

Appendix Y: Results of Integrated Program Review Pilot

To: David Conn

From: Brian Tietje

Date: June 18, 2009



cc: Dave Christy, Cheryl Ney, Doug Keeseey, Brenda Helmbrecht, Sadie Johann, Clare Battista, Chris Perello, Colette Frayne

Re: Preliminary Results from Business Administration Writing Assessment

I wanted to provide an update on the success we've experienced to-date with the integrated program review (IPR) approach to learning assessment. We have identified a number of opportunities for strengthening student writing based on the evidence we generated during a full day assessment activity that involved both English and Business faculty on Saturday, May 30th.

Cheryl Ney, Sadie Johann (English), Clare Battista (Economics), Chris Perello (Business Administration), Colette Frayne (Business Administration), and I reviewed Business Administration student writing samples from each of the following domains:

- Junior business student essays from the Writing Proficiency Exam (WPE)
- Senior business student legal briefs from Bus 404 (Business, Government, and Society)
- Senior business student book reviews from Bus 454 (Developing and Presenting Marketing Projects)

We will supplement these junior and senior writing samples with business student artifacts from EN 134 in a few weeks when the rubric scores are available.

We began the session by reviewing several papers together and calibrating our use of the University writing rubric that was developed as part of the University Learning Objectives (ULO) project. This analytical rubric includes five traits of effective writing (see attached rubric). The calibration exercise alone was useful, as it revealed important distinctions between the perspective of a subject matter expert who is primarily focusing on the content on the writing and its reflection of the student's understanding of the assignment, and an English instructor who focuses primarily on the mechanics and style of the writing itself. After the calibration exercise, two of us independently scored each of the eighty papers using the rubric, and the scores were entered and analyzed.

The scores were remarkably similar between the two independent judges, and once the final scores were tabulated, they consistently ranged between minimal and average

attainment. The scores were relatively consistent across traits, with the lowest scores corresponding to style.

After calibrating the rubric, evaluating student writing using the rubric and tabulating and reviewing the results, we engaged in a discussion about student writing that yielded a host of insights and ideas. I now realize that learning outcomes, rubrics, artifacts, and scores “set the table” for faculty to have an evidence-based discussion about improving student learning through curricular and pedagogical improvements. What I appreciated most about the discussion is that phrases such as “it seems to me”, “in my opinion”, or other unsubstantiated claims were not used because all of us had the same evidence in front of us to support our ideas. I also appreciated how the evidence turned our attention towards student learning and success, with teaching methods and course content serving a supporting role for learning.

Our plan is to present the results and conclusions from our work to a larger group of faculty from both the College of Business and the representative GE programs. We’re particularly excited to share some of the ideas that came out of our discussion which include but are not limited to:

- Linking Business courses to English courses to enable students to receive instruction about the subject matter and their writing in a shared context.
- Providing templates and suggested verbiage for the “prompts” that business faculty use when they assign written work. These refined prompts can guide students to reflect more carefully about their writing before completing an assignment.
- Sharing best practices about the effectiveness of using rubrics not only to improve student writing, but also to save faculty grading time.
- Utilizing English TA’s to help grade business student writing so that students can gain feedback and guidance on both their subject matter coverage and their writing quality.
- Posting exemplary student writing samples to instill aspirational standards for business student writing.
- Exploring the use of artificial intelligence software (e.g., Vantage Learning’s IntelliMetric system, <http://www.mccanntesting.com/products/intellimetric.html>) that provides instantaneous feedback to students about their writing.
- Developing instructional materials that faculty can readily access and use to provide a structured process approach to any writing assignment. This approach could be used throughout the Business curriculum so that students would have several opportunities to practice and master the writing process and have it sufficiently internalized to use in their careers beyond Cal Poly.

Our discussion reflected the challenge of balancing the need to achieve operational efficiencies in how we deliver instruction (e.g., through online or large lecture formats) with the importance of providing students feedback and guidance about their writing. We are hopeful that the balance is achievable, and we look forward to continuing this discussion about student writing with a broader group of faculty.

Please let me know if there is additional information about our IPR activities to-date, and thanks for your support of our efforts to improve learning in the Orfalea College of Business.

Attachments:

- University writing rubric
- Results and comments from business writing assessment activity

Writing Learning Outcomes Assessment: OCOB IPR
Saturday, May 30th, 9am – 2pm, 03-455

To Score:

- 1) After reading the entire essay, assign a score to each of the five traits found on the rubric. In other words, each essay will receive FIVE scores. Select the score description that *best* describes the essay's level of success. No essay will fit perfectly, so you need to make an informed decision. No "half" scores. Note that the rubric works with gradations, so qualifiers like "some," "often," and "generally" mean a great deal.
- 2) Write the scores on scoring sheet below, along with a very brief rationale for the scores.

