), discussing the features of each portfolio, and how those features translated to a judgment of a "C" or an "N" (see Section 4.3.2 below for a definition of these measures). Teachers typically sat around tables and read randomly portfolios from other teachers' classes until all portfolios were read and a competency measure was produced for each.

Each portfolio was read at least twice by two outside teachers (not the teacher of record for the student). If the two competency ratings disagreed (e.g., the portfolio received two judgments, a "C" and an "N"), then a third more careful and informed reading by the teacher of record was made, which decided the final rating of the portfolio. Each rating, as it was made, was attached to the portfolio and covered, so future readers would not know what the first reading had been. These procedures occurred for both midterm and final portfolios.

The Engl 5B and 10 administrations were held together, since their outcomes and portfolios are the same. Teachers conducted the same training activities before reading portfolios as Engl 5A teachers. The only difference between administrations was that in the case of Engl 5B and 10 portfolios, teachers rated each portfolio along several dimensions and gave each portfolio an overall rating. The overall ratings were converted to the "C" and "N" system for purposes of this assessment.

The most difficult and error-prone aspect of this process was collecting the data (the actual competency ratings data) from so many different teachers after the administrations. Originally we asked teachers to fill in a simple spreadsheet prepared for them; however, several had problems with familiarity of the software (Excel), while some did not turn in their spreadsheets on time, and others entered data inaccurately or with coding errors. Eventually, our administrative assistant, Nyxy Gee, attempted to gather and enter all remaining data she could and compile it. Still, there were errors in the data, which meant we had to discard some data. The data we feel most confident in, and is discussed below, does not represent the full program, as originally hoped; however, it is an appropriate sampling of the program, which IRAP has confirmed.

NOTE: While certainly the problems we encountered with gathering data affect the ability of our sample to be accurate and random. The numbers are significant for the overall population of the FYW Program. Additionally, when broken down into smaller populations (such as gender or race), it appears we have a representative sample of students that match the university numbers.

4.3.2   Distinctions Used in Competency Measures

For all course portfolios (Engl 5A, 5B, and 10) competency was recorded as either a "C" or an "N." The program describes this distinction between portfolios in Engl 5A in this way:

> **C** = demonstrates an *obvious* readiness to enter and succeed in 5B

> **N** = does not demonstrate an *obvious* readiness to enter and succeed in 5B

The program describes the same distinction between portfolios in Engl 5B or 10 as:

> **C** = demonstrates the program outcomes in *obvious* ways

> **N** = does not demonstrate the program outcomes in *obvious* ways

The most important thing about the distinction between "C" and "N" measures is the "obvious" markers in the portfolio. If a portfolio did not demonstrate *obvious* markers of competency in the ways our training sessions provided, then readers were instructed to give the portfolio an "N." Since all of the readers were currently teaching the course in question, and training on how to make the judgment was similar and grounded in real portfolio samples from the program, these simple competency distinctions could be made with consistency.

Additionally, Richard Haswell, a nationally respected writing assessment scholar and researcher, offers three useful distinctions in the way judges read texts, particularly when they read to make the kinds of decisions we must when determining placement or competency in a course or program. The two kinds of reading practices that the program used, and that allowed us to make the above distinction, especially for Engl 5A

portfolios, was "prototype categorization" and "exemplar categorization." Haswell describes each in the following way:

Exemplar Categorization **(Reader 1 and 2)**	"assumes that people sometimes categorize by comparing a new instance with intact memories ("exemplars") of similar instances . . . A person may categorize a book leafed through in a bookstore as a novel because the cover, one chapter title, and the font are quite reminiscent of a novel just read. Categorization by exemplar assumes a rummaging through episodic memory ending with a gestalt-like pattern recognition of specific exemplars. Largely unconscious, the way features of those experiences connect with features of the new instance depend on a flock of contextual contingencies, including the categorizer's previous encounter, subsequent experience with it, and current motivations" (247).
Prototype Categorization **(Reader 3)**	"assumes that people categorize by judging how similar the yet-to-be-categorized instance is to abstract schemas they have of the best example or most representative member (prototype) of possible categories. The prototype of a category is not a specific member but an idealized construction, a "convenient grammatical fiction" (Rosch, 1978, p. 40) . . . In prototype categories, members are organized by gradience within the category, each being judged further or closer to the best example. A robin is a better example of a bird than is a penguin (this is Rosch's oft-cited illustration). But this gradedness is complex, because no set of features need be shared by every member." (Haswell 246).

Exemplar readings, which are easier and quicker decisions to make, were made by outside readers of portfolios during the portfolio administrations, while the tie-breaking readings, those done by the teacher of record, were prototype readings and done afterwards. As Haswell's description above implies, prototype categorization is a more complex and longer process. Since a reader must place the current writing on a scale, so to speak, weighing options and characteristics as more or less important. For a more complete discussion of all three kinds of readings, see Section 0.

4.3.3 Competency Measures' Sample Size

The sample for Engl 5A was collected over the entire 2007-08 AY, while the samples for Engl 5B and 10 were collected in the Spring 2008 semester only. This accounts for the size difference in samples. Because some teachers did not turn in data, and some data had to be discarded due to errors, the sample size for each population is a different proportion of the overall population for each course group (Engl 5A, 5B, and 10). The following

table shows the sample sizes (N-values) for the portfolios used to measure competency and is less than the total student population in the FYW Program, but still representative and significant. For reference, the total enrollment numbers are included.

Engl 5A Portfolios (all)

N-Value	Enroll. #	Population
144		Male
256		Female
83		Asian Pacific American
31		African American
161		Latino/a
115		White
400	1,762	Total

Engl 5A/5B Portfolios

N-Value	Enroll. #	Population
82		Male
156		Female
45		Asian Pacific American
15		African American
86		Latino/a
88		White
238	1,361	Total

Engl 10 Portfolios

N-Value	Enroll. #	Population
50		Male
74		Female
33		Asian Pacific American
16		African American
36		Latino/a
36		White
125	844	Total

Table 19. Sample size of portfolios read for competency measures.

NOTE: The enrollment numbers indicated above in Engl 5A/5B category account for the total enrollment for Engl 5B, since this number would account for all students who took *both* 5A and 5B, but not those who took 5A and did not enroll in 5B (a larger set of students).

There are multiple reasons for why the sample sizes are so difference between all 5A students recorded in the sample (the first category of N-values above) and students who

completed 5A and 5B (the second category above). The assumption should not be made that the difference in numbers above have mostly do with failing 5A students. In many cases, they do not. Many reasons contribute to the sample size differences: 5B teachers turning data improperly, errors in data, students leaving the university between semesters, etc.

4.4 Program Portfolio: Competency Measures Analysis

Because the purpose of this report is to assess the learning in the FYW Program and validate the DSP decisions, most of the data and analyses in this section on the competency measures are delineated by the two DSP options, which were also used in the Section 4.2 above. In both sections below, competency measures are discussed longitudinally. This means, in the case of the data for option 2 students, the data reflects how the same group of students performed over a year (from Fall 2007 to Spring 2008). In the case of Engl 10 competency measures, the data is for Spring 2008 only.

4.4.1 Competency Measures for Option 2 (Engl 5A/5B Students)

Competency Measures for Option 2's General Population

The portfolio competency measures for all students in option 2 show continual overall improvement. When tracking the number of student portfolios that received overall judgments of "competent" by two readers (either two out of two readers judge the portfolio a "C," or two out of three readers judge it a "C"), the number of competent portfolios improved over the course of two semesters (5A and 5B), but the largest improvement occurred in Engl 5A. As the figure below shows, the number of portfolios judged overall competent jumps up 25.7% between Engl 5A midterm and final, while in Engl 5B the jump in number of competent portfolios is more modest, at 6.3%.
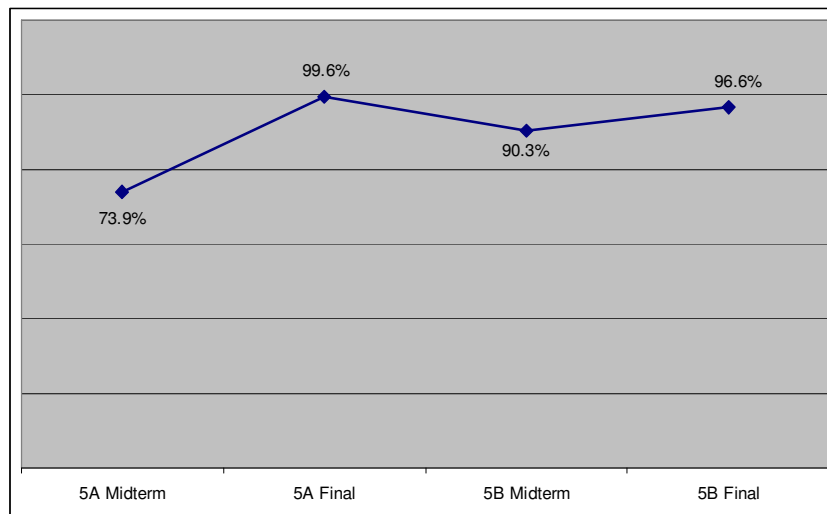
Figure 3. Overall competency rates for option 2 students in 2007-08 AY.

Overall competency is high at all four points in the 2007-08 AY. Considering only the two ends' percentages (5A Midterm and 5B Final), the 22.7% increase in the number of competent portfolios represents a significant level of competency improvement. Additionally, these same two points may give an indication of competency in academic writing of FYW students in option 2 near the beginning of their course of study in the program and at the end, the first measure average and the second high.

The number of student portfolios that received only unanimous competency ratings (i.e., both initial readers rated the portfolio a "C") is more dramatic. As with general competency rates, the largest improvement in the number of portfolios rated as unanimously competent came in Engl 5A.
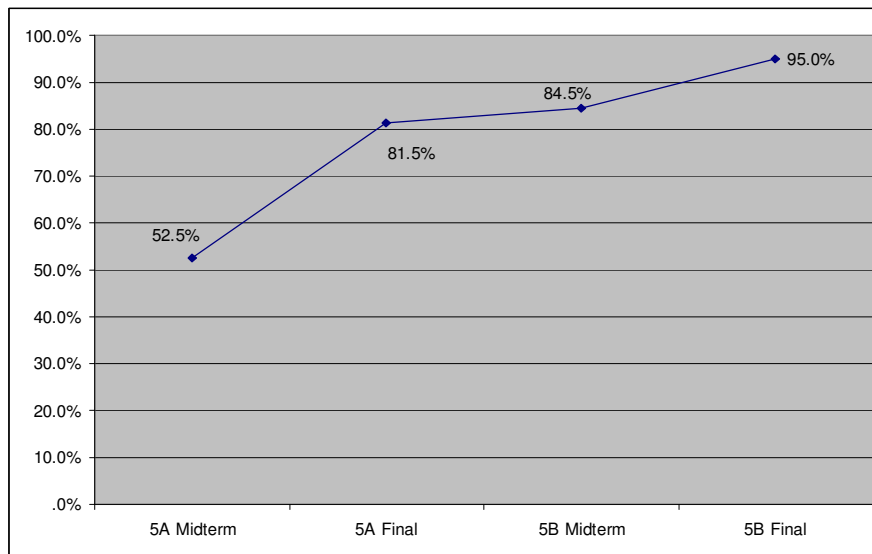
Figure 4. Unanimous competency rates for option 2 students in 2007-08 AY.

There was a 29% increase in the number of unanimously competent portfolios between 5A midterm and final, and an increase of 10.5% of the same portfolios between 5B midterm and final. Both numbers are modestly higher than their overall competency counterparts already discussed above.

The one curiosity in all competency measures is how many portfolios received unanimous competency ratings at the final periods, particularly 5B portfolios. Perhaps this phenomenon corroborates the independent portfolio readings discussed in Section 4.2 above, in which 4.7% of 5B final portfolios were rated as poor quality overall (see Table 9 above). This means, that 95.3% of all those portfolios should be in the competent category. While the numerical ratings readers had no motivation to score any portfolio higher or lower, the teachers in the portfolio administrations during the semester arguably could have had some motivation to give most portfolios a "C," since that would shorten their time in the administration, and perhaps reduce the number of portfolios needing their third read at home afterwards. Of course, this phenomenon is hard to know.

Competency Measures by Gender in Option 2

The overall competency measures by gender do not show significant differences. The figure below traces the number of students by gender that received general and unanimous competency ratings. In both cases (i.e., general competency and unanimous competency) female students consistently are rated competent or unanimously competent in higher numbers at each of the four points in the 2007-08 AY, but only marginally.
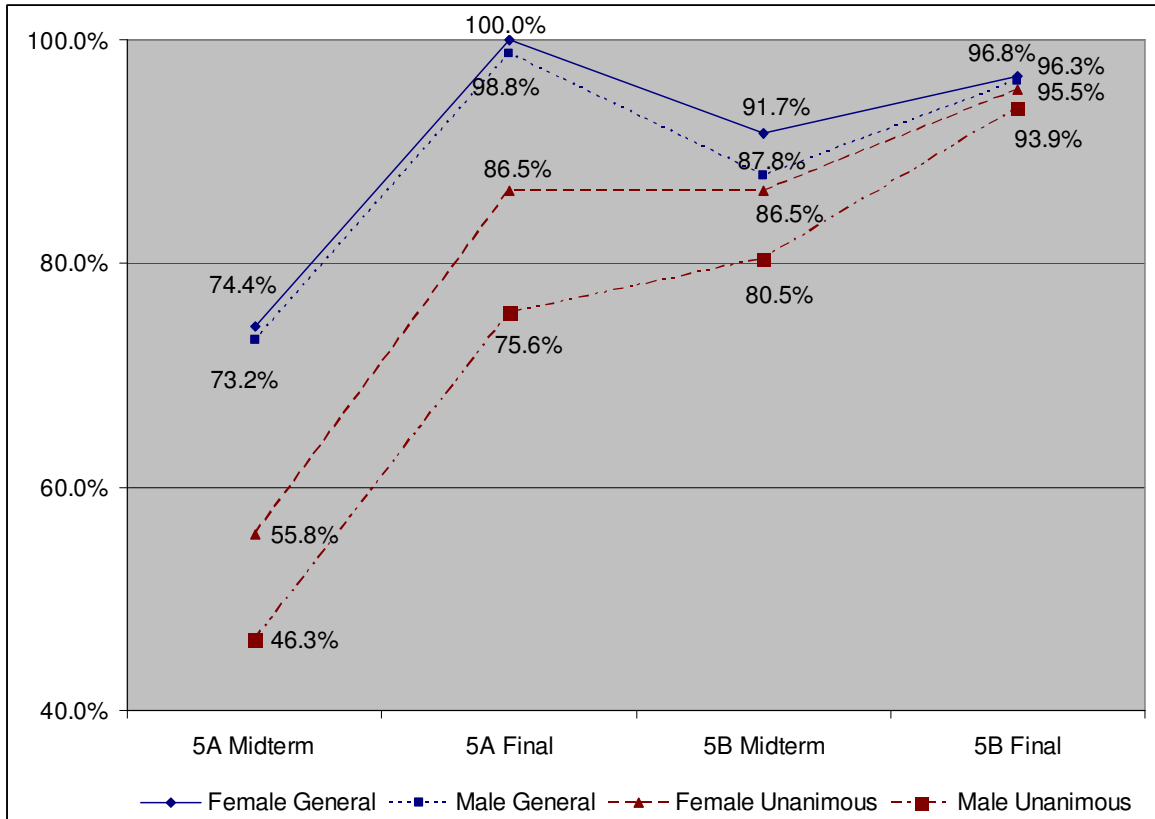
Figure 5. Overall and unanimous competency rates for option 2 students in 2007-08 AY.

Additionally, all four sets of ratings approach a merging point at 5B final. This means that there are few 5B final portfolios that not only get third readings (meaning they show obvious markers of competency by two outside readers) but few portfolios do not show incompetence by two outside readers. And these trends are not different when taking gender into account.

While the differences in numbers are marginal in the general competency figures, averaging 1.7% difference, they are more dramatic in the unanimous figures, averaging 7% difference. The largest difference between male and female portfolios occurs in Engl 5A, particularly at the final, with a 10.9% difference between male and females.

	5A Midterm	5A Final	5B Midterm	5B Final
Overall Competency	1.2%	1.2%	3.9%	0.5%
Unanimous Competency	9.4%	10.9%	6.1%	1.6%

Table 20. Differences between males and females in the total number of portfolios rated as overall and unanimously competent in option 2.

All the above analyses point to one conclusion: women's portfolios are seen as demonstrating obvious features of competence in consistently higher numbers than men's portfolios, but in the 5B final, both male and female portfolio competency numbers are similar and the differences are the smallest of the year.

Competency Measures by Gender and Race in Option 2

The table below shows the overall and unanimous competency rates by racial group for which data exists, parsed by male and female, along each portfolio. The percentages are of each group, not of the general population. Most groups perform similarly. In fact, there are few differences in competency measures by race and gender, whether considering overall or unanimous competency. Whether male or female, students appear to perform similarly, with one or two exceptions.

OVERALL	5A Midterm	5A Final	5B Midterm	5B Final		UNANIMOUS	5A Midterm	5A Final	5B Midterm	5B Final
Females						**Females**				
APA	66.67%	100%	96.67%	96.67%		APA	46.67%	86.67%	86.67%	93.33%
Black	66.67%	100%	100%	100%		Black	33.33%	83.33%	83.33%	100%
Latinas	73.77%	100%	90.16%	96.72%		Latinas	59.02%	81.97%	85.25%	95.08%
White	78.95%	100%	89.47%	96.49%		White	57.89%	87.72%	87.72%	96.49%
Males						**Males**				
APA	73.33%	100%	93.33%	100%		APA	53.33%	66.67%	93.33%	93.33%
Black	100%	100%	66.67%	88.89%		Black	77.78%	88.89%	55.56%	77.78%
Latinos	60%	96%	88%	96%		Latinos	24.00%	68%	76.00%	96%
White	74.19%	100%	90.32%	96.77%		White	48.39%	80.65%	83.87%	96.77%

Table 21. The overall and unanimous competency numbers for option 2 students by gender and race.

Generally speaking, all gender-racial groups end up doing very well in Engl 5A, leaving with competency. In Engl 5B, all gender-racial groups continue to perform well in overall competency measures, except for Black males, who had 7.11% fewer competent portfolios than the next highest gender-racial group, Latinos.

As can be seen in the above table, the number of portfolios by Latino students that receive unanimous competency judgments was consistently lower than all other groups, except Blacks (in Engl 5B portfolios), particularly for the 5A midterm, with only 24% of the population receiving unanimous competency judgments. Black males received the fewest 5B final unanimous and overall competency ratings. In fact, in most cases all gender-racial groups achieved at least 93.33% overall and unanimous competency

measures in 5B final portfolios, except for Black males. Only 77.78% of the Black male population achieved a unanimous competency judgment on portfolios. Meanwhile, white males and females performed almost exactly identical, while Asian Pacific American males and females performed similarly too.

If the numbers in the overall competency table (the left side above) are an accurate measure of student writing competency in the program, then Latinos may start with more distance from the writing competencies judged in the FYW Program as passing or acceptable. This same group appears to make the most gains, since they finish only slightly behind in the 5A and 5B finals. The pattern of starting behind and having to gain more ground during the semester appears to be the pattern in both 5A and 5B for Latinos. The one group that seems anomalous is Black males. While they appear to do fine in Engl 5A, the group performs the worst of all groups in Engl 5B, although still finishing with high competency numbers (88.89%). This may suggest that the Engl 5B curriculum contains writing and reading competencies that are farther from those competencies with which Black males enter.

The unanimous competency measures (the right side of the table above) are perhaps more interesting. Readers that make up these ratings are outside readers who do not know the student in question, and they indicate how many portfolios show obvious markers of competency by outside readers. While they are informed readers, they do not have as much stake in the student's success as a teacher of record would. Predictably all the numbers are lower than overall competency measures, but the 5B final numbers, and to a lesser extent the 5A final numbers, are very close to each other, as the general population's competency numbers would suggest (see "Competency Numbers for the General Population" in this section above). Black males, however, have the biggest difference between overall and unanimous competency numbers (at 11.11%). Besides achieving the smallest number of unanimous competency judgments of all groups at 77.78%, Black males achieved the smallest number of overall competency judgments, with 88.89%.

By either overall or unanimous competency measures, the gender-racial groups that seem most at risk, even if only slightly, during both semesters of option 2 and at their ends are Latinos (and perhaps Latinas) and Black males.

4.4.2   Competency Measures for Option 1 (Engl 10 Students)

Competency Measures for Option 1's General Population

The portfolio overall competency measures for all students in option 1 show continual modest improvement. When tracking the number of student portfolios that received overall judgments of "competent" by two readers (either two out of two readers judge the portfolio a "C," or two out of three readers judge it a "C"), the number of competent portfolios between midterm and final improved over the course of the semester (Engl 10) by only 3.2%, as seen in the figure below. This is a significantly smaller gain in total numbers of overall competent portfolios from that observed in option 2 (see Section 4.4.1 above).
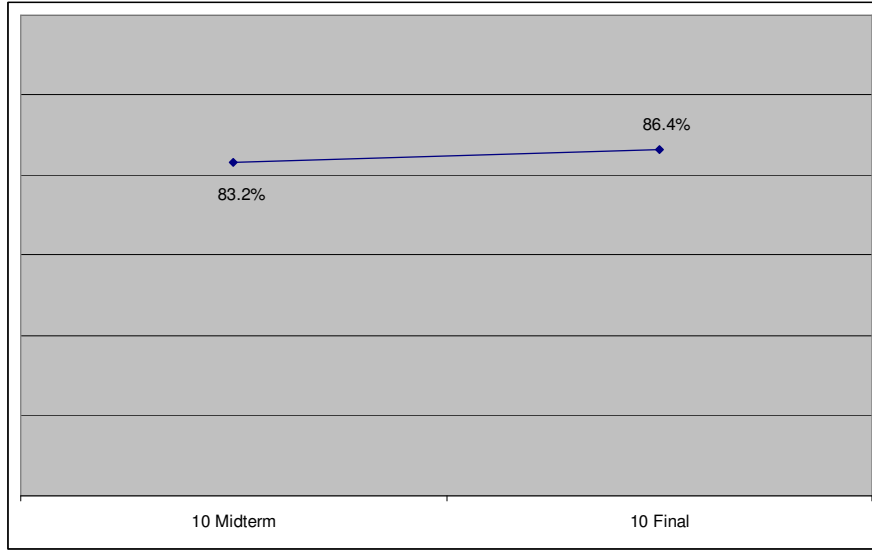
Figure 6. Overall competency rates for option 1 students in 2007-08 AY.

Taking just the two endpoints for each option (i.e., 5A midterm, 5B final, and 10 midterm and final), the difference in numbers of overall competent portfolios is dramatic. At the midpoint, 9.3% more (relatively) option 1 students are judged overall competent, while at the final portfolio, the end of both options, 10.2% more (relatively) option 2 students are judged overall competent. Thus when overall competency of both options are compared, more option 2 students make more gains in portfolios.

OVERALL

	Midterm	Final
Option 2	73.9%	96.6%
Option 1	83.2%	86.4%

Table 22. Comparison of overall competency rates at the endpoints for options 1 and 2 in 2007-08 AY.

While overall competency is high at both points in the 2007-08 AY for option 1 students, one could argue that these students, who self-selected the accelerated course, choose it because they feel (and were) already prepared for academy reading and writing. Thus the two endpoint percentages (Midterm and Final) only show an increase of 3.2%. The total ending number of competent portfolios is still quite high at 86.4%, although not as high as the option 2 students' ending overall competency rate of 96.6%. One way to read these numbers is that option 2, the stretch program, provides more adequate instruction and time for more of our students to succeed.

The number of option 1 student portfolios that received only unanimous competency ratings (i.e., both initial readers rated the portfolio a "C") changes in even less significant ways, moving up only 1.6% from midterm to final, as seen in the figure below.
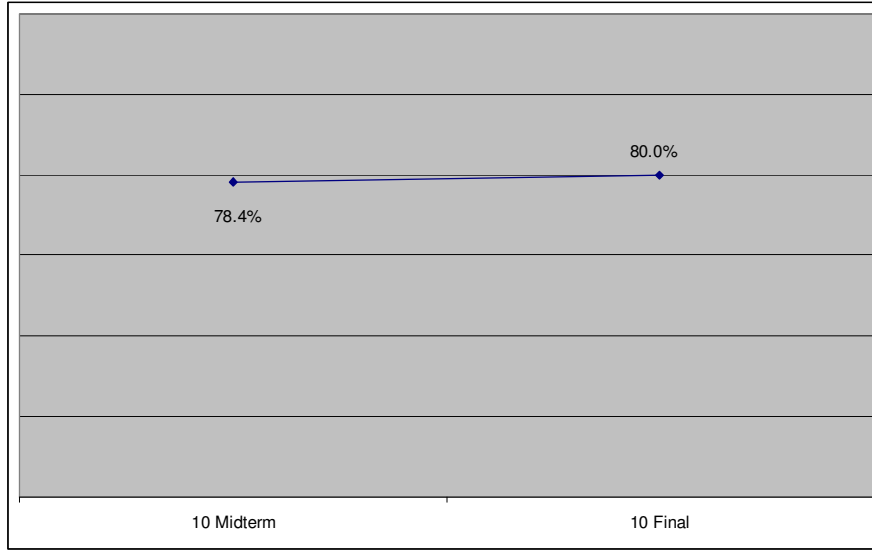
Figure 7. Unanimous competency rates for option 1 students in 2007-08 AY.

Compared to option 2 students, the unanimous competency rates are even more dramatic in difference. At the midpoint, 25.9% more (relatively) option 1 students are judged unanimously competent, while at the final portfolio, the end of both options, 15% more (relatively) option 2 students are judged unanimously competent. Thus when unanimous competency of both options are compared, more option 2 students make more gains in portfolios (see table below).

UNANINMOUS		
	Midterm	**Final**
Option 2	52.5%	95%
Option 1	78.4%	80%

Table 23. Comparison of unanimous competency rates at the endpoints for options 1 and 2 in 2007-08 AY.

The one curiosity in all competency measures, both in option 1 and 2, is how many portfolios received unanimous competency ratings at the final periods. Option 1 portfolios seem much closer (at 80%) to what might be expected to receive unanimous judgments of competence by outside readers. However, if our program is working correctly, then we should get high numbers like these at the end of each option. As mentioned in the Section 4.4.1 above, this phenomenon corroborates the independent portfolio numerical ratings discussed in Section 4.2 above, in which 0.0% of Engl 10 final portfolios were rated as poor quality overall (see Table 14 above). This means, that all those option 1 portfolios should be in the competent category. While the numerical ratings readers had no motivation to score any portfolio higher or lower, the teachers in the portfolio administrations during the semester arguably could have had some motivation to give most portfolios a "C," since that would shorten their time in the administration, and perhaps reduce the number of portfolios needing their third read at home afterword. Of course, this phenomenon is hard to know. Nevertheless, the

difference in the numerical ratings' translation to competency (100%) and the present unanimous competency rates (80%) is curious. If the sample in the numerical ratings had been larger, perhaps these two percentages would be closer.

