

Ann Tatum

From: owner-bc_english@listserv.bakersfieldcollege.edu on behalf of Scott Wayland [swayland@bakersfieldcollege.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, September 20, 2011 10:03 AM
To: bc_english; bc_esl
Subject: English B50 Transmogrification
Attachments: SLOs 8--29--11.docx

Importance: High

Colleagues:

Here for the last time for your consideration are the notes from our big B50 meeting. I will be calling another meeting soon to come to some final conclusions to put before the department. The basic options are outlined below in addition to the SLO's (attached). Please, if you have any comments/concerns/worries/brilliant insights, we need to hear them. Open fire, please!

The English 50 SLO/FEE cage match was most entertaining. For those who couldn't make it, here are the basics. Everyone attending was unanimous in agreeing that the course as it stands now could do a better job of preparing students for 1A and that the FEE and SLO's need some serious revision. Any changes, of course, will be voted on by the whole department. The purpose of this notice is to generate discussion and perhaps some new ideas. We will probably need another meeting to make some final, more specific decisions. Our goal is to have whatever changes we decide on be in place for next semester, spring 2012.

The FEE: We all agreed that in its current form, it must go. However, we all agreed that some form of in-class writing is required to assess student performance, especially in light of the possibility that work produced out of class will reflect some high-level or professional assistance. While we encourage such help, we also need to know what the students actually can do. The sticking point is the all-or-nothing nature of the FEE. It stresses only one kind of writing (timed, in-class) and, because of its importance, tends to skew the course to focusing too much on this style. English 1A (and most other writing projects the students will encounter) involve more time for reflection, development, and drafting. Everyone in attendance agreed that we needed to stress this kind of writing and that the FEE tends towards the opposite. A key point of the options below is that assessment and faculty sharing of essays will continue.

Option 1: Keep the same FEE structure as currently exists but firmly de-emphasize the weighting by making the test a percentage of the final grade. Levels of 10 to 20% were discussed. The weakness of this option is that it shifts the paper sharing and discussion to the end of the semester when some sort of midterm or $\frac{1}{4}$ term session would be better for students and teachers in terms of getting feedback that can be acted upon before it's too late. A way around

this would be to hold mid-term paper sharing every semester, perhaps streamlined by instructors bringing in the most troublesome papers, those on the edge between passing and not. After all, we have little trouble with the clear passes and fails.

Option 2: Keep the FEE but remove the "F." Each instructor would assign in-class writing projects, but we would gather at midterm or ½ term to review and discuss standards.

Option 3: Instructors devise their own in-class assignments, but we all have at least one similar out-of-class project (see SLO discussion below) that the students do. At some point during the semester we gather and share papers, ranks, discuss the how's and why's of our scores, etc. This would be equivalent to the 1A research paper sharing project that many of us have participated in over the last few semesters.

Option 4: Paul Parks suggested a sort of hybrid of 2 + 3. We assign a portfolio for each student to contain a sample of writings, both in and out of class, that we evaluate. Paul suggests we bring in only a sampling of our students work, perhaps the most problematic/borderline, to make the reading sessions manageable.

SLO's: Our concern here is to better prepare the students for 1A, the new standard for graduation. Because of the demands of the research paper and other essays in this class, we all agreed that some sort of multiple-source essay should be the norm in B50 along with a longer effort, probably 750 words or more. Logically, the multiple-source essay (at least two but not many more) would be the longer effort. We discussed that hardcore research was not the point here. Richard Marquez explained how he provides to the students the two works they will use in the synthesis paper. As you will see in the SLO grid below, the multiple-source essay is entered but not the length, so we need to discuss this. Also in the grid is the necessity of introducing the students to MLA. As noted in the grid, we don't expect mastery, but students should not be hitting these arcane demands for the first time in 1A. Many instructors are already implementing these standards in their classes. The discussion here is to make these practices and types of assignments standard for ALL B50's. Since the FEE doesn't seem to be doing what we want, our hope is the more rigorous SLO's will do better.

Here are the SLO's:

<<SLOs 8--29--11.docx>>

Cheers,

Scott