

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Minutes April 4, 2008

PRESENT: Patricia Alvarado Lee Chen Monica Colon Tracy Fung
Marty Furch Marcela Gomez Juan Gonzalez Carol Lowther
Nimoli Madan Jose Luis Ramirez Jerrie Raymer Gary Sosa
Jorge Villalobos

The meeting was called to order at 9:37 A.M.

ASSESSMENT AS IT RELATES TO STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Marty distributed a handout of what is now part of Curricunet that is being piloted and may be completed when instructors review their courses. Marty wanted to introduce this topic at this meeting and would like to expand on it during next month's meeting. This form has to do with the Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Cycle (SLOAC). Palomar College is expected, as an institution, to demonstrate that they understand this cycle and that they are implementing it into their system in three ways: at a course level, program level, and institutional level. The latter refers to the GE requirements for graduation. Furthermore, the form is an SLO attachment in Curricunet that is voluntary at this time. However, the Learning Outcomes Council will recommend that it become part of the Curricunet process as of fall 2008. Marty asked the Department to go through the questions in the form as if reviewing a particular course. Then, they can provide feedback to Marty or Teresa Laughlin regarding the questions on this form. The purpose of the SLOAC process is that we clearly state student learning outcomes. Marty believes that the ESL Department is very progressive in this respect because we have learning outcomes stated on our syllabi. However, the other part of the process is the assessment process: how we assess those student learning outcomes, what measures are actually used, and how we know that that assessment is appropriate and working. Learning outcomes are going to be four or five specific things that the instructor feels that are overarching goals for the student to achieve upon completion of that course. Marty recommended that as a Department, we may want to pick a few courses to work on, determine the student learning outcomes and the assessment measures and schedule some type of dialogue at the Department meetings to compare results and get updates on the process. Tracy shared that she had gone through this process with her Pronunciation class and she feels question five seemed too long and complex. Marty encouraged the faculty to send any comments and feedback to Teresa Laughlin by April 16 because as of April 17 the Learning Outcomes Council will be presenting the form to the Curriculum Committee for approval. Marty shared that as part of the Learning Outcomes Council she is in charge of the website. Once she receives approval, she will place some documents on the website so faculty can see how to respond to the questions in the form, how to write SLOs, how to think about the assessment, and how to organize the process to meet with colleagues in order to evaluate the assessment. Marty shared a sample of an SLO Assessment Plan from Skyline College who just finished their accreditation successfully. Marty thinks that the Department can use this sample as a template for the courses that we choose to evaluate. Marty believes that the ESL part-time faculty should be engaged in this process because they are teaching the majority of the ESL classes and assessing students. This could be done as part of Professional Development. Gary asked if the Department has a template of the ideal syllabus that lists the student learning outcomes. Marty responded that the Department does not have this, but it may be a good idea to post one on the ESL website along with a guide on how to write SLOs.

ESL 36 CHANGE IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS

Lee reminded the Department that at last month's meeting it was decided that students would not take the Compass Test at the end of ESL 36. As a Department we can decide when to stop testing these students. Tentatively, the Department decided to implement this change at the end of fall 2008 pending that the course reviews were pre-launched and approved. The written final that will be given at the end of ESL 36 should be graded anonymously. Marty believes that the whole Department should be involved in reading and evaluating the essays rather than just the ESL 36 instructors. Tracy added that Colleen had mentioned that English 50 classes don't meet on finals week and thus, those two hours are used for grading the final papers. Therefore, an option is for the proposed ESL 36 finals to be given the week before finals and read during finals week while instructors are still on contract. Carol mentioned that another detail the Department needs to consider is how much the final will be worth as part of the student's final grade. Lee suggested that it be worth 30% of the student's total grade. Nimoli added that, according to Colleen, for writing classes in-class writings are about 30% of the total grade. The Department decided to continue the discussion about the details of this change so that Colleen and Lynne are involved in the decision making and provide their thoughts and ideas. Lee asked the Department to review ESL 36 and possibly ESL 101 using the SLOAC process explained by Marty and provide feedback at next month's meeting.

