

4/21/11

Annual Report on the First-year Composition Program, 2009-2010

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The First-year Composition Committee (FYCC) met twice during the 2008-09 academic year. During this time, its members were Christy Desmet, Director of First-year Composition (Chair); Deborah Miller, Associate Director, FYC; Wesley Venus, Assistant Director, FYC; C. J. Bartunek, Lizz Bernstein, Nathan Camp, Maria Chappell, Elizabeth Davis, Don McCreary, Mike Moran, and Caroline Young.

I. COURSE DEMOGRAPHICS:

During the 2009-10 academic year, the First-year Composition Program taught the following number of sections and students (broken down into Total, ESOL, Online, Learning Community, Honors, Freshman College, and Special Topics sections of English 1101, 1102, and 1102M.

TOTAL SECTIONS (now 24 student maximum, up 2 per section from 2008)

	ENGL 1101	ENGL 1102	ENGL 1102M	TOTAL
Summer 2009	2	4	1	7
Fall 2009	75	65	20	160
Spring 2010	12	56	28	96
TOTAL	89	125	49	263

From the above totals, the following sections are broken down as follows:

ESOL Sections (limited to 15 students)

	ENGL 1101	ENGL 1102	ENGL 1102M	TOTAL
Summer 2009	0	0	0	0
Fall 2009	1	0	1	2
Spring 2010	1	0	1	2
TOTAL	2	0	2	4

Fall: Teachers were: Betsy Craig (2/1101), Signe Wegener (1/1102M)

Spring: Teachers were: Stephen Looney (1/1101), Gabriel Lovatt (2/1102M)

ON-LINE Sections (limited to 15 students)

	ENGL 1101/1102 and 1102MCombined	ENGL 1102	ENGL 1102M	TOTAL
Summer 2009	0	0	0	0
Fall 2009	2	0	1	3
Spring 2010	1	2	0	3
TOTAL	3	2	1	6

Fall: Teachers were: Shane Bruce (2/1101E), James Gregory (1102E), Rosemary Luttrell (1/1102E)

Spring: Teachers were: Shane Bruce (1/1101E); Ondra Dismukes (2/1102)

Learning Communities Fall 2009 Sections (limited to 20 students each)

	ENGL 1101 and 1102/1102M, combined	TOTAL
Fall 2009	7	7
TOTAL	7	7

Learning Communities are combined sections of ENGL1101 and ENGL1102/M offered only during Fall semester. Students who attend these sections take all of their classes together throughout the semester. These specific sections were taught by: Sharon McCoy (Life Sciences A and B – 2 separate classes); Daniel Butler (Film and Stage); Nathan Camp (Business); David Powell (Pre-Law); Caroline Young (Music); Rosemary Luttrell (Global Engagement).

Learning Communities sections of FYC have a maximum of 20 students taught during fall semester, although most sections are smaller because some (indeed, perhaps, an increasing number) of students in each LC place out of English Composition altogether.

Honors First-year Composition Sections (limited to 15 students)

	ENGL 1050H	ENGL 1060H	TOTAL
Summer 2009	0	0	0
Fall 2009	4	2	6
Spring 2010	3	2	5
TOTAL	7	4	11

Freshman College, Fall 2009

There was one section offered to students enrolled in Freshman College which was a combination of ENGL1101 and ENGL1102M. The Instructor of the course was Laura Weaver, and the number of students who enrolled in this particular section was 16 (12 students receiving credit for ENGL1101 and 4 students receiving credit for ENGL1102M).

Special Topics Sections of FYC

	ENGL1101	ENGL1102	ENGL1102M	TOTAL
Summer 2009	0	0	0	0
Fall 2009	1	4	0	5
Spring 2010	0	3	0	3
TOTAL	1	7	0	8

Fall: These sections were taught by: Matthew Forsythe (1/1101 – Sports); Valerie Morrison (1/1102 – Post Modern Novel); Scott Reed (2/1102 – Video Games)

Spring: There were no special topic courses taught in the Spring semester.

For ease of scheduling and in an effort to keep classes as flexible as possible, we have limited somewhat the number of special sections that may be offered and allowed those who seem within the guidelines for FYC to be offered as “regular” sections.

