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## Charting New Territory: Creating an Interdepartmental Course for Generation 1.5 Writers

- This article describes a composition course for Generation 1.5 students offered collaboratively by a university's English as a Second Language (ESL) and writing programs. The paper outlines the course curriculum and addresses challenges such a cross-disciplinary course presents in terms of assessment, placement, awarding course credit, and designing curriculum to meaningfully and appropriately address students' needs and backgrounds.

### Introduction

In the opening chapter of their volume, *Generation 1.5 Meets College Composition*, Harklau, Siegal and Losey (1999) point to some of the "political and ethical dilemmas" that accompany college writing requirements for multilingual and bilingual students. These issues include: (a) how to appropriately and fairly assess and place Generation 1.5 students, (b) which courses to place them in, ESL or college composition courses, (c) what instructional paradigms to use with bilingual writers, (d) how to balance students' self-esteem and self-identity against their academic literacy needs, and (e) whether this subgroup of students should be held to the same standards as their monolingual English-speaking counterparts.

While ESL faculty at community colleges, California State Universities, and many University of California campuses have been working out ways to address the above issues for some time, these questions have only recently become urgent for us in the ESL Service Courses at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). Like all campuses across California, UCLA's ESL program has been serving what we used to call "long-term immigrant" students for well over a decade. Most of these students have been in the US less than seven years, under the eight-year limit for acquisition of academic literacy set forth in Collier (1987). But only within the last three years have we seen a tripling of entering first-year students who are long-term immigrants born in the US or educated in California schools since the primary grades.

During these three years, the ESL program attempted to serve the needs of bilingual students within the existing placement and course structure. Until

fall 2001, students were placed either in a college composition course (English Composition 2, a prerequisite to freshmen composition) or in our equivalent ESL writing course, ESL 35. The placement process was and continues to be done collaboratively by the UCLA Writing Programs and the ESL Service Courses faculty. The process involves a careful examination of the UC system's Subject A exam, the writing sample from UCLA's in-house English as a Second Language Placement Examination (ESLPE), and the results of the verbal sections of the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT®) I and II. In addition to these measures, we also take account of other languages the student speaks and the number of years in the US and in U.S. schools. Before the 2001-2002 academic year, if students' writing samples and test results indicated they were English learners, they were usually placed in the ESL writing course regardless of how long they had lived in the US or how they identified themselves.

In the fall of 2001, however, we designed a special composition course for Generation 1.5 students who have been in U.S. schools longer than eight years. Other programs facing the same problems have approached the problem administratively; we decided to approach it pedagogically. On the surface, this would seem to be the simplest solution of all, but in a large bureaucracy like UCLA, it was no easy task. To create the special composition course for 1.5 generation students, we had to circumvent existing bureaucratic structures and cross-disciplinary boundaries between the ESL and composition programs. The intent of this article is to describe the course and the obstacles we overcame to institute it.

### *Crossing Departmental Lines: Collaborative Course Design*

Along with a group of teaching assistants, I regularly teach ESL 35, the ESL composition course into which first-year students identified as English learners are placed. During the three-year period leading up to 2001, approximately one-third of the students in a typical ESL 35 section were born in the US or had immigrated at a young enough age to attend U.S. schools since elementary school. These students' attitudes toward the ESL placement were negative; they resented being placed in ESL classes. My attitude about the appropriateness of their placement, however, changed over time; at first, I thought that the ESL placement was beneficial to them—like bad tasting medicine. Gradually, however, I became convinced that I could not teach them well in a class that also enrolled international undergraduate students and students who had been in the US for less than five years. The U.S.-educated students often identified English as their first language and had an orientation to American culture and learning language that was distinct from that of students who readily identified themselves as ESL students.

But I didn't see an easy way to get around the problem. The instructors in the UCLA Writing Programs, I was told, lacked the expertise in language-related issues to deal with these students' pressing language needs. And the students' writing samples evidenced the need for attention to linguistic form and academic vocabulary. Help was on the way, however. At the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) 2001 convention in St.

