

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Minutes October 3, 2008

PRESENT: Patricia Alvarado Lee Chen Monica Colon Tracy Fung
Marty Furch Marcela Gomez Juan Gonzalez Lynne Henson
Carol Lowther Nimoli Madan Jose Luis Ramirez Jerrie Raymer
Shayla Sivert Colleen Weldele

GUESTS: Dick Borden Steve McDonald

The meeting was called to order at 9:32 A.M.

ESL STUDENTS' CONTRIBUTION TO SPAR

Dick Borden from the Research and Planning Department reported to the attendees about Palomar's ARCC student progress and achievement rate. He explained that the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) annually prepares college level performance measures in support of mandated Accountability Reporting of the Community Colleges (ARCC). These measures are submitted to the State Legislature and one of the first measures reported for each college is the Student Progress and Achievement Rate (SPAR). In order to determine the SPAR, the CCCCCO tracks groups of students for three different time periods in order to determine what percentage of those students achieved at least one of five predefined outcomes within six years of entering the College. The five outcomes are: earned a certificate, earned an AA/AS, became transfer directed or successfully completed both transfer-level Math and English courses, became transfer prepared or successfully completed 60 UC/CSU transferable units with a GPA of 2.0, and lastly, transferred to a four-year institution of higher education. Students from 1999-2000, 2000-01, and 2001-02 were tracked for the 2008 ARCC report. The SPARs for Palomar College for the three time periods are 53.8%, 54.9% and 50.7%. In addition, the average SPAR for the three years is 53.2%. Furthermore, Dick used this background to explain how second language learners contribute to Palomar's ARCC Student Progress and Achievement Rate (SPAR). He explained that the Institutional Research and Planning staff classified each of the students, including International Students, who were tracked by the CCCCCO into two groups based upon whether they had ever taken a Credit ESL course at Palomar. In order to explain his findings, Dick handed out three different graphs. The first graph shows that ESL students are twelve percentage points higher than non-ESL students in achieving the first outcome of obtaining a certificate. They are also higher than the non-ESL students in the next three outcomes. However, in the last outcome of transferring to a four-year institution of higher education, ESL students are ten percentage points lower than non-ESL students. Regardless, the data shows that ESL students are strong contributors to Palomar's SPAR. Moreover, the second graph excludes students with a student visa (International Students). The graph shows that the SPAR for ESL students without a student visa is three percentage points lower than non-ESL students in achieving the first outcome. Consequently, the SPAR for ESL students is lower than non-ESL students in achieving the other outcomes. For example, they are eleven percentage points lower than non-ESL students in transferring to a four-year educational institution. Regardless, ESL students without a visa are still within three percentage points of the Non-ESL's SPAR. The last graph that Dick presented includes data only for students holding a student visa (International Students). The data shows that the SPAR for ESL students with a student visa is one percentage point lower than non-ESL students with a student visa. However, Dick pointed out that both groups are thirty percentage points above Palomar's three-year average of 53%. In addition, as we move higher in the outcomes, ESL students exhibit greater SPAR than non-ESL students. For example, ESL students achieve the transfer outcome by one percentage point higher. In conclusion, students holding student visas

contribute strongly to Palomar's SPAR. The Department discussed the data presented by Dick and had the opportunity to ask him questions about the results.