Totals

From the above totals, the breakdown of ESOL, On-Line, Learning Community and Special Topic courses are as follows:

- The total number of ESOL sections of First-year Composition was 4; the total number of students was 62;
- The total number of sections of On-Line First-year Composition was 6; the total number of students was 82;
- The total number of First-year Composition Learning Community (combined) sections was 7; the total number of students was 103;
- The total number of First-year Composition Special Topics courses was 8; the total number of students was 185;
- The total number of sections of Honors First-year Composition was 11; the total number of students was 143;
- The total number of Freshman College sections was 1; the total number of students was 16.

Breakdown of total sections/students included in 2009-2010

	ENGL1101	ENGL1102	ENGL1102M	TOTAL
Summer 2009	2/27	4/66	1/19	7/112
Fall 2009	75/1,689	65/1,452	19/418	159/3,559
Spring 2010	12/270	57/1,305	28/645	97/2,220
TOTAL	89/1,986	126/2,823	48/1,082	263/5,891

Beginning with Fall semester 2009, FYC classes increased from 22 students per class to 24 students per class. The total number of FYC sections, including the Honors sections, taught during 2009-10 were 263, with a total number of students for the year being 5,891.

II. TEACHER DEMOGRAPHICS

During the 2009-2010 school year, there were 80 Teaching Assistants and Instructors who taught 263 sections of First-year Composition (these numbers do not include TA units assigned to the Writing Center, for Computer Support, for sophomore support, for ENGL4000 support, or for teaching sophomore sections, creative writing and upper-division classes).

III. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENTS

1. Administration and Program Supervision

A. Office Events: All was pretty much quiet on the Park Hall 128 front this year. Wesley and Tina Venus had a baby, Ben. Wesley, the Assistant Director of FYC, was also offered and accepted an offer of a tenure-track Assistant Professorship of English at Gordon College in Barnesville, Georgia. In 2010, the UGA First-year Composition Program was also accepted into Cohort 6 of the Inter/National Coalition of Electronic Portfolio Research; project members include Christy Desmet, Ron Balthazor, Elizabeth Davis, and Deb Miller. All three events were pleasant ones!

B. CAI in First-year Composition and the “Frogs”: During **Fall 2009** Frog (computer-assisted classroom assistants) staff were: Wesley Venus, Assistant Director of FYC, Lisa Bolding, Beth Kozinsky, Ida Stewart, and Jessica Walker. During **Spring 2010**, the staff consisted of: Wesley Venus, Lisa Bolding, Joy Bracewell, and Nicole Lobdell.

C. <emma> Developments: During 2009-10, <emma> again upgraded hardware to improve hardware and software redundancy. Also, the <emma> development team expanded the development of eDocs, an in-browser composing, marking, and reviewing tool, and moved to ubiquitous use of jQuery (a Javascript library) for numerous user-interface improvements. In short, <emma> continues to offer advanced tools for composition as it gets easier to use.

D. Apprentices and Fall Orientation: In 2009-10, the FYC Program trained a total of 7 apprentices; 6 in Fall 09, and 2 (one a re-do) in Spring 10.

2. Curricular Development:

FYC Syllabi for new textbooks: In Summer 2009, a voluntary committee is meeting to produce a collection of sample syllabi for each course using the new textbooks. In the summer of 2009, a committee of volunteer Teaching Assistants and Instructors met to establish sample syllabi for all three courses, particularly the two using brand new textbooks: ENGL 1101 and 1102M. The syllabi and related Course Materials have been gathered together into a new FYC <emma>[™] site. The members of the Syllabus Committee 2009 were: Deborah Miller (Chair), Christy Desmet, Wesley Venus, Sharon McCoy, Laura Weaver, Annalee Edmondson, Mollie Barnes, C. J. Bartunek, Erin Presley, Scott Reed, Matt Forsythe, James Gregory, and Caroline Young.