Louis, I attended a panel discussion in which Bonnie Norton Pierce and Alistair Pennycooke dialogued with graduate students about the ideas in their seminal works. Norton Pierce discussed her 1995 *TESOL Quarterly* article, "Social Identity, Investment, and Language Learning." Rejecting the notion that learner motivation determines success in language learning, she argued that a learner's social identity frequently overrides this and other factors because it determines the learner's investment in language learning. In this discussion, I recognized the attitudes of U.S.-educated writers in my ESL 35 class who often classified themselves as native speakers of English and Americans, albeit "hyphenated" ones. Their social identity did, as Norton Pierce predicted, deeply color their attitudes toward literacy and language learning. At the California Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (CATESOL) 2001 convention in Ontario, I attended the Generation 1.5 colloquium organized by the San Francisco State University ESL and composition faculty and realized that the academic literacy questions raised by Generation 1.5 writers could only be solved by crossing departmental boundaries. And I spoke to Jan Frodesen about a special 2-unit language in writing course that she had developed for the Generation 1.5 writers at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB). These experiences convinced me that the problem had to be addressed in a new way, and that way had to be pedagogical.

Armed with this new resolve and a few statistics (about the numbers of U.S.-educated and U.S.-born students in UCLA ESL composition courses over the three-year period from 1997-2000), my ESL colleagues and I organized a meeting with the Writing Programs' faculty. Together, we discussed the students' unique profile and needs, in particular, their lower-than-required SAT verbal scores (below 520 verbal SAT), their length of residence (more than eight years in U.S. schools), their bilingual status (most reported speaking a language other than English at home), the language and vocabulary errors present in their writing, and their dissatisfaction at being forced to satisfy their Subject A requirement by taking an ESL composition course. We then explored alternatives to teach them in a way that would be more satisfying to them and to us. Options we entertained included: (a) simply placing them in a college composition course with no special instructional accommodation; (b) creating an adjunct model whereby students would be placed in a college composition course and a special 2-unit workshop course taught by an ESL professional<sup>1</sup>; (c) requiring these students to get tutoring; (d) creating a special course just for the entering Generation 1.5 students. In the end, we opted to design a special course that would be taught by an ESL composition expert, but offered by the UCLA Writing Programs, carrying its name and numbering (English Composition 2 – Approaches to University Discourse). Instead of meeting four hours a week as the ESL and college composition courses do, the class would be an intensive six-hour-a-week section.

In opting to create a special course, we were making some firm statements in response to some of the ethical and political questions surrounding college composition requirements for Generation 1.5 students. We wanted to reduce the stigma and devastation that students felt when placed in ESL writing courses. We wanted to preserve their self-identity and acknowledge

the hard work that had earned them a place at one of the state's most prestigious universities. The choice also implies, however, that these students should be held to the same writing requirements as their monolingual counterparts while acknowledging that the university has the responsibility to creatively dedicate resources to helping bilingual students meet these requirements. The university can't simply label them "remedial," off-loading their instruction to the community college system or expecting them to take pre-university writing courses and pass the Subject A exam to gain admittance to freshman English courses. Finally, the decision to increase the number of contact hours recognizes that the students have two areas in which they must improve—language and academic writing and reading skills—and that the university needs to give them time, focused instruction, and expert faculty to work on these two areas simultaneously.

### *Rethinking Course Placement*

Creating the course that has come to be known as English Composition 2i or English 2i raised questions regarding placement: (a) Would the placement and assessment process for Generation 1.5 students remain the same or change? (b) How would the students be categorized by the registrar, as having an ESL requirement and a Subject A requirement or as having only a Subject A requirement? (c) Most importantly, how could we give students some voice in the way they satisfied their Subject A requirement?

In answer to the first question, we decided to keep our placement system in which students who fail the Subject A with an "E" designation are instructed to take the UCLA ESL Placement Exam before their ultimate course placement is decided. Essentially, this procedure allows the student to submit two writing samples written several months apart, one a reading-based writing task and the other an analytical or argumentative task about a topic of general interest. The procedure has also ensured a careful review and consideration of each student's case, at least as much as we have access to from SAT scores and the information about language background and years in the US and U.S. schools the student provides on the "intent to register" questionnaire which he or she returns to our campus.