ASSESSMENT ISSUES

Shayla reported on behalf of Carol, Colleen and Lynne that they have been looking at rubrics and topics for the end of semester assessment for ESL 36. They have concluded that they are looking at a simple pass or fail rubric. Thus, the student is either ready for ESL 101 or not ready. If students want to challenge their placement and want to go to ESL 102 or 103, then they will be required to take the ESL Compass Test. Shayla explained that according to the Course Outline of Record for ESL 36, students are supposed to be writing Narrative and Descriptive essays, but the assessment topics tend to be for students to write Expository essays. Thus, the Committee has been discussing whether the essay given to students will be a Narrative or an Expository essay. Colleen believes that it would be better to give students an Expository essay because that's the type of essays they will be expected to write from that point forward. Lastly, at this point Adjunct instructors currently teaching ESL 36 have not been involved in this process, but will be contacted by the Committee. Next, Lee reported about the Counselor's meeting that he attended in September. Lee mentioned that Teresa, a Counselor, expressed a concern where a re-entry ESL student was told to take the ESL Placement Test again even after the student had already passed ESL 102. Thus, the concern is that students should not be required to take the ESL Placement Test again if the eligibility is already in their student record. According to the Department, re-entry ESL students who have academic ESL placement and have left for more than one year, are given the option to register for classes based on their eligibility or take the ESL Placement Test again to see if they place higher. The Department discussed the different possible reasons why the student was allowed to take the test. Lee also reported that Counselors have liaisons with different Departments. These liaisons would talk to the Departments to get a list of classes that are suitable for ESL students and that they will be successful in. Shayla mentioned that she has talked to students about knowing enough about the Catalog to be able to go see a Counselor with an Ed Plan and asking the Counselor if the classes they have selected meet the requirements for their specific goal. Lastly, Lee informed the Department that Diane McAllister is heading an effort to reinforce a policy that the College already has regarding assessment. The policy states that, "Students are permitted to be assessed only once per year. Placement is valid for two years." Diane claims that this policy has never been enforced by the College. The ESL Department already follows the first part of the policy. Diane will insist that the College inactivates all unused assessment placements older than two years. Lee told Diane that since the Department is already part of the assessment process, we will support this request.

SLO

Marty distributed a handout to the Department. She explained that the benefit of having SLOs is that it makes us more aware of what we are assessing. Thus, this allows teachers to know what they are assessing when determining whether a student can move from one level to the next. The handout explains the difference between an objective and an outcome, which is the first question that comes up when developing student learning outcomes. For example, an "objective represents valuable skills, tools, or content that enable a student to engage a particular subject," whereas in an outcome "SLOs represent overarching products of the course." When developing an SLO, first you would need to define a goal. Then, achieve an objective within that goal and arrive at an outcome. The learning outcome is what you are assessing. Marty recommended starting with the assessment and working backwards.

LECTURE/LAB ISSUE

Lee informed that when offering a course we cannot combine lecture and lab together as we have been doing with our ESL courses. According to Diane Veach, we must come up with two separate components for such a course specifying how many hours will be dedicated for lecture and how many will be for lab. The ESL classes affected by this change are ESL 3, 34, 35 and 36. The Department studied a table listing hours required per unit for lecture-only classes and for lab-only classes. This year we are expected to identify the courses that need to be addressed and start deciding what needs to change and what those changes will impact. Next academic year, we will start working on implementing those changes. Lynne suggested that if we want to keep the classes at ten hours per week we could offer a four-unit lecture for four hours a week and two-unit lab for six hours a week. Thus, the class would change from three units to six units. The Department argued that such a change would have a negative impact on students, especially those that have to pay non-resident fees. The Department discussed various options about splitting the courses into lecture and lab. Lee proposed that the Department bring any ideas or suggestions regarding this issue to next month's Department meeting.

UPDATES AND REMINDERS

Lee reminded the Department about a grant titled Training and Development Grant being administered by Human Resources. The deadline to submit a proposal is November 3. Secondly, the TESOL convention will be held in Denver during spring break. The CATESOL state conference will be in Pasadena in April. Next, Monica distributed the Book Adoption Forms for Spring 2009 to all the coordinators. The forms are due back by October 13. Lee announced that the College has developed a new Finals Exam Schedule for Spring 2009. He will let the Department know as soon as he has more information. On another note, Lee announced that the ESL Department did not succeed in its efforts to hire another full-time faculty position. ESL was number ten on the list, but the College only had enough money for the first seven positions on the list. Also, the College is having a College Fair on October 20th. In addition, on October 24th we will have an ESL High School Counselors and Teachers Conference from 8:30am to 1:30pm. At this conference, the attendees are informed about EAP and are given information about the ESL Program and classes offered at Palomar. Lee and Jose Luis encouraged the faculty to attend the conference, if possible.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:52 P.M.