Competency Measures by Gender

The overall competency measures by gender for option 1 show one important trend. Females outperform their male counterparts. The figure below traces the number of students by gender that received overall and unanimous competency ratings. Theoretically, if there were no significant differences by gender in option 1 competency rates, we should see the lines of growing numbers in the figure below bunched together by overall and unanimous ratings, instead the lines of growth are bunched by gender, with female students attaining higher numbers in both categories than males. In both cases (overall competency and unanimous competency) female students consistently are rated overall competent or unanimously competent in higher numbers at each of the four points in the 2007-08 AY. In fact, females are more often judged unanimously competent at both midterm and final than males are judged overall or unanimously competent (see the figure below).
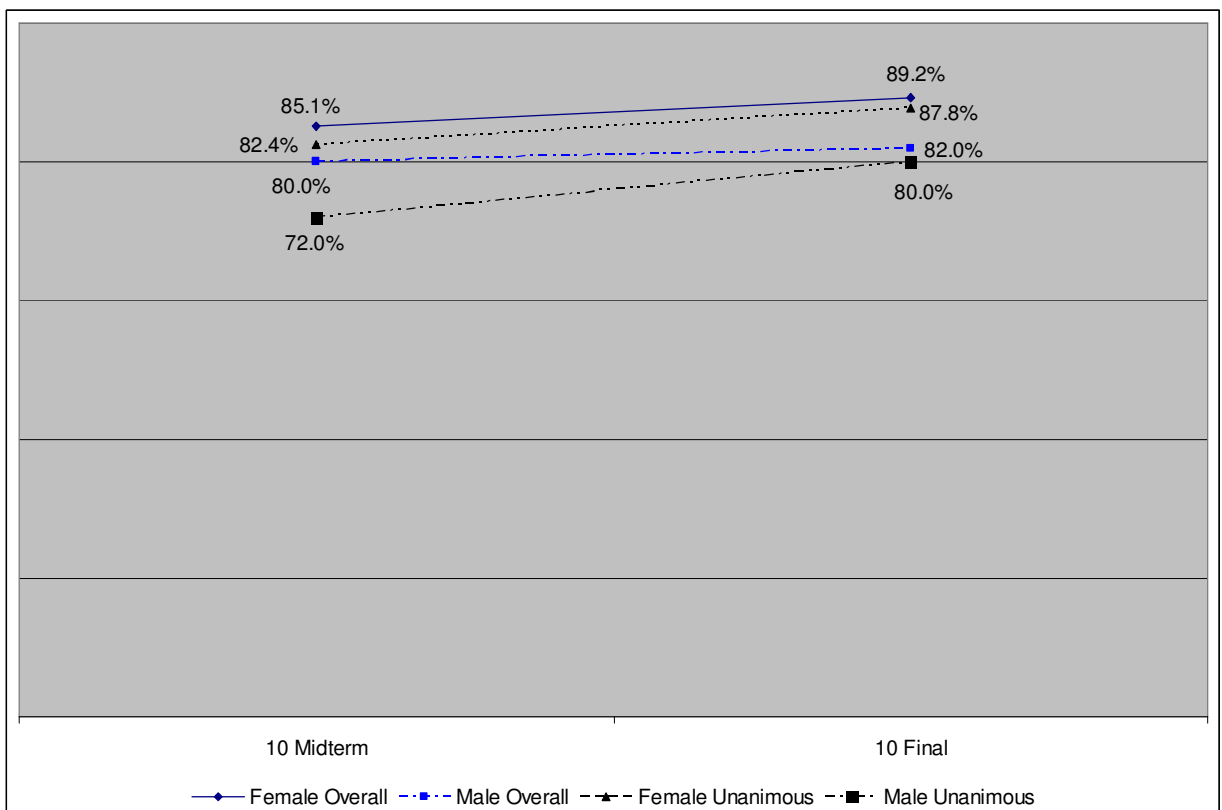
Figure 8. Overall and unanimous competency rates for option 1 students in 2007-08 AY.

Additionally, the four sets of ratings do not approach a merging point at 10 final, as they did in option 2's competency ratings at 5B final (see Figure 5 above). There is a 7.2% difference in overall competency rates and a 7.8% difference in unanimous competency.

However, males still show an overall competency of 82% by the end of option 1, while females make up the upper range of the number of overall competent portfolios with 89.2%. These gender differences in competency rates may suggest that there is a slight propensity for females to have academic reading and writing practices that come closer to the ones promoted in the program, which fits national trends. The table below compares the differences by gender of competency ratings for options 1 and 2 at their two endpoints (5A midterm, 5B final, and 10 midterm and final).

	Midterm	Final
Option 2		
Overall Competency	1.2%	0.5%
Unanimous Competency	9.4%	1.6%
Option 1		
Overall Competency	5.1%	7.2%
Unanimous Competency	10.4%	7.8%

Table 24. Differences between males and females in the total number of portfolios rated as generally and unanimously competent in option 1 and 2.

All differences in the table above favor females. Again, all the above analyses point to one conclusion about gender formations in option 1: women's portfolios are seen as demonstrating features of competence in consistently higher numbers than men's portfolios, whether parsed by overall or unanimous competency. There is a similar trend in option 2 portfolios, but much less significant, and this significance virtually disappears at option 2's final endpoint.

Competency Measures by Gender and Race

The table below shows the overall and unanimous competency rates by racial group for which data exists, parsed by male and female, along each portfolio in option 1. The percentages are of each group, not of the general population. The most obvious trends in overall competency rates, and to a lesser degree in unanimous competency rates, is that Asian Pacific American females and White males and females were judged competent in higher relative numbers at midterm than at final, so performance seems to have gone down for these groups. Meanwhile, Black males and females, and Latinos were judged competent in relatively higher numbers at the final than midterm (the opposite trend). Again, these are percentages of the groups in question.

OVERALL	10 Midterm	10 Final		UNANIMOUS	10 Midterm	10 Final
Females				**Females**		
APA	100%	94.74%		APA	94.74%	94.74%
Black	45.45%	72.73%		Black	45.45%	63.64%
Latinas	94.44%	94.44%		Latinas	88.89%	94.44%
White	91.30%	86.96%		White	91.30%	86.96%
Males				**Males**		
APA	64.29%	92.86%		APA	57.14%	92.9%
Black	80%	100%		Black	40%	100%
Latinos.	83.33%	72.22%		Latinos	77.78%	72.22%
White	100%	83.33%		White	100%	75%

Table 25. The overall and unanimous competency numbers for option 1 students by gender and race.

The best performing gender-racial groups, those with the highest ending percentage of overall competent portfolios, were Black males, Asian Pacific females, and Latinas.

Note: The sample size for Black males only numbered 5, making any conclusions about this group somewhat dubious. If we group both male and female Blacks together, their overall percentages drop under Whites to a competency rate of 56.25% at midterm and 81.25% at final (see Table 26 below).

From the table above, the two groups most in jeopardy seem to be Latinos and Black females in option 1, a finding not seen in the analysis of option 2's competency rates discussed earlier (see Section 4.4.1 above). Both groups have the lowest overall competency percentages of any gender-racial group. Each gender-racial group was judged to have more than 10% fewer overall competent portfolios than the next lowest gender-racial group, White males (Black females difference was 10.6% fewer, while Latinos was 11.11%).

White females, and to a lesser degree White males, also show an interesting trend. While the overall and unanimous competency rates of these two groups dropped from midterm to final, all competent portfolios from White females were unanimously judged as such, while only one portfolio from a White male received a third reading and judged not competent. Thus virtually all portfolios from White students in option 1 were unanimous decisions and judged competent, a total of 94.29% at midterm and 85.71% at final (see table below).

When males and females in each racial group are combined, similar, but more stark, formations occur. Blacks and Latinos have more trouble achieving competency in option 1, but show virtually no difference in option 2 from any other racial group.

OVERALL (Opt. 1)			OVERALL (Opt. 2)		
	10 Midterm	10 Final		5A Midterm	10 Final
APA	84.85%	93.94%	APA	68.89%	97.78%
Black	56.25%	81.25%	Black	86.67%	93.33%
Latino/a.	88.89%	83.33%	Latino/a	69.77%	96.51%
White	94.29%	85.71%	White	77.27%	96.59%

Table 26. The overall competency numbers for option 1 students by race.

As can be seen in Table 25 above, the number of option 1 portfolios by Black female and Latino students that receive unanimous competency judgments was consistently lower than all other groups, except for Asian Pacific American males at midterm. Black females received the fewest final unanimous ratings, along with Latinos. Barring Black females and Latinos, all gender-racial groups achieved at least 75% overall and unanimous competency measures in final portfolios, usually higher. However, when considering only racial groups and not gender (such as in the above Table 26), Blacks and Latinos/as again show fewer relative competent portfolios in option 1 than their peers.

The racial group comparison above also highlights the fact that, like option 2, the racial groups that seem to have the most trouble attaining the same relative level of competent portfolios are Blacks and Latinos/as. Meanwhile, these same groups do much better, in fact arguably comparable with their peers, in option 2, but perform lower in option 1. These findings may suggest that the Engl 10 curriculum (option 1) contains writing and reading competencies that are farther from those competencies with which Blacks and Latinos/as enter the program, and/or Blacks and Latinos/as who enter option 1 may not be making the choice for the same reasons as others.

These same issues, i.e., fewer competent portfolios relatively speaking, are found in the unanimous competency measures (the right side of Table 25) also. Black females and Latinos have fewer unanimously competent portfolios than other groups (Black females with 63.64% and Latinos with 72.22%).

By either overall or unanimous competency measures, the gender-racial groups that seem most at risk during option 1 are Latinos and Black females, and more likely all Blacks.

4.5 Teacher Commenting Data

The second source of direct evidence is a more selective batch of random student papers with teacher comments on them from a random sampling of Spring 2008 midterm portfolios in Engl 5A, 5B, and 10. The teacher comments on these papers were read and coded to understand better the kind of direct instruction students receive on their written work in the program. These comments are direct measures not of student learning but of teaching in our program and helps us understand better the context of student learning in the FYW Program. Since one of the FYW Program's mission statement directives is to train and develop professionally teachers (see the second bullet item in Section 2.1 above), and since the effectiveness of teachers' comments on student writing is vital to

the success of our undergraduates' writing practices, gathering data on teacher commenting practices is direct evidence of our program's success and limitations, particularly one of its mission statements, even if it is not direct evidence of student learning along our program outcomes. Given this direct link to the context of learning and writing for the program's students, this data is considered direct evidence in this program assessment report.

4.5.1   Teacher Commenting Methods and Procedures

During the Spring 2008 midterm portfolio reading sessions, the graduate students from Dr. Asao B. Inoue's Engl 281 seminar (most of whom were also teachers teaching in the program) collected 120 random student papers that were commented on by roughly 30 teachers. The papers were gathered and copied from midterm portfolios during the portfolio sessions where all teachers in the program read and judged portfolios. Dr. Inoue and his class read, coded, and analyzed the comments on these drafts after studying extensively the literature and research on teacher commenting practices and error in student writing in the field (see Section 10.14 below for a full bibliography of research and scholarship read and discussed before engaging in this project).

During several class sessions, eleven readers were trained on how to read teacher comments and code them in identical spreadsheets, which were then gathered by Dr. Inoue and combined to make a master set of data. The coding of papers took approximately one week to complete and was done independently, but guided by Dr. Inoue via email and class discussions, particularly on difficult papers/comments.

All papers used had identifying student and teacher information taken off or blacked out. Each paper was then identified by a number ranging from 001 to 1,000, each reader getting approximately 10-12 papers labeled in different groups of 100. Additionally, when initially gathered, teachers were asked to put five bits of biographical information on each paper to help in our analyses:

- Commenting teacher's gender (self-identified)

- Commenting teacher's racial designation (self-identified)

- Commenting teacher's semesters of experience (self-identified)

- Student-Writer's gender (teacher identified)

- Student-Writer's racial designation (teacher identified)

4.5.2   Coding of Teacher Comments

The coding of data in teacher comments on the midterm portfolio papers was done in three ways, and are described below:

- **Kinds of Markings and General Orientation**: These data coded the purpose of each comment in a paper. Was it a comment or marking about ideas,

grammar, typos, or was it explorative and open-ended? How many comments referenced the textbook or discussed rhetorical features of the student's text? This portion of the data was coded along the following 14 dimensions: grammar, typo/error, mystery, format, style, topic/prompt, idea/revision, directive, open ended, reference to other texts, rhetorical, open question, closed question, and specific ideas in the text.

- **Quality of Comments**: These data coded the quality and nature of comments in a paper, particularly in terms of the likely response or reception students would have when reading the comment. For instance, was the comment a positive one, affirming the student or text, negative, or ambiguous? Was the comment a question, statement, or fragment? This portion of the data was coded along six dimensions: positive, negative, ambiguous, questions, statements, and fragments.

- **Numerical Counting of Particular Comments**: This data counted words in the following 3 kinds of comments: (1) annotations in the margins of student texts, (2) endnotes or headnotes written to students by teachers, and (3) the presence of a grade on the draft.

NOTE: Many comments in the sample were counted more than once if they fit more than one of the above categories. For instance, a comment that was an ambiguous question was marked both as "ambiguous" and as a "question."

4.5.3 Teacher Commenting Sample Size

There were 120 student papers with comments on them from approximately 30 total teachers, teaching in all three courses of the FYW Program. The following table provides the number of papers commented on by each group of teachers, delineated by gender-race:

COMMENTING TEACHERS

Race / Gender	# of Papers	% of Total
White Females	62	58.49%
White Males	25	23.58%
Latinas	8	7.55%
Latinos	4	3.77%
Other Females	7	6.60%
Other Males	0	0.00%

Table 27. Sample size of teachers who commented on student papers by gender-race.

Like the FYW Program generally, most of the participating teachers were White females. In the table below, the number of student papers used in the sample is identified by gender-racial group of the students whose papers were coded:

STUDENT-WRITERS

	# of Papers	% of Total
Females	**60**	**55.05%**
APA	11	10.09%
Black	2	1.83%
Latina	17	15.60%
White	20	18.35%
Males	**49**	**44.95%**
APA	9	8.26%
Black	3	2.75
Latino	14	12.84%
White	12	11.01%
Not Reporting Race	30	27.52%
Not Reporting Gender	9	8.26%

Table 28. Sample size of students participating in the teacher commenting data by gender-race.

In both respects, our random sample matches closely the demographics of the FYW Program and its undergraduate students.

4.6   Teacher Commenting Data Analysis

The following are some of the analyses that have direct bearing on the assessment of the FYW Program and the validation of the DSP decisions made in the program. These analyses on teacher commenting practices are divided into the three ways comments were measured on the student papers: (1) kinds of markings and general orientation, (2) quality of comments, and (3) numerical counting of particular comments.

Kinds of Markings and General Orientation

The first way the program gathered teacher commenting data was by kinds of markings. The goal was to understand exactly what kinds of textual features were most commented on? Who received more comments concerning particular features?

While the average number of comments in each category in Table 30 below may not tell us directly about effective or detrimental commenting practices, they do give the program places to do ongoing inquiry and training with teachers. Table 30 below shows the codes counted for data along kinds and general orientation of comments. If instruction in the FYW Program is in part delivered through teachers' comments on student drafts, and students' success is linked to this instruction, then it appears that most of the direct instruction on student writing falls into the category of "grammar," with an overall average of 9.37 comments per paper. While grammar is not a program goal, but is a minor program learning outcome, this finding is curious. However, the typical paper was 4-5 pages long, making this average number only about 2 comments on grammar per

page of any draft. At its face, this commenting practice doesn't seem unusual or concerning, unless we parse by gender-race (discussed below).

The frequency of grammar comments on writing by Latinos/as and Black males average the highest, at 20.33, 12.27, and 21.50 respectively. Additionally, papers by Black males and females and Latinas received the fewest average comments on ideas in their papers and revision suggestions (1.67, 0, 2.0 respectively). When you put these two practices together, the general effect on Black males and females and Latinas is that writing instructions appears to be mostly concerned with correcting grammar. This is at odds with the program outcomes since grammar is only one of eight program outcomes. At their face, these findings seem to suggest one source of the lower numerical ratings and lower competency ratings of Latinos/as and Blacks in the program already discussed in previous sections. Generally speaking, Blacks and Latinos/as seem to get different direct instruction on their writing than other racial groups.

The median of the average overall comments per paper is 3.02, which means half of the overall averages rests under this number and half over it. Seeing which categories fall under and over the median may tell us something about the priorities of teachers when commenting on papers, and whether particular gender-racial groups get differential treatment by having an unusual amount of certain kinds of comments on their papers. The table below shows the median of overall averages and where each category falls relative to that median.

Comment Category	Ave./Paper
Grammar	9.37
Directive Comments	4.66
Specific Ideas in Paper	3.75
Style	3.68
Typos/Errors	3.09
Ideas/Revision	3.07
Rhetorical	3.05
Median	**3.02**
Open-Ended Questions	3.00
Mystery	2.97
Format	2.94
Closed Questions	2.77
Open Comments	2.47
Reference to Text	1.91
Topic/Prompt	1.81

Table 29. Median of overall averages and overall averages of kinds of comments for all students.

One way to understand the above table is to consider it a map of the priorities of the program's teachers. Direct instruction on writing in the FYW Program, then, seems to be occurring through commenting practices that fall above the median. Grammar is what our teachers care most about. Even when the three highest averages (Latinas and males and Black males) are not averaged in, the overall average grammar comments per paper is

6.13, making it still higher by almost two points than the next highest category. Directive comments (comments that tell a writer what to do most directly) are the preferred method of delivering writing instruction on papers. Additionally, connecting comments to specific passages and ideas in papers is a practice high on the program's teachers' lists. Least concerning to teachers is guiding students in following or engaging the topic at hand or the assignment prompt, as is the commenting method of pointing students back to their textbooks for help in their writing.

These findings suggest two important things about the direct instruction on student writing in the program:

- correctness and grammar are high priorities for teachers, while engaging the given prompt either is not important or needs little attention in papers;

- teachers prefer to tell students directly what to do in their writing and connect many of their comments to specific places in the student's text, meanwhile referencing the program's textbooks is not a significant priority.

Another way to understand the table is to consider it a map of what our students need to work on most in their writing, assuming that teachers are responding/commenting in ways that help their students the most. The high instance of grammar, in this view, simply means that our students need more direct instruction on this aspect, and teachers are giving it to them. Marking grammar is a practice our teachers do over twice as much as the next highest category. Conversely, the inattention to the prompt and textbooks in commenting practices may suggest that our program's curricula and teachers' other instruction are working to guide students successfully in engaging the program's universal writing prompts and applying most of the important ideas in the program's textbooks.

As seen in Table 31 below, when viewing the data by gender alone, there are few significant differences. In fact, five categories mentioned in the above analyses, each fall in the same places relative to both medians (male and female). Comments on grammar, directive comments, and those linked to specific ideas in the student text are above both medians, while comments that reference the textbooks and discuss the assignment topic or prompt are under the median. Generally speaking, males have almost one more comment per paper than females, as the medians in the table below illustrate; however, when all the categories are averaged, a smaller margin shows up (a difference of .14). Gender of student-writers alone does not seem to affect the FYW Program's commenting practices as a whole.

All Teachers' Comments to   **Average Per Paper**

	Grammar	typo/error	Mystery	Format	Style	Topic/Prompt	Idea/Rev.	Directive	Open	Ref to Text	Rhetorical	Open ?s	Closed ?s	Specific Ideas
White Females	6.71	3.00	2.60	2.40	3.71	1.25	3.18	5.25	4.71	2.23	3.20	3.08	2.77	5.67
White Males	5.50	3.50	3.33	1.20	1.60	1.00	3.13	3.78	2.00	1.00	4.50	1.20	2.86	1.00
Latinas	20.33	2.25	2.33	4.86	8.14	2.33	2.00	5.29	1.79	1.70	2.00	3.55	2.17	2.75
Latinos	12.27	4.17	2.67	4.14	5.33	1.33	4.33	6.60	2.00	3.25	2.57	3.14	3.10	2.00
Asian PA Females	11.44	1.80	3.75	2.00	2.20	3.50	3.00	4.22	3.25	2.25	3.00	2.00	2.17	2.33
Asian PA Males	4.00	4.33	1.67	4.40	2.80	2.33	4.00	3.71	2.00	1.50	2.00	1.80	2.33	5.50
Black Females	3.00	na	1.00	na	na	na	na	2.50	2.00	na	5.00	1.00	2.50	1.00
Black Males	21.50	3.00	10.00	na	4.00	1.50	1.67	4.67	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	5.00
ALL	**9.37**	**3.09**	**2.97**	**2.94**	**3.68**	**1.81**	**3.07**	**4.66**	**2.47**	**1.91**	**3.05**	**3.00**	**2.77**	**3.75**

Table 30. Averages of all teachers' comments on student papers along dimensions of kind.

All Teachers' Comments to   **Average Per Paper**

	Grammar	typo/error	Mystery	Format	Style	Topic/Prompt	Idea/Rev.	Directive	Open	Ref to Text	Rhetorical	Open ?s	Closed ?s	Specific Ideas
Females	10.37	2.35	2.42	3.09	4.69	2.36	2.73	4.31	2.94	2.06	3.30	2.41	2.40	2.94
Males	10.82	3.75	4.42	3.25	3.43	1.54	3.28	4.69	1.75	1.69	2.77	2.04	2.32	3.38

Female Median	2.83	Female Average	3.45
Male Median	3.26	Male Average	3.51

Table 31. Averages of all teachers' comments on student papers along dimensions of kind and by gender.

Quality of Comments

The goal for gathering quality of comments data was to understand generally how students received the comments they got, or how teachers tended to react to particular student papers. Do teachers react more positively to certain gender-racial groups writing? Do teachers offer particular forms of commenting more than others, statements rather than questions? Gathering this data provides ways to understand the reception of both student writing (directly) and teacher's comments (indirectly).

The data gathered that measured the quality of comments, or the effect a particularly comment most likely had on a student, are seen below. The table can be split into two sets of columns, the first three, tabulating the average comments per paper by the tone of the comment (positive, negative, or ambiguous), and the second set of three columns, which tabulates comments by their methods or rhetorical delivery (questions, full statements, or fragments) that affect the way students read and understand such comments. Overall, ambiguous comments, ones that could be negative or positive, and full statements, were by far the largest categories of comments by quality. The high frequency of ambiguous comments could be a practice of contextually bound commenting, making it difficult for the eleven coders of comments to determine the exact nature of these comments. In some cases, perhaps students would sense the tone of these comments, while coders cannot.

Explicitly positive comments, however, and those formed in fragments to students were generally the lowest categories. The low frequency of positive comments may be a weakness in the practices of the department. Additionally, the high frequency of statements (average of 7.8), particularly compared to the relatively lower instances of questions (average of 4.79), may contribute negatively to students' revision practices. Generally, positive comments, but especially questions, help students rethink their drafts and create self-reflective writing practices, ones the program promotes. By this data, these two practices might be improved.

All Teachers' Comments to	Average Per Paper					
	Positive	Negative	Ambig.	Quest.	Statement	Fragments
White Females	2.94	2.33	9.07	5.06	10.50	3.21
White Males	2.10	1.80	5.29	3.67	7.30	2.14
Latinas	2.07	2.40	4.94	5.00	7.11	3.86
Latinos	4.00	5.50	9.00	5.00	6.92	4.33
Asian Pacific Am. Females	2.44	2.00	7.71	3.60	8.80	3.75
Asian Pacific Am. Males	2.29	2.50	10.00	3.00	6.38	5.50
Black Females	3.50	3.50	3.50	2.50	7.00	1.50
Black Males	3.00	10.00	12.00	3.67	5.33	8.00
All Females	2.74	2.56	6.31	4.04	8.35	3.08
All Males	2.85	4.95	9.07	3.83	6.48	4.99
ALL	**2.75**	**2.93**	**7.87**	**4.79**	**7.80**	**3.79**
All Female Median	2.69	2.37	6.33	4.30	7.96	3.48
All Male Median	2.64	4.00	9.50	3.67	6.65	4.92
All Median	2.69	2.45	8.36	3.67	7.06	3.80

Table 32. Averages of all teachers' comments on student papers along quality of comments.

When parsed by gender, all patterns mentioned above remain, with males (again) receiving more comments per paper in all but two categories, comments made in the form of questions (with a small difference of .21) and in the form of statements (with a difference of 1.87). Thus gender alone has little effect on the quality of teachers' commenting practices.

When parsed by gender-race, the qualities in teacher commenting practices shift a bit. Black males and females and Latinos, have the most positive comments per paper on average than any other group (3.00, 3.50, and 4.00 respectively). These numbers are above all averages and medians. However, all males, but particularly Black males, received more ambiguous comments than any other group, at 12.00 per paper on average, which is again above all medians and averages. Meanwhile White females, the most successful group in the program by all accounts, received the most comments delivered as full statements (10.50 per paper), again well above all medians and averages. White females also received the fewest negative comments per paper (2.33), which is below all averages and medians. The only group who averaged fewer negative comments was White males at 1.80.

The one pattern that seems striking in the quality of comments of the program seems to be that Black males receive the most negative and ambiguous comments and the most comments in the form of fragments, while the highest performing group, White females, receives the most questions and full statements in comments. Black males receive fewer questions (below all averages and at the male and overall medians) and fewer full statements (below all averages and medians) in their papers. This pattern suggests that teachers are engaged with White female writing more so than other racial-gender groups, and least engaged with Black male writing. Considering that most of the program's teachers are White females (58.49%), this pattern is not surprising.

Generally it is agreed that comments formed as questions and full statements help students with their writing more than fragments and directives, and they signal a reader who is engaged with the writing as ideas, not as a text of errors to be simply corrected. The pattern in quality of comments just mentioned suggests one source of Blacks performance problems in our program, and perhaps one source of White female's success, although textual and other analyses outside the scope of this project would need to be conducted to confirm this hypothesis.

While the competency measures (discussed earlier) do suggest that Black males would receive more negative comments, and the comments coded by kind (discussed above in this section) also suggest that Black males would receive more fragmentary commenting since they appear to have more grammar issues in their writing (this is often how teachers comment on grammar issues), there appears to be a deadly cycle. Black males perform poorly, so they receive negative and fragmentary comments that do not engage with the student-writers' ideas, instead focusing on grammar, reducing their confidence levels about their writing and moving their attention away from the primary outcomes in the program, which then makes it harder to meet those same program outcomes and reflect effectively in their portfolios.

Numerical Counting of Particular Comments

The third way the teacher comments were coded was in raw counts of particular kinds of comments, namely, all annotation in the margins of student drafts, the endnote or head note, and the presence of a grade. From these tabulations, the goal was two-fold: first, to understand the general depth and scope of commenting practices on papers. Do teachers generally comment a lot in the margins, or do they reserve most of their comments for the endnote or head note? Second, the project inquired in a simple way into the grading practices of teachers. Do they grade early or developing drafts?

The first inquiry provides a general understanding of the quality of the other two ways we coded data (discussed above). In what overall commenting context should we consider, for instance, that papers from Black males received on average 21.50 comments about grammar and 1.67 comments about ideas and revisions? The second inquiry is important because the overwhelming consensus in the literature on grading writing concludes that grades are detrimental to student growth in writing, especially grades that are put on early or developing drafts. These numbers might provide additional context for commenting practices.

As Table 33 below shows, teachers appear to comment in adequate depth in papers. There are on average 7.13 words per marginal comment and 76.65 words per endnote. To give a reference, the number words in this sentence is 20, and the number in this paragraph is 95. Females, however, generally average more comments received overall on their drafts, more words per marginal annotations (7.75) and more words in endnotes (65.31), but the differences are close enough to be considered negligible. Meanwhile, most papers do not have grades on them (only 30 of the 106).

All Teachers' Comments to

	Annotat.	Endnote	Grade Present?
White Females	8.37	87.40	4
White Males	4.94	100.18	3
Latinas	11.21	68.95	3
Latinos	4.86	63.85	4
Asian Pacific Am. Females	7.63	91.91	6
Asian Pacific Am. Males	4.76	43.57	no data
Black Females	3.80	13.00	1
Black Males	9.10	37.33	1
All Females	7.75	65.31	15
All Males	5.91	61.23	10
ALL	**7.13**	**76.65**	**30**
Female Median	8.00	78.17	3.5
Male Median	4.90	53.71	3.0
All Median	6.28	66.40	3.0

Table 33. Averages of all teachers' comments on student papers along three particular counts.

The following gender-racial patterns seem most dramatic:

- Black females and males receive the shortest endnote comments (13.00 and 37.33, respectively), which is below both medians (78.17 and 53.17, respectively);

- White males, Asian Pacific Females, and White females received the most words per endnote (at 100.18, 91.91, 87.40, respectively);

- Black females receive the shortest average marginal annotation (3.80), less than half the median for females generally (8.00);

- Black males receive the second highest number of words per annotation at 9.10, which is almost twice the male median, and above all medians.

Again, the most stark patterns occur along racial formations, primarily Blacks and Whites. If we think of annotations as the most direct dialogue with the student on their texts and ideas, then most gender-racial groups receive similar commenting in depth and scope, except for Latinas and Black males, who receive more annotations per paper. If an endnote is considered the way a teacher directs or instructs on where a developing draft should go next or provides broader discussion of the paper in question, then Black males and females and Asian Pacific American males receive the least direction, with all three groups receiving endnotes well under all medians and averages, but especially Black females, who received an unacceptable average of 13 words per endnote.

From all the commenting data, it appears that there are mixed observations. What is not mixed is the clear distinction in commenting practices of the program's teachers by gender and gender-racial groups in some cases. Below are profiles of the two most dichotomous gender-racial student groups (Whites and Blacks), the ones who form the extreme ranges of commenting practices in terms of length and depth in the FYW Program.