The second question, how to categorize these students once we had decided on their placement, was a little trickier. I was in favor of classifying them as "Subject A required" only because one of my goals in creating the course was to remove the stigma, anger, and disappointment associated with being placed in an ESL course. George Gadda, my counterpart in the Writing Programs and the Chief Reader for the Subject A, did not concur. First, he pointed out that giving them only a Subject A required designation would allow them in the university's computerized enrollment system to sign up for any section of English 2, not one taught by an ESL composition specialist. More importantly, he worried that this placement would not send students an accurate message about their academic literacy preparation and language placement. In the end, it was agreed that the students would receive an "ESL 35/2i placement." The students who receive this newly created designation are coded into the university system as having both a Subject A and an ESL

requirement to fulfill. Once they have successfully completed English Composition 2i, both requirements disappear from their permanent transcript.

To involve students in the placement decision and, at the same time, ensure that we were basing the course placement on sufficient grounds, we sent students a letter or attached a note to their ESL placement examination results directing them to discuss their placement with me. In these private meetings, I explained their placement (what it was and how it had been determined), described the ESL 35 and the English 2i courses, and gave them the choice of whether they would take ESL 35 or English 2i to satisfy their Subject A/ESL requirement. I also asked them about themselves—their language background, their experience in U.S. schools, and the profile of language use in their homes. Consulting with the students in this way had several benefits. It allowed us to determine if the background information we had used to place the students was comprehensive and accurate. Talking to some of the students made it clear whether the ESL 35/2i placement was appropriate. For instance, one young woman's father was a native speaker of English and her mother spoke a language other than English, but never spoke it with her daughter. Another student with a hearing impairment had parents who were bilingual in German and English and were U.S. university educated.

These placement conversations were revelatory in another important way. As many researchers discuss, what students call themselves (Rodby, 1999) and what they claim as their native language (Harklau, Siegal and Losey, 1999) are crucial parts of the equation when working with Generation 1.5 writers. The students who were ultimately placed in the course had usually been in the US since first or second grade and readily acknowledged speaking another home language. But when asked what their first language was, most said they knew English better than the other language or languages that were spoken in their environments. Finally, being able to discuss their placement seemed to have an important impact on their attitude going into the course. Rather than feeling “punished” or “stigmatized,” most students seemed glad to have been given information about fulfilling their composition requirement. In the final analysis, the most important outcome resulting from involving students in the placement decision was a marked improvement in the class atmosphere and the students' participation in the course over what it had been when students were automatically placed in ESL 35. The students and I had already established a relationship before the course began, which opened a channel of communication and honest feedback that I drew upon throughout the entire quarter.

Maintaining and making subtle accommodations to our existing placement structure has had some drawbacks. Entering first year students to UCLA participate in a week-long orientation program during which they enroll in their fall quarter courses and plan their course schedule for the rest of the academic year. The U.S.-educated bilingual students that would be the most likely candidates to enroll in English Composition 2i cannot enroll in it until they have taken the ESL placement exam. Some students, however, wait until just before fall quarter (after Orientation) to take the exam. Because of the small numbers of Generation 1.5 students at UCLA, we are only able to offer one section of English Composition 2i in the fall quarter. However,

many students already have their schedules set and thus cannot rearrange them to fit English 2i. We are now entertaining ways to determine placement before students come to Orientation.

We also have to work out an accurate profile for students who can benefit most from English Composition 2i instead of an ESL writing course. In our first attempt at identifying students who could be offered the 2i option, we arbitrarily decided that students who had attended school for more than nine years would be offered the possibility of taking the newly created course. All other criteria (SAT verbal scores below 420, a nonpassing score on the Subject A, and an ESL 35 placement) remained the same. This leaves open questions: How suitable is this placement for U.S.-born bilingual students? Should students who have attended U.S. high school for less than nine years also have this option? Time and experience will certainly give us a clearer sense of what types of students can most benefit from the course.

