GENERAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT REPORT

Course: SPANISH 283
Materials used, n: 15
Rubric/Scoring standard used: Gen Ed rubrics for writing, critical thinking and info. literacy
Date of assessment: June, 2016
Report submitted by: KATHLEEN POTTS, Theater

WRITING SKILLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CCNY rubric</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>AACU rubric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure and Organization</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence and Development</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics and Style</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average scores***

**Strengths:** The main strength was student engagement with the materials. Even when students were not 100% successful in creating a thesis, it appeared as though they were working very hard to engage the topic and make an argument.

**Weaknesses/Concerns:** Students needed more work on crafting an effective thesis statement. There were also a range of structural issues, evidence & development issues, and mechanics & style issues. Many of the mechanics issues seemed to be related to having English as students’ (self-reported) second language. The issue of “evidence” and development of arguments was also a large weakness of many students. Too many arguments were based on personal opinion and the single source article, poem, or essay.

**Other comments:** The paper topics were actually very engaging and interesting to read.

CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explanation of issues</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context &amp; Assumptions</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student's Position</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average scores***

**Strengths:** Almost every student crafted a position and worked to address the audience and the context of the topics. The students also worked hard to explain their issues, which was fairly successfully done throughout.
**Weaknesses/Concerns:** The largest weakness was the evidence portion. There simply was not enough evidence (in most cases) to back up the students’ positions. This lead to uneven conclusions (some quite good and many quite poor) throughout the sample papers.

**Other comments:** The critical thinking related to the students’ own writings was often among the strongest of the critical thinking exercises. They worked hard to assess their own translation and creation choices.

### INFORMATION LITERACY SKILLS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Understand info needs/ search efficiently</th>
<th>Evaluate info sources</th>
<th>Credibility of sources</th>
<th>Use info ethically</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Strengths:** The majority of these papers appeared to understand plagiarism and avoid issues related to “accidental” cases of plagiarism.

**Weaknesses/Concerns:** The majority of assignments do not appear to ask for any searching for sources beyond the original source article, poem, or other assignment. This keeps the papers on a fairly basic level, which may be appropriate for general education classes.

**Other Comments:** My worry is that few students are being trained so that they gain the skills needed for more advanced critical thinking. Without the ability (and patience) to search academic articles for evidence, their papers remain quite “self-contained” – mostly responding to their own surface-level thoughts about the topics. (Which, at times, are really quite interesting and – by some students’ self-reporting – quite enlightening to their world view based on the original single source article/poem/etc.)

### CONTENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

**Average scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content learning outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Course learning outcomes assessed (specify outcomes that relate to topic based on assignment sheets, also see last page of this form)**

- Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring world cultures or global issues

Students demonstrated good knowledge of in terms of course content scoring at the “competent” level.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Patterns (e.g., common strengths or common weaknesses) in the samples of student writing:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Strengths = Decent structure, most papers appear to be proofread, and there is evidence of engagement in topics and their contexts.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Were the Writing Rubrics to be useful instruments for evaluating these samples of student writing? Which rubric was more appropriate for these essays?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes, the Writing Rubrics were very helpful. The students appeared to score higher on the AACU assessment, partly because they do not appear as specific in assessing the skills. I think the CCNY crafted rubrics help to really see what we are attempting to do in these courses. But the AACU rubric makes us (the instructors) and the students “appear” to be more successful!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Was the Critical Thinking rubric to be a useful instrument for evaluating these samples of student writing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes, it is very informative when used to examine the specific skills being taught and evaluated in these courses.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Suggestions on what can be done on instructional, departmental and/or institutional level to improve student writing and critical thinking and information literacy skills in Gen Ed courses.

**Institutional level:**

The institution could offer more “support” for students grappling with these skills. Right now the Writing Center is fairly effective, but often appears overwhelmed by the number of students wishing to access their services.

**Departmental level:**

Departments can have the academics & curriculum committees assess these issues on a semester by semester basis and see how things are improving.

**In class/instructional level:**

The classes need to spend some time spotlighting information literacy skills. Although we have more access than ever to resources (through the web and library subscriptions), the students seem to be slipping in their abilities (and willingness) to do the hard work of searching out and assessing credible peer reviewed sources.

**Other comments:**

Thanks to Ana Vasovic and fellow assessment coordinators and assessment scoring volunteers for supporting assessment at the college.

* Scale 1-4 reflects the ability range from the beginning level to the accomplished level – it is meant as a “college span” scale; it is expected that the majority of freshmen would not be at the “accomplished” end of the scale.

1 – beginning  
2 – developing  
3 – competent  
4 – accomplished
General Education Program Learning Outcomes

Pathways - Flexible Core General Outcomes

A Flexible Core course in any category must meet the following three learning outcomes.

- Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions
  
  **Writing and Communication Skills** - The student will be able to:
  
  ✓ formulate a clear thesis
  ✓ provide coherent, unified and effective organization of a paper
  ✓ develop abundant details and examples that provide evidence in support of sound logic
  ✓ use standard diction, grammar and mechanics of English

- Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.

  **Critical Thinking skills (AACU VALUE rubric)** - The student will be able to:
  
  ✓ clearly frame an issue or problem and consider it critically
  ✓ select, use, and evaluate information to investigate a claim or point of view
  ✓ analyze his or her and others’ assumptions and evaluate relevance of contexts when presenting a position
  ✓ present a position taking into account its complexities and limits as well as others points of view
  ✓ develop logical conclusions based on evaluation of evidence

- Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.

  **Information literacy skills** - The student will be able to:
  
  ✓ demonstrate a clear understanding of information needs and ability to search efficiently
  ✓ effectively evaluate information sources
  ✓ articulate credibility of sources
  ✓ use information ethically

Pathways - Flexible Core Area Specific outcomes

In addition courses in each category will have to satisfy at least three of the specified learning outcomes.

**A. World Cultures and Global Issues**

- Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring world cultures or global issues, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, economics, ethnic studies, foreign languages (building upon previous language acquisition), geography, history, political science, sociology, and world literature.
- Analyze culture, globalization, or global cultural diversity, and describe an event or process from more than one point of view.
- Analyze the historical development of one or more non-U.S. societies.
- Analyze the significance of one or more major movements that have shaped the world's societies.
- Analyze and discuss the role that race, ethnicity, class, gender, language, sexual orientation, belief, or other forms of social differentiation play in world cultures or societies.
- Speak, read, and write a language other than English, and use that language to respond to cultures other than one's own.

******************************************************************************

4