This analytic rubric accounts for the following properties:

- **Purpose:** Does the writer address the assignment and write with a purpose that is clear to the reader? Is there an identifiable thesis? Does the writer understand and meet the audience's expectations?
- **Synthesis:** Is the paper organized both locally (within paragraphs) and globally (as a whole)? Does the organizational strategy best express the purpose? Does the writer make connections between (un)related ideas, texts, perspectives, and experiences to construct a cohesive depiction of the topic?
- **Support:** Is the thesis fully supported with relevant evidence or does the essay rely on broad and general assertions? Is repetition mistaken for development? Are there errors in logic?
- **Style:** Does the writer make effective stylistic choices in terms of paragraphing, sentence structure, word choice, tone, introductions, conclusions, etc?
- **Mechanics:** Is the essay free of errors – spelling, punctuation, grammar – that consistently impede or even distort meaning?

University Expository Writing Rubric (Draft 5)

ULO Committee

<i>Trait:</i>	<i>Poor/No Attainment</i>	<i>Minimal Attainment</i>	<i>Average Attainment</i>	<i>Good Attainment</i>	<i>Superior Attainment</i>
Purpose: Addresses the assignment. Clearly articulates the focus/thesis and writes with an awareness of the audience's expectations.	Disregards assignment. No discernible focus/thesis. Unaware of audience's expectations. Score: 0	Seems aware of the assignment's goals, but does not consistently meet them. Focus is mentioned, but shifts frequently, making the purpose unclear. Possible inappropriate shifts in audience. Score: 1	Consistent effort to address assignment. Thesis/focus is generally clear, may be lost at times. Writes with an eye to audience, but some inconsistencies are evident. Score: 2	The assignment is addressed. Thesis/focus is identifiable throughout the essay, but occasionally strays off topic. Seems aware of the audience's expectations and attempts to cater the prose accordingly. Score: 3	Assignment's goals are shared by the writer, though the writer does not seem confined by them. Fully controls thesis throughout the essay and consistently meets the audience's expectations. Score: 4
Synthesis: Organizes texts/ideas/ information into a cohesive, organized discussion (both globally and locally).	No attempt to synthesize texts/ideas; organization feels random making cohesion impossible. Score: 0	Preliminary attempts to synthesize texts/ideas; discussion feels unorganized at times. Yet, some paragraphs/sections hold together. Score: 1	Some attempts to synthesize complex texts/ideas, but cannot sustain the effort. Global organization is clear, but local organization may stray. Score: 2	Synthesizes texts/ideas with some expertise and begins to formulate a cohesive look at the topic, but lacks some sophistication. Some missteps with organization. Score: 3	Synthesizes texts/ideas with expertise and formulates a sophisticated, complex discussion of the topic. Organization feels deliberate and complements the topic. Score: 4
Support: Assertions and/or conclusions are fully developed and are based on appropriate evidence.	Assertions and/or conclusions are difficult to locate and are unsupported. Needless repetition takes the place of development. Score: 0	Assertions and/or conclusions are identifiable, but are not supported by evidence. Some repetition persists and makes reading difficult at times. Score: 1	Assertions and/or conclusions are occasionally supported by evidence. Some generalities persist. Score: 2	Clear assertions/conclusions are made; evidence is usually used effectively, but some errors in logic are detectable. Development aided by the inclusion of some key details. Score: 3	Makes fully developed assertions and/or draws logical conclusions that are supported by the evidence. Consistently includes details that point to the complex nature of the topic. Score: 4
Style: Writing is stylistically complex (i.e. sentence structure, word choice, transitions, tone, and paragraphing).	Simple sentences and word choice; paragraphs break randomly and may lack topic sentences. Score: 0	Attempts at complex sentences/ language and deliberate paragraph breaks, but awkward moments persist. Score: 1	Demonstrates some adeptness when making stylistic choices, but style lacks consistency and refinement. Score: 2	Generally writes with complex sentence structure and language; evidence of stylistic complexity. Score: 3	Evidence of consistent, deliberate, and refined stylistic presence on the page. Score: 4
Mechanics: Writing is free of spelling and punctuation errors. Content is clearly expressed.	Pervasive errors distort meaning and make reading difficult. Score: 0	Some errors are significant and detract from the meaning. Piece requires closer editing. Score: 1	Some errors impede reading but the content is generally clear. Score: 2	Minor errors are present, but are not too distracting. Content is clear. Score: 3	The writing is near perfect with almost no errors. Score: 4