***Course Design and Instructional Choices***

Like its ESL and English 2 counterparts, English 2i is designed to familiarize students with university level reading texts and writing tasks. In its design, it is essentially a blend of its “parent” courses, ESL 35 and English 2. When designing the curriculum, I wanted to ensure that it would be aligned with the curriculum requirements for English 2. But if we were to retain and even expand the language and vocabulary focus of ESL 35 for the English 2i participants, the reading and writing requirements couldn’t completely mirror those of English 2. In the final analysis, I decided that it was more important for the English 2i students to write consistently and frequently than it was for them to be bogged down with the heavy reading load that characterized most English 2 sections. See Figure 1 for a comparison of the requirements in the three courses and Appendix A for the English 2i syllabus.

**Figure 1**  
**Comparison of Course Requirements for**  
**English 2, English 2i, and ESL 35**

	<i>English 2</i>	<i>English 2i</i>	<i>ESL 35</i>
Contact Hours/Week	• 4 hours	• 6 hours	• 4 hours

Writing Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3-4 graded papers, approximately 20 revised pages</li> <li>• Expository writing that synthesizes course readings</li> <li>• Teacher-assigned tasks (type of writing may be open and determined by student)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 graded papers, approximately 20 revised pages</li> <li>• Writing that synthesizes course readings</li> <li>• Teacher-assigned tasks corresponding to central academic text types (evaluative, comparison and contrast analysis, argumentation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 graded papers, approximately 15 revised pages</li> <li>• Writing that synthesizes course readings</li> <li>• Teacher-assigned tasks corresponding to central academic text types (evaluative, comparison and contrast analysis, argumentation)</li> </ul>
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15-20 pieces, some to be over 20-25 pages in length (over 100 pages of text)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 pieces, none to be longer than 10 pages (50-60 total pages)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15 pieces, none to be longer than 10 pages (50-60 total pages)</li> </ul>
Reading-Related Assignments and Class Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class discussion</li> <li>• Discussion board postings on class website related to self-selected questions about the readings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class discussion</li> <li>• Discussion board postings on class website related to teacher-formulated questions about the readings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Class discussions</li> <li>• Reading guides (handouts with comprehension and discussion questions students fill out before class discussion of readings)</li> </ul>
Writing-Related Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-class quick writes on topics related to readings or writing assignments</li> <li>• Journal and website posting activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prewriting tasks (not mandatory)</li> <li>• In-class quick writes on topics related to readings or writing assignments</li> <li>• Style imitation exercises (focused on conclusion strategies)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided prewriting and outlining activities (must be completed)</li> </ul>
Other Course Requirements		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammar and vocabulary activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grammar and vocabulary activities</li> </ul>
Conferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3-4 times per quarter, on a voluntary basis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 7-8 times per quarter, mandatory, becoming voluntary in the middle of the quarter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3-4 times per quarter, mandatory</li> </ul>



The English 2i is theme-based as are English 2 and ESL 35. This fall, the readings and writing assignments were based on the theme of social and economic issues in Los Angeles. Students enrolled in the English 2i course read less than students enrolled in English 2, but submitted four assignments for grading, a number comparable to those submitted by English 2 students and more than ESL 35 students. The 2i students also met with me in writing conferences an average of seven times over the 10 weeks. In addition, instead of having students complete “reading guides,” which ask pointed reading comprehension and discussion questions, I posted one question on the website for each week’s readings. The question, which required them to synthesize the readings and their own opinions and experience, was closely tied to the writing assignment they would eventually complete. Students posted their responses to these questions on the class website discussion board. At the beginning of the quarter, they also responded to the postings of at least three of their peers. But as the paper load became heavier, they confined their work to posting their own thoughts about the discussion question. Often, students incorporated passages from their discussion board postings into their papers or cited the ideas from their peers’ postings as evidence in their papers. I usually drew from these bulletin board postings when creating language and vocabulary exercises.

