Minutes – Math Department Meeting  
Tuesday, April 23, 2013  
By B. Hilst

Present: Michael Sherry, Chair  

Guest Speakers  
Barry Gribbons and Daylene Meuschke from Institutional Research shared information regarding Research Brief #59 (a handout was provided to department members). In the brief were data relating student success in mathematics at COC and grades earned by students at the high school level (specifically, local high schools). Discussion followed on the data themselves and their implications for our department.

Coordinator Nominations  
Mike asked department members to forward him the names of instructors they wish to nominate for coordinator positions. Make sure to have that instructor's permission before submitting his/her name for nomination.

Skills4Success  
Angela announced that the next meeting will be Thursday, April 25. Current discussions have revolved around the institutional score card. Both the Skills4Success Committee and our department will discuss this in more detail later.

Staffing  
Mike indicated that there are plenty of unstaffed courses for the next academic year. Department members are encouraged to recommend candidates for part-time faculty positions.

Meetings  
Our spring 2014 meetings will coincide with the Division meetings which are scheduled to be on Fridays. We will discuss later when to schedule our meetings for the upcoming fall semester.

Budget  
Kathy informed us that the supply orders we submitted will be arriving over the next couple of weeks. Any supply orders that have not yet been submitted must be sent to Kathy ASAP! Kathy also distributed payment forms to course coordinators to be signed and returned to her.

Math 075  
The next orientation meeting will be on Saturday, May 11, in Hasley 133 and 134. Tutor training will take place the same day. Everyone is encouraged to attend. Please contact Matt or Kathy if you would like more information.

Math 213  
Bob shared results of the Math 213 SLO assessment (handouts were provided to department members). Discussion followed on how success would be measured at both the course level and the program level. The data were then analyzed and results recorded for each of the criteria specified for both the course and program SLOs.

Scheduling Form  
We discussed the online form used to submit schedule requests. Mike showed how the information is collected and applied in creating the schedule. Suggestions were made on ways to improve it.

Next meeting: Friday, May 24, 9:30 – 11:00 am, location TBA
SLO Loop-closing

Based on loop-closing discussions, Jia-Yi made two recommendations:

1. Over the next two years (through spring 2012), the department should consider assessing all literature courses whenever they are offered.

2. The department should consider adding an English 091 or 101 prerequisite to courses in creative writing, literature, and linguistics. Leslie St. Martin suggested that we survey students in these courses to see which English courses they have taken. We can discuss these issues at the next department meeting.

Other issues were noted:

1. Deanna raised an additional concern related to SLO assessment: If writing skills are included in the SLOs of a particular course, then writing skills should, of course, be part of the assessment. In literature courses, however, how should we assess? Although we can assign essays in such courses, we should not make writing skills the primary means of assessing them.

2. We are attempting to revise SLOs to make the language similar across courses; however, the SLOs in some courses can be more course-specific.

3. When to hold loop-closing meetings: Deanna mentioned that it might be more feasible and efficient to have sub-groups meet to discuss a particular course—such as one of the coordinated courses. Smaller groups could find it easier to schedule meetings during the week.

Degree Applicability of Basic Skills Courses

According to Audrey Green, any course coded as Basic Skills is not degree-applicable; therefore, English 091, 094, and 096 are not degree-applicable, nor can they be used as electives.

Adjunct Evaluations

Adjunct evaluation reports should be forwarded to Jia-Yi by November 21. If anyone has issues communicating with adjunct instructors, please let Jia-Yi know.

Course Revisions

Jia-Yi reported that the department is making good progress on course revisions. Two have been completed and approved, and five additional revisions have been submitted. Courses being revised for fall 2013 need to reach Stage 7 by mid-November.

Update on SCV Learning Consortium

Mary reported that Hart District faculty would like to observe our classes in order to see how the sample essay prompts and syllabi we have provided are actually addressed in the classroom. Mary distributed a sign-up sheet for instructors who are interested in having a teacher observe their class(es).
Major Quest - Tuesday, October 30 (11:00-2:00)

The department decided not to participate. We can do our own presentations on the benefits of becoming an English major.

English Club

Mike reported that the English Club has an ICC representative that can attend future meetings of the Inter-Club Council.

English for Transfer (AA-T) Associate in Arts Degree

Jia-Yi reported that department approval was needed in order to add English 102H and 103 to the transfer model for the Associates Degree in English. Students would need to complete English 102 or 102H, and 103, for a total of 6 credit hours in that category. There was a motion to approve the idea, and it was approved.

