

Annual Report for Assessment of Outcomes 2012-13

Subject Area Committee Name: Adult Basic Education

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For LDC/DE: Core outcome(s) assessed: Communication

1. Describe changes that have been implemented towards improving students' attainment of outcomes that resulted from recent outcome assessments. These may include but are not limited to changes to content, materials, instruction, pedagogy etc. Please be sure to **describe the connection** between the assessment results and the changes made.

The ABE SAC last assessed the "Communication" outcome in 2010-2011 academic year. At that time we carried out an assessment based on our "Capstone Project". The focus on Capstone Projects has led to wider use of these projects by faculty even when they were not being used as part of our "LAC work". Because of our assessment work instructors are more likely to use written, oral, and electronic components of in the Capstone Projects. In the 2011-2012 academic year the ABE SAC assessed the "Cultural Awareness" outcome with a written assignment. In our struggles to carry out the assessment and in reviewing the assessment results it was determined that there was a great need for clearer assessment of student writing. A few years ago, the Basic Skills Coordinating Council recommended that ABE create classes for DE students who were not at a level that allowed them to succeed in WR 80. The COMPASS score was raised and those students who tested below 28 were advised to take ABE Fundamentals of Writing. The SAC worked with DE instructors to develop the CCOGS for ABE Fundamentals of Writing.

Some instructors in ABE developed a paragraph rubric to help determine readiness for transitioning to WR 80, but have felt we needed to improve and open up our methods for effectively assessing our writing students. We also recognized that students should have more options other than linear movement from one level to the next. We wanted to be better informed of choices for students and better equipped to make recommendations based on predicting student success at each level.

Through our initial work, we decided that we would not limit this project to just Fundamentals of Writing DE students, but all ABE writing students. This focus on "How do we effectively assess writing" has led us to the work we have done this year.

For each outcome assessed this year:

2. Describe the assessment design (tool and processes) used. Include relevant information about:

Our first goal this year was to develop an assessment tool to assess the Communication Core Outcome that could also be used to help instructors better understand the transition points of our writing students:

- *Fundamentals of Writing (DE students who fall below COMPASS Writing score of 28 and ABE students levels 3 and 4)*
- *ABE Advanced Integrated Reading and Writing (ABE students CASAS levels 5 and 6 and DE students who want to bypass WR 80, 90 or even 115)*
- *WR 80 (COMPASS scores 28-42)*
- *WR 90 (COMPASS scores 43-69)*
- *WR 115 (COMPASS scores 70-78)*
- *WR 121 (COMPASS scores 79-99)*

The second goal was to create an advising packet of materials (anchor papers, rubric with benchmarks at each level, flowchart of transition points, checklist of student readiness behaviors) that instructors can use to determine readiness of students and guidance for advising. This packet would become part of our Communication Core Outcome assessment.

The assessment committee for the ABE SAC did gather writing samples from ABE and DE writing courses. We used these samples to inform the development of a draft rubric. ([Attachment A](#)) We recognize that this rubric may be too complicated, but part of our ongoing plan is to work with the rubric to refine it. We have also developed a "Check List of Student Readiness Behaviors".

([Attachment B](#)) We have not established benchmarks, but that will be part of our initial work next fall. We will also work with our LAC coach to determine an appropriate sample for this assessment.

Since we are still in the development phase of this assessment tool, we have no results to analyze or report.

3. Provide information about the results (i.e., what did you learn about how well students are meeting the outcomes)?

We are still in the process of learning how well our students are meeting the outcomes. Rather than push forward with an assessment project that would not give us meaningful results, we are taking time to develop a tool that will give us meaningful results and will continue to be used by faculty beyond being a "Learning Assessment" project.

4. Identify any changes that should, as a result of this assessment, be implemented to help improve students' attainment of outcomes. (These may include, but are not limited to, changes in curriculum, content, materials, instruction, pedagogy etc).

As a result of the work we have done this year we have a group of faculty who are committed to making learning assessment part of what we do as a SAC. We were not successful in completing our assessment project, but the process has made it possible to include a new group of faculty who understand what we are trying to do and are committed to taking this project forward next year, getting meaningful results, and making this assessment tool part of our ongoing professional practice.

