EXECUTIVE SUMMARY UPDATE
Student Success, Equity Initiatives, and Departmental Reform
October 2010

This summary serves to update the Chancellor of the work that has continued from the last summary report, dated June 17th, 2010, and presented to the Board of Trustees.

Our primary focus has been directed to the curricular restructuring that we began to envision last fall of 2009, which has now begun in earnest in order to be able to offer 15 new accelerated/intensive courses in both Basic Skills and Pre-Transfer/Transfer-level courses in spring 2011. While the department had hoped to have the year to create these courses, the Chancellor urged us to have something in place for spring 2011. To meet this need, the six sub-groups (see pages 7-17) met numerous times during the summer and now into the first 8 weeks of the fall 2010 semester.

With the unmet need for thousands of students to enroll in any English class, we were able to hire in summer 2010 and bring four new full-time faculty into the English Department. As of today, we have posted for four more faculty, two for spring 2011 and two for fall 2011. The department continues to argue that access equals equity.

Highlights:

Curriculum Development
- We will offer 10 sections of English 961A and 5 sections of English 95X this Spring 2011. (see pages 1 & 2, 4 & 5)

Professional Development
- Dr. Katie Hern, from Chabot College, nationally recognized for her work in accelerated/intensive curriculum, presented a highly successful professional development workshop. (see page 2)

Need for Resources
- A more fully developed proposal for needed resources was sent to Dr. Griffin. (see pages 2 & 3 for a summarized version)

Beyond Accelerated Classes—Larger Departmental Reforms
- This work is detailed in the longer report, under English Department Action Directives. (see pages 7-17)
English Department Update  
Student Success, Equity Initiatives, & Departmental Reform  
October 2010

BACKGROUND

The English Department has been working vigorously to fulfill the charge given to it by the Chancellor in response to the October 2009 Equity Report and the Equity Hearings from Spring and Summer 2010.

NEW COURSES IN AN ACCELERATED PATHWAY

Our primary focus during the first eight weeks of Fall 2010 has been on development of our two new accelerated courses. (See Figure 1 and Figure 2 for working drafts of the information students will see in the print schedule regarding these courses.)

English 961A

- The course will be 6 units and meet for 6 hours per week
- 10 sections will be offered during Spring 2011.
- Successful completion will mean that the student will receive credit for both English 96 and English 1A.
- It will be possible for a student who has successfully completed a specified amount of work to receive 3 units of credit and a passing grade in English 96 if they do not meet all of the English 1A learning outcomes.
- The class will be taught using a Project-Based Learning pedagogy. Each section will be built around a Thematic Focus/Driving Question
that reading and writing tasks will be centered around throughout the semester.

*English 95X*

- The course will be 6 units and meet for 6 hours per week
- 5 sections will be offered during Spring 2011.
- Successful completion will mean that the student will receive credit for both English 92 and English 93.
- It will be possible for a student who has successfully completed a specified amount of work to receive 3 units of credit and a passing grade in English 92 if they do not meet all of the English 95X learning outcomes.
- The class will be taught using a Project-Based Learning pedagogy. Each section will be built around a Thematic Focus/Driving Question that reading and writing tasks will be centered around throughout the semester.

**WE HAVE UNDERTAKEN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT FOR FACULTY TEACHING NEW ACCELERATED COURSES**

To support and train faculty in the development of the new, accelerated courses the department conducted a highly successful professional development workshop on Thursday September 30th. All fifteen faculty who will be teaching pilot sections of the accelerated courses during the spring attended the workshop. Our workshop presenter/facilitator was Dr. Kathleen Hern of Chabot College who is nationally recognized as a scholar with expertise in the area of accelerated course design and pedagogy.

**NEED FOR RESOURCES**

Chancellor Griffin requested that both the English and Math departments submit a list of resources that were necessary in order to implement the reform agenda in each department that addresses the issues involving student success and equity. The English Department identified 5 areas that need immediate and continued support:

- **Professional Development for Pilot Faculty**
  We need professional development to support our faculty in developing their approaches, syllabi, lessons, and assignments for intensive, high-stakes classes that they have never taught before.

- **Assessment and Benchmarking Instruments**
  We need assessment instruments to assess student skills for proficiency and benchmarking purposes; in addition, we need tools and resources to be able to assess, on a large scale, student responses, attitudes, beliefs, and opinions.
• 2 tutors to be Embedded in the New Accelerated 961A Course Sections
  We need tutors to help support student success and learning, both inside and outside the classroom. We have successfully done this in our retention program courses and our Basic Skills courses.

