ASSESSMENT OF WRITING AT QUEENS COLLEGE

ASSESSMENT SHOWCASE

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Amy J. Wan
Professor
Department of English
Special Assistant to the Provost on Writing

Why assess writing?

- Writing instruction happens in lots of different classes (110/FYW, College Writing 2, Writing Intensive)

- Writing is learned with practice over time

- Communication competencies for students in college and beyond

Kinds of assessment

- Anonymous evaluation

- Syllabus assessment

- Surveys: faculty and students

What is English 110?

- Fulfills CUNY Pathways' English Composition 1 (EC1) requirement

- Part of the First Year Writing program

- Every first-year student takes course with very few exceptions

- Serves as introduction to variety of writing practices:
  - Research
  - Rhetoric
  - Revision
  - Writing Strategies

Motivations for Assessing English 110

- Large number of sections with lots of different faculty teaching them

- Wanted some data that was based on student work/writing in order to strengthen curriculum and faculty development

- Key marker of retention and future student success

1-year Retention Rates of Fall 2021 Freshmen who Took English 110 at Entry
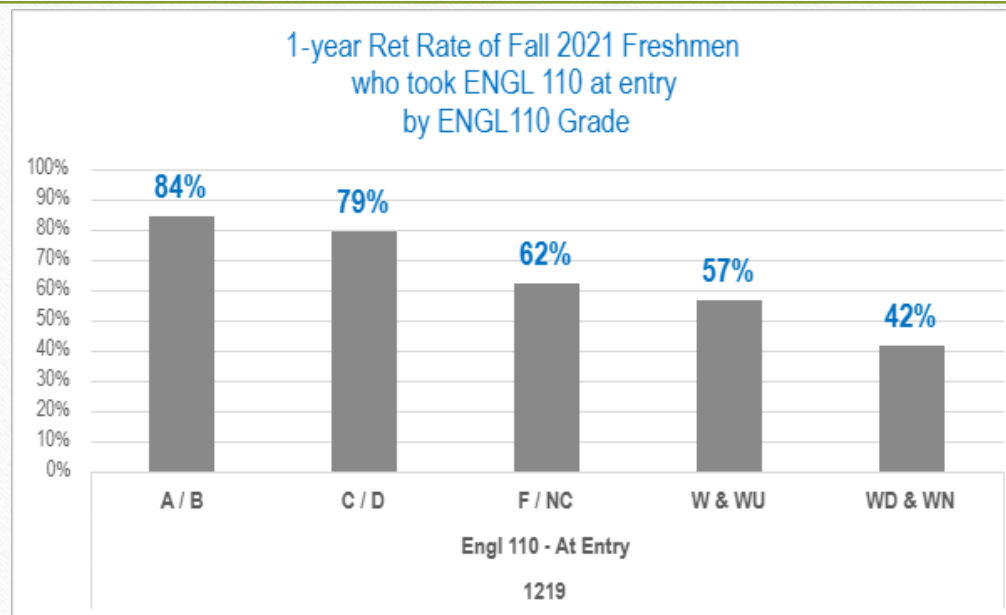
ENGL 110 Assessment Timeline

- 2018: Consulted with OIE in spring 2018

- 2018-2019: Assessment took place

- Fall 2019: Analysis and results
- Spring 2020: Plan interventions

Assessment Questions

1.How well are students meeting ENGL 110 learning outcomes?

2.How well do students' ENGL 110 course grades correlate with scores from a rubric-based assessment?

3.How can we support ENGL 110 students and faculty in meeting ENGL 110 learning outcomes?

Methodology

- Stratified random sample of ENGL 110 sections
  - 55 ENGL 110 sections selected
- Random sample of student papers
  - Common ENGL 110 assignment: End-of-term research papers
  - 3 - 5 students selected from each section
- Papers collected and de-identified by OIE prior to assessment
- Rating rubric developed and normed by a team of English faculty
- Faculty readers scored papers against the rubric
- Scores were recorded and analyzed

SUMMARY

Question 1. How well are students meeting ENGL 110 learning goals?

Overall, students are meeting ENGL 110 learning goals (5) and (6), which align to Rubric Criteria groups E. Fluency of Writing and F. Language Use:

- (5) Produce writing that strategically employs appropriate language conventions in different writing situations.

- (6) Produce writing that demonstrates an understanding of their own voice, style, and strengths.

SUMMARY

Question 1. How well are students meeting ENGL 110 learning goals?

However, students are not meeting ENGL 110 learning goal (1), which aligns to Rubric Criteria group B. Content and Idea Development:

- (1) Produce writing that responds appropriately to a variety of rhetorical situations with a particular focus on academic argumentation.

SUMMARY

Question 1. How well are students meeting ENGL 110 learning goals?

Students are not meeting Pathways EC1 learning outcomes:

- (2) Write clearly and coherently

- (4) Support a thesis with well-reasoned arguments, and communicate persuasively

- (5) Formulate original ideas and relate them to the ideas of others by employing the conventions of ethical attribution and citation.

Discussion with faculty

1. What pedagogical techniques do you currently use to support student learning around academic argumentation in college writing?

2. What challenges do you face in teaching academic argumentation?

3. What kinds of professional development would help you the most in meeting and overcoming these challenges?

REFLECTIONS on 110 Assessment

1. What did we learn from this assessment?

2. What were the next steps?

Syllabus reviews

- All writing classes undergo regular syllabus reviews

- Started with ENGL 110 from the department's regular collection

- Have looked at CW2 and W classes in the last couple of years

- Add on a question or two to the regular syllabus check

Faculty Survey on Disciplinary Writing

- Given to all CW2 and W instructors in Fall 2024
- What we wanted to learn:
  - What kinds of writing faculty are assigning
  - What expectations faculty have about writing based on discipline
  - What techniques and strategies faculty use to teach writing and communicate expectations to students
  - How generative AI is influencing our teaching

Findings from Faculty Survey

- Three skills rated as important across all disciplines
  - Critical analysis
  - Logical organization
  - Articulation of reasons and conclusions
- Most assigned writing tasks
  - Discussion posts
  - Reflection papers
  - Response papers
  - Research papers

What we learned about assessment

- Assessment is a way to start addressing questions you have or problems you're worried about within your program

- Assessment results can help anchor decisions about faculty development, student outreach, and curriculum revisions

- We have support!

Thank you!

Amy Wan

Amy.Wan@qc.cuny.edu

WAQ @ CETLL upcoming virtual hours:

- Tue, Dec 10: 2:00—3:00pm

https://www.qc.cuny.edu/cetll/cetll-its-drop-in-hours/