COMMENTARY ON **Black Student Papers**		**Ave./ Paper**	**Overall Ave.**	**Overall Median**	**White Student Papers**	**Ave./ Paper**	**Overall Ave.**	**Overall Median**
KIND								
Most Concern	Grammar	**12.25**	9.37	9.08	Grammar	**6.11**	9.37	9.08
Fewest Concern	Ref To Text	**1.00**	1.91	1.70	Topic/Prompt	**1.13**	1.81	1.50
Those Above Ave. and Medians	Mystery	**5.50**	2.97	2.63	Open	**3.36**	2.47	2.00
Those Below Ave and Medians	Ideas/Rev	**1.67**	3.07	3.13	Format	**1.80**	2.94	3.27
Never Concerns	Format	**0.00**	2.94	3.27	N/A	**-**	-	-
NUMBERS								
Words Per Annotation		**6.45**	7.13	6.28		**6.65**	7.13	6.28
Words Per Endnote		**25.17**	76.65	66.40		**93.79**	76.65	66.40
QUALITY								
Frequency Of Positive Comments		**3.25**	2.75	2.69		**2.52**	2.75	2.69
Frequency Of Negative Comments		**6.75**	2.93	2.45		**2.07**	2.93	2.45
Most Comments Were	Statements	**6.17**	7.80	7.06	Statements	**8.90**	7.80	7.06

Table 34. Portraits of Teacher Comments on African American and White Student Papers.

In a nutshell, these two portraits suggest the main findings about student learning and the direct teaching of writing in the FYW Program. Most comments on papers in both racial groups concern grammar issues; however, the frequency of grammar comments in papers written by Blacks is over twice that of papers by Whites, and above the average and median of the overall population. The most concerning, or comment-worthy, aspect of papers written by Blacks is mysterious – that is, it was unclear by coders to what these marks referred; however comments that discuss "style" are next highest in frequency (not noted in the table above). In papers by White students, the most concerning aspect is open-ended questions, which typically deal with the content and ideas of the paper and are generative/formative in nature. These comments are also above the averages and medians of the overall population. Format and ideas concerning revision and rethinking papers are never or rarely discussed in papers by Blacks, while format is only rarely discussed in papers by Whites.

The biggest discrepancy seen in the data above is in the number of words per endnote. Blacks received the shortest endnotes, while Whites received the longest of all gender-racial groups, and in the overall population. The ratio of positive to negative comments is also dramatically imbalanced. Whites have a near even balance, with a few more positive comments per paper, while Blacks receive over twice as many negative comments as positive ones per paper.

These portraits suggest why we might find Blacks (and in some cases Latinos/as) making fewer gains in portfolios and showing small overall progress in competency rates. While some of these numbers may be due to teachers adjusting their commenting styles to individual students and their writing needs, it appears the program should look into and address explicitly the features of African American (and to a lesser extent Latinos/as) student writing in our program. The apparent focus on grammar and mysterious marks, and the avoidance of content, format issues, and ideas in African American student papers seems suspicious, particularly when compared to comments on White student papers that appear almost opposite in quantity and quality.

5   Indirect Measures

During 2007-08 AY the FYW Program gathered indirect evidence of student learning, data from entry and exit surveys in all courses. These surveys collected biographical information and information on student's sense of placement satisfaction and placement accuracy. Additionally, the assessment coordinator gathered enrollment and grade data from the institution to compare to the findings in the surveys, particularly student satisfaction and accuracy.

5.1   Entry and Exit Surveys

Each semester during the 2007-08 AY, the FYW Program administers semi-anonymous, and voluntary surveys, with only student ID numbers on the surveys for tracking purposes, in classrooms (see Section 10.12 for an example of the surveys). While during the 2007-08 AY, the entry surveys were completed during weeks 6-8, starting in the Fall of 2008, surveys are completed during the first two to three weeks of each semester, and

the last two weeks of the semester. While the first year's entry surveys were given earlier than all subsequent ones, the difference in timeframe is only 2-3 weeks, but doing the entry surveys at a truer entry is preferable.

NOTE: After the 2007-08 AY, all surveys are conducted online, through http://www.esurveyspro.com/. While still semi-anonymous, asking for students to input their student ID numbers, survey data are disconnected from the ID numbers, the teacher and her/his classroom.

The entry surveys were administered in all Engl 5A, 5B, and 10 courses, with 10 courses being added to the administrations during the Spring 2008 semester. The following is a list of the data gathered from the surveys:

Question/Data	Collected In	
Student ID Number	All	
Gender	5A / 10 Entry	
Racial Designation	5A / 10 Entry	
Home Languages	5A / 10 Entry	
Level of Parent Schooling	5A / 10 Entry	
High School Last Attend.	5A / 10 Entry	
Zip Code of Residence	5A / 10 Entry	
Rate: DSP Descriptions Helpfulness	5A / 10 Entry	Added in Fall 2008
Rate: Brochure Quest. Helpfulness	5A / 10 Entry	Added in Fall 2008
Rate: Pace of Course Helpfulness	5A / 10 Entry	Added in Fall 2008
Rate: Councilor Helpfulness	5A / 10 Entry	Added in Fall 2008
Rate: Dog Days Orient. Helpfulness	5A / 10 Entry	Added in Fall 2008
Rate: EPT Score Helpfulness	5A / 10 Entry	Added in Fall 2008
Rate: High School Grades Helpfulness	5A / 10 Entry	Added in Fall 2008
Rate: Literacy Confidence Helpfulness	5A / 10 Entry	Added in Fall 2008
Rate: Time in Option Helpfulness	5A / 10 Entry	Added in Fall 2008
Identify Satisfaction Level	All	
Identify Placement Accuracy Level	All	

Table 35. Entry and exit survey data gathered in all surveys.

The question concerning satisfaction levels is articulated as:

Select the one statement below that most matches your current feelings about this class.

- I am not satisfied with my decision to take this course (my self-placement).

- I am only partially satisfied with my decision to take this course (my self-placement).

- I am mostly satisfied with my decision to take this course (my self-placement).

- I am completely satisfied with my decision to take this course (my self-placement).

The question concerning placement accuracy is articulated as:

Select the one statement below that most matches your current feelings about this class.

- I did not make an accurate or correct placement decision to take this class.

- I am not sure if I made an accurate or correct placement decision to take this class.

- I made an accurate or correct placement decision to take this class.

5.1.1   Survey Methods and Procedures

In the 2007-08 AY, each survey was administered in all classes by teachers of the courses. The survey itself explains the confidentiality of the data, and that teachers do not get class data back, only program data. Additionally, the surveys were administered before any grades on portfolios or courses were provided to students. In the fall semester, we asked all teachers to code the data for us in identical spreadsheets, giving everyone written instructions, and for those not familiar with Excel or with limited access to a computer, the program administrative assistant, Nyxy Gee, completed the data entry for them. Because this turned out to be a problem in a number of ways, compromising the accuracy and attainment of the data, in the Spring semester, we asked all teachers to turn in the surveys to the administrative assistant to do the data entry herself.

Again because of concerns about human error in data entry, teachers' abilities to promptly return surveys, and teachers administering the semi-anonymous surveys in classrooms, beginning in the 2008-09 AY, all surveys are administered online at http://www.esurveyspro.com. Teachers provide a URL to their students, and students complete them outside of class.

The data for the surveys was given to IRAP for analysis and returned to the FYW Program Assessment Coordinator, Asao B. Inoue, who then did his own analysis on the data for this report.

5.1.2   Survey Sample Size

The size of the sample of each survey used for this report is seen in the table below. The samples are not full program numbers because we could only use those data that were complete and for the full year (in the case of Engl 5A and 5B), since we are interested in longitudinal findings. However, IRAP has confirmed that the data is representative of the university population generally and the FYW Program (First year students population) numbers. The AY totals below in parentheses are group totals, while the "% of Total Enrollment" percentages are percentages of the total enrollment of that group of students in the program during the 2007-08 AY.

	N (AY Total)	% of Total Enrollment
Option 2: Engl 5A / 5B	**236 (924)**	**25.54%**
APA	45 (345)	13.0%
Black	15 (142)	10.6%
Latinos/as	85 (658)	12.9%
White	87 (387)	22.5%
All Female	155 (742)	20.9%
All Male	81 (482)	16.8%
Option 1: Engl 10	**125 (424)**	**29.48%**
APA	33 (189)	17.5%
Black	16 (129)	12.4%
Latinos/as	36 (496)	07.3%
White	35 (298)	11.7%
All Female	74 (747)	09.9%
All Male	50 (412)	12.1%

Table 36. Sample size for entry and exit surveys in all FYW Program courses.

NOTE: The AY total enrollment indicated above in parenthesis is not the total enrollment in the courses listed for a number of reasons. First, in the option 1, half of the students surveyed have not finished the program, taking Engl 5A in the Spring. The number used above is the number of Engl 5B enrollments in Spring of 2008, which would be a close indicator of the total number of students eligible to complete the entire option in the 2007-08 AY. However, the enrollment for Fall 2007 Engl 5A could be used also (at 1066). Second, the total enrollment for option 2 students is only Spring 2008 surveys, because the present survey was not administered in Engl 10 courses until then.

The numbers above do not account for the small number of Native Americans, nor the unidentified students.

The percentage of total enrollment indicated in the far right column is calculated by the group indicated, so it is a percentage of the sampled group relative to itself, not the whole program's population. For instance, we were only able to gather random data from 7.3% and 9.9% of the Latinos/as and females (respectively) in option 1, making these groups the most vulnerable to unclear or uncertain conclusions from the data. Conversely, groups in option 2 have more representative sampling.

5.2 Entry and Exit Survey Data

Like the portfolio competency measures and the numerical ratings on portfolios (discussed in earlier sections of this report), the data and analyses in this section on the entry and exit surveys are delineated by the two DSP options. In both sections below, survey data, primarily the last two questions, satisfaction levels in the course chosen and

the felt placement accuracy, are discussed longitudinally. This means, in the case of the data for option 2 students, the data reflects how the same group of students answered these two questions on surveys over the AY (from Fall 2007 to Spring 2008). In the case of Engl 10 survey results, the data is for Spring 2008 only.

5.2.1   Survey Data for Option 2

Satisfaction Levels

As described in Section 5.1 above, the satisfaction levels are identified by four statements that rate the student's felt sense of satisfaction in the course. This data is meant to show how satisfied students feel about their DSP decision. The survey responses equate to a linear scale: not satisfied, somewhat satisfied, mostly satisfied, and completely satisfied. Below shows the percentages of students who responded to the satisfaction level question with mostly or completely satisfied.

MOSTLY OR COMPETELY SATISFIED

	N	5A Entry	5A Exit	5B Entry	5B Exit
All	236	**83.9%**	**89.8%**	**82.2%**	**87.7%**
APA	45	84.4%	91.1%	86.7%	97.8%
Black	15	86.7%	93.3%	86.7%	93.3%
Hispan.	85	81.2%	92.9%	83.5%	89.4%
White	87	85.1%	85.1%	77.0%	80.5%
CGS	75	84.0%	85.3%	80.0%	85.3%
FGS	157	83.4%	91.7%	82.8%	88.5%
Females	155	**84.5%**	**87.1%**	**80.0%**	**84.5%**
APA	30	90.0%	90.0%	83.3%	96.7%
Black	6	83.3%	100.0%	83.3%	83.3%
Hispan.	60	83.3%	90.0%	83.3%	88.3%
White	57	82.5%	80.7%	73.7%	75.4%
Males	81	**82.7%**	**95.1%**	**86.4%**	**93.8%**
APA	15	73.3%	93.3%	93.3%	100.0%
Black	9	88.9%	88.9%	88.9%	100.0%
Hispan.	25	76.0%	100.0%	84.0%	92.0%
White	30	90.0%	93.3%	83.3%	90.0%

Table 37. Satisfaction levels of FYW students in option 2.

NOTE: The "FGS" and "CGS" rows indicate "first generation students" and "continuing generation students."

Generally speaking, students grow in satisfaction during each semester and during the entire year. The vast majority of students are mostly or completely satisfied with their initially chosen course (Engl 5A), gain satisfaction by the end of the first semester (Engl 5A exit), some loose satisfaction generally at Engl 5B entry (semester midpoint), but

again regain satisfaction by the end of option 2, Engl 5B exit. The two groups who show the highest levels of satisfaction at the end of option 2 are Blacks and Asian Pacific Americans.

The figure below shows the trends in the overall population. Additionally, more students in option 2 are mostly or completely satisfied with the option by the end of the year in Engl 5B than they were in the begin of Engl 5A.
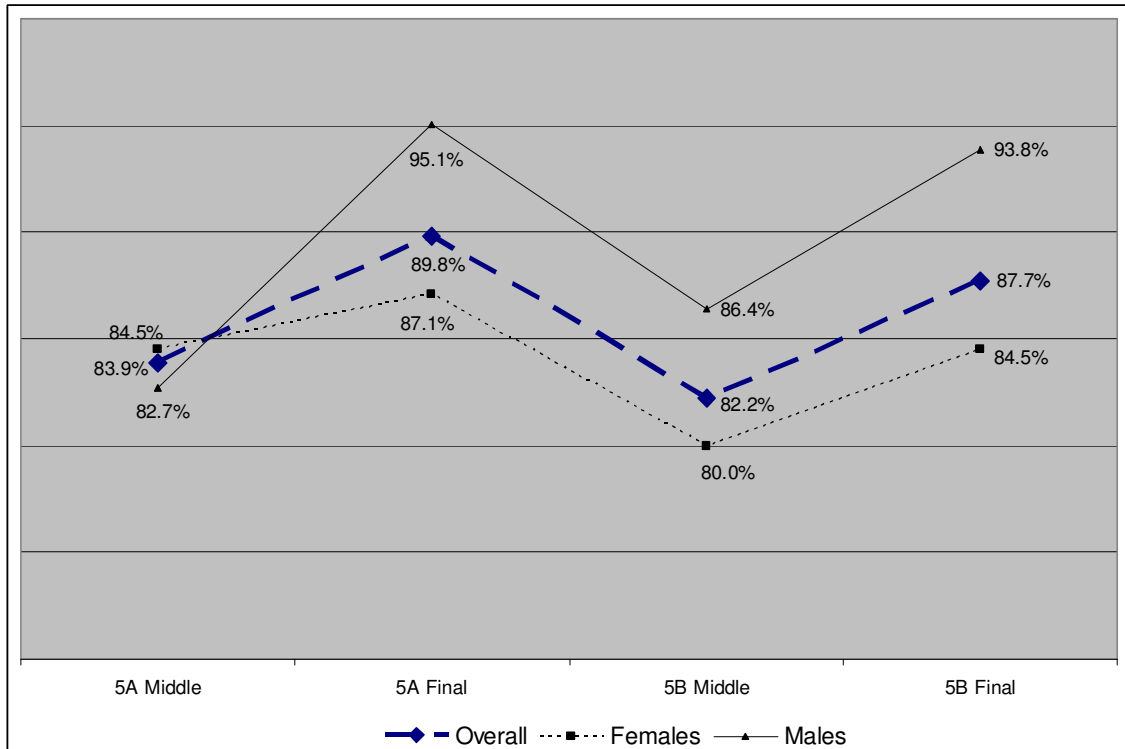
Figure 9. Overall, male, and female satisfaction levels in option 2.

By gender alone, both groups start at near the same levels of satisfaction, but females decline over the year, ending at the same level of satisfaction with which they began the option. Meanwhile males start slightly lower in satisfaction, but increase over the year, and end with a higher percentage of satisfied students.

Most racial or gender-racial groups also show similar patterns from the 5A entry to 5B exit. The lowest exit satisfaction level in Engl 5A and 5B occurs in Whites, which is probably due to the generally lower satisfaction levels of white females (discussed below). While 85.1% of Whites still feel mostly or completely satisfied at the end of Engl 5A, 91.1% or more of all other racial groups feel mostly or completely satisfied in the course. At the end of the option, at 5B exit, only 80.5% of Whites are mostly or completely satisfied with the course. Meanwhile nearly 90% of all other racial groups are satisfied with the course (see figure below).

As the figure below demonstrates, the most satisfied racial group at the end of option 2 is Asian Pacific Americans, with Blacks close in numbers. Whites, as already mentioned,

have the fewest relative numbers of mostly or completely satisfied students by the end of the option. This is a trend that needs addressing.
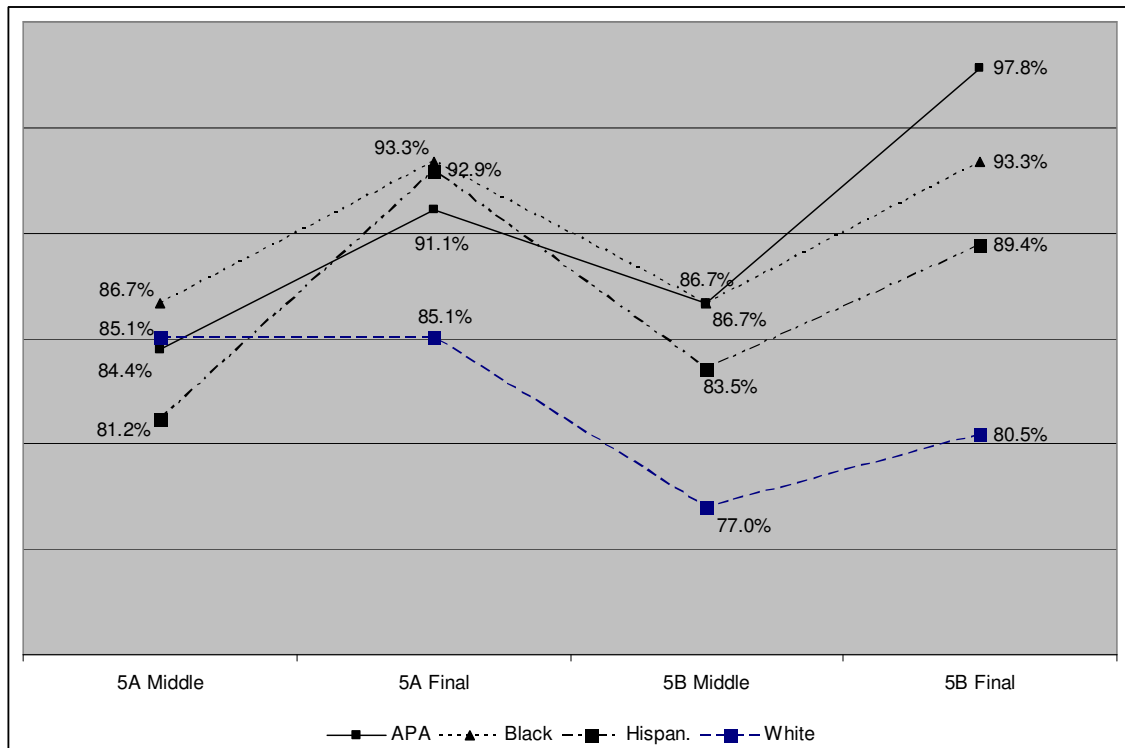
Figure 10. Satisfaction levels by race for option 2 students.

Continuing generation students are less satisfied generally than first generation students, but both groups show high levels that raise over the semester and year. Fewer first generation students are mostly or completely satisfied with 5A at entry than continuing generation students, but more of first generation students are mostly or completely satisfied at the exit of 5B.

Generally speaking, most groups do not obtain the same high numbers of satisfaction at 5B exit as the same groups did at 5A exit, making 5A exit the high mark of satisfaction in option 2.

The one group whose 5B exit satisfaction level is not at or above the initial 5A entry is White females. They have the lowest satisfaction at most points in the year. Part of this trend may be due to their relatively low level of satisfaction at the entry of 5A and 5B. However, this phenomenon is puzzling given White females' high portfolio competency ratings and the generally positive teacher commenting practices given to their papers (discussed in the previous sections above). The figure below compares White females' overall competency measures, White females' satisfaction levels, and the satisfaction level of the overall female population.
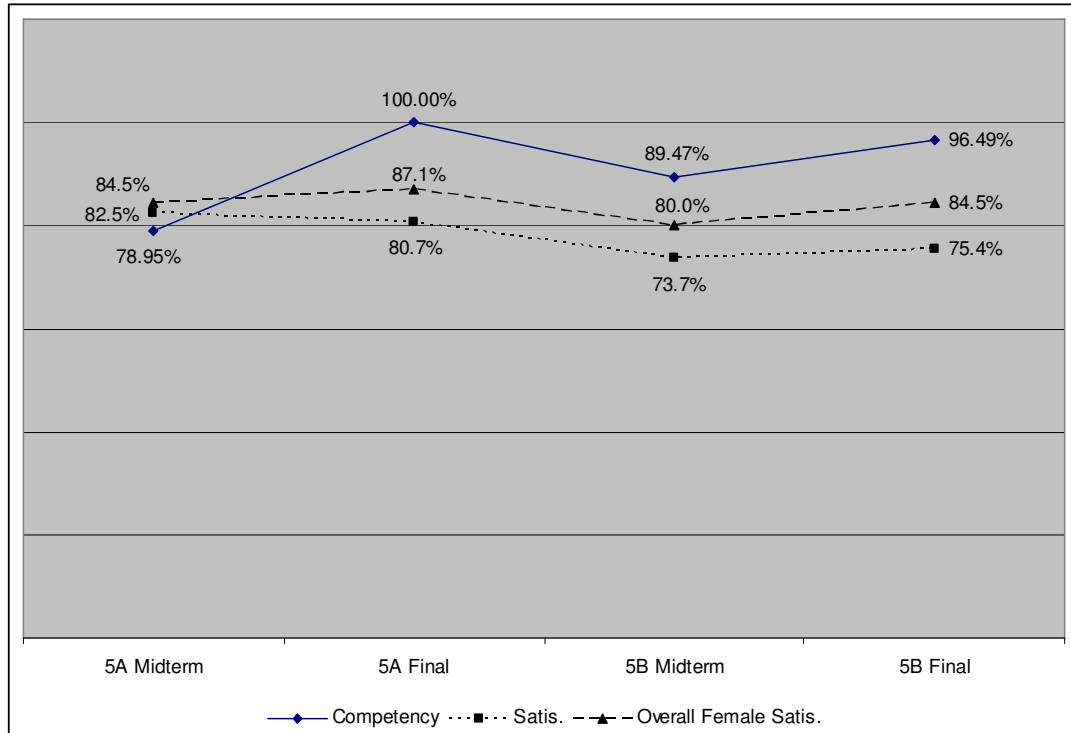
Figure 11. The competency measures, female satisfaction levels, and satisfaction level of the overall female population in option 2.

The figure above illustrates another interesting finding. In White females, there is a negative, or inverse, correlation between their satisfaction levels and portfolio competency measures (discussed above in Section 4.4.1). Typically, this relationship is represented by a correlation coefficient (r), which illustrates the relationship between two variables, that is, the direction and strength of the correlation. In this case, these variables are satisfaction levels and portfolio competency measures. The correlation coefficient is then squared (r^2) to represent generally the amount of variance accounted for by one variable to the other. So in this case, r^2 shows the amount of variance accounted for in the correlation between satisfaction levels and portfolio competency measures.

NOTE: All correlation coefficients in this report are suggestive and may have more error in them that cannot be determined because of the small sample sizes of several aspects of the data used. No significance testing was conducted on the data because the IRAP office could not perform these analyses (those who would normally do this statistical work), thus the accuracy of the coefficients could not be determined and show some suspicious differences. For these reasons, no correlations are considered in the conclusion sections to this report. However, since this is the first year of data collection, and a pilot study on the DSP and Writing Program, correlation coefficients were produced for later comparisons.

As the table below shows, White females, and the overall White population, which is mostly females, are the only populations that show an inverse correlation between satisfaction in option 2 and their overall competency measures (those judged as overall

competent), meaning the better White females do in portfolios, the less satisfied they are in the course. This suggests that there may be other more powerful factors involved in Whites' and White females' higher competency measures than their sense of satisfaction in the course. Or perhaps that in this group, a sense of satisfaction is not as important to their achieving competency through portfolio demonstrations. However, as the r^2 shows, this correlation only accounts for 10% of the variance, so more likely this correlation is mostly random and unaccounted for.[5]

Satisfaction to Overall Competency		
	Correlation (r)	r^2
White Females	-0.32	0.10
Females	0.19	0.04
Males	0.78	0.61
APA Males	0.97	0.93
All Students	**0.67**	**0.45**
APAs	0.66	0.44
Blacks	0.89	0.80
Latinos/as.	0.87	0.76
Whites	-0.14	0.02

Table 38. The correlation coefficients established by satisfaction levels and overall competency rates for some groups of option 2 students.

On the other hand, the groups with the highest correlation between course satisfaction and portfolio competency measures were Blacks, Asian Pacific American Males, and Latinos/as. The more satisfied Asian Pacific American males and Blacks are with their courses in option 2, the more likely they will do better in the portfolio (the instrument used to measure competency). Satisfaction appears to account for 80% of the variance in portfolio competency ratings in Blacks, and 93% in Asian Pacific American Males. And this same relationship, with slightly less variance accounted for (76%), exists in the Latino/a population.

In the general population, however, there appears to be a weak correlation between students' sense of satisfaction in their option 2 DSPs and their competency measures (judged as overall competent). There is an equally weak correlation in most groups, with Whites showing virtually no correlation (almost pure chance). Meanwhile the strongest correlations are in Blacks and Latinos/as, both of which are significant.

Placement Accuracy

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[5] It should be noted that, as Table 36 above shows, the n values of each group varies in percentage of that group, so the significance of the White sample (representing 22.5% of all Whites in option 2) is different than the Black sample (representing 10.6% of all Blacks), for instance. Future correlations can help confirm these and other correlations discussed in this report.

As described in Section 5.1 above, the placement accuracy levels are identified by three statements that rate the student's felt sense of how accurate she thinks her decision was to take the course in question. This data is meant to understand how accurate students feel their DSP decisions are. The survey responses equate to a linear scale: not accurate, not sure how accurate, and accurate. The table below shows the percentages of students who responded to the placement accuracy question with an "accurate" response.

FELT PLACEMENT WAS "ACCURATE"

	N	5A Entry	5A Exit	5B Entry	5B Exit
All	236	**81.8%**	**80.5%**	**78.4%**	**81.8%**
APA	45	82.2%	84.4%	82.2%	93.3%
Black	15	93.3%	86.7%	93.3%	93.3%
Latino/a	85	77.6%	85.9%	82.4%	83.5%
White	87	83.9%	72.4%	71.3%	72.4%
CGS	75	81.3%	68.0%	70.7%	77.3%
FGS	157	82.2%	86.0%	81.5%	83.4%
Females	155	**82.6%**	**78.7%**	**77.4%**	**79.4%**
APA	30	83.3%	80.0%	80.0%	93.3%
Black	6	83.3%	100.0%	100.0%	83.3%
Latina	60	81.7%	86.7%	83.3%	83.3%
White	57	82.5%	66.7%	68.4%	66.7%
Males	81	**80.2%**	**84.0%**	**80.2%**	**86.4%**
APA	15	80.0%	93.3%	86.7%	93.3%
Black	9	100.0%	77.8%	88.9%	100.0%
Latino	25	68.0%	84.0%	80.0%	84.0%
White	30	86.7%	83.3%	76.7%	83.3%

Table 39. Course placement accuracy levels for FYW students in option 2.

Generally, option 2 students' sense of the accuracy of their DSPs is stable over the entire year, hovering around the 80% mark, and starting and ending the year with the same percentage of the overall population finding their placements accurate. The two groups with the highest percent at the end of option 2 were Blacks and Asian Pacific Americans, with numbers well above the other groups (at 93.3% each). In fact, Black males achieved 100% at 5A entry and 5B exit, and Asian Pacific American females achieved 83.3% at 5A entry and 93.3% at 5B exit. White females end up with the lowest sense of placement accuracy at the 5B exit, with 66.7% feeling their placement was accurate, and the larger group of Whites achieve a similarly lower percentage at 5B exit (72.4%). The largest gain in any group was in Asian Pacific Americans, with an 11.5% increase from 5A entry to 5B exit.

While White females feel consistently that their DSPs are less accurate than all other groups through out the year, Black males and Asian Pacific American females feel consistently that their DSPs are accurate through out the entire course of the year. Males consistently feel that their placements are more accurate than females, with an average of

7.9% higher at each measuring point, except in the 5A entry (the differences are: -1.8%, 8.0%, 6.4%, 9.3%).

Similar to Whites, but less dramatic, continuing generation students (CGS) show a social formation that slightly looses a sense of placement accuracy as the year progresses (dropping 4% between 5A entry and 5B exit). Meanwhile, first generation students are relatively stable in their sense of placement accuracy, with very similar 5A entry (82.2%) and 5B exit numbers (83.3%). This is a similar trend noticed in course satisfaction, with first generation students showing higher levels of both satisfaction in the course chosen and their sense of accuracy in their DSPs made.

When correlating placement accuracy trends shown in the above table to the two most corresponding measures, course satisfaction and overall competency measures (already discussed in sections above), a few interesting observations surface. The table below shows students' sense of placement accuracy correlated to these two other measures, and provides the Pearson correlation coefficient (providing the strength and direction of the correlation) and its corresponding r^2 (providing a general sense of the amount of variance accounted for in the correlation).