• Creation of New Computerized Classroom/Writing Workshop Spaces
  Currently, the English Department has only one computerized classroom space to serve over 8,000 students in over 200 courses each semester. We need more technology-infused classrooms in which faculty can not only model reading and writing practices but, even more importantly, in which students can write, workshop, revise, and research during class time. Our proposal is to add an additional permanent classroom space and 2 mobile “rolling labs” comprised of laptops on securable carts.

• Classified Staffing Needs
  We need two full-time classified staff members to help manage our learning labs and help create the new lab and learning spaces that will be required to meet increased student demand from the new, accelerated classes. (One position needs to be upgraded from 9 month to 12 months; the second position would be a completely new position.)

The English Department is painfully aware of how serious the college’s fiscal predicament is. These requests may seem inopportune, but it has been tasked to address at-risk student needs, and it cannot do so without the commitment of significant additional resources. The need for computerized classrooms, for example, is a request that the college should have regularly addressed over the past 15 years. For example, most of our peer institutions offer numerous sections of integrated writing and reading courses taught in computerized classrooms; some even require such instruction as part of the class structure.

And we would like to point out that we are not sitting still and simply waiting to find out what resources can be directed to help us in our equity and reform efforts. The timeline that we have been given is too demanding and we have been forced to be proactive. For example, we were so serious about professional development training that we paid for our professional development workshop in September out of pocket, with the hope that the college will reimburse us for the expenses incurred.

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<td>Implementation of 2 Mobile/Rolling Labs</td>
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NEW ACCELERATED ENGLISH PATHWAY

The English Department is offering two new 6 unit courses that will allow students to complete their English class requirements in a shorter period of time.

**English 961A** 6 units 6 hours per week
**Prerequisite:** Eligibility for English 96

College-level reading assignments. Practice in developing and organizing formal essays and pursuing critical analysis and lines of inquiry. Each section of English 961A will be developed around a central question driving class inquiry and research. (See each section in the schedule for the central question for that class.)

*English 961A is an intensive course that combines two semester-length courses (English 96 + 1A) into one. While passing the course fulfills the student’s 96 and 1A requirements, students should be advised that the work load in this class is very challenging and time-consuming.*

**English 95X** 6 units 6 hours per week
**Prerequisite:** Eligibility for English 92

College preparatory composition and reading. Practice in techniques of critical reading, exposition, and argumentation. Each section of English 95X will be developed around a central question driving class reading and writing. (See each section in the schedule for the central question for that class.)

*English 95X is an intensive course that combines two semester-length courses (English 92 + 93) into one. While passing the course fulfills the student’s 92 and 93 requirements, students should be advised that the work load in this class is very challenging and time-consuming.*

Is an intensive course in the accelerated English pathway right for you?

Visit www.ccsf.edu/english/newlink to take a short self-evaluation to help you decide if an intensive and accelerated course is right for you. Also, while there read the Guidelines and Tips for Successful Accelerated Learning (requires Adobe reader).
## English 961A

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<th>CRN</th>
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<td>COM</td>
<td>MWF 11:00 am-01:00 pm</td>
<td>ARTX 185</td>
<td>Naas, Jodi</td>
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*Course Theme/Driving Question: “How do we make decisions?”*

| A00 | ENGL 961A | COM | MWF 12:00 pm-02:00 pm | BATL 511 | Keast, Darren |

*Course Theme/Driving Question: “How does language shape reality and reality shape language?”*

| A00 | ENGL 961A | COM | MWF 09:00 am-11:00 am | ARTX 188 | Isles, John |

*Course Theme/Driving Question:*

| A00 | ENGL 961A | COM | TR 08:00 am-11:00 am | BNGL 703 | Baccierra, Benj. |

*Course Theme/Driving Question: “To what degree does justice exist in our society?”*

| A00 | ENGL 961A | COM | MWF 12:00 pm-02:00 pm | BATL 511 | Cox, Karen |

*Course Theme/Driving Question: “Does technology change culture, or does culture change technology?”*

| A00 | ENGL 961A | COM | MWF 10:00 am-12:00 pm | BATL 551 | Sapienza, Mitra |

*Course Theme/Driving Question: “What is the American Dream—and is it only a dream?”*