5. Reflect on the effectiveness of this assessment tool and assessment process. Please describe any changes to assessment methodology that would lead to more meaningful results if this assessment were to be repeated (or adapted to another outcome). Is there a different kind of assessment tool or process that the SAC would like to use for this outcome in the future? If the assessment tool and processes does not need to be revised, please indicate this.

Following is a list of the issues we plan to address as we move forward with this project:

- *Improve the process for collecting writing samples. We did not collect samples from WR 115 and ABE Advanced Integrated Reading and Writing*
- *We didn't ask for any information/assessment to accompany the samples. We don't know if students were ready to transition or were not meeting the expectations. Did the transition? Where they ready to move to next level?(based on writing competence- not attendance and or/participation)*
- *Along with the writing samples (pre/post) we also need to know if they writing was in class or based on multiple drafts and revisions*
- *Continue to develop the rubric that can be used on the samples*
- *Meet together to assess and double score the samples*
- *Refine the checklist of behaviors*
- *Create a flowchart of transition points*
- *Work with DE 80/90, WR 115 and 121 (credit level ESOL?) instructors to exchange ideas and improve the project. Identify 2 or 3 instructors at each level, spread across campuses, to work with us along with ABE instructors at each level*
- *Look at CCOGS for each level*
- *Come up with a common writing prompt that participating instructors would use. Something related to goal setting and self-reflection.*
- *Decide what other needs our writing instructors have and determine how this project can meet these needs*
- *Discuss how we anticipate to improve our program based on this project*
- *Consider extending to the project to Fundamentals of Reading if there is need*

As we finished our work for this year and began writing this report we received an email from Blake Hausman from the English SAC. The message included this passage,

"There's a movement to get English, DE, ABE/GED, and ESOL together -- both at SEC, and across the district -- in order to conduct some "big tent" assessment work. We want to get people from the Assessment Committees from all of these SACs together. We want to build a framework for holistic assessment of student writing, especially as it relates to what we do in (and leading up to) Writing 115. Ideally, this will evolve into something that enables PT instructors to be paid to participate in holistic reading/assessment of student work."

The ABE SAC Assessment Committee hopes to take the work we have done this year, join forces with the other assessment committees and move forward with a truly useful assessment tool.

The ABE SAC Assessment Committee would like to express our thanks to the LAC for providing a grant to fund the work done on this project by adjunct faculty. We understand that this was special dispensation to use the funds in this way and funds will not be available to be used in this way in the future. We did not use all the funds granted, but the funds we did use made it possible to get adjunct faculty involved and committed to this process. In spite of the fact that funding will not be available to compensate adjunct faculty for their

continued work on this project, the adjunct faculty who participated this year are excited about continuing to work on this project. Using LAC grant funds to engage adjunct faculty and demonstrate for them the rewards of doing this work, may be a model for getting greater engagement and commitment from adjunct faculty to the mission of the LAC.

Attachment A

Level Descriptors and Benchmarks (What students should be able to do at the start of each of level *note- I looked at the benchmark for the previous level because those indicate what students should be able to do at the end of each level) **See Level Continuum to add more details** **Draft Document**

	Fundamentals of Writing Level 3	Fundamentals of Writing Level 4	Advanced Integrated Reading and Writing Level 5	Advanced Integrated Reading Writing Level 6	WR 80	WR 90	WR 115	WR 121
Content, Development and Text Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use simple transition words to help organize written communication b. Use comparing and contrasting (before, now, here, there) words, c. Write a text with beginning, middle and end d. Organize text to highlight central idea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use a variety of transition words b. Make a clear and credible case in written communication c. Provide context for the point being made, provide supporting details and examples d. Logically order and link a few short paragraphs, grouping related ideas in ways that enhance the topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use signal words in writing to clarify transitions and relationships among ideas from sentence to sentence, paragraph to paragraph (whereas, however, while, on the one hand, therefore) b. Include most important information and the right amount of information c. Predict likely reader questions d. Use an organizational pattern appropriate to the topic and purpose (cause/effect, problem-solution, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e. Utilize an organizational pattern that enhances the appeal to the audience and is appropriate to the purpose f. Logically link multiple paragraphs in essay format in order to provide a clear and effective description of the topic in the beginning, demonstrate coherence throughout the text and summarize the key points in the conclusion g. 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Organize the text on a complex topic by breaking the topic into parts accessible to readers, emphasizing key concepts or points, and closing with a recommendation or observation on the relevance of subject to a wider context b. Choose from a variety of formats to write a well-organized, logical, lengthy paragraphs, each of which uses main ideas and extensive supporting detail to thoroughly cover the topic areas and make reasoned explanations, rationales, and arguments c. Maintain coherence through the use of a 	