PLACEMENT ACCURACY TO				
	Competency	r^2	Satisfaction	r^2
All	**-0.23**	**0.05**	**0.45**	**0.21**
APA	0.44	0.19	0.95	0.91
Black	-0.77	0.60	-0.58	0.33
Latino/a	0.98	0.96	0.92	0.84
White	-0.87	0.75	0.60	0.36
CGS	-0.69	0.47	0.22	0.05
FGS	0.64	0.40	0.97	0.94
Females	**-0.81**	**0.65**	**0.38**	**0.14**
APA	0.04	0.001	0.86	0.74
Black	0.58	0.33	0.58	0.33
Latina	0.82	0.67	0.80	0.64
White	-0.92	0.86	0.64	0.41
Males	**0.77**	**0.60**	**0.88**	**0.77**
APA	0.97	0.93	0.90	0.82
Black	0.00	0.00	0.52	0.27
Latino	1.00	1.00	0.89	0.79
White	-0.37	0.14	0.79	0.62

Table 40. Correlations between students sense of placement accuracy with two other measures in option 2 students.

In the general population, there appears to be no correlations in either case (placement accuracy to competency, or placement accuracy to course satisfaction), thus students' sense of how well they place themselves in their option 2 course has little baring on their competency or their levels of course satisfaction. In most groups, there is a weak

correlation in both calculations. The group that does stand out the most, however, is Latinos/as, and Latinos in particular. Latinos'/as' sense of placement accuracy has a strong correlation with their competency levels, accounting for 96% of variance. Additionally this same group also shows a strong positive correlation between placement accuracy and satisfaction levels. One way to understand these correlations is: When Latinos/as feel their DSP course placements are accurate, they perform more competently and feel mostly or completely satisfied in their courses.

Most interesting in the above table is the Latino population. Latinos show a perfect correlation (very rare) between placement accuracy and competency, and a strong correlation between placement accuracy and course satisfaction. Clearly, for Latinos/as, but especially Latinos, their sense of an accurate course placement is the strongest predictor of their overall competency and their satisfaction in the course. Meanwhile for Whites, and most especially White females, placement accuracy is a strong predictor in the opposite direction (seen in the inverse correlations above). This means generally that when White females feel their DSP placement is less accurate, they tend to do better in their competency measures.

Asian Pacific American males also show strong, positive correlations in both calculations, with all Asian Pacific Americans showing a strong correlation only in placement accuracy to course satisfaction. Like Latinos, Asian Pacific American males' sense of the accuracy of their DSPs predicts their overall competency and their satisfaction in the course. Also of note is the differences in continuing generation students and first generation students. In these two populations, generally speaking, first generation students' sense of placement accuracy is a better, positive indicator of overall competency (although 60% of variance is still unaccounted for), and their sense of placement accuracy to course satisfaction has a strong, positive correlation. Continuing generation students, however, have a weak, negative and virtually no correlation (respectively). Continuing generation students' sense of placement accuracy does not predict well their competency, nor does it give an indictor of their satisfaction. On the other hand, placement accuracy does give some positive indication for first generation students of their competency and a strong positive indication of their satisfaction.

5.2.2   Survey Data for Option 1

Satisfaction Levels

In the table below, option 1 students who answered mostly or completely satisfied to the survey question regarding their satisfaction in the course chosen is shown next to option 2 students' responses (discussed above). All trends in option 1 show a similar slow increase from 10 entry (midpoint) to 10 exit. There is a high level of satisfaction, regardless of race, gender, or gender-racial groups.

Since more groups are well above the 80% satisfaction mark and show an increase in satisfaction, the only group that is of some concern are Black males, with a constant 80% satisfaction level in option 1 from entry to exit.

MOSTLY OR COMPLETELY SATISFIED

Option 1	N	10 Entry	10 Exit	Option 2 5A Entry	5A Exit	5B Entry	5B Exit
All	125	**91.2%**	**96.0%**	**83.9%**	**89.8%**	**82.2%**	**87.7%**
APA	33	97.0%	97.0%	84.4%	91.1%	86.7%	97.8%
Black	16	87.5%	93.8%	86.7%	93.3%	86.7%	93.3%
Latino/a	36	86.1%	94.4%	81.2%	92.9%	83.5%	89.4%
White	36	91.7%	97.2%	85.1%	85.1%	77.0%	80.5%
CGS	41	90.2%	97.6%	84.0%	85.3%	80.0%	85.3%
FGS	83	91.6%	95.2%	83.4%	91.7%	82.8%	88.5%
Females	74	**94.6%**	**97.3%**	**84.5%**	**87.1%**	**80.0%**	**84.5%**
APA	19	100.0%	100.0%	90.0%	90.0%	83.3%	96.7%
Black	11	90.9%	100.0%	83.3%	100.0%	83.3%	83.3%
Latina	18	83.3%	94.4%	83.3%	90.0%	83.3%	88.3%
White	23	100.0%	95.7%	82.5%	80.7%	73.7%	75.4%
Males	50	**88.0%**	**94.0%**	**82.7%**	**95.1%**	**86.4%**	**93.8%**
APA	14	92.9%	92.9%	73.3%	93.3%	93.3%	100.0%
Black	5	80.0%	80.0%	88.9%	88.9%	88.9%	100.0%
Latino	18	88.9%	94.4%	76.0%	100.0%	84.0%	92.0%
White	12	83.3%	100.0%	90.0%	93.3%	83.3%	90.0%

Table 41. Satisfaction levels for FYW students in option 1 and option 2.

While in almost all cases, satisfaction does not increase much in the course, most option 1 students start at higher levels than their option 2 counterparts. These findings in option 1 students suggest that most students who DSP into option 1 are mostly or completely satisfied with the course, and this level of satisfaction either doesn't change or increases by the end of the course.

When running correlations on option 1 student data on course satisfaction, many of the findings are inconclusive, most likely because of the limited or static nature of the growth in numbers and the small sample sizes. There is not much to conclude from these correlations. Below is a table that shows the Pearson correlation coefficients and their r^2 values (explained in the last section) for both option 1 (two leftmost columns) and option 2 students (two rightmost columns, already discussed).

SATISFACTION TO OVERALL COMPETENCY

	Option 1 Correlation (r)	r2	Option 2 Correlation (r)	r²
All	**1.00**	**1.00**	0.67	0.45
APA	0.71	0.50	0.66	0.44
Black	1.00	1.00	0.89	0.80
Hispan.	-1.00	1.00	0.87	0.76
White	-1.00	1.00	-0.14	0.02
CGS	-1.00	1.00	0.35	0.12
FGS	1.00	1.00	0.74	0.55
Females	**1.00**	**1.00**	0.19	0.04
APA	~	~	0.00	0.00
Black	1.00	1.00	0.33	0.11
Hispan.	~	~	0.82	0.67
White	1.00	1.00	-0.32	0.10
Males	**1.00**	**1.00**	0.78	0.61
APA	~	~	0.97	0.93
Black	~	~	0.00	0.00
Hispan.	-1.00	1.00	0.88	0.77
White	-1.00	1.00	0.22	0.05

Table 42. Correlations between course satisfaction to overall competency in option 1and 2.

Most evident is the apparent strong correlations that many groups have who choose option 1, if a coefficient could be calculated. Since a positive, one to one, or perfect, correlation simply does not exist in such complex, real world behaviors, it is hard to accept so many of them (as seen above), even if they are an inverse correlation. What these correlations might tell us is that, yes indeed, most option 1 students, who tend to come to us with literacy competencies that are closer to those expected in the FYW Program, grow in satisfaction in their DSPs and this growth in satisfaction predicts well their success, or their overall competency in the portfolios that they turn in.

In the cases where there is a perfect negative correlation, such as in Latinos/as and Whites, we might say that while these groups' satisfaction in their DSPs grow over the semester, there is a strongly similar decline in their competency measures. Does a growing satisfaction mean a decline in competency? Probably not. Most likely, these negative correlations show that despite some students' lack of development (measured in competency ratings) in the course, they still feel satisfied with their DSP.

Given that most groups show some kind of perfect correlation in Engl 10, and three groups have inconclusive findings, one should read these findings with caution. And because they consist of only one semester (Spring 2008), it's hard to know for sure how to read these correlations. Therefore, no solid conclusions are made concerning the correlations above between option 1 student course satisfaction and their competency measures.

Placement Accuracy

Option 1 students generally feel their DSPs are accurate, showing high overall numbers, much like their course satisfaction numbers. The table below shows option 1 students' responses to the placement accuracy question in surveys next to option 2's data.

FELT PLACEMENT WAS "ACCURATE"

Option 1	10 Entry	10 Exit	Option 2 5A Entry	5A Exit	5B Entry	5B Exit
All	84.8%	88.8%	**81.8%**	**80.5%**	**78.4%**	**81.8%**
APA	81.8%	87.9%	82.2%	84.4%	82.2%	93.3%
Black	81.3%	75.0%	93.3%	86.7%	93.3%	93.3%
Latino/a	91.7%	97.2%	77.6%	85.9%	82.4%	83.5%
White	86.1%	88.9%	83.9%	72.4%	71.3%	72.4%
CGS	92.7%	92.7%	81.3%	68.0%	70.7%	77.3%
FGS	81.9%	86.7%	82.2%	86.0%	81.5%	83.4%
Females	89.2%	89.2%	**82.6%**	**78.7%**	**77.4%**	**79.4%**
APA	84.2%	94.7%	83.3%	80.0%	80.0%	93.3%
Black	90.9%	72.7%	83.3%	100.0%	100.0%	83.3%
Latina	94.4%	100.0%	81.7%	86.7%	83.3%	83.3%
White	91.3%	87.0%	82.5%	66.7%	68.4%	66.7%
Males	80.0%	88.0%	**80.2%**	**84.0%**	**80.2%**	**86.4%**
APA	78.6%	78.6%	80.0%	93.3%	86.7%	93.3%
Black	60.0%	80.0%	100.0%	77.8%	88.9%	100.0%
Latino	88.9%	94.4%	68.0%	84.0%	80.0%	84.0%
White	83.3%	91.7%	86.7%	83.3%	76.7%	83.3%

Table 43. Placement accuracy levels for option 1 and 2 students.

Most groups in option 1 improve in their feelings of course placement accuracy as the semester goes on, except for White females, and Black females (the Blacks category also shows a dip in percentage, but this is accounted for by the larger Black female population to Black male). This finding is curious since the other data, mainly portfolio competency measures and teacher commenting practices on Black and White student papers, would suggest that White females in option 1 would not have a decrease in their sense of placement accuracy, unless their relatively lower competency numbers (86.96% received an overall competent judgment on 5B exit, the average was 87.16% in all gender-racial groups) had a negative effect on their senses of DSP accuracy. The commenting practices on their papers, represented in Table 34 and discussed in Section 4.6 above, would suggest that White females would have more positive notions of their placement accuracy. Interestingly, this drop in placement accuracy seems to work independently of the same group's course satisfaction level (97.3%).

Black females also show lower exit percentages than entry, and they are more dramatic than White females' numbers. Their lower overall competency at both midterm (entry) and final (exit) and the more negative commenting practices conducted on their papers,

suggests this group might conclude that their DSP was less accurate by the semester's end. However, like White females, these findings have very little correspondence to Black female's sense of satisfaction (100% at exit). Depending on whether one cares more about a student's sense of DSP accuracy or satisfaction, will determine how important these drops in the numbers really are.

Much like the previous data for option 1, placement accuracy data had many inconclusive correlations. The comparative table below shows option 1 and 2 Pearson correlation coefficients and their r^2s for two correlations: (1) students' sense of the accuracy of their DSPs (placement accuracy) to their overall competency measures, and (2) placement accuracy to students' sense of satisfaction in their DSPs.

PLACEMENT ACCURACY TO

Option 1	Compet. (r)	Compet. r^2	Satis. (r)	Satis. r^2	Option 2 Compet. (r)	Compet. r^2	Satis. (r)	Satis. r^2
All	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	**-0.23**	**0.05**	**0.45**	**0.21**
APA	1.00	1.00	0.71	0.50	0.44	0.19	0.95	0.91
Black	-1.00	1.00	-1.00	1.00	-0.77	0.60	-0.58	0.33
Latino/a	-1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.98	0.96	0.92	0.84
White	-1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-0.87	0.75	0.60	0.36
CGS	~	~	~	~	-0.69	0.47	0.22	0.05
FGS	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.64	0.40	0.97	0.94
Females	~	~	~	~	**-0.81**	**0.65**	**0.38**	**0.14**
APA	-1.00	1.00	~	~	0.04	0.001	0.86	0.74
Black	-1.00	1.00	-1.00	1.00	0.58	0.33	0.58	0.33
Latina	~	~	1.00	1.00	0.82	0.67	0.80	0.64
White	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-0.92	0.86	0.64	0.41
Males	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	**0.77**	**0.60**	**0.88**	**0.77**
APA	~	~	~	~	0.97	0.93	0.90	0.82
Black	1.00	1.00	~	~	0.00	0.00	0.52	0.27
Latino	-1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.89	0.79
White	-1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	-0.37	0.14	0.79	0.62

Table 44. Correlations between placement accuracy and two other measures for both option 1 and 2.

Much like student satisfaction correlated to competency (previously discussed) in option 1 students, placement accuracy correlated to competency and to course satisfaction yields some inconclusive results and mostly perfect correlations in results that are yielded. Given the high numbers of satisfaction and placement accuracy (except in the case of Black females, and Blacks generally), the above correlations tell us very little alone.

5.3 FYW Passing Rates and Grade Distributions

The final data presented here as indirect evidence of learning along program outcomes are grade distributions. These distributions were collected from PeopleSoft and not self-

reported directly to the program by students or teachers. For a complete comparison of grade distributions of the FYW Program in 2007-08 AY, and the Fall and Spring semesters of 2005, the last year the old course was used (Engl 1A), see Section 10.13 below.

5.3.1 Passing Rates

While passing rates of students say very little about what kind of learning is occurring in the program, and they only suggest the success of the DSP, they do offer some indirect ways to see student learning. However, one must assume that a student's grade is somehow a product of meeting the program outcomes listed for that course and not mostly the result of other factors (for a list of those outcomes see Section 2.2 above).

While the Engl 5A course is not a commensurate course with the previous course, Engl 1A, comparing the passing rates of Engl 1A in 2005, which met the CSUF writing requirement, to Engl 5A, 5B, and 10 in the 2007-08 AY can offer some sense of how well the new curriculum and DSP are working for our students. Does the current FYW Program pass the same number of students? Do the same gender and racial formations pass through the program successfully? The table below compares the passing rates of these four courses, and the percentages are of the group in question (e.g., 78.7% of all Asian Pacific Americans pass Engl 1A, while 86.4% of the same group passed Engl 5A).

Engl 1A Compared to Engl 5A, 5B, and 10

| | 2005 | 2007-08 | | |
	1A Pass	5A Pass	5B Pass	10 Pass
APA	78.7%	86.4%	83.2%	72.5%
Black	82.9%	75.6%	73.7%	69.0%
Latino/a	78.1%	81.8%	80.9%	78.0%
Native Am.	91.7%	76.9%	78.6%	40.0%
White	81.4%	86.2%	83.7%	82.6%
Unknown	75.5%	85.1%	90.9%	84.9%
Male	79.9%	79.4%	81.1%	70.4%
Female	83.5%	84.9%	83.3%	80.5%
Total	**82.0%**	**82.7%**	**82.4%**	**76.9%**

Table 45. Passing rates of Engl 1A (2005) and Engl 5A, 5B, and 10 (2007-08 AY).

There is very little difference in passing rates overall, or by gender or racial formations. When compared to the previous writing course, Engl 5A, 5B, and 10 pass roughly the same percentages of students. The groups that may appear from the percentages above to be underperforming in the new program (e.g., Blacks in 5A and Native Americans in 5A, 5B, and 10) actually have grown in numbers, and so more of these students are passing now, but not in as high percentages as they were in Engl 1A. In the case of Native Americans, the student numbers are actually so small that one additional failing student will change dramatically the percentages above (these numbers are discussed below).

When considering the growth in numbers of students in the program, the current program shows that it is passing more students than the previous 1A course, and providing at least the same percentages of passing students in both options, although it would appear that option 2 is slightly more successful at passing students than option 1. Below are the numbers of passing students (the difference in totals under the racial groups and the gender groups account for variations in reporting by the institution).

Engl 1A Compared to Engl 5A, 5B, and 10

| | 2005 | 2007-08 | | |
	1A Pass	5A Pass	5B Pass	10 Pass
Asian PA	258	477	287	137
Black	92	204	56	89
Latino/a	389	630	532	387
Native Am.	11	10	11	4
White	323	380	324	246
Unknown	40	80	40	45
Total	**1,113**	**1781**	**1250**	**908**
Male	713	790	391	290
Female	1,031	1,278	618	601
Total	**1,744**	**2,068**	**1,009**	**891**

Table 46. Passing numbers for Engl 1A (2005) and Engl 5A, 5B, and 10 (2007-08 AY).

Passing Rates of Blacks And Asian Pacific Americans

The one group most at risk, as most of the other data show (previously discussed), is Blacks. One quarter of the number of Blacks in 5A pass 5B, meaning only 73% of all Blacks enrolled in 5B pass. Only 69% of Blacks in 10 pass. While this lower passing rate in Blacks could be for a variety reasons, such as withdrawing from 5B, this is a concern that needs addressing programmatically.

Asian Pacific Americans in Engl 10 come close to the passing percentage of Blacks, at 72.5%, which is equally concerning. While Native Americans are also a concern, they are mostly so because we have so few of them. This is a university recruitment issue, not a FYW Program issue, but those that are in our program appear to need more support. Finally, like the previous portfolio competency data shows, passing rates by gender in Engl 10 are concerning. 10.1% fewer males pass Engl 10 than females, while like the previous competency data, there appears to be no gender differences in option 2 students.

By just about every grade measure, the FYW Program is currently doing just as well, and in a few places a little better, at passing students as its previous incarnation (the Engl 1A). The only exception to this is option 1 (Engl 10), and only along three groups: Blacks, who pass at a rate of 13.9% fewer in 10; Native Americans, who pass at a rate of 51.7% fewer (again, since there are so few of them, this number may not be concerning); and males, who pass at 8.5% fewer in 10.

5.3.2 Grade Distributions

Perhaps the more telling grade-related data are the grade distributions (see Section 10.13 for a full account of the grade distribution data). As seen in the figure below, the general population's grade distributions for all four courses show some interesting patterns. Engl 1A loosely fits a bell curve, with more students attaining "Bs" and "As." Meanwhile Engl 5A and 5B produce more "As" than any other grade, with lower grades descending in numbers as they approach the "F" and "W" grades. Engl 10 students obtain slightly more "Bs" than "As," but not in as high a proportion as Engl 1A. In fact, the difference between the number of "As" and "Bs" given in Engl 10 was 10 (out of 1,159 grades given). In fact, 29.25% of all grades in Engl 10 were "As," 30.11% were "Bs," and only 16.57% were "Ds" or "Fs."
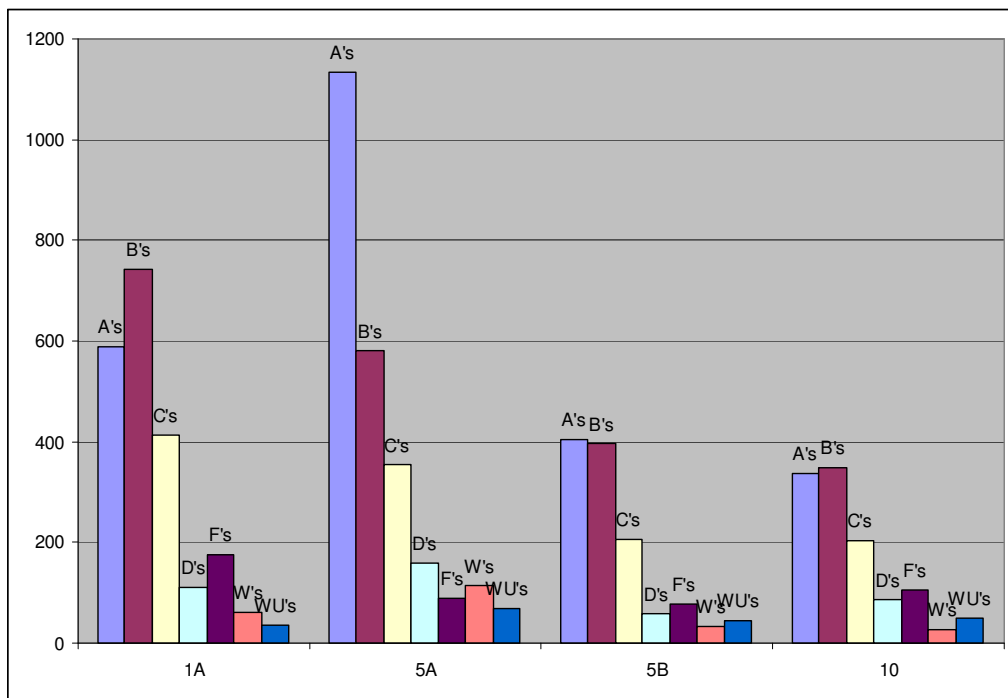
Figure 12. Overall population's grade distributions for Engl 1A and Engl 5A, 5B, and 10.

While strictly speaking, none of the courses represented above fit a "normal distribution," or "Gaussian distribution," where roughly 68% of all grades must cluster together and be within one standard deviation from the mean, 95% of the grades must be within two standard deviations, and nearly 100% within three standard deviations from the mean. Since the mean in each case above, including Engl 1A, hovers at the A/B range, there is less room for grades to distribute away from that point on both sides, so bell shaped curves are not possible, instead they are slopes. Engl 1A comes closest to meeting these requirements, as does 10 to a lesser degree.

In both options of the DSP program, the curve turns into a slope, with mostly "As" and "Bs." Because these distributions do not fit the typical bell curve, this does not mean that something is wrong. It could be a product of successful curricula and teaching, thus more

student learning occurring. It could also mean that assumptions about student performances on portfolios and in classes are changing more dramatically in teachers. More students are being seen as competent and superior in their coursework and progress.

When parsed by race, the grade distributions do not change much. For example, Engl 5A's grade distributions by the total numbers are seen in the figure below.
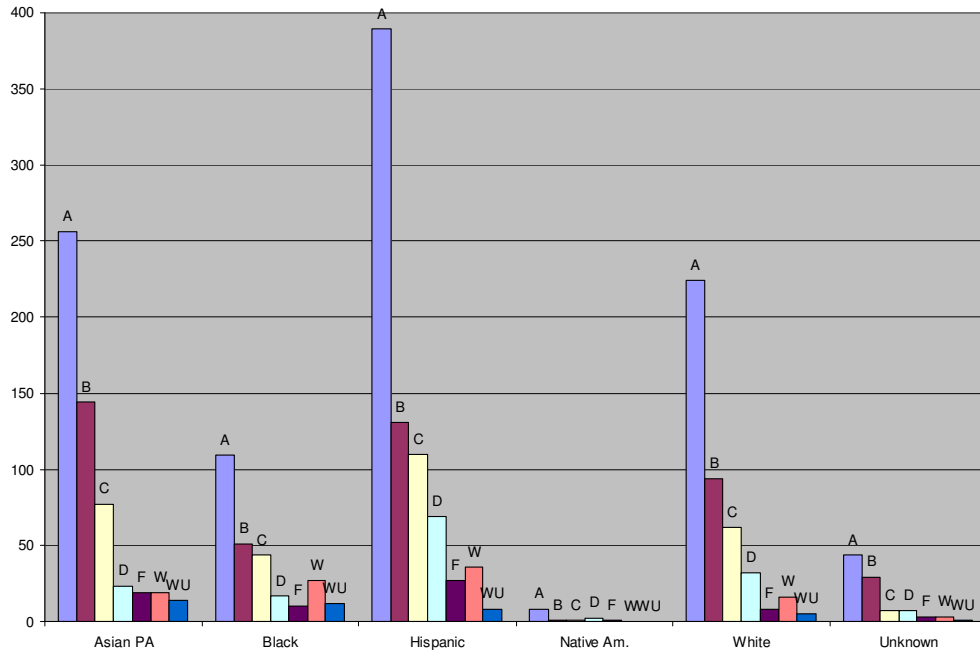
Figure 13. Grade Distributions for Engl 5A by Race.

All groups perform well, and most students in each group receive mostly "As" or "Bs," with a total of 69.16% of all grades represented above being "As" or "Bs" (see table in Section 10.13 for a complete data table on grades). This is slight improvement from Engl 1A (with 57.4% "As" and "Bs"). Most grade distributions by race in option 1 and option 2 look like the above figure.

The same grade distributions seen above occur when parsing the data by gender and in terms of percentages of total grades, as seen in the figure below. Most students receive "As" and "Bs" in option 1 and 2 of the current FYW Program. Higher percentages of females achieve "As" than males in every course. And in Engl 10, males come closer to a bell curve, while females maintain the program's slope distribution.
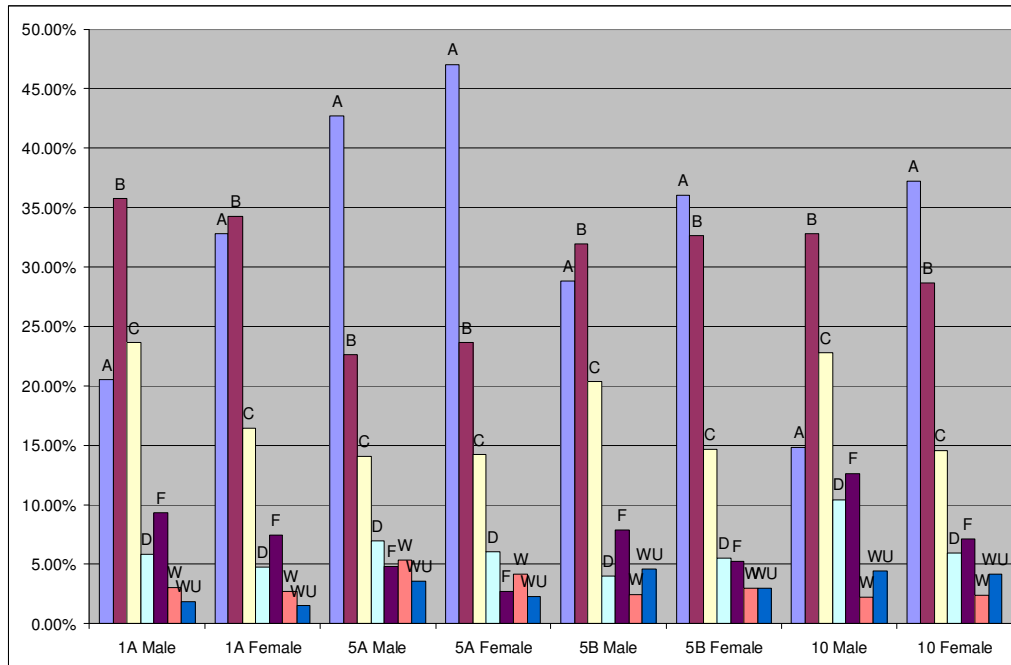
Figure 14. Grade distributions of Engl 1A, Engl 5A, 5B, and 10 by gender.

The main thing these grade distributions tell us is that gender does not appear to be a factor in option 2, but may be a factor in option 1, particularly at the higher and lower ends of the grade distributions (males have less than half as many "As" and about twice as man "Fs").