| A00 | ENGL 961A | COM | MWF 10:00 am-12:00 pm | BNGL 710 | Vogel, Kelly |

*Course Theme/Driving Question: “Do we have a civic responsibility?”*

| A00 | ENGL 961A | COM | MW 06:30 pm-09:30 pm | BATL 451 | Delgado, John |

*Course Theme/Driving Question: “How are education help us to overcome adversity?”*

| A00 | ENGL 961A | COM | MTWR 11:00 am-01:00 pm | BNGL 713 | Archer, Daniel |

*Course Theme/Driving Question: “Why are we so attracted to monsters?”*

| A00 | ENGL 961A | COM | TR 11:30 am-02:30 pm | BATL 611 | Miles, Amy |

*Course Theme/Driving Question: “What is happiness?”*

## English 95X

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*Course Theme/Driving Question: “How can we be more successful?”*

| A00 | ENGL 95X | COM | MWF 09:00 am-11:00 am | ARTX 268 | Smith, Kristin |

*Course Theme/Driving Question: “What defines a life worth living?”*

| A00 | ENGL 95X | COM | MWF 08:00 am-10:00 am | SCIE 215 | Lawlor, Amy |

*Course Theme/Driving Question: “Can we ever achieve social equality?”*

| A00 | ENGL 95X | COM | MWF 09:00 am-11:00 am | BATL 511 | Langmo, Tore |

*Course Theme/Driving Question: “Who’s in control?”*

| A00 | ENGL 95X | COM | MW 06:00 pm-09:00 pm | ARTX 268 | McCormick, Chante |

*Course Theme/Driving Question: “How are changes in communication changing us?”*
BEYOND ACCELERATED CLASSES—LARGER DEPARMENTAL REFORMS

As both a precursor and parallel effort to developing its accelerated courses, the English Department established a series of Work Groups. (See Figure 3.) These Work Groups were tasked with researching and recommending curricular, departmental, and program reforms.

These groups were formed in April and continue to meet. They were asked to come up with initial “Action Directives” by the end of September. (They will continue to meet and develop larger recommendations and ideas throughout the year.)

Figure 3: English Department Reform Process
What follow are the Work Group Action Directives which each group submitted within the last ten days. Since the department just received these, we are now in the process of “digesting” them.

Some of these directives are polished and fully formed. Others are very rough and will need clarification, revision, and much greater refinement. Moreover, working through these directives will occur in a department of over 100 people that prides itself on consensus-building. Thus, we have considerably more work to do in the months ahead.

However, given the compression of the timeline, we feel that these directives, coupled with the highly quickened development of our new accelerated curriculum, demonstrate the seriousness of purpose with which this department is responding to the challenges of student success and equity.

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT ACTION DIRECTIVES**

**English Department Multicultural Pedagogy and Students Work Group**

**Action Directives**

**September 24, 2010**

The following is a list of three actionable items for the accelerated class instructors to utilize. They are informed by Dr. James A. Banks’ model for multicultural education. Under each item is a brief description of how these directives are informed by Banks’ model.

As a short but very rich resource we have attached an interview with Dr. Banks.*

**Action Directives for Accelerated Classes:**

1) Accelerated classes should assign a unit or text that addresses social issues and activism.

   **Notes:**
   This could end up being a weaker “Level 1 Contribution” if it’s just about the usual "heroes"—in the vein of Cesar Chavez, Malcolm X, etc. However, it could also be Additive—a stronger “Level 2 Contribution”—if it included a unit on an issue affecting Latinos, another unit on an issue affecting the gay/lesbian/trans community, etc. But for it to be Transformative—a “Level 3 Contribution”—the focus of each unit would be multiple perspectives on a problem or issue, with attention to the various stakeholders, interrogating who benefits and who suffers, and reconciling information from multiple sources.

* The essay is not included in this update. It can be found at http://www.learner.org/workshops/socialstudies/pdf/session3/3.Multiculturalism.pdf
2) From a selection of multicultural literature the teacher provides (students may also add to the list?), accelerated classes should allow students to choose one text to study during the semester, foregrounding choosing criteria, negotiating, and decision making.

_Notes:_
If the process itself is foregrounded, it could begin to "teach students thinking and decision making skills, to empower them, and to help them acquire a sense of political efficacy"—major goals of the Decision-Making and Social Action Approach.

3) The accelerated classes should include goal setting, planning and reflective cycles throughout the semester for the individual, the group, and the class.