			<p>compare-contrast)</p> <p>e. Logically arrange ideas and maintain consistent focus</p> <p>f. Have a clear opening, and closing and organize paragraphs using explicit or implicit main ideas and supporting details to elaborate a topic, describe or persuade</p>				<p>wide range of signal words to clarify relationships among ideas from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph</p>	
Voice (Express one's unique thoughts and ideas and conveys personal engagement with the topic)	a. Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English and situations where informal discourse is appropriate	<p>a. Establish style, tone and voice appropriate to the purpose</p> <p>b. Insert voice and individual insight into writing</p> <p>c. Select register, pace and tone appropriate to the formality or seriousness of the situation</p> <p>d. Apply some style techniques appropriate to the purpose (simile, metaphor)</p> <p>e. Demonstrate awareness of how grammar choices affect</p>	<p>a. Establish and maintain style, tone and voice appropriate to purpose</p> <p>b. Maintain consistency in style and tone throughout the text</p> <p>c. Demonstrate individual thinking and insight</p> <p>d. Apply style techniques appropriate to purpose and audience (rhetorical questioning, repetition, imagery)</p>	<p>g. Establish and maintain style, tone and voice appropriate to purpose</p> <p>a. Express individuality and insights</p> <p>b. Communicate with reader in an authentic and engaging manner</p> <p>c. Apply style techniques appropriate to purpose (euphemism, humor, hyperbole)</p> <p>d. Choose words and phrases for effect</p> <p>e. Choose</p>	<p>h.</p>		<p>a. Express flavor and texture through style, tone and voice that is appropriate to purpose</p> <p>b. Risk revealing self and show individual insights and thinking</p> <p>c. Demonstrate commitment to the subject/message</p> <p>d. Apply style techniques appropriate to the purpose (sarcasm, irony, alliteration, parallelism)</p> <p>e. Communicate both literal and implied meanings</p> <p>f. Use a natural and engaging language to connect with the</p>	

		<p>f. meaning (past vs. present perfect) f. Use varied vocabulary to hold audience interest</p>	<p>e. Determine type and amount of detail required f. Select vocabulary to convey nuance</p>	punctuation for effect			audience	
Word Choice	<p>a. Use common prefixes and suffixes to add meaning to words b. Use words that are appropriate for informal written discourse and formal written discourse c. Use idioms appropriately d. Use common articles, prepositions of time and place and adverbs appropriately</p>	<p>a. Select vocabulary to convey precise thoughts and express shades of meaning (smell vs scent, I should go vs. I have to go) b. Correctly use some commonly confused verbs (do and make, say and tell, bring and take) c.</p>	<p>a. Use vocabulary and phrases common to an area of interest or field of study b. Use prefixed and suffixed to build words that express abstract concepts (-ness, -crazy, -ism.) c. Apply knowledge of common homographs (same spelling different meaning) and homophones (same pronunciation, different meaning- to, too, two)</p>	<p>a. Use context to determine when to use slang, idioms, and colloquialisms appropriately b. Use metaphors, similes and analogies c. Apply knowledge of homographs and homophones</p>			<p>a. Use of precise and specific vocabulary throughout b.</p>	
Sentence Structure and Flow	<p>a. Construct, expand and connect simple and compound declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamatory sentences b. Use a variety of coordinating conjunctions to create compound sentences c. Use correlative</p>	<p>a. Construct and connect simple and compound sentences to create a coherent extended text b. Begin to use subordinating conjunctions, conjunctive adverbs and transition words to create complex</p>	<p>a. Use verbs in both the active and passive voice b. Use a variety of sentence types including compound and complex sentences, to construct text that is well connected and flows throughout c. Construct complex</p>	<p>a. Choose among simple, complex, and compound-complex sentences to signal differing relationships and ideas b. Construct complex sentences using a full and varied range of subordinating conjunctions e.</p>			<p>a. Make a wide range of grammar choices appropriate to the purpose and audience b. Use a balance of all 4 types of sentences (simple, compound, complex and compound/complex) varying for</p>	