***“Not Ignoring the Elephant in the Room”—Language and Vocabulary Instruction in English 2i***

In addition to the adjustments made to the reading and writing components of the course, the other aspect of 2i that makes it distinct from both its ESL and English Composition equivalents is both the amount and way of approaching language instruction. As I began planning the new course, this aspect of the course was my greatest concern. After all, it is the students’ written English that places them in the course in the first place. Addressing these language issues is difficult because the students’ knowledge of formal English grammar varies widely and often their approach to accuracy is anchored in and governed by strong intuitions about English. From previous experience, I knew that traditional ESL approaches such as teaching editing strategies or reviewing and practicing grammar points often bored them or required knowledge of formal English rules they lacked. More discourse-based approaches such as having students analyze published texts to discover how a given structure functions in written text seemed more suited to the intuitions that Generation 1.5 writers have for English. While such activities help them pay attention to stylistic and linguistic choices in writing and open them to the range of structures and vocabulary available to writers, it is unclear how much this will influence the language in their own written texts and, particularly, the accuracy of that language. Finally, I knew it would be important to respond in some way to the errors in their written texts, but I wasn’t sure how much students would attend to and learn from consistent and focused marking of errors.

Luckily, with six hours a week of instructional time, I could experiment with various approaches to language instruction. I used the first three weeks

to assess their knowledge of formal grammar terminology and rules and to try various approaches to see which worked best. My choices were driven by several guiding principles. The language activities I chose had to address language problems I saw in the students' writing (the essay drafts they submitted and their bulletin board postings) which were more informal than the essays. The activities had to be discourse-based, involve the students in discovering what they already knew about how written English works, and help students produce more accurate academic English in their graded essays.

The results with the fall 2001 class were promising. The students participated eagerly in almost all of the language activities. They were interested in tasks like labeling sentence constituents, learning terminology for parts of speech, verb types (e.g., transitive and intransitive) and sentence parts, and finding structures in written passages that corresponded to this terminology. They also enjoyed practicing strategies to edit their own writing for verb tense shift and subject-verb agreement with complex subjects. Students first learned to identify and mark the subjects and verbs in their paragraphs, editing any errors they discovered. They were subsequently asked to complete the process as homework. I looked at these and marked any errors they hadn't been able to find. Finally, they were expected to find all subject-verb agreement errors in their texts by independent self-editing. If they couldn't find all errors independently, I marked a general comment "subject-verb agreement errors" in the margin of paragraphs in drafts that still contained errors, and students would try again. They practiced the same instructional cycle for verb tense shift, highlighting the verbs in their written paragraphs in different colored markers to see if they could detect shifts in tense that needed to be more clearly signaled to readers.

We also worked on language errors that recurred in their writing, both the bulletin board posting and the drafts of papers. Their drafts of a comparison/contrast analysis paper contained errors with linguistic forms used to signal comparisons and contrasts, so we reviewed the different structures used to signal comparison or contrast, including correlative conjunctions (e.g., *just as...so is; as ..., so is...*), conjunctive adverbs (e.g., *in contrast*), and subordinators (e.g., *whereas, while*). They then rewrote incorrectly signaled sentences taken randomly from student drafts, using the structures they had learned. In almost every piece of writing they did, there were errors with relative clauses, particularly the more difficult relative pronouns such as *in which, for which*, and the relative adverbs, *where* and *when*. They found the explanation of this aspect of grammar difficult (and boring), but when I pointed out problematic sentences in their own writing and explained how to find out which relative pronoun to use (by reconstructing the embedded sentence and finding the repeated noun phrase), they caught on fairly quickly.