_Notes:_
These seem like foundational skills for students to be active agents in their educations and in the world. The course would help students develop transferable problem-solving strategies that allow them to "gather pertinent data, analyze their values and beliefs, synthesize their knowledge and values, and identify alternative courses of action, and finally decide what, if any, actions they will take." This is, on so many levels, the basis for student success, so working with and through problem-solving strategies would directly support students in achieving their current and future academic goals.

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**English Department Affective Issues and Pedagogy Work Group**

**Action Directives**

**September 24, 2010**

**VISION**
Create a culture of success in the English department for students and faculty

**MISSION**
Accelerate student progress through an effective and cohesive sequence of reading and writing courses

**GOAL**
Continually consider and address the affective domain in the development of our students and our selves.

**Affective Domain Directives**

Based on cross-referencing the findings of the subgroups (Self-efficacy, Stereotype Threat, Resiliency, and Motivation), instructors will focus on the motivation dimension of the affective domain in the areas of

- Creating positive relationships.
• Establishing and maintaining high expectations.
• Establishing an environment and opportunities in and outside the classroom for positive collaboration and participation.

These directives are based on what we found to be the most effective in helping students develop into more positively motivated, resilient, persistent and ultimately more successful learners. Also included are directives that will help instructors develop into more positively motivated, resilient, persistent and more successful teachers.

Directive One

All Faculty Should Strive to Create Positive Relationships

• Instructors will use language that emphasizes possibility of positive outcomes, and will communicate through tone and enthusiasm that they care and are behind the students and want them to succeed.
• Instructors will be aware of how they communicate with students and use respectful and professional language rather than demeaning or overly friendly language.
• Instructors will meet individually with each student three times during the semester to not only find out about their academic progress but to also get to know them as people.
• Instructors will check with students regularly to see whether their notion of how well they are doing coincides with the instructor’s evaluations and records.
• Instructors, in the feedback to students, will emphasize strategies for improvement of work rather than strictly focusing on error.
• Instructors will model positive relationships by developing positive relationships with their fellow faculty members, administrators and staff.
• Instructors will earn the respect and trust of their students by following through on commitments, establishing clear boundaries and treating students fairly.

Directive Two

All Faculty Should Set High Expectations and Give Students Adequate Support to Meet Those Goals and Expectations

• Instructors, at the beginning of the semester, will clarify behavioral and academic expectations through the use of modeling. An example of a behavioral expectation that could be modeled by the instructor would be arriving on time to class. Examples of academic expectations that are modeled include sample summaries and essays.
• Instructors will provide support for the reading of difficult material through effective direct instruction of reading processes and strategies such as
previewing vocabulary, annotation strategies, questioning, and summarization.

- Instructors will provide support for students’ writing processes by guiding students through the writing process with relevant pre-writing, drafting and proofreading activities.
- Instructors will be given clear expectations and the adequate support to meet those expectations by supervisors, evaluators and administrators.
- Instructors will participate in relevant professional development activities that will affect positively and directly their teaching effectiveness such as Reading Apprenticeship, level committees, assessment, essay grade norming. The college will make it an institutional priority to support instructors in obtaining such professional development and training.

**Directive Three**

**All Faculty Should Provide Numerous Opportunities for Positive Collaboration and Participation**

- Instructors will start each semester with ways for students to establish immediate communication with one another; this is so that they start out knowing a few others in the class in a social as well as academic context.
- Instructors will give students opportunities to make choices within a well-structured and relevant lesson and to work with topics and projects that are of high interest to them.
- Instructors will provide opportunities for students to engage in “reciprocal teaching” and teach each other.
- Instructors will use in the context of their lessons, purposeful collaborative learning activities, some of which involve guided practice, pair or group practice.
- Instructors will create an atmosphere in the classroom where students will feel safe to collaborate and participate by communicating respectfully with them and treating everyone fairly, and in doing so, modeling the behavior they would like the students to display when working with their peers.
- Instructors will be given opportunities for positive collaboration and participation in the department and college through self-selected projects and committees.
- Instructors will form learning communities based on areas of professional interests.
- Instructors will mentor and teach each other.
- Instructors will collaborate in creating lessons and essay assignments.
- Instructors will feel safe to collaborate and participate in the department and college when everyone communicates respectfully with each other and everyone feels they are being treated fairly.
English Department Assessment and Institutional Research Work Group
Action Directives
September 24, 2010

Mission Statement:

The Assessment Work Group believes that assessment and institutional research should contribute to the ways in which we understand our course sequence and desired student learning outcomes and that it should help us adapt to our diverse students' academic needs. Intelligent and well-executed assessment and research should give more shape to our course sequence, more direction to what we prioritize as teachers working in that sequence, and more clarity regarding what learning outcomes are being achieved as well as what those outcomes mean.