	<p>conjunctions (either/or, neither/nor)</p> <p>d. Use irregular and complex grammar structures (irregular past, present perfect) abstract nouns, relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which , that) and relative adverbs (where, when, why)</p>	<p>sentences (for instance, while, after, however,)</p>	<p>sentences using a full range of subordinating conjunctions</p> <p>d.</p>	<p>c. Some varied sentence beginnings</p>			<p>meaning, reader/listener interest and style</p> <p>c. Vary sentence beginnings and use connectives to create a rhythm and flow in the text</p>	
Conventions and Mechanics	<p>a. Spell a variety of high-frequency single and multi-syllabic words</p> <p>b. Spell most common abbreviations</p> <p>c. Capitalize the first words of sentences and most proper nouns and titles</p> <p>d. Apply end marks correctly to most simple sentences</p> <p>e. Some errors with fragments- especially with dependent clauses and longer sentences.</p> <p>f. Inconsistent application of basic comma rules- sometimes uses correctly between items in a series and</p>	<p>a. Spell words containing common roots and common affixes to construct multisyllabic words</p> <p>b. Apply spelling patterns and rules to spell words with silent consonants (walk, know, write) and consonant digraphs (phone, when, tough)</p> <p>c. Attend to capitalization in acronyms, names of nationalities and organizations</p> <p>d. Apply end marks correctly and consistently to simple and</p>	<p>a. Use knowledge of a range of syllable patterns, roots, prefixed and suffixed to spell multi syllabic words</p> <p>b. Use specialized discipline specific acronyms</p> <p>c. Attend to capitalization, including dialog sentence structure, first lines of poetry</p> <p>d. Use commas between dependent and independent clauses</p> <p>e. Use punctuation in dialogue</p>	<p>a. Attend consistently to capitalization throughout text</p> <p>b. Use punctuation for effect to indicate where the reader should pause, exclaim, etc.</p> <p>c.</p>	<p>f.</p>	<p>g.</p>	<p>a. Attend consistently to capitalization throughout text-</p> <p>b. Choose punctuation for effect</p> <p>c. Use ellipses, dashed, to indicate a pause or break</p> <p>d. Use italics, citations and footnote markers appropriately</p>	<p>h.</p>

	between compound sentences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> compound sentences e. Some fragments with complex sentences f. Occasional run on sentences g. Use commas consistently to separate items in a series, compound sentences h. Use appropriate paragraph indentation and word spacing 						
Fluency	With some hesitation and varied ease, accuracy, and control of basic grammar, spelling and punctuation, and vocabulary on familiar topics.	With growing confidence and independence, accuracy, and control of grammar, spelling, organization, punctuation, register, and vocabulary	Comfortably on familiar topics but with some hesitation in formal styles of writing and occasional spelling, word choice, punctuation, organization or grammatical errors and a developing sense of audience.	Comfortably on most topics to most audiences from familiar to formal with control of vocabulary, punctuation and grammar, although there may be rare difficulties using complex sentences			Comfortably on most topics to audiences from familiar to formal, with good control of a broad vocabulary, punctuation and grammar; although there may be rare difficulties in a few aspects of very complex sentences	

Attachment B

Checklist of Student Readiness Behaviors:

Does the student demonstrate college readiness and self-management behaviors such as :

1. Attends consistently
2. Turns in homework and meets deadlines
3. Seeks and uses feedback
4. Participates in classroom activities
5. Communicates appropriately with the instructor
6. Communicates appropriately with other students
7. Self-advocacy
8. Basic computer literacy

Potential questions for students to consider:

1. Do I want to stay in a non-credit program that allows some flexibility in pacing? For example, ABE classes are designed to be repeatable so that students may continue as they work to meet their academic goals?
2. Do I want to pay the non-credit fee versus the credit-fee for a pre-college class?
3. Do I want to start using my financial aid for a pre-college class?
4. How long might I be in pre-college level classes based on my current ability?
5. Am I ready for the demands of a graded, 11 week course?
6. Do I know what resources I can access that may help me as I continue?