Online Placement Project: The largest and most ambitious project that we have undertaken so far this year has been a pilot project to potentially reconfigure placement in the University of Georgia's First-year Composition sequence. The pilot project was based on the IMOAT model of MIT, directed by Les Perelman. Christy attended a workshop by Les and others involved in the IMOAT project in Davis, CA in May 2009, as part of the Computers and Writing Conference. Our interest stemmed from the fact that our current placement system is flawed in several ways. First, placement in Academic Enhancement is now voluntary and advisory rather than mandatory, a change that has made targeting, persuading, and helping students who need the extra time and help quite a challenge. Second, the Departmental Placement Test combines a bubble-in test with (in the case of low scores) an afternoon writing sample evaluated holistically by trained (human) raters under the direction of Christopher Hayes (Division of Academic Enhancement). The afternoon test is authentic, but the morning one uses multiple choice questions and so does not measure writing performance directly.

The Online Placement Project was conceived and piloted by Christy Desmet, Deborah Miller, Elizabeth Davis, Christopher Hayes, Wesley Venus, and Ron Balthazor. Ron designed, tested, and tweaked the online mechanism for delivering the placement test (based on <emma> and on Ron's work for the USG Regents' Exam). We all collaborated on constructing the test, which consisted of two essays, submitted online, over a prescribed period of time. One of the essays involved readings, the other did not. In this situation, students could write substantive essays on readings over a period of time, thus improving the authenticity of the placement mechanism by making it resemble more closely a real FYC assignment.

The research group read pilot essays to construct a grading rubric and to select exemplary essays for training raters in holistic evaluation of the online essays. Mary Ann O'Neal and Bob Krask (two 1101 and an 1102, I believe) let us use their classes in the Fall pilot. We trained raters; Chris Hayes, as the able head of the existing placement system, led the training of raters. We used Wesley Venus and Deb's Miller's classes (two 1101 and 1 1102 classes) for the spring pilot. We surveyed the results and debriefed the raters. Fall Raters were: Scott Reed, Joshua King, Joy Bracewell, Stephanie Ferguson, Annalee Edmundson, John Spiers, and Emily Kane. Spring Raters were: Bob Krask, C. J. Bartunek; Katie Norman; Mollie Barnes; and Nicole Lobdell.

We would hope to repeat the process soon and have some hope that someone will fund this important project.

3. Assessment

Success and Retention: In AY 1998-99, the FE Program was asked by VPAA Jim Fletcher to study the department's placement procedures for First-year Composition. This study is ongoing. We have been tracking the number of students who receive C-'s, D's and F's and the reasons for their performance; we have also been tracking the numbers and reasons for student W's and WF's.

Fall 09

WP: 103

WF: 11

C-/D/F: 38

Spring 10

W: 121

WF: 12

C-/D/F: 34

We are very pleased that there is very little attrition and therefore very few unproductive credit hours in FYC.

USG General Education Outcomes for Written Communication: In response to the upcoming SACS accreditation process and in cooperation with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, the FYC Program has designed and implemented an assessment rubric for evaluating the achievement of stated program goals and USG Common Learning Outcomes for General Education in the capstone project used in all FYC courses: a summative electronic writing portfolio delivered through <emma>[™], the Electronic Markup and Management Application. The results of this assessment project became available in September 2009. The report submitted by FYC for the SACS accreditation process is linked to this Annual Report.

IV. Student Awards

1. Donald E. Barnett Essay Awards

ENGL 1101

Student: Macy Marie Sirmans

Teacher: Matthew Forsythe

Student: Olivia Swint
Teacher: Caroline Bartunek

Student: John Mays
Instructor: Nathan Camp

ENGL1102

Student: Darcy Lenz
Instructor: Lisa Reeves

ENGL1102M

Student: Mariana Heredia
Instructor: Cyndi VanderVen

2. Michael G. Moran ePortfolio Awards

ENGL1101

Student: Trevor Spears
Teacher: Caroline Bartunek

ENGL1102

Student: Katie Ali Farhani
Teacher: Sara Amis

ENGL1102M

Student: Teneil Salmon
Teacher: Alison Lenhardt

3. Teaching Assistant Awards and Activities

For the period of 2009-10, the following Teaching Assistants were nominated by the Department for the Outstanding Teaching Assistant Awards given by the Office of the Center for Teaching and Learning: Katherine Barrow, Nicole Camastra, Matthew Forsythe, David Grubbs, Emily Kane, David Powell.

We nominated Matthew Forsythe also for the campus-wide Excellence in Teaching Award. Only five Teaching Assistants campus-wide are given this award in any given year. We were delighted that Matthew was given the award!