Action Directives

1) Policy and Practice Directive: English Department assessments should be, whenever and wherever possible, smoothly incorporated into the actual curriculum and practice of a class.

2) Policy and Practice Directive: English Department assessments should increasingly focus on establishing Entry and Exit benchmarks for student skills, learning outcomes, and course objectives.

3) Policy and Practice Directive: During the pilot process of the new, accelerated courses, the department should aim for tech enhancement of all or no fewer than half of 961A pilot & control group 1A courses.

- Tech enhancement in Insight might include required discussion forum interaction, online quiz-taking, document storage, assignment posting, assignment submission, Web resource links, and Web lectures/lecture notes.
- Areas of assessment of tech enhancement could include a student's judgment of her/his
  - investment in the course
  - affective well being
  - progress in the course (learning more? less?)
  - retention rates and grades
- In other words, rate on a scale of 1-10 how much the tech enhancement added to the course and her/his investment in it

4) Assessment of the new, accelerated classes should include measures of student attitudes and responses to the Driving/Inquiry Question and Project-Based Learning pedagogy/methodology.

5) Fall 2010 Specific Course Recommendation: English 1A
English 1A Fall 2010 Recommended Exit Assessment Measures

- Develop and implement online (through Insight) an assessment instrument that assesses
  - Sentence-level knowledge.
  - Knowledge of MLA conventions.
  - Research Integration.
  - This would be given to students in the weeks before and/or after Thanksgiving.
- Give the Advanced Degrees of Reading Power Test as an Exit measure in the class
  - First choice would be to give it during the scheduled final exam period.
  - Second choice would be to give it during scheduled “arena” testing times in Dec.
- Each of these assessments should be done in at least 10 sections.

6) Fall 2010 Specific Course Recommendation: English 93

English 93 Fall 2010 Recommended Exit Assessment Measures

- Develop and implement online (through Insight) an assessment instrument that assesses
  - Sentence-level knowledge
  - This would be given to students in the weeks before and/or after Thanksgiving
- Give the Advanced Degrees of Reading Power Test as an Exit measure in the class
  - First choice would be to give it during the scheduled final exam period.
  - Second choice would be to give it during scheduled “arena” testing times in Dec.
- Each of these assessments should be done in at least 10 sections
Specific Assessment Recommendations for Spring 2011

961A & 1A (10 sections of each)

Entry
- Advanced DRP in class (by end of week 2)
- By the end of Week 3 have students take the Sentence Knowledge/ MLA Conventions/Research Integration assessment (on Insight)

Midway
- Reading Comprehension Exam (Based on the 92 Botstein model: distribute reading 1 week in advance; students have 2-week window to take a multiple choice reading comprehension exam in Insight)

Exit
- MLA Abstracts/Annotated Bibliographic Entries (citations + summaries) of two research sources integrated in a research-based paper produced in the last month of course. Each objective expository abstract/summary will be followed by evaluative paragraph focusing on why the source was chosen, why it was or was not useful, and why or why not it is an effective argument.
  - A rubric will need to be developed for this assessment
  - Each student’s Abstracts/Bibliographic Entries will be evaluated by two other 961A/1A teachers.
- Sentence Knowledge/ MLA Conventions/Research Integration assessment (on Insight)
- Advanced DRP

95X & 93 (5 sections of each)

On-going for 95X
- Reading Plus for half of 6th hour, or 30 minutes per week or 8 hours per term (progress and levels to be assessed); other half could be devoted to conferences, Reading Plus review with instructor; and targeted lab activities with record-keeping, such as Exercise Central.

Entry
- Advanced DRP in class (by end of week 2)
- By the end of Week 3 have students take the Sentence Knowledge assessment (on Insight)

Midway
- (Require students to take the Eligibility Exam?)

Exit
- Sentence Knowledge assessment (on Insight) during the final two weeks of the term
- Advanced DRP during scheduled final exam period (preferred) or scheduled arena testing times
• MLA Abstract/Annotated Bibliography of the same article used for reading comprehension midway through 1A & 961A

English Department Multilingual Students and Pedagogy Work Group
Action Directives
September 24, 2010

Action Directives

1) We have created a sequence of the important grammar and syntax areas to teach in each class in the English sequence including the new, advanced accelerated courses. See the table below.