Grade Distributions for Blacks and Asian Pacific Americans

It should be noted that Blacks and Asian Pacific American students received an unusual amount of "Fs" in Engl 10, as seen in the Figure 16 below. The accelerated program, the commenting practices on Black papers, or some other factor may be accounting for this higher rate of "Fs." In most cases, there are half or fewer "Fs" than "Cs," except in the case of Blacks and Asian Pacific Americans. It does not appear in option 2 students. This is a trend that should be looked into.
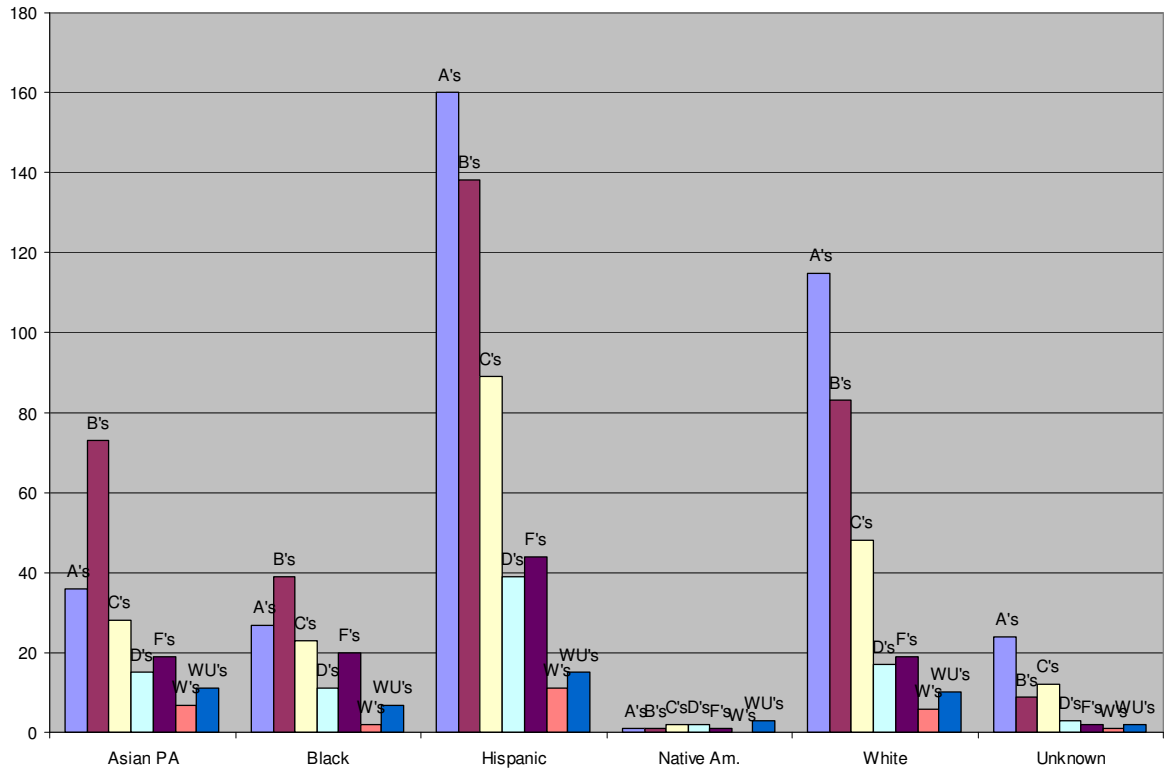
Figure 15. Engl 10 grade distributions by race.

Thus, grade distributions again suggest that Blacks continue to be a very vulnerable population, especially in option 1, perhaps partly due to their lower numbers than other racial groups. While Blacks appear to perform better in 1A (getting fewer "Fs,"), in option 2, Blacks exceed the course expectations and outcomes, according to grade distributions, as the figure below shows.

	1A	5A	5B	10
■ A's	14.41%	40.37%	51.32%	20.93%
■ B's	40.54%	18.89%	10.53%	30.23%
□ C's	27.93%	16.30%	11.84%	17.83%
□ D's	7.21%	6.30%	14.47%	8.53%
■ F's	6.31%	3.70%	5.26%	15.50%
■ W's	1.80%	10.00%	5.26%	1.55%
■ WU's	1.80%	4.44%	1.32%	5.43%
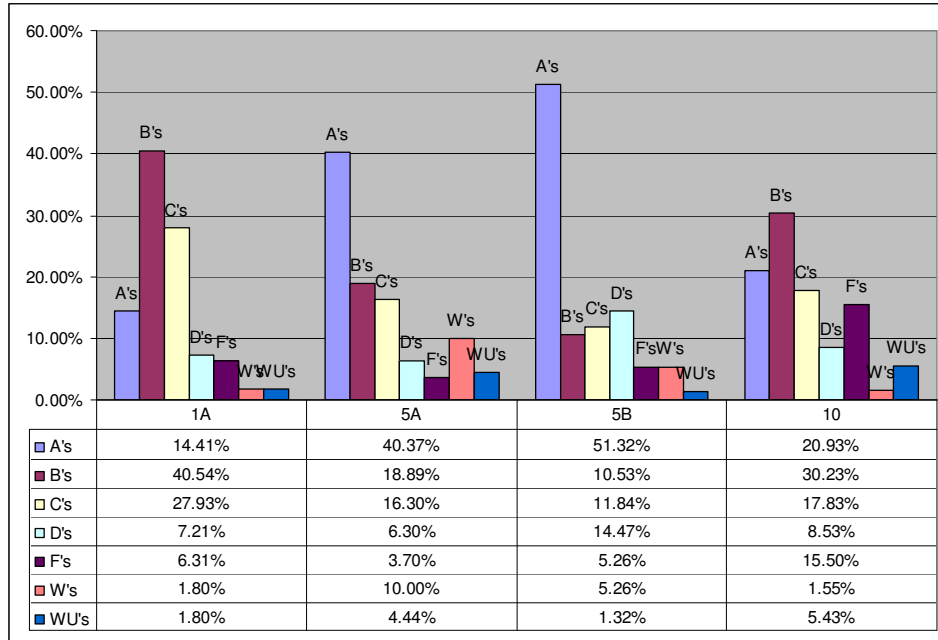
Figure 16. Grade distributions for Black in Engl 1A, 5A, 5B, and 10.

In the 1A course, Blacks produce a more typical bell curve, with more "Bs" than "Cs." Most noticeable is that in option 1, more than 59% of all Blacks receive "As" and "Bs" (with more than 61% in 5B). While in Engl 10, about 51% of Blacks receive "As" and "Bs."

What accounts for the lower rate of passing in 5A and 5B (compared to Engl 1A) appears to be the higher rate of "Ws" and "WUs" in Black students. This is not necessarily bad. The above distribution suggests that if Blacks stay in option 2, they tend to perform in similar ways as other groups, who also demonstrate similar grade distributions (see figure below), and succeed in high rates.
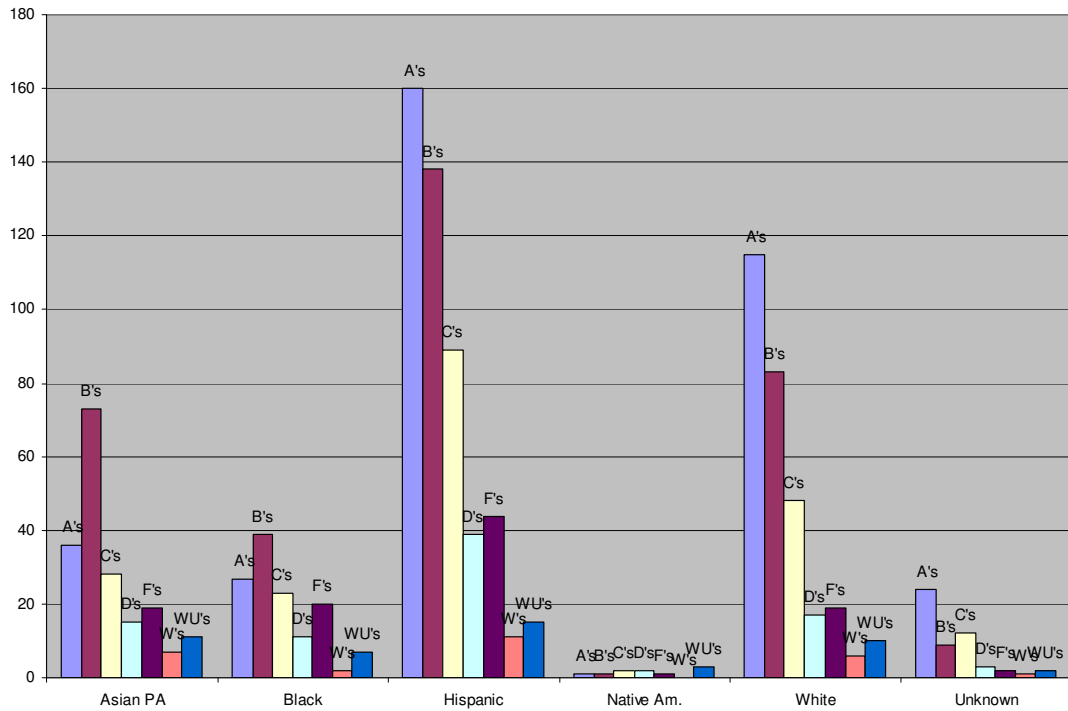
Figure 17. Grade distributions by race for option 1 (Engl 10).

Overall, option 1 students produce the same kind of sloped grade distribution as the general population of option 2 students (see figure below).
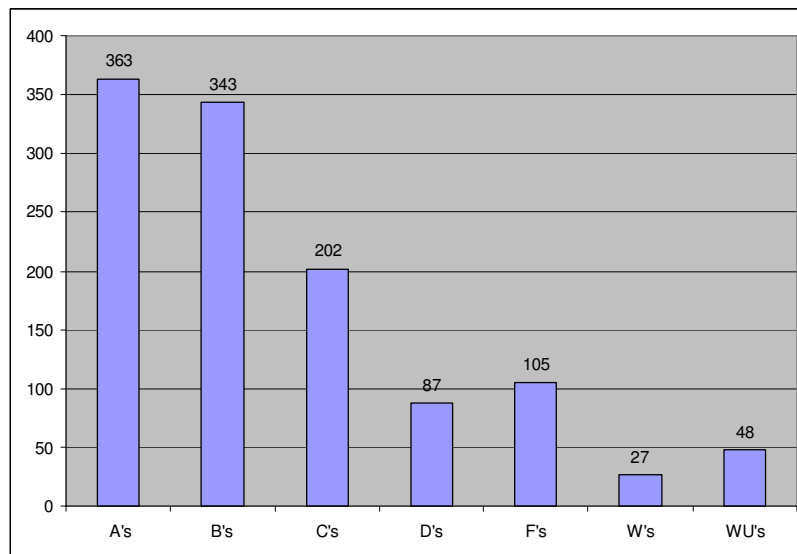
Figure 18. Grade distribution for all option 1 students.

Again like option 2 students, this suggests that of those students who stay in their courses (not taking a "W" or a "WU"), the majority of them pass the course with an "A" or a "B."

5.3.3 Grade Distributions Comparisons

Passing Rates Compared to Overall Competency

The table below compares the passing rates of students in both options and the overall competency rates in both options at each data point (midterm and final). One way to read the numbers below is to note the differences between passing rates and overall competency in each group at the endpoint of each option (e.g., 5B final and 10 final). In all cases but two (Asian Pacific Americans in 10 final and Blacks in Engl 5B final), the difference is about 10% to 15%, with overall competency always higher than the passing rates. This could mean a number of things, but most importantly, that failure rates do not always equate a group's general ability to meet the program's learning outcomes. Thus we might say, if these numbers are historical trends, that about 10-15% of students generally fail writing courses because of non-writing competency related reasons.

Alternatively, this difference could also suggest problems with our competency numbers, our portfolio reading and rating administrations, and/or our sample sizes. However, since overall competency should be higher (students often fail a class because of other factors than ability, such as absences, illness, etc.), it would seem that the first hypothesis is more likely.

| | Passing Rates | | | Overall Competency | | | |
	5A Final Pass	5B Final Pass	10 Final Pass	5A Midterm	5B Final	10 Midterm	10 Final
Asian PA	86.4%	83.2%	72.5%	68.9%	97.8%	84.85%	93.94%
Black	75.6%	73.7%	69.0%	86.7%	93.3%	56.25%	81.25%
Latino/a	81.8%	80.9%	78.0%	69.8%	96.5%	88.89%	83.33%
Native Am.	76.9%	78.6%	40.0%	no data	no data	no data	no data
White	86.2%	83.7%	82.6%	77.3%	96.6%	94.44%	86.11%
Unknown	85.1%	90.9%	84.9%	no data	no data	no data	no data
Male	79.4%	81.1%	70.4%	74.4%	96.8%	80.0%	82.0%
Female	84.9%	83.3%	80.5%	73.2%	96.3%	85.1%	89.2%
Total	**82.7%**	**82.4%**	**76.9%**	**73.9%**	**96.6%**	**83.2%**	**86.4%**

Table 47. Comparison of passing rates and overall competency rates in Option 2.

Since all the numbers above fit similar patterns, except for Blacks in option 2 and Asian Pacific Americans in option 1, it would appear that passing rates generally give some indication of the level of competency achieved by students in both programs.

Passing Rates Compared to Course Satisfaction

The table below compares the passing rates of students in both options and their satisfaction levels to the old Engl 1A passing rates. Most notable in the table is how option 1 students (Engl 10 students) pass in similar numbers as the same students did in Engl 1A, meanwhile option 2 students tend to do better across the board than both their option 1 and Engl 1A counterparts. Additionally, option 2 satisfaction levels increase and

end high, suggesting that not only are students successful in their writing courses but are satisfied with the course of study chosen (their DSPs).

PASSING RATES COMPARED TO SATISFACTION (MOSTLY OR COMPLETELY)

Option 1	10 Passing	10 Entry	10 Exit	Option 2 5A Passing	5A Entry	5A Exit	5B Passing	5B Entry	5B Exit	Engl 1A 1A Passing
All	**76.9%**	**91.2%**	**96.0%**	**82.7%**	**83.9%**	**89.8%**	**82.4%**	**82.2%**	**87.7%**	**79.6%**
APA	72.5%	97.0%	97.0%	86.4%	84.4%	91.1%	83.2%	86.7%	97.8%	78.7%
Black	69.0%	87.5%	93.8%	75.6%	86.7%	93.3%	73.7%	86.7%	93.3%	82.9%
Latino/a	78.0%	86.1%	94.4%	76.9%	81.2%	92.9%	80.9%	83.5%	89.4%	78.1%
White	82.6%	91.7%	97.2%	86.2%	85.1%	85.1%	83.7%	77.0%	80.5%	81.4%
CGS	no data	90.2%	97.6%	no data	84.0%	85.3%	no data	80.0%	85.3%	no data
FGS	no data	91.6%	95.2%	no data	83.4%	91.7%	no data	82.8%	88.5%	no data
Females	**80.5%**	**94.6%**	**97.3%**	**84.9%**	**84.5%**	**87.1%**	**83.3%**	**80.0%**	**84.5%**	**83.5%**
APA	no data	100.0%	100.0%	no data	90.0%	90.0%	no data	83.3%	96.7%	no data
Black	no data	90.9%	100.0%	no data	83.3%	100.0%	no data	83.3%	83.3%	no data
Latina	no data	83.3%	94.4%	no data	83.3%	90.0%	no data	83.3%	88.3%	no data
White	no data	100.0%	95.7%	no data	82.5%	80.7%	no data	73.7%	75.4%	no data
Males	**70.4%**	**88.0%**	**94.0%**	**79.4%**	**82.7%**	**95.1%**	**81.1%**	**86.4%**	**93.8%**	**79.9%**
APA	no data	92.9%	92.9%	no data	73.3%	93.3%	no data	93.3%	100.0%	no data
Black	no data	80.0%	80.0%	no data	88.9%	88.9%	no data	88.9%	100.0%	no data
Latino	no data	88.9%	94.4%	no data	76.0%	100.0%	no data	84.0%	92.0%	no data
White	no data	83.3%	100.0%	no data	90.0%	93.3%	no data	83.3%	90.0%	no data

Table 48. Comparison of passing rates and satisfaction levels in options 1 and 2 and Engl 1A.

The most important trend to see in the above table are the dual associated trends in option 2 students passing and satisfaction levels. They are not only high, but in each case (except for Blacks) higher than the previous Engl 1A course, and (at least in the case of passing rates) also higher than option 1 students' rates.

While option 1 students do not pass in quite as high of numbers as those in Engl 1A, one might account for this by the tighter control of the curriculum in the new program (e.g., the instituting of the portfolio procedures and required curriculum, two features not present in the Engl 1A curriculum). While in a few cases, such as Blacks in both option 1 and 2 and males in option 1, there are noticeably lower passing rates than their Engl 1A counterparts, yet these same students' satisfaction levels are high. These groups, as previous indirect and direct evidence suggests, need more careful study before we can make any conclusions about what this means.

Interestingly, in option 2, while there is little difference in passing rates between males and females, there is almost a 10% difference in satisfaction, with males finding more satisfaction at 5B final than females. Option 2 passing rates and satisfaction rates for females are almost equivalent. This is the only group in which we find this close of an association.

6   Conclusions from the Data

Below are the three primary objectives for all the program assessment endeavors CSU, Fresno's FYW Writing Program engages in. The data and research above is compiled here in order to make conclusion about:

- **What we know** about the FYW Program, particularly in terms of the student learning occurring in our program, which helps us make changes and continue to develop the program in ethical and responsible ways, ways that respond to our students changing needs and concerns;

- **What we still need to know** about the FYW Program that we do not know or realize without collecting data, which can provide us with a better understand of our program and its students, so as to respond in kind;

- **How valid is our DSP**, which might be translated in lay-terms to mean, "does our DSP work effectively for our students" or "does the DSP place students accurately and appropriately into writing courses"?

Each section below will make conclusions along the above lines only.

While all findings in this report must be tentative and only suggestive because of both the limited data in some cases and because it's only one year's worth of data, the following sections do attempt some possible conclusions. Future years' data should help us confirm, alter, and refine the following conclusions.

6.1   What We Know About The FYW Program

Please note that in some cases, particularly along race and gender and to a lesser degree along program outcomes, the conclusions made here are suggestive and future studies need to be done to confirm or alter these findings. Below is a synopsis of the findings from this report.

6.1.1   Option 2 Students

Generally speaking, the vast majority of option 2 students passed (82.4%) their writing courses, mostly with either "Bs" or "As." The same students' portfolios demonstrated overall competence, with 96.6% showing so. Additionally, on independent measures of those portfolios, students' writing was rated "adequate" or better quality 95.3% of the time. Along all five learning outcomes measured, students improved their scores by an average of .52 points on a six point scale. Students made the most improvement along "Rhetoricality" and the least along "Reflection," while the highest average scores occurred along "Language Coherence." Gender or race had little to no effect on grade distributions or passing rates (except in one or two instances discussed below). The majority of students (87.7%) ended up feeling completely or mostly satisfied with their courses, although males tended to be more satisfied than females, students of color were more satisfied than Whites by a margin of over 10%, and first generation students were slightly more satisfied than their continuing generation counterparts. By the end of the year, most students felt their DSPs were accurate (80%). In terms of passing students, option 2 passes roughly the same number of students overall (82.4%) and by gender as the old Engl 1A did in 2005, and in fact, produces more "As" and "Bs" than the old course.

The main exception to the above picture of the program's students is in the case of Blacks (usually Black males). While Blacks have high levels of satisfaction and felt sense of placement accuracy, they appear to be most at risk in option 2. They achieved fewer overall competency judgments on portfolios than all other groups, and passed in fewer numbers than all other groups (9.2% fewer passed proportionally than Blacks in 1A). Additionally, Blacks received twice as many negative comments on their papers from teachers, overwhelmingly concerning grammar, and a noticeably shorter end comment than all other groups (almost twice as short as Whites).

Finally, while most students, regardless of race, gender, or generation of education do well, improve along the program's outcomes, and are satisfied in option 2, Blacks appear to be most at risk in almost every area.

6.1.2   Option 1 Students

Generally speaking, the vast majority of option 1 students passed (76.9%) their writing course, mostly with "Bs and "As," while most students (86.4%) demonstrated overall competence. Additionally, on independent measures of those portfolios, 100% of the students were rated as "adequate" or better quality. Along all five measured learning outcomes, students improved an average of .68 points on a six point scale, making the

most improvement in "Reflection" and the highest average scores in "Language Coherence." Gender played an important factor in competency, with 7.6% more females showing overall competence than males (relative to their respective groups). This gender imbalance showed up in grade distributions as well, with females achieving more "As" and "Bs," while males received mostly "Bs" and "Cs." Black females, and perhaps all Blacks, also showed lower numbers of overall competency and fewer "As" and "Bs" (proportionally) that any other group. While most students were generally satisfied (96%), females tended to be more satisfied than males, Whites and APAs were more satisfied than any other racial group, and Black males ended up being least satisfied (80%) of all gender-racial groups. Generally, students' sense of placement accuracy was high (88.8%). While more Latino/a students felt their placements were accurate than any other racial group, Blacks felt the least confident in their placement accuracy, and more continuing generation students felt their placements were accurate than first generation students. Finally, option 1 passes 5.1% fewer students generally than its old Engl 1A counterpart. Most noticeably, Blacks, males, and APAs are most affected by the fewer passes, all of which achieving lower passing rates than any other group. While there is generally 10% fewer students passing in any group and overall than what their competency measures show, APAs have an even larger margin of 21.4%.

Finally, while option 1 performs about as well as its Engl 1A counterpart, with students finding high levels of satisfaction and placement accuracy, passing at similar rates, improving along the program's outcomes, and achieving high levels of competency, Blacks, males, and APAs have noticeably lower passing rates, and Blacks are less satisfied and achieve fewer competency ratings.

Below is a more detailed set of observations from the data discussed in this report.

6.1.3   Direct Evidence: Numerical Ratings of Learning Outcomes

Option 2 (Engl 5A/5B)

- At the end of option 2 (5B final), the average student met all program outcomes, and 95.3% of all students achieved an overall rating of "adequate quality" (3) or better.

- By the end of the option 2, only 4.7% of all students' portfolios were rated of "poor quality" (1 or 2), which is a 25.3% decrease from the 30% measured of "poor quality" at 5A midterm.

- Over the course of option 2, all students on average improved by .52 points (on a scale of 6 points) in all five of the program learning outcomes measured, with the average student score resting in the "proficient" category for each outcome.

- Over the course of option 2 (one year), students on average made the most improvement in the outcome of "Rhetoricality" (.59), with the second-most improvement occurring in the outcome of "Summary/Conversation" (.55).

- At the end of option 2, students scored on average the highest in "Language Coherence" (4.09).

- Over the course of option 2 (one year), students on average improved the least in the outcome of "Reflection" (.43), but on average were rated at 3.77, which is mid-range "adequate quality."

Option 1 (Engl 10)

- A the end of option 1 (10 final), all students achieved an overall rating of "adequate quality" or better (100%).

- Over the course of option 1 (one semester), all students on average improved by .68 points in all five of the program learning outcomes measured.

- Over the course of option 1 (one semester), students on average made the most improvement in the outcome of "Reflection" (.94), with the second-most improvement occurring in the outcome of "Summary/Conversation" (.89).

- At the end of option 1 (one semester), students scored on average the highest in "Language Coherence" (4.56), but made the least improvement in this same outcome (.22).

6.1.4 Direct Evidence: Portfolio Competency Measures

Option 2

- Overall competency measures for all students showed continual overall improvement (22.7%), from 73.9% at 5A midterm to 96.6% at 5B final.

- Overall competency measures (96.6% overall competency) for all students appeared to agree closely with the numerical portfolio ratings (95.3%) of all students.

- Gender did not play a significant factor in overall competency measures, with males receiving only .5% fewer overall competent judgments than females at 5B final.

- Black males were most at risk, achieving overall competency in the fewest numbers at 5B final (88.89%), and showing 7.11% fewer overall competent judgments than the next closest group (Latinos).

- Latinos (and Latinas to a lesser degree) may have been at risk, starting with lower overall and unanimous competency measures (overall: 60%; unanimous: 24%) but ending comparable to most other groups (overall: 96%; unanimous: 96%).

- All racial groups achieved similar overall competency rates, averaging 96.1% overall competency.

Option 1

- Overall competency measures for all students showed a very modest improvement of 3.2%, from 83.2% at midpoint to 86.4% at final.

- Overall competency measures (86.4%) for all students appeared to not agree closely with the numerical portfolio ratings (100%) of all students.

- Females attained higher measures in overall and unanimous competency, with overall competency ratings of 85.1% at midterm and 89.2% at final, and averaging a difference of 7.6% higher than males.

- Black females (and perhaps all Blacks) were most at risk, achieving overall competency in the fewest numbers at 10 final (72.73%), while Latinos started with higher competency (83.3%) but ended similarly (72.2%).

- All portfolios from White students except one were unanimous decisions and judged competent, a total of 94.29% at midterm and 85.71% at final.

6.1.5 Direct Evidence: Teacher Commenting Data

- Comments concerning correctness and grammar appeared to be high priorities for teachers (9.37/paper), which was over three times the median number of all kinds of comments made, while engaging the given prompt either was not important or needed little attention in papers (1.81/paper).

- Teachers preferred to tell students directly what to do in their writing (4.66/paper) and connected many of their comments to specific places in the student's text (3.75/paper), meanwhile referencing the program's textbooks was not a significant priority (1.91/paper).

- Regardless of students' gender, most direct instruction on student writing took the form of ambiguous (7.87/paper), full statements (7.8/paper), while the fewest comments were positively worded (2.75/paper) fragments (3.79/paper).

- Generally, the most direct instruction on student writing appeared to be of adequate depth, in terms of annotations (7.13 words/comment) and endnote (76.65 words/comment).

- Blacks and Latinos/as received different direct instruction on their writing than any other gender-racial group, with a disproportionally stronger instructional emphasis on grammar.

- White females received what is considered pedagogically more effective comments than all others, with the most questions (5.06/paper) and full statements (10.50/paper), while Black males received the least effective comments, with fewer questions (3.67/paper) and fewer full statements (5.33/paper) in their papers.

- Black and White students received the two most different kinds, quality, and quantity of comments in the program; the typical comments on student papers had the following characteristics:

  Blacks: Over twice as many negative comments as positive, overwhelmingly concerning grammar, and mostly in the form of statements, with an endnote of 25.17 words long.

  Whites: Almost the same number of positive and negative comments, with just a few more positive, concerned mostly about grammar and open-ended remarks on the content of the paper, mostly in the form of statements, with an endnote of 93.79 words long.

6.1.6 Indirect Evidence: Entry and Exit Surveys

Satisfaction Levels: Option 2

- Generally, all students grew in satisfaction during each semester and during the entire year, from 83.9% to 87.7% finding their DSPs completely or mostly satisfying.

- Males achieved higher levels of satisfaction (93.8%) than females (84.5%) by 5B final, while females remained constant in satisfaction (84.5%).

- 91.1% of all students of color felt mostly or completely satisfied in the course, with APAs being the most satisfied group (97.8%).

- More first generation students end satisfied (88.5%) than continuing generation students (85.3%) in their DSPs in option 2.

- White females had the lowest satisfaction at most points in the year (82.5%, 80.7%, 73.7%, 75.4%).

Satisfaction Levels: Option 1

- Generally, all students grew in satisfaction during the semester, from 91.2% to 96% finding their DSPs completely or mostly satisfying.

- Females started (94.6%) and ended (97.3%) the semester with higher levels of satisfaction.

- Whites (97.2%) and APAs (97%) ended up most satisfied of all racial groups.

- Marginally more continuing generation students ended up satisfied (97.3%) than first generation students (95.2%).

- Black males ended up being the least satisfied (80%).

Placement Accuracy: Option 2

- Students' sense of the accuracy of their DSPs was stable over the entire year, hovering around the 80% mark, and started and ended the year with the same percentage.

- Relatively speaking, more Blacks and Asian Pacific Americans than any other group found their DSPs accurate (93.3% each) by the end of 5B.

- White females found their DSPs the least accurate by the end of option 2 (66.7%).

- More first generation students felt their DSPs were accurate (83.4%) than their continuing generation counterparts (77.3%).

- Latinos'/as' sense of placement accuracy had a strong, positive correlation with their competency levels, and their satisfaction levels, meaning: When Latinos/as felt their DSPs were accurate, they performed more competently and felt mostly or completely satisfied.

Placement Accuracy: Option 1

- Students' sense of the accuracy of their DSPs grew over the semester, from 84.8% to 88.8%.

- Latinos/as (mostly accounted for by the Latina population) felt their DSPs were accurate (97.2%).

- Relatively fewer Blacks felt their DSPs were accurate than other groups, with 75% finding their placements accurate.

- More continuing generation students felt their DSPs were accurate (92.7%) than their first generation counterparts (86.7%).

6.1.7   Indirect Evidence: Passing Rates

Option 2

- When compared to the previous writing course (Engl 1A) in 2005, the DSP option 2 passed roughly the same percentages of students overall (82.4%) and by gender (Males: 81.1%; Females: 83.3%).

- Relative to their group, option 2 passed 4.5% more APAs (83.2%) than Engl 1A did in 2005.

- Relative to their groups, option 2 passed 9.2% fewer Blacks (73.7%) and 13.1% fewer Native Americans (78.6%).

- Regardless of group (except for Blacks), passing rates appeared to be consistently lower by an average of 10% than overall competency measures, meaning grades seemed to represent students' competencies consistently regardless of race or gender.

- 73.7% of all Blacks passed while 93.3% of Black portfolios showed overall competency, a significant difference of 20.3%, well above the average.