Essay One (EN 134 sample)

Trait	Score
Purpose	
Synthesis	
Support	
Style	
Mechanics	

Rationale:

Essay Two (WPE sample)

Trait	Score
Purpose	
Synthesis	
Support	
Style	
Mechanics	

Rationale:

Essay Three (Bus 404 / 454)

Trait	Score
Purpose	
Synthesis	
Support	
Style	
Mechanics	

Rationale:

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Bus 404

Essay #	Purpose		Sum	Synthesis		Sum	Support		Sum	Style		Sum	Mechanics		Sum
1	2	2	4	2	2	4	1	2	3	2	1	3	2	2	4
2	2	1	3	2	2	4	3	2	5	2	2	4	1	1	2
3	3	3	6	2	3	5	3	2	5	1	2	3	2	3	5
4	2	1	3	2	2	4	2	1	3	2	2	4	2	3	5
5	2	1	3	2	1	3	0	1	1	2	1	3	2	2	4
6	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	2	3	0	1	1	2	2	4
7	2	2	4	2	1	3	2	1	3	2	1	3	1	2	3
8	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2
9	1	2	3	2	1	3	2	1	3	1	1	2	2	2	4
10	2	3	5	1	2	3	1	2	3	0	1	1	0	1	1
11	2	1	3	3	1	4	3	0	3	2	2	4	1	2	3
12	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
13	1	2	3	1	3	4	1	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3
14	3	1	4	3	1	4	3	1	4	2	1	3	2	3	5
15	2	2	4	2	2	4	1	1	2	0	1	1	2	1	3
16	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	3	5	2	2	4	2	3	5
17	3	3	6	3	3	6	2	2	4	3	3	6	2	2	4
18	1	1	2	1	2	3	2	1	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
19	4	3	7	3	3	6	4	3	7	3	2	5	4	4	8
20	2	1	3	1	2	3	0	1	1	2	1	3	2	2	4
21	2	2	4	2	2	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	2	1	3
22	3	3	6	3	3	6	3	3	6	2	2	4	4	3	7
23	2	3	5	1	2	3	2	2	4	1	1	2	2	2	4
24	3	3	6	2	3	5	2	4	6	2	2	4	3	3	6
25	3	3	6	2	2	4	3	3	6	3	2	5	2	2	4
26	1	0	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2
27	2	2	4	2	2	4	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	3
28	2	1	3	2	1	3	2	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	2
29	2	2	4	2	2	4	0	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	4
			110			105			95			84			107
		Avg	3.793			3.621			3.28			2.90			3.69
		Avg-outlier	3.786			3.577			3.19						
			3.8			3.6			3.2 to 3.3			2.9			3.7
		Purpose	1.9	Synthesis		1.8	Support		1.6	Style		1.45	Mechanics		1.85

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Bus 454

Essay #	Purpose		Sum	Synthesis		Sum	Support		Sum	Style		Sum	Mechanics		Sum
1	3	3	6	3	2	5	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	2	4
2	4	4	8	4	4	8	3	3	6	3	3	6	3	3	6
3	3	2	5	2	2	4	2	2	4	1	2	3	2	2	4
4	1	1	2	2	2	4	1	2	3	1	1	2	2	2	4
5	2	2	4	2	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	3
6	1	1	2	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	2	3	1	2	3
7	2	1	3	1	1	2	2	2	4	1	1	2	2	1	3
8	1	1	2	3	1	4	2	2	4	1	2	3	3	2	5
9	3	3	6	2	3	5	3	3	6	2	2	4	2	2	4
10	2	2	4	2	2	4	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	3
11	2	3	5	2	3	5	1	2	3	1	3	4	2	3	5
12	1	2	3	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	2	3
13	4	1	5	3	1	4	3	1	4	3	2	5	3	2	5
14	2	2	4	2	2	4	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	4
15	3	3	6	2	2	4	3	2	5	2	2	4	3	3	6
16	2	2	4	2	3	5	3	3	6	2	2	4	2	3	5
17	3	2	5	2	1	3	1	1	2	2	1	3	1	1	2
18	4	3	7	4	3	7	4	2	6	3	2	5	3	2	5
19	3	2	5	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	4	2	2	4
20	3	3	6	3	2	5	3	3	6	2	2	4	2	2	4
21	3	3	6	2	3	5	2	3	5	2	3	5	3	3	6
22	2	2	4	1	2	3	1	1	2	1	2	3	1	1	2
23	1	2	3	1	3	4	2	1	3	1	3	4	2	2	4
24	2	2	4	2	1	3	1	2	3	2	1	3	2	2	4
25	2	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	3
26	3	3	6	3	3	6	3	2	5	2	2	4	4	3	7
27	1	1	2	2	1	3	1	0	1	3	2	5	3	2	5
28	1	1	2	1	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	1	2
29	2	3	5	1	3	4	2	1	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
30	3	2	5	3	1	4	3	2	5	2	2	4	3	2	5
31	3	2	5	2	2	4	3	3	6	2	1	3	2	2	4
32	2	3	5	1	2	3	3	3	6	1	2	3	2	3	5
33	3	2	5	2	1	3	2	2	4	2	2	4	3	3	6
34	1	1	2	2	2	4	1	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3
			149			132			121			116			141
	Avg		4.382353			3.882353			3.558824			3.411765			4.147059
	Avg-outlier		4.363636			3.862069			3.46875			3.393939			
			2.181818			1.931034			1.734375			1.69697			2.073529
	Purpose		2.2	Synthesis		1.9	Support		1.7	Style		1.7	Mechanics		2.1