2) We created folders in the English Department Dropbox folder (www.dropbox.com) and are collecting and creating as much material to upload so that teachers can login and share exercises and pedagogical techniques.

3) Also in the Dropbox folder is a sub-folder titled “Essential Readings.” It offers readings and resources for any faculty member interested in teaching ESL/ELL students.

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4) We are working on developing specific exercises, activities, and pedagogical methods for the new accelerated class that combine sentence-level practice with essay writing practice.

Examples: Pairing appositives with describing interviewees, and pairing subordination with counter-arguments.

5) We are working on creating a new online assessment tests to compare exit levels of 1A students and students coming out of the accelerated courses.

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**English Department Peer Institutions and Site Visits Work Group**

**Action Directives**

**September 24, 2010**

**Action Directives**

1) *Reading and writing should be taught in an integrated fashion.*
   A) Reading strategies are taught using the texts students also write about
   B) Students should be taught to apply reading strategies to improve writing
   C) All required courses should use a variety of texts including at least one full length text and a variety of shorter essays. Most of these texts should be thesis driven, expository texts
   D) Courses and instructors should use texts in writing, building to a synthesis of multiple texts by the end of the semester

2) *Study Skills*
   A) Learning practices and study skills should be taught directly
   B) Students should be made familiar with support services and campus resources through class activities
   C) Students should be taught to acquire “cultural capital” within the college; those with such capital can better navigate an academic environment and have greater retention and persistence

3) *Conferencing with Students*
   Other schools require regular conferencing with students throughout the semester to ensure retention in regular and intensive courses.

4) *There Should Be an Enrollment Cap of 27 Students in Composition and Integrated Reading/Writing Courses*
This actionable directive is supported both by the practices of our peer institutions and by studies and information from scholarship and site visits that show smaller classes lead to greater student success, particularly for at-risk students.

5) **Tutors/Support Services**
   A) Dedicated tutors are better able to provide meaningful assistance to basic skills students and increase retention through continuity.
   B) Greater lab access will enable courses to fulfill reading outcomes through Reading Plus and other programs as well as promote good study skills.

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**Student Surveys and Focus Groups Work Group**

**Action Directives**

**September 24, 2010**

**Mission Statement:**

In order to better serve its students and the larger CCSF community, the English Department should be regularly surveying, talking with, and listening to students and staff about their experiences with our courses, curricula, and policies. The information that results from these processes should be used to help shape and inform the both the long-term and short-term goals and strategic choices the English Department makes.

**Action Directives**

1) The English Department should continue to regularly survey and talk to students and staff about their thoughts, feelings, and responses to English Department courses, curricula, and policies.

2) The highest priorities for surveys, focus groups, and listening sessions should be collecting data
   - That can be used to support the self-assessment and self-evaluation of department programs and curricula.
   - That can be used to lead to greater instructional and student success.

3) The Department needs permanent survey and software tools in order to collect, analyze, and disseminate the opinions and thoughts of students and other members of our college community. These tools need to be robust enough to handle the demands of thousands of respondents when the department does a survey involving more than 30 sections of courses in a semester.
This group’s recommendation: an annual departmental subscription to Survey Monkey with the “Unlimited Response” option. (Current subscription cost is $200.00). This research tool would be available to any member of the English Department.

4) The title of this Work Group should be changed to “Student and Campus Community Survey and Focus Groups.” It should be made a permanent standing subcommittee of the English Department Curriculum Committee.

5) In order to conduct focus groups and strategic listening sessions, the department needs access to trained, objective focus group leaders/facilitators; this might also involve getting training for some of our own faculty to become such facilitators.
Minutes for the Listening Session for English Workgroup
September 28, 2010

Attendees: Jen Levinson (facilitator), Ghislaine Mazé (taking minutes), Jessica Brown, Rick Cantora,
Lena Carew, Ms. Bob Davis, Luis Escobar, Jeffrey Fang, Brandi Machado, Lerone Matthis, Jim Sauvé,
Drew Vai, Nancy Vargas, Laura Walsh

The attendees met from 2:00 to 3:00 in Batmale 551.