Option 1

- When compared to the previous writing course (Engl 1A) in 2005, the DSP option 1 passed 5.1% fewer students overall (76.9%).

- Relative to their group, option 1 passed 6.2% fewer APAs (72.5%), 13.9% fewer Blacks (69%), and 9.5% fewer males (70.4%).[6]

- Regardless of group (except for APAs), passing rates appeared to be consistently lower by an average of 10% than overall competency measures, meaning grades seemed to represent students' competencies consistently regardless of race or gender.

- 72.5% of all APAs passed while 93.9% of APA portfolios showed overall competency, a significant difference of 21.4%, well above the average.

6.1.8   Indirect Evidence: Grade Distributions

Option 2

- Race and gender did not seem to play a factor in grades: the grade distributions for the overall population and all groups were similar and slopes, with mostly "As" and "Bs" given.

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[6] Option 1 also passed 51.7% fewer Native Americans than Engl 1A; however, since there were so few Native Americans enrolled in the program (n=4), it's hard to tell how accurate this number is.

Option 1

- Race did not seem to play a factor in grades: the grade distributions for the overall population and all groups were similar and slopes, with mostly "Bs" and "As" given, except for Blacks and APAs.

- Blacks and APAs produced a typical bell curve grade distributions, with mostly "Bs," while all other groups produced slopes with mostly "As" and "Bs."

- Gender did play a factor in grades: Females grades were a slope, receiving more "As" than any other grade, while males produced a typical bell curve, "Bs" and "Cs" as the most frequent grades.

6.2   What We Would Still Like to Know About The FYW Program

In most cases, the FYW Program has begun evidence-gathering processes that will allow the program to assess the student learning occurring and compare that data against other data, both direct evidence of learning and indirect. There are a few areas we need more or on-going data. From the observations made this year, the following remain questions that deserve more focused efforts:

- Since Blacks appear to be most at risk across the board, how well do Blacks perform on independent measures along the program outcomes (numerical ratings) in both options?

- What levels of competency do Blacks achieve in portfolios in both options?

- Since females perform differently relative to males in both options and their satisfaction levels are different in each option, how well do males and females compare along numerical ratings on program outcomes in both options?

- Will females continue to attain higher competency levels than males in option 1?

- How well do APAs do on numerical ratings in option 1 since they pass at lower rates in the course than other racial groups?

- Since Latinos/as seem to have positive correlations between competency and satisfaction to their senses of placement accuracy, what levels of competency do Latinos/as achieve in portfolios (numerical ratings) in option 2?

- Are there substantive differences in the content of teacher comments to Black, Latino/a, APA, and White students, or along gender lines of students that might affect their progress in their courses?

- Since "Reflection" was the weakest growth outcome in option 2 but the strongest in option 1, how can we account for this difference?

6.3   How Valid Is The DSP?

NOTE: At this point in the report, the writer, Asao B. Inoue, who is also the program's Assessment Coordinator, will use the first-person to discuss the validity of the program. As will become clear in the discussion below, this is important to do, given the nature of "validity" arguments themselves.

In the psychological measurement community validation of test results has long been understood as a rhetorical endeavor. In fact, Cleo Cherryholmes, a political science theorist who studies structural and poststructural educational theory and practices, including validation practices, explains that Lee Cronbach and Paul Meehl's (two important validity theorists) original work on construct validity begins to argue construct validation as not just an interpretation of test results and its supporting nomological network (Cronbach and Meehl, 1955, p. 300) but as "explicitly discursive" (Cherryholmes, 1988, p. 102). By 1971, Cronbach promoted validation as an investigation that becomes rhetorical "in the sense of making persuasive arguments" (Cherryholmes, 1988, p. 103). And eventually, Cronbach argued an explicit rhetorical notion of construct validity, as well as one that is empirical and logical (Cherryholmes, 1988, p. 107; Cronbach 1988; Cronbach 1989). In his comprehensive discussion of the subject, Samuel Messick's famous explication of validity focused on "integrated evaluative judgment," "inductive summary," and the interpretation and use of "inferences" and "actions" from test results (1989, p. 13).[7] In short, Messick revealed validity as a rhetorical endeavor. Finally, Brian Huot, a writing assessment theorist, draws on Lee Cronbach (1988), Pamela Moss (1992), and Lorrie Shepard (1993) to explain validity in writing assessment as an argumentative activity:

> Not only does validity as argument pose more of an interest to those with a strong sense of rhetoric, it also give[s] them a rhetorical heuristic for learning to construct validity arguments that contain a strong consideration of alternate views as well as an understanding of how to create arguments that are compelling to various audiences. (2002, p. 56)

Thus the degree of validity of CSU Fresno's DSP that I argue for below is not a toggle (i.e., it is not either valid or invalid), rather validity is rhetorical by its nature, thus contextual, and is only understood from particular interpretations or uses of the text through particular theoretical frameworks. And these interpretations are subject to counter-interpretations, as any interpretations will be. Like any validation argument of any placement system, the validity of DSP decisions at CSU Fresno is not a conclusive

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[7] Samuel Messick's definition is important to this validity argument. He states: "Validity is an integrated evaluative judgment of the degree to which empirical evidence and theoretical rationales support the *adequacy* and *appropriateness* of *inferences* and *actions* based on test scores or other modes of assessment" (1989, p. 13).

thing, and like all rhetoric, my arguments concerning the validity of the DSP is from a particular subject position in the program, mine. My colleagues, as well as teachers in the program may interpret some of the evidence differently.

In the program's DSP, the level of validity can be considered broadly the level of appropriateness that student decisions, or course placements, are seen as. Acceptably valid writing course placements are then those that demonstrate an acceptable level of appropriateness, or an acceptable level of achievement along key learning outcomes by all students, an acceptable level of success in courses by all students, and an acceptable level of student satisfaction in all students. I believe all three of these theoretical frameworks are important in any comprehensive sense of the validity of the DSP. Additionally, all social formations discernable in the program should accounted for in any comprehensive sense of the validity of the DSP.

To make my validity argument, I'll first discuss the data that directly applies to these notions of appropriateness, then I'll address fairness, power, and participation of the stakeholders involved. As I have argued elsewhere from sophistic rhetorical traditions (2007), validity arguments should address at least three kinds of inquiries:

- **Methods and Fairness**: How does the assessment's methods for gathering evidence construct fairness? How are fair results ethically determined, supervised, and articulated? (Inoue 37)

- **Power and The Wellbeing of Stakeholders**: How does power work to validate decisions? What are the interests and needs of students and other stakeholders involved and who articulates them? How do our assessments serve our students, their needs, and wellbeing? (Inoue 39-40)

- **Participation and Agreement**: How is agreement constructed and by whom? Who is affected by the results of the assessment and how are they involved in decisions? How are various judgments accounted for before a decision is made? (Inoue 42-3)

While this report is not meant to treat these areas fully in our program, I will attempt below to provide brief conclusions on each inquiry after a discussion of the data, which provides for the three theoretical frameworks that define "appropriateness" for our DSP (i.e., development along outcomes, success in courses, and satisfaction). Discussing both of these things, the data and the three inquiries above, should offer a comprehensive answer to our most fundamental question: "How valid is our DSP's decisions or the course placements students themselves make?"

In a Nutshell

In short, t**he direct and indirect evidence of student learning in both options suggests strongly that in the population at large the DSP is acceptably valid**. Students have few problems in the key areas in which data was collected. Most students demonstrate the program outcomes, pass their courses at acceptable rates, achieve overall competency in

acceptably high numbers, feel satisfied with their courses, and find their course placements accurate. Most who choose option 2 met the expectations in the five program outcomes measured (95.3%), generally improved in all outcomes (+.52 on a 6 point scale), achieved overall competency at high rates (96.6%), passed in acceptable numbers (82.4%), had stable feelings of placement accuracy (80%) throughout the year, and ended with high levels of satisfaction (87.7%). All of those who choose option 1 met expectations in all five program outcomes measured (100%), generally improved in all outcomes (+.68 on a 6 point scale), passed in acceptable numbers (76.9%), achieved overall competency at reasonably high rates (86.4%), grew in their senses of placement accuracy (+4% to 88.8%), and ended their courses with high levels of satisfaction (96%).

Comparative passing rates also show that in both options, students' decisions are highly valid ones. When compared to the previous writing course (Engl 1A) in 2005, the DSP option 2 passed roughly the same percentages of students overall (82.4%) and by gender (Males: 81.1%; Females: 83.3%). Meanwhile option 1 passed 5.1% fewer students overall (76.9%) and 9.5% fewer males and 3% fewer females (Males: 70.4%; Females: 80.5%). In option 2, the racial groups who pass at the lowest rates compared to Engl 1A rates were Blacks (73.7%, or 9.2% fewer than 1A) and Native Americans (78.6%, or 13.1% fewer than 1A), while APAs were the best performing group compared to their Engl 1A counterparts (83.2%, or 4.5% more than 1A). In option 1, the racial groups who pass at the lowest rates compared to their Engl 1A counterparts were APAs (72.5%, or 6.2% fewer), Blacks (69%, or 13.9% fewer), and males (70.4%, or 9.5% fewer). One way to account for these lower rates of passing may be the accelerated curriculum, which may be quite different from the previous 1A curriculum, making the comparison somewhat inaccurate. Engl 1A may not have been the same course as Engl 10.

According to the Program Outcomes

The program outcomes measures, which were independent readings of student portfolios, show clearly that the DSP is a valid placement system if the primary measure of validity is learning along our program's stated outcomes. While these measures are limited (see Section 4.1.3 above), they match well all other measures the program gathered. Because of the small sample size, I cannot offer any findings along gender or race. However, all students in the program on average improved along all five program outcomes by between .52 in option 2 to .68 in option 1, and that students improved the most in option 2 along "Rhetoricality" (+.59), while in option 1 they improved the most along "Reflection" (+.94). Meanwhile overall competency for all students in option 2 improved 22.7%, from 73.9% at 5A midterm to 96.6% at 5B final, while in option 1, overall competency improved modestly at 3.2%, from 83.2% at midpoint to 86.4% at final. In option 2, 95.3% of all students achieved an overall rating of "adequate quality" or better, while 100% of option 1 students achieved the same rating. This not only suggests that more time and instruction on writing makes for more learning and better writers, but also more valid DSPs, since option 2 students made at least as much or more gains in overall competency and along all learning outcomes as option 1 students. Since our core philosophy and pedagogy centers on "reading rhetorically," "entering academic conversations," and "reflecting and self-assessing" reading and writing practices, these gains in student outcomes suggest high validity of the DSPs in the general population.

According to Competency Measures

If competency measures from portfolios are the main factor in the validity of the DSP, then students' DSPs are in most cases highly valid, and in a few other cases marginally less so. In option 2, overall competency measures for all students show continual overall improvement of 22.7%, from 73.9% at 5A midterm to 96.6% at 5B final. Overall competency measures (96.6%) for all option 2 students appear to agree closely with the program outcomes measures (95.3%) of all students. In option 1, overall competency measures for all students show a modest improvement of 3.2%, from 83.2% at midpoint to 86.4% at final. In option 1, females generally achieve higher rates than males (7.6% higher), while Black females (and perhaps all Blacks) achieve overall competency in the fewest numbers at 10 final (72.73%). Latinos start with higher competency (83.3%) but end similarly as low as Black females (72.2%). Since portfolios are considered passing if they meet expectations along all program outcomes and teachers were trained to read for competency in this way, these high rates of competency by two outside teachers (and on occasion the teacher of record as a third reader), suggests that most students in both options have made highly valid decisions about what course to take in the program, but option 1 is more rigorous and demanding course. The only difference between option 1 and 2 is time in the program. It seems clear that time helps all students achieve competency, but most at risk in option 1 are Blacks and Latinos.

Interesting, 73.7% of all Blacks passed option 2, while 93.3% of option 2 Black portfolios showed overall competency, a significant difference of 20.3%, suggesting something other than Black's DSPs are causing their failure rates. Their competency rates suggest appropriate DSPs, while their pass rates suggest less appropriate ones. Similarily in option 1, 72.5% of all APAs passed while 93.9% of APA portfolios showed overall competency, a significant difference of 21.4%. Again, competency shows validity in the DSP, while pass rates suggest less validity. These patterns of difference in Blacks' and APAs' DSPs are curious, particularly since Blacks appear to show similar discrepancies in both options.

According to Teacher Commenting Practices

Another way to consider the validity of the DSP is to see how teachers respond to the students who end up in their classes. This gives clues to both students' needs in the class and the kind of direct instruction on writing that students receive, which can factor into the appropriateness of their choices to take a class. Teacher commenting practices on papers is the most direct form of instruction we offer. The observations presented above (see Section 4.5 above) about teachers' commenting practices agree in many ways with the observations concerning student progress by race and satisfaction in both of the program's options. Blacks get the worst kinds of comments, or are the most negative, which may be eroding their confidence and abilities to succeed in their classes. Meanwhile whites, and in particular, white females appear to get the preferred kinds of comments (according to the literature on teacher feedback and commenting practices, see Section 10.14 below for a list of works consulted in the teacher commenting project). Seeing this direct evidence of teaching in the program develops a clearer picture of the dynamics occurring in our program along race and gender, suggesting possible ways to

read the success of White females and the failure of Black males, for instance. While not conclusive by any means, the commenting data seems to suggest that the 7.11% fewer overall competent judgments than the next closest group (Latinos) that option 2 Black males received could be due in part to the kinds of comments they are receiving on their writing. Likewise in option 1, the teacher commenting practices suggests why Black females (and perhaps all Blacks) are most at risk, achieving overall competency in the fewest numbers at 5B final (72.73%), while Latinos start with higher competency (83.3%) but end similarly low (72.2%). The vast majority of the literature on teacher commenting and student error overwhelming concludes that negative commenting and comments that focus on error do not help students write better, nor do they offer students ways to profitably think about and reflect upon their practices. What does help students is positive and facilitative comments, like questions and encouraging comments, as well as comments that address the content and encourage a dialogue with the student directly. This theoretical framework from the literature on commenting gives one way to read the evidence from the teacher commenting data.

When considering all students together, comments concerning correctness and grammar appear to be the highest priority for teachers (9.37/paper), appearing most often on all papers. Teachers prefer to tell students directly what to do in their writing (4.66/paper) and connect many of their comments to specific places in the student's text (3.75/paper), meanwhile referencing the program's textbooks is not a significant priority (1.91/paper). Regardless of students' gender, most comments were ambiguous (7.87/paper), full statements (7.8/paper), while the fewest comments were positively worded (2.75/paper) fragments (3.79/paper). Most annotations (7.13 words/comment) and endnotes (76.65 words/comment) were of adequate depth. Most of these findings are encouraging, even the higher frequency of grammar comments is not necessarily troubling since it equates to about 1-2 per page, but some training in teacher commenting practices may still need to be done. One association that these findings corroborate is the high ratings all students received along the outcome of "Language Coherence" it the independent outcomes measures. Option 2 students achieved the highest average score in this outcome at 4.09, as did option 1 students, with an average score of 4.56.

However the most troubling trends occur by race and (to a limited extent gender). All Blacks and Latinos/as receive different direct instruction on their writing than any other gender-racial group, with a disproportionally stronger instructional emphasis on grammar. White females receive what is considered pedagogically more effective comments than all others, with the most questions (5.06/paper) and full statements (10.50/paper), while Black males receive the least effective comments, with fewer questions (3.67/paper) and fewer full statements (5.33/paper) in their papers. Black and White students receive the two most different kinds, quality, and quantity of comments in the program; the typical comments on student papers had the following characteristics: Writing by Blacks had twice as many negative comments as positive, overwhelmingly concerning grammar, and mostly in the form of statements, with an endnote of 25.17 words long. Meanwhile Whites received almost the same number of positive as negative comments, with just a few more positive, having most comments concerned about grammar and open-ended remarks on the content of the paper, and were mostly in the form of statements, with an endnote of 93.79 words long.

When factoring into validity the direct instruction on writing that the program provides its students, then Blacks' DSPs end up less valid than Whites. Or teacher commenting practices appear to counter the course placements that Blacks make, perhaps creating doubt, some uncertainty, and a more of a felt sense of placement inaccuracy. This conclusion is corroborated by Black's lower passing rates, satisfaction, and accuracy measures. However, they seem to conflict with White female's sense of satisfaction in option 2, which is lower than others.

It's hard to know for sure what the commenting data is really telling us, or if can tell us enough about how well or in what differential ways teachers are instructing various groups of students (consciously or not). But given how well this data coincides with the competency measures and the passing rates of Blacks, it seems commenting on student papers may affect the validity of Black students DSPs more that others.

According to Satisfaction Measures

If student satisfaction in a course chosen is important in the validity of the DSP system, then both options of our DSP are highly and acceptably valid. In option 2, all students grew in satisfaction during each semester and during the entire year, from 83.9% to 87.7% finding their DSPs completely or mostly satisfying. Males achieved higher levels of satisfaction (93.8%) than females (84.5%) by 5B final, while females remained constant in satisfaction (84.5%). Students of color felt mostly or completely satisfied in the course (91.1%), with APAs being the most satisfied group (97.8%). More first generation students ended satisfied (88.5%) than continuing generation students (85.3%) in their DSPs, while White females had the lowest satisfaction at most points in the year (82.5%, 80.7%, 73.7%, 75.4%). In option 1, students grew in satisfaction during the semester, from 91.2% to 96% finding their DSPs completely or mostly satisfying. Females started (94.6%) and ended (97.3%) the semester with higher levels of satisfaction than males, while Whites (97.2%) and APAs (97%) end up most satisfied of all racial groups. Continuing generation students end up more satisfied (97.3%) than first generation students (95.2%), and Black males ended up being the least satisfied (80%) of all groups. Overall, however, the least satisfied groups of students in both options still show high ending levels of satisfaction in their DSPs.

These high levels of satisfaction are vital to any DSP, mostly because the system demands that students themselves come to a course placement, and this means they should be satisfied in it. Especially in option 2, where students are opting to take an additional semester of writing instruction (not being forced to do so), satisfaction in their courses is most important for their sense of self-efficacy (or confidence in their abilities to do something, like writing successfully in a college setting). In her review and discussion of the research on student's self-efficacy concerning writing and DSP systems, Erica Reynolds found that all the research suggests that students are not only capable of making a DSP, but they can do so accurately (91-2). In fact, in several studies, she found that strong self-efficacy correlated positively with students' abilities to perform well on writing tasks (80). Satisfaction levels are then one way to capture self-efficacy if we assume that part of satisfaction in a writing course includes one's confidence in succeeding in the writing expected of that course. In both options, students' satisfaction

levels suggest high levels of self-efficacy, and explain the high measures in learning outcomes and competency measures.

According to Accuracy Measures

Another measurable and possible factor in self-efficacy is students' sense of the accuracy of their own course placements. If course placement accuracy levels are the dominant factor in determining validity of the DSP, then both options again show high levels of validity. In option 2, a stable 80% found their placements accurate; however, more Blacks and APAs found their DSPs accurate (93.3% each) by the end of 5B. White females in option 2, the only anomaly, found their DSPs the least accurate by its end (66.7%), while more first generation students felt their DSPs were accurate (83.4%) than their continuing generation counterparts (77.3%). In option 1, students' sense of the accuracy of their DSPs grew over the semester, from 84.8% to 88.8%. Latinos/as (mostly accounted for by the Latina population) felt their DSPs were accurate (97.2%). Relatively fewer Blacks felt their DSPs were accurate than other groups, matching their lower satisfaction levels, with 75% finding their placements accurate. More continuing generation students felt their DSPs were accurate (92.7%) than their first generation counterparts (86.7%). While the placement accuracy levels felt by females in option 2 are somewhat surprising, particularly given their high passing rates, high competency rates, and high satisfaction levels, this does not make their DSPs less valid, given the overwhelling evidence to the contrary for this group. For Blacks in option 1, it appears their lower sense of placement accuracy may in fact help explain their lower passing, competency, and satisfaction rates. Blacks' lower sense of placement accuracy may also be explained by the kinds of comments that are placed on their writing. Again, because most of the data on Blacks coincide with each other, it appears the relatively lower course accuracy rates of Blacks seem to tell a similar story as other measures for Blacks in option 1. Ultimately, the only significantly low accuracy rates that would call into question the validity of some DSPs would be that of females in option 2, but this questioning of validity is weak at best (given the other strong measures for females).

The most interesting trends in course accuracy measures appear to flip-flop by option. In option 2, the groups that tend to perform well and pass at higher rates than they did in Engl 1A, such as Blacks, Latinos/as, APAs, and males generally, find their placements most accurate. Meanwhile the groups that performed the best and passed at the highest rates, women generally (and most likely White Women, but we did not parse this data), and Whites, tended to find their placements least accurate. Continuing students, compared to their first generation counterparts, fit this same trend. The exact opposite of these trends holds for option 1 students. More time appears to help students of color, males, and first generation students more than it does Whites, continuing generation students, and females, although the other evidence clearly shows that time seems to help all students.

According to Passing Rates

While passing rates have already been discussed above in a comparative way to Engl 1A, our program's passing rates on their own merits also validate highly the DSPs. In option

2, 82.4% of all students pass, while 81.1% of all males pass and 83.3% of all females pass. Blacks pass in the fewest numbers (73.7%) and Whites pass in the highest numbers (83.7%). In option 1, 76.9% of all students pass, 70.4% of all males pass, and 80.5% of all females pass. Again, Blacks pass in fewest numbers (69%), while Whites pass in the highest (82.6%). In both cases, Blacks seem to perform worse than any other group, however, they do better in option 2, despite their high competency rates, relatively high satisfaction and accuracy rates. Still in option 2, more than 7 out of 10 Blacks pass, while almost 7 out of 10 Blacks pass option 1. In option 1, the most significant difference in passing rates is along gender lines. While all numbers are still high, these two groups (Blacks in option 2 and females in option 1) have indicators of less validity than any others, but I believe it would inaccurate to say that passing rates alone would cause Blacks' DSPs to be invalid.

Generally, considering race and gender in competency measures alone, option 2 decisions show themselves to be more valid than option 1 decisions. In option 2, gender is not a factor in who succeeds, who passes, or what grades students get, but it does become a formation in option 1 students, with females receiving higher grades in larger numbers than males. Additionally, Black males appear to be most at risk, regardless of the option chosen, and APAs appear at risk in option 1.

6.3.1 Methods and Fairness

So how fair is the DSP and its methods for placement? Do the above conclusions tell us that the DSP is fair for all students? Fairness is constructed through our methods of placement and what equitable results we anticipate. What I've presented above is an investigation of the results of our method of placement, directly measured along four positions:

- an independent position of judgment (the numerical ratings of outcomes, direct)

- a deeply contextual, teacher-centered position of judgment (competency measures of portfolios, direct)

- a pedagogical position of judgment (teacher commenting practices on papers, direct)

- an institutional position of judgment (passing rates and grades, indirect)

These positions of judgment discussed in the previous section show a high degree of validity in the DSP. However, fairness is also constructed through other indirect evidence also presented. The direct evidence discussed tell us about students' learning and competencies most directly, but the indirect evidence is trickier.

Indirect evidence offers a different kind of story about students. Grade distributions tell us stories about hierarchies. Passing rates tell us stories of inclusion and exclusion, of margins and mainstreams. Satisfaction levels identified by students themselves tell us

stories of agency, self-efficacy, their felt senses of fairness (what *feels* fair), and the ways the program and institution treat them as human beings. And placement accuracy identifications tell us stories about students' gauging of their own decisions to be in particular classes (do they think they made the right decisions or are they in the right classes?).

According to the positions of judgment and stories told about our students, the DSP is fair for the population as a whole (not accounting for race or gender). When we account for gender, option 2 is uniformly fair, but option 1 is less fair for males. When we account for race, Blacks (and Black males) have less fair DSPs in both options, and APAs may have less fair DSPs in option 1. However, one possible over-riding factor in the DSP that makes such statements of *un*fairness false is the method of placement itself, which determines all the numbers and data presented here. Students choose their own courses, which is inherently a fairer method than someone else choosing for them, especially given the research on DSP (Royer and Gilles 2003), writing assessment (Huot 2002), validity (Cronbach 1988, 1989; Messick 1989; Moss 1992) and self-efficacy discussed by Reynolds (2003). Thus in the DSP itself, fairness is ultimately constructed by students' decisions, making them, by this measure, more valid, since validity itself is an argument that must be accepted by students as much as it is an argument that must be made by an administrator or researcher. Students, like anyone else, are more likely to find their own choices fair, thus more valid, because they made them, which the evidence shows through their high satisfaction and accuracy levels.

6.3.2   Power and The Wellbeing of Stakeholders

How does power function in the DSP and does it serve the wellbeing of all of our stakeholders, most importantly our students? To answer this, we can look first at who has the power to make decisions on placement, then how well those decisions turn out. Students themselves make their placements and by all measures above do very well, developing along all five measured outcomes, achieving high rates of competency, passing at acceptable rates in all courses, finding satisfaction in all courses, and feeling their placements were accurate most of the time. This description of the wellbeing of students in the program is not simply what students feel is good for them, nor is it what the program articulates as what is best for students, what teachers feel is best for students, nor even what the field of composition studies says is best for students. It incorporates all of these aspects of student wellbeing. They choose. They show competence. They pass courses. They are satisfied. The institution dictates the primary learning outcomes from what the discipline articulates, and their filtered through faculty and teachers who know the students at our site. Power moves from students in this model since they control key aspects of the program, namely self-assessment (in the portfolio) and course placement. Control of the curriculum and classroom is not lost, only shared more with students, which provides them with more ways to succeed, as our data shows. Ultimately, the level of validity of any course placement mechanism is based on the program's ethical uses of power, like course choices and placements, and the wellbeing of students, like how satisfied they are and how much have they learned, and how many pass our course along gender-racial lines, as well as overall. Given these factors of power, the DSP is highly valid.

6.3.3   Participation and Agreement

Finally, who participates in the DSP and who makes decisions? Clearly students are at the center of all decisions and must participate in course placement. This begins their "re-education" in how to behave in the university, how to be agents in their own educations. Participation doesn't mean in the DSP that they acquiesce to what others say about their writing ability. It means they decide with guidance from others. Ultimately, the DSP's methods demand that students begin their journeys through our program by participating and agreeing with advisors and faculty about where they belong. All direct and indirect measures of their learning, the high satisfaction and course accuracy rates, passing rates, and direct measures of course outcomes, reinforce the positive effects of students' direct participation in course placement. Since our students participate in their own assessments, from course placement to their own self-assessments in portfolios, and these assessment processes are both folded integrally into the program and its pedagogies, the DSP is highly valid, especially given the passing rates and high competency numbers.

7   Timeline

The following is a brief timeline of upcoming program assessment events and activities scheduled. In a nutshell, the program plans to continue gathering all the kinds of data discussed in this report.

Fall 2008 – Collect all direct and indirect data from selected courses in the program.

Spring 2009 – Collect all direct and indirect data from selected courses in the program.

Summer 2009 – Conduct independent portfolio readings (numerical ratings), analyze numerical ratings data, analyze competency data, and gather course passing rates for 2008-09 AY, write version two of this report.

Fall 2009 – Finish version two of this report and present it to the English Department, the College of Arts and Humanities, IRAP, and other interested university entities.

8   Closing the Loop

Below are the ways in which the program is attempting to improve and continue to develop its curriculum, processes, training, and methods in order that our students continue to meet the expectations of the learning outcomes, and perhaps, exceed them. All of these applications come from the findings and discussions in this report, as well as teachers' input on the program in the Engl 290 courses conducted each semester by the coordinators of Engl 5A, 5B, and 10.

8.1 What We Are Changing About the FYW Program

First, in the Fall of 2008, the program is changing its method of gathering random portfolios. We now select whole selections of students to participate in the program assessment data gathering, particularly portfolios. This will ensure more uniform collection and appropriate numbers of portfolios to make the necessary analyses based on gender and race outcomes measures that could not be made in this first report.

Second, students need more involvement (participation and power) in the assessments of their portfolios, so the program incorporated into the portfolio competency readings student/peer portfolio competency ratings, which accompany the teacher of record's portfolio competency ratings. Begin Fall 2008, the program gathers both the teacher's competency ratings and midpoint and final, and two students' competency ratings for each portfolio. This agrees with the DSP philosophy concerning increasing student agency, the program's philosophy that focuses on developing students' reading and writing practices (assessment being a part of both of these practices), and the program's promoted outcomes of student self-assessment. One additional comparison this will allow for next year is student/peer competency ratings and teacher competency ratings. If students deserve the right to select their own courses, and they do fine in those courses, then can they also judge competency of peers in those courses? Answering this question will provide for a richer sense of validity, and a pedagogical way to help students access and reflect upon the program's outcomes.