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Essay #	Purpose		Sum	Synthesis		Sum	Support		Sum	Style		Sum	Mechanics		Sum	WPE
1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	4	1	1	2	2	1	3	
2	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	1	3	2	2	4	2	2	4	6
3	2	3	5	2	2	4	1	2	3	2	3	5	2	3	5	9
4	3	3	6	2	2	4	1	2	3	1	2	3	2	1	3	8
5	1	2	3	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	4	2	2	4	8
6	1	2	3	1	1	2	1	1	2	3	2	5	2	2	4	8
7	3	3	6	2	2	4	1	2	3	1	1	2	3	1	4	9
8	2	2	4	2	2	4	1	2	3	1	0	1	1	0	1	6
9	3	2	5	2	2	4	3	1	4	2	2	4	3	2	5	8
10	1	1	2	2	2	4	1	1	2	2	1	3	2	2	4	6
11	2	2	4	2	3	5	2	2	4	1	1	2	1	2	3	8
12	3	2	5	2	2	4	1	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	8
13	3	2	5	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	2	4	10
14	1	2	3	2	2	4	1	2	3	2	2	4	1	2	3	6
15	2	2	4	2	3	5	1	1	2	1	3	4	2	2	4	8
16	3	3	6	3	3	6	3	3	6	3	4	7	3	3	6	9
17	2	3	5	3	3	6	2	1	3	2	3	5	3	3	6	8
18	2	2	4	2	1	3	2	2	4	2	1	3	1	1	2	8
19	2	3	5	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	1	3	1	2	3	8
20			81			75			61			68			71	
21		Avg	4.3			3.9			3.2			3.6			3.7	
22		Rubric avg	2.1		Rubric avg	2.0		Avg adjusted	3.2		Avg adjusted	3.6		Avg adjusted	3.7	
23								Rubric avg	1.6		Rubric avg	1.8		Rubric avg	1.9	
	Purpose		2.1	Synthesis		2	Support		1.6	Style		1.8	Mechanics		1.9	

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WPE: Jrs only	Purpose	2.1	Synthesis	2	Support	1.6	Style	1.8	Mechanics	1.9
BUS404	Purpose	1.9	Synthesis	1.8	Support	1.6	Style	1.5	Mechanics	1.9
BUS454	Purpose	2.2	Synthesis	1.9	Support	1.7	Style	1.7	Mechanics	2.1

Comments (shorthand)

Consistency of scores across OCOB courses/assignments
 No trait stands out, although style seems slightly weaker
 OCOB senior level writing isn't above average attainment
 what are the EN134 results for OCOB students
 what are WPE results for junior OCOB students
 are skills developed in EN134 built on? Dissipated? Decrease?
 Do assignments in the major give adequate practice in writing in the discipline
 Many OCOB writing assignments dictate the structure of the writing for the assigning
 would linking courses be useful
 faculty need assistance in developing assignments
 how do we address challenges of larger class sizes
 master's students as TA's might be helpful--undergrad assistants, definitely not
 shorter assignments don't give practice at synthesis
 importance of teaching writing as a process
 use of evidence in writing
 Chris has a strategy rubric for writing
 rubrics would be very useful for engaging all faculty in building skills
 give samples of writing for students so they can see what the different levels on the rubric mean

Observations about this rubric scoring session

some readers had more context and experience scoring the particular assignment
 discussion moves between individual students and cohort
 it would be useful to have a way to enter scores as they determined
 would it be useful to capture the strengths and weaknesses in the writing from individual papers
 lots of teacher talk on use of rubrics...their value, how they are using them with students
 (for ex. circling the score on the rubric and handing it back with the paper)