1) Jen Levinson presented a review of the agenda – I. Agenda II. Introductions III. Information IV.
Discussion V. Wrap-up
2) The attendees introduced themselves, stating their role in CCSF and their reasons for coming to the
meeting with the English workgroup.
3) Laura Walsh introduced herself as an instructor from the ESL dept. She is interested in Eng classes
because ESL students transfer into Eng classes – She teaches ESL 160, to students preparing to trans.
Into Eng. Classes. She presented data showing that students from ESL 160 pass English 93 at 77%,
significantly higher than newly-placed into 93 students. She is wondering if there’s a way to help ESL
completers to accelerate through the sequence, and possibly to re-take the placement.

4) Jen Levinson passed out questions for discussion, along with a draft of the class descriptions for the
new classes that would go into the catalog, along with an overview of project-based learning and
samples of the “driving questions” that might frame these accelerated courses.

5) Rick asked why these particular classes were combined. Jim Sauvé said we achieved acceleration
with 91, and are able now to skip students... Now the problem population is 92, and 92 students seem to
need the focus... Combining 92 and 93 seemed like the best way
That would be offering acceleration opportunities for 90% of students placing into the program.

6) Nancy Vargas said she was wondering if it would be helpful to look at models that have been helpful
with underrepresented students, as at other campuses – through programs such as PUENTE that speak
to the student at a motivational level, and that have been used in retention programs. For selecting the
questions, and setting the readings – asked if we are looking at these methods and materials.
Jessica said that she has taught in PUENTE and acknowledges that these models work. She gave an
example of one of the driving questions – “Who's in charge?” – and said that such a question might be
able to accommodate the materials and concerns found in such programs.

7) Ms. Bob said he has heard discussions about student discouragement. He asked whether anything in
the documents from the Eng. Department addresses the issue of student discouragement. Jessica
explained that the department’s Affective Workgroup is studying this issue.

8) Jen asked the students for ideas – Lena Carew said that the option of accelerated pathways helps.
She pinpointed the discouragement at the moment when a student gets their placement results.

9) Drew Vai said that the forms that a student initially fills out marking out the placement and the
course pathway can be discouraging. He feels like the diagram of the new pathways would be
heartening...

10) Brandi Machado said that students might respond to courses that offered alternative projects, and
group assignments that divide roles within a group to acknowledge the different strengths of students.
within a group. She wondered whether there might be alternative ways to show what was learned, such as making a documentary.

11) Jeffrey Fang suggested that having success stories to help cultivate and share methods of success for students currently in the sequence. He suggested finding the point where a student can engage the professor in the classroom to build a relationship.

12) Luis Escobar would like another opportunity for the group to meet and get all ideas out. He noted that all discussion has focused on acceleration, and he would like to propose that we talk about concentrating resources on underserved students. Perhaps we could have a couple sections of students who have a GPA of 2.5 or lower – to pair students with a counselor and help support...

13) Brandi Machado agreed with Jeffrey's and Luis's comments, and added that looking at the psychological aspect, instructors may not always know when they have students from a special retention program in their class – students from retention programs often feel that their instructors don't share a perspective with the students, or are unable to acknowledge the shared background of students. She noted that students who are homeless, as well as students in programs such as WAYPASS and Second Chance, face specific challenges within the traditional class format.

12) Jen will send out a Doodle to find a meeting time for the group – Jessica requested that we meet again before 10/8. Jen also offered to set up a mailing list to continue the conversation online.

13) Laura Walsh relinquished her time for asking the students a question she had prepared, in the interest of time.

14) Jessica Brown addressed some issues from the discussion. She said that we have 6 subgroups in the department now working on many of these issues, including the Affective group that is working on issues of discouragement. She adds that another aspect to what we are currently working on is offering the option for students to get credit for one portion of the course when attempting one of these intensive new courses. She said that we hopes to have a shadow CRN … Setting benchmarks to allow students to meet the course requirements for half of the work in an accelerated course. She also noted that many of the driving questions behind the accelerated courses are designed to allow a wide range of students and perspectives to engage.

Basic skills initiative may be able to get tutors for Eng 95. We have a doc. going to the chancellor asking for more resources that we could offer to students. She noted that much of the information Jim Sauve can bring to the group can answer some of the questions people have about these new courses. She also emphasized that we have professional development happening this week for the Eng. Instructors – and that this is coming out of pocket.

She emphasized that we are working off such studies as the NCPSR report from September to learn about the best practices and latest findings about effective cc and basic skills education. She emphasized that she is committed to keeping her mission statement at heart, and that is seeing that students succeed in our classrooms.