WAYS TO ENSURE STRONG ENROLLMENT IN SUMMER 2008

Lee explained that now that the summer 2008 class cancellations have been finalized, the Department needs to find ways to ensure that the remaining courses are strongly enrolled. Jerrie shared that she has sent letters to all of the principals of all of the schools in Ramona because they have eliminated all of their ESL programs. She has included a flyer with the letters she has mailed and requested to have it posted at their school or include it in their mailings. She has also posted flyers at Headstart. In his programs, Lee has told his teachers to encourage their students to recruit at least one new student each. Gary added that many students are loyal to their teachers so sometimes they return because they like their teachers. Carol mentioned that it might be helpful if teachers inform students about what they can expect to learn in the summer, the book they will be using, etc. Gary commented that in situations where students can only attend two out of the four nights due to work situations, it might be helpful to encourage them to still attend regardless of their situation. Other ideas mentioned included: for teachers to try something new in the summer or to plan a field trip. However, teachers need to be aware that if they plan to have a field trip, they need to submit their request to the Department more than two and half to three weeks before the date of the field trip. Jose Luis mentioned that it might be a good idea to encourage the new incoming freshmen attending the Early Acceptance Program in June to enroll in summer ESL courses. Marcela added that another possibility is to advertise the ESL classes on the Palomar College website. Lee shared that he had encouraged Tami Richey to promote the ESL summer courses with her students attending the computer class at the MAAC Headstart Center in San Marcos. He told her to inform them that the first day to get an appointment for the Placement Test is April 28.

SPRING 2009 SCHEDULE

Lee just wanted to encourage full-time faculty to begin thinking about selecting the courses they would like to teach in the spring 2009. Gary pointed out that the faculty needs to take into consideration the new ESL full-time faculty and plan out a year of that person's courses. In addition, the faculty needs to consider that Nimoli will be on sabbatical in spring 2009.

ENGLISH TUTORS

Shayla was out sick so Monica read her report on her meeting with the English Tutors. In her report, Shayla states that on March 31, she met with Gary Zacharias and the five tutors working in the English Writing Lab. One of the topics she covered at this meeting is how they can better serve the needs of the students in the twenty minute time frame they have with each student. She suggested that they first identify the assignment, read through to make sure that the ideas make sense, and then help the student address consistent problems such as punctuation and verb tense consistency. They also discussed the different types of ESL students that they see: F-1 visa students, residents, those who have come here through high school, those who have never stepped foot in an ESL classroom, and those who feel that they have finished ESL. Shayla expressed that she would like to share the ESL website with the tutors so they can continue to compile useful reference information for themselves and the students. She added that she will give them a copy of the Department's course flowchart so they can better understand our program and, with the consent of the Department, a copy of the Course Outline of Records. In conclusion, she asked the Department whether they would be open to have a tutor observe their classes and whether they have any ideas or materials that they would like her to communicate to the tutors. She hopes to meet with them at a later date and to continue sharing materials and experiences and answering their questions as they arise. Since tutors come and go, Marty wondered whether we need to have an ongoing training or connection with the Writing Lab. Nimoli suggested that if the English Department has some type of training for their tutors, then they could probably just add ESL materials to their training. Jose Luis suggested providing the tutors with copies of the syllabi. Lee was asked by the English Department whether ESL would ever want to have their own tutors. Marty expressed that that would be a possibility once the Teaching Learning Center is established in Escondido because otherwise the Department would need to include the tutors in our budget.

REPORT: EVALUATION OF ESL DEPARTMENT CHAIR

Marty reported that of all the Faculty Chair Reviews she received they all stated that they feel that, "Lee Chen is performing his Department Chair duties in a satisfactory manner and should continue serving as Department Chair for another year." Thus, the Department has voted Lee Chen as Department Chair for another year. Marty gave Lee the anonymous reviews she received which give him feedback and constructive comments.

DISCUSSION: TORCHLIGHTS IN ESL

The Department discussed the data from the City College of San Francisco. Gary pointed out that the City College of San Francisco has 19,000 ESL students of which more than 400 are foreign students. In addition, the Non-Credit ESL Program has ten levels and the Credit Program has 7 levels that require listening and speaking. Gary thought that it was interesting that the data demonstrated that co-enrollment in other "business" classes while taking Non-Credit ESL classes increases the probability that students will transition from Non-Credit to Credit ESL. Lee pointed out that several of our students that successfully completed the ESL Program have attributed their success to taking other non-ESL classes while taking ESL classes. In addition, Gary highlighted that students at City College are pre-screened and exempted from the placement test if they are determined to be at the literacy, beginning level. Gary added that he liked City College's faculty ratio of 160 Full Time and 182 Part Time ESL Instructors. In addition, all part-time instructors, credit and non-credit, starting in their third semester of service receive the same health and dental benefits as full-time instructors. However, non-credit instructors get paid less than those that teach credit courses. Lee noted that their Academic Program is credit and their Non-Credit Program is Life Skills only. Marcela wondered whether a student who has advanced English skills has the option of taking Non-

Credit Life Skills classes. Lee answered that the ESL Program at City College is very flexible, thus, students can move up and down or vice versa between both programs.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 A.M.