Community college students who complete an “associate degree for transfer” have a higher chance of admission to a CSU. Jia-Yi distributed a handout that explains this new provision in the California Education Code.

Writing Center: Tutoring Pedagogy

Kim Haglund reported that tutors in The Learning Center work according to TLC’s mission statement, which Kim said she can forward to the English department. TLC’s approach to tutoring is guided by institutional and social constructs; for example, the pedagogies used in our classes guide TLC tutors. Kim noted that tutoring in TLC operates on the following premises: (1) The process of discussion is important (e.g., Socratic questioning). (2) People learn to write by working with others. She also noted that TLC recognizes the importance of immediate oral feedback, which encourages motivation.

Kim H. said that TLC serves the entire college, providing tutorials and access to resources (handouts, textbooks). Tutors help with writing across the curriculum—for example, helping a student who is writing a paper for a psychology class.

English instructors are encouraged to communicate with TLC in the following ways: (1) Instructors can provide feedback after students have visited TLC, noting what worked, what didn’t work, etc. (2) Through Dropbox, instructors can share their syllabi and assignment handouts with TLC.

English 096 Presentation: Adam Kempler, Mike Harutunian, Mary Petersen, and Erin Delaney

Mary discussed the principles on which the design of English 096 is based:

(1) “Backwards design” (vs. compartmentalized courses): Start with what students need to do in English 101 and build backwards. Instructors can give 101-style assignments and then prepare students to complete them successfully. Instructors do not teach to a particular level of student; instead, they teach to a level of achievement. Thus, every student has the opportunity to attempt the skills and to move towards the goal.

(2) “Just-in-time remediation”: Intervene when students need help, rather than front-loading instruction in particular skills that not all students may need. When instructors target just the students who need the skills, more time is available for critical thinking, analysis, and so on.
(3) “Intentional support for affective issues”: Students may not be deficient in skills; they just may not know how to handle affective issues such as procrastination. Instructors can cultivate habits of mind that are essential for success. They can engage in “positive harassment,” showing heightened care and commitment while holding students accountable.

(4) “Frequent formative assessments”: Instructors should avoid just a few cumulative assessments; instead, they can give many formative assessments through group work, journals, and so on.

Adam distributed a number of articles on acceleration and presented a video which illustrated various active-engagement activities in an English 096 class—including recitation of key course concepts, paired work, an open-book group quiz, and a planning session for the Personal Growth project.

Erin shared materials from the 096 instructors’ classes: a sample syllabus, essay assignment/prompt, and student paper. She suggested that the department might want to create a coordinator position for English 096.

Mike noted the advantages of using an entire book in 096 rather than an anthology of readings. He also noted that the selected text was challenging; in this case, the instructor may find it difficult to abandon his or her role as the “sage on the stage” and let students discover the text for themselves. Mike also suggested that we offer information and training sessions on “backwards design” (either in the Institute of Teaching and Learning or as a Flex presentation).

Deanna mentioned that the course design of 096 gives students the opportunity to integrate course concepts and themes throughout the semester as they consider an idea multiple times and begin to see connections between readings.

Jia-Yi agreed with Adam that 096 should be discussed regularly at department meetings—perhaps not at every meeting, but at every other meeting.

SLO assessment of 096 will be postponed till spring. The issue of “open access” will be discussed at a later date.

**English 081 SLO Assessment: Adam Kempler**

Adam presented the results of the English 081 assessment for spring 2012, noting that three SLOs were assessed that semester—(1) annotation skills, (85% pass); (2) paragraph writing (75% pass); and (3) analyzing theme and conflict in a work of fiction (77% pass). The first two SLOs were assessed on the 081 midterm; the third SLO was assessed on the final exam.

Adam noted possible reasons why students did not pass a particular SLO. For example, it might be too much to ask students to analyze, in a single paragraph, both theme and conflict in a work of fiction (SLO #3); in this case, it might be advisable to rewrite the SLO.

Adam also noted efforts to increase retention in 081: College Success Tips, the Educational Plan, and the Student Services assignment. In addition, principles of acceleration can be used in 081.

Adam indicated the need for department feedback regarding how to proceed with English 081 assessment. Possible topics of discussion include the following: (1) modify SLO #3; (2) consider and discuss the assessment data; (3) consider having students focus on developing an essay (rather than just a paragraph) as early as the second paper; (4) create a plan for retention and success; and (5) revise the English 081 curriculum to emphasize critical reading and essay writing (enhance the focus on critical reading).

Next Meeting: November 26
Minutes: Mike Harutunian