Third, the teacher commenting patterns suggest reinforcing the good commenting practices already existing in our program, as well as highlight the ways in which teachers comment differentially on various groups of students. This will be a feature both in the required Engl 290 (by all TAs), and in the teacher orientations that occur at the start of each semester. Additionally, the program's newsletter, published twice each semester, may be a place for more focused discussions of teacher commenting practices along racial and gender lines can occur.

Fourth, the progress of Blacks in all courses should be looked at in some way to understand their lower passing rates. This will be a proposed line of inquiry brought up in the Composition Committee and the Writing Program.

Fifth, because of the imbalance in the two options along the outcome of "reflection," additional research should be conducted to understand better what is going on in this area of portfolios, perhaps in order to help develop future curricula. A current graduate student, Meredith Bulinski, is already in the process of conducting research on the discourse of reflection in our program's portfolios. We anticipate her completing her thesis sometime next summer, maybe in time to be included in the analyses of the next annual report.

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10 Appendices

10.1 Appendix: DSP Placement Brochure

THE DIRECTED SELF-PLACEMENT PROGRAM

The English Department at California State University, Fresno has designed a new method for placing students in composition classes. We call our new program Directed Self-Placement (DSP). Now you have the opportunity to make an important decision about which composition classes are best for you as you prepare to read and write successfully at the university.

Note: International students are placed into appropriate courses based on their scores on the University English Exam (UEE).

What Are My Choices?

Option 1: The Accelerated Program	Option 2: The Stretch Program	Option 3: The Program for Multilingual Speakers
Semester 1 English 10 Accelerated Academic Literacy	**Semester 1** English 5A Academic Literacy I	**Semester 1** Linguistics 6 Advanced English Strategies for Multilingual Speakers
	Semester 2 English 5B Academic Literacy II	**Semester 2** English 5A Academic Literacy I
		Semester 3 English 5B Academic Literacy II

How Do I Make My Decision?

To help choose an appropriate option, you should complete the following steps:

Step 1: Look at the diagram above to understand class requirements for each option.

Step 2: Read the chart on the next page and decide which option best matches your reading and writing abilities.

Step 3: Read the course descriptions for the different options to confirm your ideas about which class will provide instruction that best fits your current abilities.

Step 4: If you are a multilingual student whose EPT score is lower than 138, give special consideration to Option 3.

What if I just choose the easiest path?

As far as placement is concerned, our experience shows that almost all students are satisfied with their choice and will work very hard to make sure their choice works out. Some choose a class that doesn't work for them or is too challenging. For the very few who choose a path that doesn't fit their needs, we believe they are learning something important about getting an education, entering university culture, and developing self awareness. So, some students may choose the wrong class, but we think supporting student agency and encouraging self-assessment more than compensate for the difficulties a student may experience by not choosing carefully.

Which option will fulfill my remediation requirement?

Passing English 10, 5A, or Linguistics 6 meets the CSU system remediation requirement. Students who score below 151 on the EPT have to meet this requirement. Simply passing any one of these classes will take care of that requirement.

What if English was hard for me in high school and I don't know whether to take Linguistics 6 or English 5A?

One way to answer this question is to think about your language background. If your primary language is not English, and you find that reading and writing in English, especially academic English, takes more time than you spend on other subjects, or that you really depend on individual instruction to complete assignments, then Linguistics 6 is probably a good choice. In 5A you will be expected to read longer, more complicated academic essays and respond to them with limited coaching from the instructor. Thus you will be asked to prepare for a 5A class more independently than you would in a Ling 6 class.

Basically, if you feel you need support as you develop academic vocabulary, or if you find it very challenging to get your writing to say what you want it to say in an academic sounding way, you probably would benefit from Linguistics 6. If you think organizing writing is not a big problem for you, or you are able to read things independently in a fairly rapid manner, or that your grammar does not get in the way of saying something in your writing, then you may be able to start with 5A.

This is not an easy choice, but we encourage you to be honest about your needs. Taking shortcuts to academic literacy often results in lost time and money.

ENGLISH PLACEMENT TEST INFORMATION

Do I still have to take the EPT?

Yes, all students entering the CSU are required to take the EPT, but we are not using the EPT as the sole criteria for placement, as is done at many other CSUs. We believe students can make an informed decision about the class that best suits their needs by thinking about how well they can read and write as well as what kind of instruction will best support them as they enter the university.

How much should I think about my EPT score as I choose an option?

The EPT does not provide comprehensive placement information. We believe many factors determine a student's literacy competence. The EPT provides some reference, but it does not provide definitive assessment of student placement. We would prefer students think about their strengths and weaknesses and then make a decision about which class best fits their needs.

With that said, we prefer you think about your language and writing background: How have you done in your high school classes? Have much experience have you had reading and writing analytical, argumentative, or expository texts? How hard is it for you to read independently and develop writing that engages ideas, develops ideas, communicates your purposes? How much do you know about doing research, or revising, or editing? What kind of experience do you have responding to reading or what others say? How well can you correct grammar and manipulate words and sentences in your writing? In short, we want students to think about what they can do –how well they perform academic English-- and make a decision that will enhance the reading and writing abilities they have as they enter college.

Why am I allowed to choose an option?

One of the things that we value in our writing program is student agency. That means we want students to have authority over their work and to be responsible for the use of that authority. Too often students are locked into passive roles in education, thought of as a kind of empty container that simply needs to be filled with information. We believe that learning is all about decision-making: deciding, acting, and then reflecting on what you have chosen to do. Through this process students begin to see literacy not as a body of knowledge – a set of rules to master—but as an active process of using knowledge for the purpose of saying something about the world, or as we call it, entering into academic conversations about ideas and practices that shape the world. So, allowing students to choose an option is the first step in establishing student agency.

In order to choose your option, read the descriptions below and decide which of the three best describes your reading and writing abilities.

OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3
I think of myself as a strong reader and writer.	*I think of myself as an average reader and writer.*	*I spoke another language besides English when growing up,* OR *a language other than English is used in my home.* AND *I am fluent in spoken English but it takes me a long time to read and write in English.*
READING:		**READING AND VOCABULARY:**
I am comfortable reading complex essays and take notes as I read.	I feel reading can be boring and hard and I don't really do much other than just read and put it away.	I often lose the meaning when I read because I get stuck on words I don't understand.
When I read, I make connections to other things I have read or experienced as a means of understanding a reading.	When I read, I am still not sure what the author's point was, and it is difficult to explain how the reading relates to anything.	I find it challenging to follow main point from section to section when I read.
I feel comfortable identifying the structure and organization of the things I read.	I would like to learn more about how writers connect and organize ideas in their writing.	I want to develop my vocabulary for college-level English.
WRITING:		**WRITING:**
I do well finding topics to write about and I can relate my ideas to the ideas of others.	I have trouble coming up with good topics and ideas for my essays.	I have ideas for writing but it's difficult to express my ideas, so I usually don't write very much..
I have effective strategies for outlining and organizing my writing.	I am unsure of myself when I plan my writing and could use tips on planning strategies.	
I feel comfortable doing research, know how to locate and evaluate sources and relate them to my own writing.	I need to improve my research skills and learn how to use outside sources in my writing.	When I make paragraphs, the point isn't always clear and the sentences don't seem to flow.
I am confident about the conventions of grammar, punctuation, and spelling.	I could use some brushing up on grammar and punctuation.	I need help with writing effective sentences and editing grammar mistakes in my writing.
CONCLUSION:		**CONCLUSION:**
I am ready to work at a quick pace, with the instructor as my guide.	*I would prefer to get more practice and help from my instructor as I learn to write college-level assignments.*	*I prefer to take an extra semester to work on my English before taking English 5A and 5B.*
ENGLISH 10	**ENGLISH 5A AND 5B**	**LINGUISTICS 6**

Directed Self-Placement and the English 10 choice

What happens if I elect to take English 10 and find out that I am in over my head?

At the beginning of English 10, your instructor will outline the kinds of work you will be doing. She or he will also ask you to do some writing and look at your writing to see if there is any indication that you are better suited to another course. If, within the first week, you believe you have not made the best decision, you may be able to switch to another course. Such changes present challenges for the student and the university, and there is no guarantee that you will be able to make the change that semester. For these reasons, it is best to weigh your options carefully and, when in doubt, you may want to choose English 5A/5B sequence.

What if I elect to take English 5A and then find out that it is too easy for me? Can I change into English 10?

Depending on course availability, some students may be able to make this switch-- within the first two weeks of the semester. However, do not anticipate that this will be the case very often. In most cases, we will encourage students who feel that English 5A is too easy, to view it as additional experience. Rather than anticipating a change, we encourage you to weigh the different options as carefully as possible, based on the questions identified in the Option Comparison Chart.

If I fail English 10 and decide to take English 5A and 5B, will the 5A/5B grades replace my English 10 grade?

Yes.

Linguistics 6:
Advanced English Strategies for Multilingual Speakers cont.

We believe multilingual students possess cultural knowledge that benefits them as they enter university life, but we also know that switching back and forth between two languages can generate difficulties, especially in terms of reading and writing in academic English. If you feel your difficulties with academic English may be related to your experience with the English language, then Linguistics 6 may be the best class for you at this stage of your development.

Why take Option 3?

- Fulfills G.E. requirement in three semesters
- Develops language base needed to do well at the university
- Focuses on smaller units of language, including sentences and paragraphs
- Concentrates on smaller writing assignments (1-3 pages)
- Provides the support needed to do well academically at the university

Option 3: The Program for Multilingual Speakers

Linguistics 6:
Advanced English Strategies for Multilingual Speakers

Linguistics 6 assists multilingual speakers who need more practice and guided instruction in reading, writing and academic language use as they enter university study. Students who benefit from this class usually find academic reading and writing in high school very challenging. You should consider this course if you have difficulty reading an essay or a longer piece of writing (10 pages or more) and understanding how the different parts of the writing lead up to a point. This course may help you understand what a writer is saying from paragraph to paragraph. You might benefit from this course if you write sentences that seem to lose their focus, or get tangled up because of vocabulary, verb tense, or structural problems. Or you might benefit from this course because you have trouble coming up with language to express yourself in a way that sounds "academic." Many students who take this class find the focus on sentence and paragraph level issues provides the kind of support they need to write well in their General Education classes. After completing Linguistics 6, you will move on to English 5A and 5B. *(3 semesters, 9 units).*

You should consider Linguistics 6 if you think the following list of goals addresses your reading and writing needs:

• Developing academic vocabulary: working on expanding your knowledge of language used in university level readings and writings.

• Improving sentence completeness, clarity, and variety: learning more about what makes sentences hold together and say what you want them to say; learning more about how to generate good sentences.

• Developing improved reading comprehension strategies: learning more about the strategies good readers use when they are reading well.

• Learning how to use summary and paraphrase to master readings and generate writing.

• Developing organizational strategies for writing as a process: learning about the kind of decisions good readers and writers make as they develop writing.

• Developing improved editing habits: learning how to see grammatical patterns in your writing so you can edit them before you turn in your writing.

Directed Self-Placement and the English 5A/5B choice

I am a good writer, but I need help with grammar. Which class should I take?

You should consider your command of grammar conventions as one of many factors in your decision making process. Command over grammar is one of the many characteristics of experienced college writers that both English 5A/5B and English 10 will address. In all of the first year writing courses, the focus on grammar will involve its relationship to what you are trying to express, the ways you are thinking, and the decisions you make as you write. We think it is important to remember that grammar is simply one aspect of successful writing. Many people are very good sentence writers, but still need more practice and instruction regarding planning, organization, developing ideas, reading critically, research methods, and revision strategies. Instead of focusing on one issue like grammar, we encourage you to consult the questions on the Option Comparison Chart.

If I fail English 5A do I have to retake it or can I go into 5B and pass the English requirement by passing English 5B?

Successful completion of English 5A is a prerequisite to taking English 5B. This means that you must receive a C or better in English 5A in order to enroll in English 5B.

Will taking English 5A and 5B mean that I will not graduate on time?

The credits you receive for English 5A can be applied to graduation as elective credits and English 5B meet general education requirements (Foundations Area A2). Taking the English 5A/5B sequence will not delay your graduation. We believe, moreover, that in the long-term, taking the course that is most appropriate to your experiences and preparedness will increase the chances of a timely graduation.

Why should I pay to take extra credits for English 5A/5B when I can get take care of my English requirement with one class?

English 5A counts toward elective college credit, so you would not be paying for an extra class; you would be making choices about the best classes to take for your educational experience.

Option 1: The Accelerated Program

English 10: Accelerated Academic Literacy

English 10 is an advanced class, and to choose this option you need to be a very competent reader and writer, ready to read complex essays, develop research supported analyses and complete assignments at a faster pace. *(1 semester, 3 units)*

Generally speaking, you are well prepared for English 10 if you have done a lot of analytical reading and writing in high school. If you choose English 10, you will learn how to further develop your critical reading abilities, and your knowledge about how to do research, as well as create complex arguments from that research. This class starts with longer assignments (5-7 pages) and will build on your abilities to inquire, reflect, compose, revise, and edit. Finally, you should choose English 10 if you feel comfortable with rules of spelling, punctuation, and grammar. English 10 is for students who are willing to commit themselves to a faster paced curriculum in reading and writing.

Why take Option 1?

• Fulfills G.E. requirement in one semester

• Emphasizes reading, researching, and writing

• Moves at a quicker pace

• Presents a greater challenge

• Begins with longer papers (5-7 pages)

Option 2: The Stretch Program

English 5A and 5B: Academic Literacy I & II

English 5A and 5B "stretches" the reading and writing assignments over two semesters. The first semester starts with shorter assignments and moves toward more complex reading and writing at semester's end. The second semester builds on work in 5A and leads you through longer and more complex analytical reading and writing tasks. This option will make the transition from high school to college reading and writing easier for you. Unless you really excel in English, we suggest this option. *(2 semesters, 6 units)*

These two courses have the same learning outcomes as English 10. The only difference is that there is more time to learn the conventions of academic writing. You should choose this option if you haven't done a lot of reading and writing or if you find reading and writing difficult. In addition, these classes will focus more on researching, citing, and including sources correctly in your writing. You will learn to read critically and to connect the reading with the writing that you will do. Finally these courses include more direct instruction in language choice, sentence variety, and editing.

Why take Option 2?

• Fulfills G.E. requirement in two semesters

• Emphasizes developing writing and reading strategies

• Gives you an entire year of work with the same peers and teachers

• Begins with less demanding assignments (3-5 pages)

• Offers more opportunities to revise papers and learn to read critically

• Eases transition to college reading and writing

THE WRITING PORTFOLIO FOR ENGLISH 5A, 5B, AND 10

In English 5A, 5B, and 10, you will submit midterm and final portfolios of your written work. Each portfolio will include written work that you created and revised over the entire semester of each course. Your work will be scored by a team of composition faculty (not your teacher) and it will be worth 60% of your final course grade.

Portfolios in English 5B and 10 are scored with the same criteria. Portfolios in English 5A will be scored with its own criteria.

You must receive *C* or better in English 5A to enroll in English 5B the following semester.

You must receive *C* or better in either English 5B or 10 to meet the general education writing requirement.

10.2   Appendix: FYW Program Tenure-Track Faculty Responsibilities

10.2.1   Coordinator for English 5A

Text book reviews, continue to coordinate texts for program

- Maintain relationship with Penguin

- Work with bookstore on ordering protocols

- Make sure people are using texts that match the program

- Make sure orders are done on time

Perform Adjudications

- Student grade challenges

- Complaints about instructors

- Disruptive student problems

- Plagiarism problems

- Manage probation for students

- Manage probation for teachers

Manage student challenges to FYW

- Collect portfolio and assess

Oversight of 290's

- Coordinate content and methods

- Facilitate reflection and revision

- Match 290 curriculum to teacher needs

- Try to involve part time faculty

- Try to find different 290 roles for different levels of experience

Manage teacher development

- Oversight of teacher progress through the program by maintaining coherence in their support and development as teachers of writing

- Maintaining a rationale for teacher development

- Protecting beginning teachers with support, guidance, guided curriculum, text selection

- Oversee progress of teachers in the program by setting up an observation plan and making sure that faculty can perform observations, or finding other people to perform observations

- Oversee relevance of 290's

- Oversee development of Comp Program handbook

- Oversee development of Comp Prg web space

- Oversee access to methods and materials for teaching

- Listen to teachers and respond to their concerns programmatically or individually

- Write memos that describe program and its goals, practices, outcomes, (Institutional memos, rationales, etc)

- Oversight of teacher grading performance

Oversight of portfolio assessment

- Finding rooms

- Establishing processes

- Discussion purpose and applications

- Assessment of portfolio

- Teaching teachers about portfolio

- Listen to teacher concerns about portfolio

- Adjusting portfolio process, now in its 6th semester.

Oversight and organization of Orientations

- Getting rooms, setting dates, generating content, agendas

Oversee TA evaluations

- Manage observations

- Lead discussions about TA performance

- Make sure policies and protocols are followed

- Make sure Union guidelines are followed

- Adjudicate hearings for poor performance

- Establish probationary plan for under-performing TAs

- Manage probationary plan for under-performing TAs

- Make final assessment on TA performance

10.2.2 Coordinator for English 5B

Text book reviews, continue to coordinate texts for program

- Maintain relationship with Penguin

- Work with bookstore on ordering protocols

- Make sure people are using texts that match the program

- Make sure orders are done on time

Perform Adjudications

- Student grade challenges

- Complaints about instructors

- Disruptive student problems

- Plagiarism problems

- Manage probation for students

- Manage probation for teachers

Manage student challenges to FYW

- Collect portfolio and assess

Oversight of 290's

- Coordinate content and methods

- Facilitate reflection and revision

- Match 290 curriculum to teacher needs

- Try to involve part time faculty

- Try to find different 290 roles for different levels of experience

Manage teacher development

- Oversight of teacher progress through the program by maintaining coherence in their support and development as teachers of writing

- Maintaining a rationale for teacher development

- Protecting beginning teachers with support, guidance, guided curriculum, text selection

- Oversee progress of teachers in the program by setting up an observation plan and making sure that faculty can perform observations, or finding other people to perform observations

- Oversee relevance of 290's

- Oversee development of Comp Program handbook

- Oversee development of Comp Prg web space

- Oversee access to methods and materials for teaching

- Listen to teachers and respond to their concerns programmatically or individually

- Write memos that describe program and its goals, practices, outcomes, (Institutional memos, rationales, etc)

- Oversight of teacher grading performance

- Oversight of portfolio assessment

- Finding rooms

- Establishing processes

- Discussion purpose and applications

- Assessment of portfolio

- Teaching teachers about portfolio

- Listen to teacher concerns about portfolio

- Adjusting portfolio process, now in its 6th semester.

Oversight and organization of Orientations

- Getting rooms, setting dates, generating content, agendas

Oversee TA evaluations

- Manage observations

- Lead discussions about TA performance

- Make sure policies and protocols are followed

- Make sure Union guidelines are followed

- Adjudicate hearings for poor performance

- Establish probationary plan for under-performing TAs

- Manage probationary plan for under-performing TAs

- Make final assessment on TA performance

10.2.3 Coordinator for English 10

Text book reviews, continue to coordinate texts for program

- Maintain relationship with Penguin

- Work with bookstore on ordering protocols

- Make sure people are using texts that match the program

- Make sure orders are done on time

Perform Adjudications

- Student grade challenges

- Complaints about instructors

- Disruptive student problems

- Plagiarism problems

- Manage probation for students

- Manage probation for teachers

Manage student challenges to FYW

- Collect portfolio and assess

Oversight of 290's

- Coordinate content and methods

- Facilitate reflection and revision

- Match 290 curriculum to teacher needs

- Try to involve part time faculty

- Try to find different 290 roles for different levels of experience

Manage teacher development

- Oversight of teacher progress through the program by maintaining coherence in their support and development as teachers of writing

- Maintaining a rationale for teacher development

- Protecting beginning teachers with support, guidance, guided curriculum, text selection

- Oversee progress of teachers in the program by setting up an observation plan and making sure that faculty can perform observations, or finding other people to perform observations

- Oversee relevance of 290's

- Oversee development of Comp Program handbook

- Oversee development of Comp Prg web space

- Oversee access to methods and materials for teaching

- Listen to teachers and respond to their concerns programmatically or individually

- Write memos that describe program and its goals, practices, outcomes, (Institutional memos, rationales, etc)

- Oversight of teacher grading performance

Oversight of portfolio assessment

- Finding rooms

- Establishing processes

- Discussion purpose and applications

- Assessment of portfolio

- Teaching teachers about portfolio

- Listen to teacher concerns about portfolio

- Adjusting portfolio process, now in its 6th semester.

Oversight and organization of Orientations

- Getting rooms, setting dates, generating content, agendas

Oversee TA evaluations

- Manage observations

- Lead discussions about TA performance

- Make sure policies and protocols are followed

- Make sure Union guidelines are followed

- Adjudicate hearings for poor performance

- Establish probationary plan for under-performing TAs

- Manage probationary plan for under-performing TAs

- Make final assessment on TA performance

10.2.4 Academic Assistant

Manage calendar: Coordinate dates, rooms, protocols, information about:

- Portfolio readings

- Textbook orders

- Hiring

- Intent to return dates

- Contract deadlines

- Orientations

10.2.5 Program Director

Oversight of comp faculty scheduling

- Coordinate coverage and program offerings

- Develop courses for undergraduate Comp Studies

- Articulate with credential program

- Maintain release time for comp adm.

- Explain why we need release time and how we use it, every semester

- Protect release time for untenured faculty

- Support untenured faculty RTP progress by overseeing their assignments

Coordinate Grants

- Find grants and facilitate discussion for application

- Find money for staff support

- Find money for program assessment

- Find money for participation in national conferences

- Find money for TA development

Oversight of 290's

- Coordinate content and methods for different cohorts

Coordinate program with CSU remediation requirements

- Continue DSP and report to CSU and CSU Fresno on findings

- Chair University Subcommittee on Writing (this is very optional and needs to be discussed)

- Continued work on developing a WAC program

- Continued work on assessing W courses on campus

- Continued work on revising W courses on campus

- Continued work on assessing the value of the UDWE

- Continued work on developing standards and outcomes for W courses

- Continued work on developing support for writing instruction on campus

- Assessment of new course offerings

- Monitoring various committee renderings regarding writing on campus

Write End of the Year Reports

- Collect info and write it up for the Chair

Editor for Program Newsletter

- Conduct meetings for Newsletter Board

- Edit and select submissions

- Solicit submissions

- Write for the newsletter

Attend English Council

- Advocate for composition instruction

- Maintain communication with other programs

- Maintain and develop comp CSU agendas with other programs

- Report on portfolio assessment

- Report on DSP

- Maintain oversight on CSU EPT demands and uses

Oversight and management of Comp Administrative Assistant

- Getting info out to program

- Collecting data for assessment

- Oversight on textbook ordering, hiring, contracts, etc.

Administer FWY policies and protocols

- Work with Catalogue

- Work on class size issues, protect class size

- Work on registration issues

- Work on student placement issues

- Work on TA placement issues

- Work with TA union

- Work with Part Time union

- Work with various committees/departments on FYW issues (i.e. Ling 6 etc.)

- Develop policies for classroom/student issues and problems and administer them

- Manage Program grading policies, attendance policies, athletics policies in accordance with university requirements

- Work with Dean's office on assessment, work load issues, room assignments and availability, scheduling, seat calculations

- Work with Evaluations on course equivalencies by assessing student transcripts

- Work with various advising services on student applications and equivalencies

Oversight and Evaluation of GE articulations with other schools

- Examine course descriptions and validate or reject courses as equivalent to ours

Oversight of comp MA program

- Develop new curriculum

- Dev new classes

- Possible develop program as opposed to emphasis

- Administer changes through department and Graduate Office

- Continue to argue for curriculum changes that are in accordance with other C/R MA programs, working to address Department "Literature" concerns

Curriculum and Pedagogical oversight for FYW

- Lead discussions about content of courses

- Review curriculum, pedagogy, texts, outcomes, assessment methods

- Oversight of relation between curriculum/pedagogy and teacher pool

- Listen to teacher concerns and act on them

- Involve teachers in program changes, reflection, assessment

- Link curriculum/pedagogy to scholarship in the field

- Continue assessment of curriculum/pedagogy

- Maintain accurate info to advising services, catalogue, schedule of courses, etc

- Respond to questions and concerns from faculty, administration, the community

- Articulate program curriculum/pedagogy to high schools in the region

- Continue to disseminate our program's goals and practices to other university organizations to eliminate confusion and misinformation

- Development of model syllabi

- Oversight and assessment of teacher syllabi

- Oversight of teacher assignments

Work with Part Time faculty

- Hiring

- Establish requirements for work

- Address work load issues

- Respond to Part Time concerns

- Articulation of relation to comp program

10.3   Appendix: Program Portfolio Requirements

While each course (5A, 5B, and 10) have their own portfolios, all are based on the basic requirements of the Engl 5A portfolio. Below is the information that all teachers in the program receive regarding the Engl 5A portfolio.

5A Program Writing Portfolio

English Department, CSU, Fresno

Midterm Readings: Week 8

Final Readings: Finals Week

The Engl 5A writing program uses a program portfolio that determines if each student is ready to move on and work successfully in 5B, regardless of the course section in which she/he is currently enrolled. The portfolio is the program's way of ensuring consistency of student learning and success across sections.

Ultimately, grading and determining course grades are left up to the teacher, not the program, but the standard grading use of the final portfolio has been to make the portfolio worth at least 30% of the overall course grade. If you are using the grading contract, then all you have to do is make the portfolio and its assessment activities mandatory in the contract for passing the course. (See the "Student-Driven Portfolio Assessment" handout for details on the portfolio assessment activities).

10.4   Midterm Portfolio

The midterm portfolio should be in a simple pocket folder (no bulky binders with rings, please), and/or electronic (i.e., posted as a .rtf or .doc file on Blackboard). The following information should be attached clear to each portfolio:

- Student name

- Student ID #

- Course section

- Teacher's name

NOTE: If you are member of the portfolio assessment group, those teachers whose classes are being used to help assess the program, then your portfolios ask for slightly different information, mostly for confidentiality and access reasons. Talk to the 5A Coordinator about those special requirements.

10.5 Midterm Portfolio

Inside the folder, or in the portfolio file, the student should include the following typed materials, organized for easy access by readers:

- Letter of reflection, addressed to the readers (3-5 pages double-spaced)

- Revised Project 1 (3-5 pages, typed), including other materials the student feels will help readers (e.g. previous drafts, possibly with teacher comments; short assignments and documents that led to the creation of the project; etc.)

- Project Description Handout (or assignment handout), i.e. any formal instructions and prompt that the students were given for the project

10.6 Final Portfolio

The final portfolio is very similar to the midterm, only now the student has more choices of what to include and will include two projects, as opposed to just one in the midterm portfolio. Students should use the same folder, since the identifying information is already on there.

For clarity, here are the typed and complete materials students should include in all final portfolios:

- Revised letter of reflection, addressed to the readers (3-5 pages double-spaced)

- Revised "Best" Project (3-5 pages, typed), including other materials the student feels will help readers (e.g. previous drafts, possibly with teacher comments; short assignments and documents that led to the creation of the project; etc.)

- Project Description Handout (or assignment handout)

- Revised Project (3-5 pages, typed), the final draft of another project the student chooses

- Project Description Handout (or assignment handout)

Organization will be important in this final portfolio. And students will most likely want to mention it in their letters of reflection.

10.7 Final Portfolio Readings

During the final portfolio readings, the primary purpose is to determine if the student is ready to move on to 5B and do progress in the course. This decision can be articulated as: **Given the final portfolio, do you (and at least one other teacher) predict that this student will do okay in 5B?** So the judgment you are making is NOT about how well the

student has directly achieved the course goals (this is a judgment the teacher makes directly in her grading and evaluation processes), although theoretically this judgment does coincide with and is indirectly made in the portfolio readings, instead your direct decision in the final portfolio readings is a prediction of immediate future success in 5B.

In this reading, readers will also provide limited, summative feedback, mostly in case a teacher needs to explain later to a student how and why a particular judgment was made on a portfolio.

10.8 Letter of Reflection

The letter of reflection should be a document that in the most formal of senses transmits the portfolio to the readers, explaining what is included in the portfolio, why these items were included, what characteristics, features, revisions, and issues are important to consider when reading the portfolio, and what the student has come to understand about his reading and writing processes generally, and as they pertain to the documents included in the portfolio. The letter reflects on a variety of things, and there is no set format or set of questions or issues that students must discuss, however, the following list may be helpful to students when writing and revising theirs:

- What strategies do good readers engage in? What can the student say about the use of these strategies? How have/do these strategies generate comprehension? How do these strategies relate to specific reading situations or genres included?

- What assumptions orient the student to effective reading comprehension practices? What can she say about how the assumptions guide her reading habits? What kind of information does she have about reading that proved helpful in generating readings?

- What has the student learned about her reading processes, about the kind of decisions she makes as she reads, about how to actively engage with a text? What has she learned about marking texts or taking notes or responding to texts? What has she learned about reading as a meaning making act?

- What has the student learned about rhetoric that applies to effective reading? What has she learned about contexts for reading and the way they influence meaning making?

- What has the student learned about analyzing texts? What strategies best fit this purpose? What has she learned about controlling the literal meaning of a text?

- What has the student learned about the way that texts interact with other texts? What she learned about reading as social act, or about disagreeing on an interpretation of a text? What has she learned about the knowledge of culture, her own life, politics, history or other disciplines in relation to making meaning?

Another list to consider. Good letters of reflection often discuss the following issues in the actual writing provided:

- Self-assessment of the portfolio based on the most important elements of the portfolio rubric and/or essay guidelines and rubrics provided in the assignment

- Important revisions made in particular documents, or specific differences between drafts

- Interesting or confusing patterns of thought or rhetorical decisions in the writing and/or revisions

- Patterns in colleagues' comments and evaluations

- Challenges faced with particular rhetorical situations, arguments, or elements of the evaluation/assessment rubrics

- Things that the writer learned about his writing or writing processes

- Things that are still confusing to the writer, questions he still has, or difficulties he still sees in his writing

- Theoretical or abstract "lessons" or strategies for writing and assessing that the writer takes, or has come to better understand, from the portfolio

10.9 Appendix: Program Course Project Requirements

While each course (Engl 5A, 5B, and 10) have different projects that all students must complete, the following are the three projects that all Engl 5A students must complete, which provides an good sense of the curriculum and how it's articulated to teachers.

5A Writing Project Descriptions

Project 1: Articulating the Conversation

Description:

This project should ask students to practice reading and summarizing other people's textual arguments in order to answer a particular question that your course theme helps focus/dictate. In the most general of senses, it asks students to understand and articulate *what " they" say about a specific question, issue, or concept*. It mostly centers students on the "They Say" portion of *They Say I Say* (*TSIS*) by Graff and Birkenstein.

Primary Product and its Outcomes:

The main outcome will be a 3-4 page paper that focuses on a question (stemming from the course theme) that the student will contextualize and address through other people's arguments. It should draw on at least three sources or voices in a conversation, which means it will also have a Works Cited page. There will be a thesis, or main claim, in the paper, but this claim does not have to be a defendable position on the issue or question at hand; instead, it will more likely be one that is "factual" in nature, inherently concerned with the observed "facts" of the conversation the writer is summarizing. The main claim of the paper will most likely be an answer that is built by other people's ideas, summarized and manipulated in this paper. The summary portion of the paper should be about 2/3 (or more) of the total paper's content.

You might indicate the project's outcomes by stating it in one of the following ways:

- Students practice, develop competency in, and demonstrate using sources affectively for a factual purpose.

- Students practice, develop competency in, and demonstrate summarizing purposefully a variety of sources in an accurate and ethical manner.

Example Prompts:

The following, while not exactly what you'd give your students, could be prompts that organize this first project.

- Students read all the essays in Chapter 5 of the *Thomson Reader*. They then summarize the writers' arguments, choosing four essays that answer one of following questions: What seems to be most important about the way a person's identity is formed? Or, How does a person come to understand his or

her identity? Or, Why do Americans seem so driven to place people in specific identity categories?

- Students read chapter one (How do I Know Who I Am?) of Bloom et al's Inquiry. They could map out how some of the texts presented differing answers the chapter's main question (How do I know who I am?), creating a landscape or a terrain of possible answers.

- If you use The *Arlington Reader*, you might ask students to work in chapter 4, Education. Students may summarize from readings there to answer the question, "What is most important about getting a college degree?"

- Or this could be an essay that asks students to figure out why something is valued in a particular way, using sources to paint a picture, or represent the way a particular concept, argument, idea, belief, or other such organizing principle is represented in culture. In this essay, students may read a series of essays that look into different conceptions of race, or class, or pop culture, or status that are taken as "common sense" or "just the way things are." After reading, students summarize the various ways in which different writers weigh in on a central issue, or understand a concept or idea. For example, if you read a series of writings about "success," how have different writers portrayed success and how do they each account for these difference, or how can the writer account for them?

- Or this could be a kind of scholarship survey, allowing students to identify the most salient arguments on an academic of public issue. This essay could answer a question like, "What's the story on people trying to limit immigration?" or "What's the story behind our nations' fascination with sex and violence?" Or any of a myriad other questions that could be addressed. The "what's the story" leads students to discover the competing narratives that frame an issue or give an issue significance.

Issues to Reinforce or Introduce:

Students can organize their projects in a number of ways – that is, organize the way they think about summarizing and using that summary for some purpose. Here is a brief list of ways students might understand their purposes and tasks in this project:

- Building a discussion that reproduces the main voices in an academic conversation in order to demonstrate a "factual" claim8 about the conversation itself

- Summarize to set context (summary as a map of the conversation)

- Summarize to provide arguments different from the student writer's response

- Summarize to provide the reader with the writer's answer to the question posed

- Summarize to understand the literal meaning, concepts, ideas, or questions in an academic conversation

Suggested Readings:

You might consider the following in your lesson plans:

- *TSIS*: Preface, demystifying academic conversation

- *TSIS*: Introduction, Entering the conversation

- *TSIS*: Chapter 1, "They Say"

- *TSIS*: Chapter 2, "Her Point Is"

- *TSIS*: Chapter 3: "As He Himself Puts It."

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8 In this description, "fact" is not synonymous with "truth" or "reality" but with what is literally stated in others' views of things (the readings, for instance, that are the sources for summaries), so a "factual claim" is more of an epistemological description of the kind of claim asked for, not an ontological one.

Project 2: Critiquing the Conversation

Description:

This project can be best characterized as a critique of a conversation on which the writer is reading materials. This project centers on a particular kind of "I Say" position, one that criticizes the conversation or some aspect of it, but still incorporates the "they say." The writer's purpose in this assignment is to research what people are saying about a topic and then level a critique of the way the problem or issue is being approached, but will not take a position in the debate or conversation.

Primary Product and its Outcomes:

The main outcome will be a 3-4 page paper that focuses on a critique of the conversation (stemming from the course theme) that the student forms from reading and summarizing the various voices in the conversation. There should be at least three sources or voices used, with a Works Cited page included. There will be an articulated position or main claim in the paper that the student articulates about conversation and/or its terms. This main claim or thesis is one of value, and more particularly, one that evaluates or critiques the conversation and/or its terms. Regardless of how much summary is involved in the paper, defending the main claim of value, or thesis, should take precedence, but one might assume that around 1/2 of the paper's content will be summary, the rest will be analysis, extension, illustration, and discussion.

You might indicate the project's outcomes by stating it as:

- Students practice, develop competency in, and demonstrate using sources to develop a position that critiques a public, academic conversation.

- Students practice, develop competency in, and demonstrate using sources, building a unified critique of an academic conversation in order to enter that conversation.

Example Prompts:

- You might ask your students to enter a conversation based on *Reading Life's* "To Market, To Market," gather information about a specific element of what others are saying in that conversation (e.g. language in advertising, advertisers seduction techniques, etc.), critique the conversation that the Life's article is engaging in by considering how different voices in the conversation pose the problem/issue most important, or critique the assumptions that most use to approach or engage in the conversation. Next, research the magazine (consider what kind is it? Liberal? Conservative etc.), the periodical's purpose (to inform/ advise/ entertain/critique etc.), its readership demographics, its advertising and funding (who gives this magazine money?), its editorial politics, the political posture or position that most articles take or assume, etc.

Use this contextual, political, and historical information to inform your critique, enrich it, and reformulate your critique of the conversation and its terms.

Issues to Reinforce or Introduce:

Students might organize the way they think about this project as different from the previous one in a number of ways, mainly by purpose and tasks involved. For instance:

- Summarize to evaluate the literal meaning in order to produce an evaluation of the conversation or its terms (What's most significant in the positions of others? What's misunderstood? What's forgotten? What assumptions most affect outcomes or conclusions?)

- Summarize to see the conversation in a different way than standard views and make a judgment on this new view, or those standard ones

- Summarize to reorganize or reconfigure the terms of the conversation in order to evaluated those terms (previously, folks thought X was most important here, but given these voices, one might say it's Y because it shows us flaws, assumptions . . .)

Suggested Readings:

- *TSIS*: Ch 10, The Art of Metacommentary

Project 3: Entering the Conversation

Description:

This project centers on the "I Say" part of *They Say I Say*, but still incorporates the "they say." Essentially this project asks students to practice focused reading and forming a position within an ongoing public, academic conversation. The written portion of this project asks students to take a position on the question or issue central to their research and reading. This project builds on what they have learned in the first project and asks students to identify the most significant elements in an academic or public conversation (see the Introduction to *TSIS* for a full explanation of the idea of an academic of public conversation) and produce a position.

Primary Product and its Outcomes:

The main outcome will be a 3-4 page paper that focuses on a question (stemming from the course theme) that the student will contextualize and on which she will form a position or response in the debate or conversation. There should be at least three sources or voices used to demonstrate the conversation, with a Works Cited page included. There will be an articulated position or main claim in the paper that the student defends and is distinct from the other voices/positions that form the context and conversation in question. This means the student should take a stand in the conversation or debate. The nature of the main claim will be either factual or evaluative.[9] Regardless of how much summary is involved in the paper, defending the main focus and position should take precedence, but one might assume that around 1/2 of the paper's content will be summary, the rest will be analysis, extension, illustration, and discussion.

You might indicate the project's outcomes by stating it as:

- Students practice, develop competency in, and demonstrate using sources to develop a position on a question or issue distinct from others.

- Students practice, develop competency in, and demonstrate using sources, articulating a position, and entering public, academic, written conversations.

Example Prompts:

- After reading several essays on the way language can signify social class, or the way language can influence the way a person is identified with a particular group, ask students to summarize the conversation they are entering, establishing some of the most prevalent positions, and then to assert their

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[9] Claims of value that focus and organize projects 2 and 3 tend not to be binary judgments of "right or wrong" or "good or bad," but more nuanced and complex evaluations that resist simple answers or static, neo-Platonic assumptions of truth and value. Instead, they produce or explain contextually these values and assumptions and how they help produce evaluations and judgments.

position in the conversation, essentially answering or responding to issues that give the conversation significance. For example, students might examine one strand of hip hop culture and the way that language in that group gives power to certain kinds of people, or the way language constructs the idea of female. Once the student has a sense of the sources that inform his or her take on this conversation, the student enters into the conversation, making her or his own claims about the way language functions in that culture.

- Students might read a series of arguments about feminism, summarizing the voices the student most wants to respond to. The response to the arguments would constitute the student's position in the conversation.

- Students may look into the way education is represented in a series of writings, then enter into the conversation by taking up those ideas and establishing a relation to what has already been said by agreeing, disagreeing, extending, qualifying, revising, writing about the claims of writers from a specific racial, social, political, metaphysical, or gender perspective.

Issues to Reinforce or Introduce:

Students might organize the way they think about this project as different from the previous one in a number of ways, mainly by purpose and tasks involved. For instance:

- Summarize the literal meaning in order to create one's own position in the conversation

- Summarize to see the conversation in a different way than standard views

- Summarize to reorganize or reconfigure the terms of the conversation itself (previously, folks thought X was most important here, but given these voices, one might say it's Y, because . . .)

Suggested Readings:

- *TSIS*: Ch 4, Three Ways to Respond

- *TSIS*: Ch 5, Distinguishing What You Say from What They Say

- *TSIS*: Ch 6, Planting a Naysayer in Your Text

- *TSIS*: Ch 7, Saying Why It Matters

- *TSIS*: Ch 8, Connecting the Parts

- *TSIS*: Ch 9, Your Own Voice

- *TSIS*: Ch 10, The Art of Metacommentary

10.10 Appendix: Engl 5A Portfolio Training Document

Portfolio Theory

Portfolios, whether program or ones used in the classroom only, can have several characteristics that are important to consider. Depending on how you design them, their use, and their evaluations will determine which characteristics are most present or emphasized. There are essentially nine characteristics described by Hamp-Lyons and Condon (2000), and reiterated in most of the research and scholarship on portfolios (e.g. Belanoff and Dickson 1991; Belanoff and Elbow 1991; Yancey 1997). Portfolios offer potentially, the following characteristics:

- **Collection** – gathers more than one writing performance to be judged

- **Range** – offers more than one kind of writing to be judged

- **Context Richness** – represents the opportunities that the curriculum presents to students for writing (not separated from the curriculum)

- **Delayed Evaluation** – provides a way to NOT grade individual pieces until a late date in the semester

- **Selection** – provides only a portion of the corpus of work the student has produced, giving students a chance to make decisions on their writing

- **Student-Centered Control** – allows students to control choices and what gets judged

- **Reflection and Self-Assessment** – provides a way for students to directly reflect upon their writing practices and specific documents

- **Growth Along Parameters** - allows for a demonstration of growth in the writer along particular dimensions of the writing construct that the portfolio is meant to embody (usually seen in the letter, drafts, and revisions included)

- **Development Over Time** – can trace changes, development, of drafts

Portfolio Reading Theory
Richard Haswell (1998) offers three useful distinctions in the way judges read texts, particularly when they read to make the kinds of decisions we are attempting to make in our program portfolios. He offers the following as a way to understand the three kinds of categorizing readers often engage in:

- **Classical** Categorization – "*assumes that people categorize by grasping the non-accidental properties of a new instance and matching them with the unique set of properties that define the correct category*. Each category has a fixed set of features. Every feature is necessary and together they are suffcient for categorical definition. Classically defined, for instance, the novel is a category of books that are long, fictional, and prose. If a yet-to-be-categorized instance is a book, a person need only determine that it is long, fictional, and prose to categorize it is a novel. No further features require attention, such as the date of publication or the sex of the writer." (245).

    > **Deductive and syllogistic model for reading**: i.e. a list of premises or characteristics that make up an ideal portfolio are compared to the portfolio in question, which is often an analytical process.

Reading 3 (tie-breakers)	• **Prototype** Categorization – "*assumes that people categorize by judging how similar the yet-to-be-categorized instance is to abstract schemas they have of the best example or most representative member (prototype) of possible categories*. The prototype of a category is not a specific member but an idealized construction, a "convenient grammatical fiction" (Rosch, 1978, p. 40) . . . In prototype categories, members are organized by gradience within the category, each being judged further or closer to the best example. A robin is a better example of a bird than is a penguin (this is Rosch's oft-cited illustration). But this gradedness is complex, because no set of features need be shared by every member." (246). 　　**Comparative and inferred model of reading**: i.e. the portfolio in question (the one being read/judged) is compared to ideal ones with loose characteristics, so judgments are made in terms of how close the present portfolio is to ideal ones held in the mind (i.e. an inference is made about how near the portfolio is to the "ideal" one imagined)
Reading 1 and 2	• **Exemplar** Categorization – "*assumes that people sometimes categorize by comparing a new instance with intact memories ("exemplars") of similar instances* . . . A person may categorize a book leafed through in a bookstore as a novel because the cover, one chapter title, and the font are quite reminiscent of a novel just read. Categorization by exemplar assumes a rummaging through episodic memory ending with a gestalt-like pattern recognition of specific exemplars. Largely unconscious, the way features of those experiences connect with features of the new instance depend on a flock of contextual contingencies, including the categorizer's previous encounter, subsequent experience with it, and current motivations." (247). 　　**Contextually inductive and norm-based model of reading**: i.e. the portfolio in question is compared to similar known ideal portfolios and this contextualized judgment is made inductively without set characteristics to judge or consider.

10.11 Appendix: Competency Data

OVERALL

	5A Midterm	5A Final	5B Midterm	5B Final		10 Midterm	10 Final
All	**73.9%**	**99.6%**	**90.3%**	**96.6%**	**All**	**83.2%**	**86.4%**
Females	74.4%	100%	91.7%	96.8%	**Females**	85.1%	89.2%
APA	66.67%	100%	96.67%	96.67%	APA	100%	94.74%
Black	66.67%	100%	100%	100%	Black	45.45%	72.73%
Hispan.	73.77%	100%	90.16%	96.72%	Hispan.	94.44%	94.44%
White	78.95%	100%	89.47%	96.49%	White	91.30%	86.96%
Males	73.2%	98.8%	87.8%	96.3%	**Males**	80%	82%
APA	73.33%	100%	93.33%	100%	APA	64.29%	92.86%
Black	100%	100%	66.67%	88.89%	Black	80%	100%
Hispan.	60%	96%	88%	96%	Hispan.	83.33%	72.22%
White	74.19%	100%	90.32%	96.77%	White	100%	83.33%

Table 49. Comprehensive data for overall competency rates of FYW students in 2007-08 AY.

UNANIMOUS

	5A Midterm	5A Final	5B Midterm	5B Final		10 Midterm	10 Final
All	**52.5%**	**81.5%**	**84.5%**	**95%**	**All**	**78.4%**	**80%**
Females	55.8%	86.5%	86.5%	95.5%	**Females**	82.4%	87.8%
APA	46.67%	86.67%	86.67%	93.33%	APA	94.74%	94.74%
Black	33.33%	83.33%	83.33%	100%	Black	45.45%	63.64%
Hispan.	59.02%	81.97%	85.25%	95.08%	Hispan.	88.89%	94.44%
White	57.89%	87.72%	87.72%	96.49%	White	91.30%	86.96%
Males	46.3%	75.6%	80.5%	93.9%	**Males**	72%	80%
APA	53.33%	66.67%	93.33%	93.33%	APA	57.14%	92.9%
Black	77.78%	88.89%	55.56%	77.78%	Black	40%	100%
Hispan.	24.00%	68%	76.00%	96%	Hispan.	77.78%	72.22%
White	48.39%	80.65%	83.87%	96.77%	White	100%	75%

Table 50. Comprehensive data for unanimous competency rates of FYW students in 2007-08 AY.

10.12 Appendix: Engl 5A Program Assessment Survey

Engl 5A Program Assessment Survey

CSU, Fresno Writing Program

We thank you for taking the time to complete this important survey. The data we collect from this survey will help us improve our writing curriculum and program processes, as well as better understand our students and their experiences of the curriculum.

By filling out this survey, you give consent for your information to be used by the CSUF writing program faculty for research purposes ONLY. You do not have to fill out this survey, but we hope you will since it is important to gather as complete data as possible. **Your decision to complete the survey or not WILL NOT IN ANY WAY affect your grade or progress in your writing class**. Your teacher will not use this data in any way to compute grades or consider progress in this class. This data will go directly to the program assessment coordinator for research purposes only. Thank you very much for helping us do this important work.

Please complete the following items as directed below.

1. Print clearly your Student ID #: _____

    2. Circle your gender/sex below.

        M = male   F = female

    3. Circle the one racial designation below with which you most identify.

        B = Black, Non-Hispanic   H = Hispanic

        N = American Indian or Alaskan Native   W = White, Non-Hispanic

        A = Asian or Pacific Islander   R = Nonresident Alien

    4. Circle the highest level of schooling your parents have attained (circle only one below).

        0 = less than high school education   1 = high school education, GED,
        or equivalent

        2 = Associates degree or some college   3 = Trade schooling

        4 = Bachelor's degree   5 = Master's degree

        6 = PhD., EdD., Doctorate, or M.D. degree

    5. Print clearly the high school you attended last or graduated from below.

        _____

    6. Print clearly the zip code in which you currently reside: _____

7. Circle the one statement below that most matches your current feelings about this class.

> 1 = I am not satisfied with my decision to take this course (my self-placement).

> 2 = I am only partially satisfied with my decision to take this course (my self-placement).

> 3 = I am mostly satisfied with my decision to take this course (my self-placement).

> 4 = I am completely satisfied with my decision to take this course (my self-placement).

8. Circle the one statement below that most matches your current feelings about this class.

> 1 = I did not make an accurate or correct placement decision to take this class.

> 2 = I am not sure if I made an accurate or correct placement decision to take this class.

> 3 = I made an accurate or correct placement decision to take this class.

10.13 Appendix: Comparative Grade Distributions Data for Engl 1A and The Current FYW Program Courses (5A, 5B, and 10)

2005 - Engl 1A
FULL YEAR

	total	A's	B's	C's	D's	F's	W's	WU's		total	A's	B's	C's	D's	F's	W's	WU's	Pass	Fail
Asian PA	328	71	103	84	23	27	10	10		23.45%	21.65%	31.40%	25.61%	7.01%	8.23%	3.05%	3.05%	78.66%	21.34%
Black	111	16	45	31	8	7	2	2		7.93%	14.41%	40.54%	27.93%	7.21%	6.31%	1.80%	1.80%	82.88%	17.12%
Hispanic	498	102	171	116	25	62	12	10		35.60%	20.48%	34.34%	23.29%	5.02%	12.45%	2.41%	2.01%	78.11%	21.89%
Native Am.	12	2	6	3	1	0	0	0		0.86%	16.67%	50.00%	25.00%	8.33%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	91.67%	8.33%
White	397	114	144	65	17	32	14	11		28.38%	28.72%	36.27%	16.37%	4.28%	8.06%	3.53%	2.77%	81.36%	18.64%
Unknown	53	12	17	11	6	4	2	1		3.79%	22.64%	32.08%	20.75%	11.32%	7.55%	3.77%	1.89%	75.47%	24.53%
Total	*1399*	*317*	*486*	*310*	*80*	*132*	*40*	*34*		*100.00%*	*22.66%*	*34.74%*	*22.16%*	*5.72%*	*9.44%*	*2.86%*	*2.43%*	*79.56%*	*20.44%*

	total	A's	B's	C's	D's	F's	W's	WU's		total	A's	B's	C's	D's	F's	W's	WU's	Pass	Fail
Male	892	183	319	211	52	83	27	17		41.94%	20.52%	35.76%	23.65%	5.83%	9.30%	3.03%	1.91%	79.93%	20.07%
Female	1235	405	423	203	59	92	34	19		58.06%	32.79%	34.25%	16.44%	4.78%	7.45%	2.75%	1.54%	83.48%	16.52%
Total	*2127*	*588*	*742*	*414*	*111*	*175*	*61*	*36*		*100.00%*	*27.64%*	*34.88%*	*19.46%*	*5.22%*	*8.23%*	*2.87%*	*1.69%*	*81.99%*	*18.01%*

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	total	A's	B's	C's	D's	F's	W's	WU's		total	A's	B's	C's	D's	F's	W's	WU's	Pass	Fail
5A										**5A**									
Asian PI	552	256	144	77	23	19	19	14		25.79%	46.38%	26.09%	13.95%	4.17%	3.44%	3.44%	2.54%	86.41%	13.59%
Black	270	109	51	44	17	10	27	12		12.62%	40.37%	18.89%	16.30%	6.30%	3.70%	10.00%	4.44%	75.56%	24.44%
Hispanic	770	389	131	110	69	27	36	8		35.98%	50.52%	17.01%	14.29%	8.96%	3.51%	4.68%	1.04%	81.82%	18.18%
Native An	13	8	1	1	2	1	0	0		0.61%	61.54%	7.69%	7.69%	15.38%	7.69%	0.00%	0.00%	76.92%	23.08%
White	441	224	94	62	32	8	16	5		20.61%	50.79%	21.32%	14.06%	7.26%	1.81%	3.63%	1.13%	86.17%	13.83%
Unknown	94	44	29	7	7	3	3	1		4.39%	46.81%	30.85%	7.45%	7.45%	3.19%	3.19%	1.06%	85.11%	14.89%
Total	*2140*	*1030*	*450*	*301*	*150*	*68*	*101*	*40*		*100.00%*	*48.13%*	*21.03%*	*14.07%*	*7.01%*	*3.18%*	*4.72%*	*1.87%*	*83.22%*	*16.78%*
male	995	425	225	140	69	48	53	35		39.80%	42.71%	22.61%	14.07%	6.93%	4.82%	5.33%	3.52%	79.40%	20.60%
female	1505	708	356	214	90	41	62	34		60.20%	47.04%	23.65%	14.22%	5.98%	2.72%	4.12%	2.26%	84.92%	15.08%
Total	*2500*	*1133*	*581*	*354*	*159*	*89*	*115*	*69*		*100.00%*	*45.32%*	*23.24%*	*14.16%*	*6.36%*	*3.56%*	*4.60%*	*2.76%*	*82.72%*	*17.28%*
										total	A's	B's	C's	D's	F's	W's	WU's		
5B										**5B**									
Asian PI	345	147	89	51	20	20	8	10		22.64%	42.61%	25.80%	14.78%	5.80%	5.80%	2.32%	2.90%	83.19%	16.81%
Black	76	39	8	9	11	4	4	1		4.99%	51.32%	10.53%	11.84%	14.47%	5.26%	5.26%	1.32%	73.68%	26.32%
Hispanic	658	278	148	106	42	36	20	28		43.18%	42.25%	22.49%	16.11%	6.38%	5.47%	3.04%	4.26%	80.85%	19.15%
Native An	14	5	3	3	3	0	0	0		0.92%	35.71%	21.43%	21.43%	21.43%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	78.57%	21.43%
White	387	188	83	53	35	14	7	7		25.39%	48.58%	21.45%	13.70%	9.04%	3.62%	1.81%	1.81%	83.72%	16.28%
Unknown	44	23	11	6	1	2	0	1		2.89%	52.27%	25.00%	13.64%	2.27%	4.55%	0.00%	2.27%	90.91%	9.09%
Total	*1524*	*680*	*342*	*228*	*112*	*76*	*39*	*47*		*100.00%*	*44.62%*	*22.44%*	*14.96%*	*7.35%*	*4.99%*	*2.56%*	*3.08%*	*82.02%*	*17.98%*
male	482	139	154	98	19	38	12	22		39.38%	28.84%	31.95%	20.33%	3.94%	7.88%	2.49%	4.56%	81.12%	18.88%
female	742	267	242	109	41	39	22	22		60.62%	35.98%	32.61%	14.69%	5.53%	5.26%	2.96%	2.96%	83.29%	16.71%
Total	*1224*	*406*	*396*	*207*	*60*	*77*	*34*	*44*		*100.00%*	*33.17%*	*32.35%*	*16.91%*	*4.90%*	*6.29%*	*2.78%*	*3.59%*	*82.43%*	*17.57%*
										total	A's	B's	C's	D's	F's	W's	WU's		
10										**10**									
Asian PI	189	36	73	28	15	19	7	11		16.09%	19.05%	38.62%	14.81%	7.94%	10.05%	3.70%	5.82%	72.49%	27.51%
Black	129	27	39	23	11	20	2	7		10.98%	20.93%	30.23%	17.83%	8.53%	15.50%	1.55%	5.43%	68.99%	31.01%
Hispanic	496	160	138	89	39	44	11	15		42.21%	32.26%	27.82%	17.94%	7.86%	8.87%	2.22%	3.02%	78.02%	21.98%
Native An	10	1	1	2	2	1	0	3		0.85%	10.00%	10.00%	20.00%	20.00%	10.00%	0.00%	30.00%	40.00%	60.00%
White	298	115	83	48	17	19	6	10		25.36%	38.59%	27.85%	16.11%	5.70%	6.38%	2.01%	3.36%	82.55%	17.45%
Unknown	53	24	9	12	3	2	1	2		4.51%	45.28%	16.98%	22.64%	5.66%	3.77%	1.89%	3.77%	84.91%	15.09%
Total	*1175*	*363*	*343*	*202*	*87*	*105*	*27*	*48*		*100.00%*	*30.89%*	*29.19%*	*17.19%*	*7.40%*	*8.94%*	*2.30%*	*4.09%*	*77.28%*	*22.72%*
male	412	61	135	94	43	52	9	18		35.55%	14.81%	32.77%	22.82%	10.44%	12.62%	2.18%	4.37%	70.39%	29.61%
female	747	278	214	109	44	53	18	31		64.45%	37.22%	28.65%	14.59%	5.89%	7.10%	2.41%	4.15%	80.46%	19.54%
Total	*1159*	*339*	*349*	*203*	*87*	*105*	*27*	*49*		*100.00%*	*29.25%*	*30.11%*	*17.52%*	*7.51%*	*9.06%*	*2.33%*	*4.23%*	*76.88%*	*23.12%*

10.14 Appendix: Bibliography of Scholarship and Research Consulted for the Teacher Commenting Project

Bibliography on Revision, Response, and Writing Assessment

A bibliography initiated by Asao B. Inoue, and co-constructed with his Spring 2008, English 281 students.

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