Consistent and focused marking of errors on their paper drafts seemed to work quite effectively also. I decided to focus on three types of problems per draft: lexical problems (word choice and idiomatic phrasing problems, unclear phrases), the language aspects for which they had learned editing strategies in class (subject-verb agreement and verb tense shift), and one or two errors that I saw consistently throughout a student's texts. I usually directly revised students' problematic choices of lexicon if I knew what they intended

to say. I discussed the remaining marks in conference, asking if they knew why a given word or structure was marked and explaining the problem if they didn't know. This helped me distinguish between mistakes they could edit for if they took the time and aspects of the language about which they weren't sure. Students reported that these discussions were helpful and quite different from what they had experienced in high school. According to some students, the feedback on language errors they had received in high school consisted of having peers edit their papers, having teachers mark errors without correcting or explaining the problem, or having teachers write general comments such as "interesting ideas, but watch your grammar."

When teaching Generation 1.5 students in the ESL 35 course, I had observed that their tendency to approach language work via intuition could make it difficult for them to learn—or care about learning— grammar rules and patterns. This was not as consistently true with the English 2i participants. Rather than hindering them, their intuitions and rich experiences with oral and written English seemed to help them, especially when they were able to connect form and meaning. Their intuitive and meaning-based approach to structures was particularly useful when tackling the problem of article and noun form. It also forced me to revise my method of instruction. Discussing general or specific reference, countability, or definiteness was not as helpful as discussing the meaning of the noun they had chosen. The student would look up a noun I had marked "noun form" in the online Cambridge Dictionary (<http://www.dictionary.cambridge.org/>). The dictionary lists all the possible meanings of a given word. The student would find the meaning that corresponded to her text and click on the word to see if it was countable or uncountable. The writer would then determine whether to put an *a* in front of the noun or add an *s*. Students discovered that the seemingly useless *a*, *an*, and plurals function to signal two different meanings of the same English noun.

The preceding discussion may make it seem that we spent the entire course focused on errors and editing. However, quite a bit of time was spent on discussions of the discourse and style of academic writing. In one discourse analysis task, students made keen observations about stylistic and grammatical differences in two *L.A. Times* editorials about September 11, one written by novelist Barbara Kingsolver and the other written by an economist. Besides the course readings, students also purchased *Rhetorical Grammar: Grammatical Choices, Rhetorical Effects* by Martha Kolln. The text, written for undergraduate native speakers of English, covers such topics as sentence rhythm, end focus, and cohesion (the given/new contract, the use of pronouns, and the repetition of key terms). Students read about these topics in Kolln and did some of the text exercises. I also prepared some additional discourse analysis and reformulation activities to give them further practice with these stylistic elements. Although I wouldn't recommend having the students buy the text, I will use information about the topics listed above next time I teach the course.

All this is not to say that the English 2i course was a magic bullet for students' control of written academic English. The 10 weeks did not allow enough time for certain students to make improvements in their language. At

the end of the quarter, I counseled one student to take the ESL course equivalent to freshman composition, pointing out that she needed more time to focus on language and vocabulary<sup>2</sup>. Even with 60 hours of instruction, I had difficulty balancing work on language, style, and vocabulary with reading discussions, peer response, and lessons on important aspects of academic writing. In addition, many students were not successful in using the self-editing strategies independently. As stated earlier, students practiced text-marking strategies to edit their writing for errors such as subject-verb agreement with complex subjects. When working with a partner in class to edit their texts using these strategies, they did very well. I wanted to encourage them to use these strategies consistently when proofreading their own papers and tried to encourage this by marking entire paragraphs in their drafts “edit this paragraph for verb tense consistency” or by commenting at the end of a paragraph, “you have three subject-verb agreement errors in this passage.” Often, however, the subsequent drafts would still contain the same errors. When I asked them why they hadn’t used the self-editing strategies, several reported that they were too time-consuming and required too much attention to detail. Their resistance to looking at the language of their texts in such detail is understandable given that in all other areas of English usage, they approach language as monolingual English speakers do—via intuition and often with little effort. They seemed unsure that the investment of time would “pay off,” given the amount of time and effort necessary to find just a few errors. A second problem in their independent use of self-editing strategies was an inability to “see” the problematic grammatical structures in their own texts. When a student was editing for verb tense shift in a paragraph, it was not unusual for her to see and mark only one verb in a sentence, usually the verb in the main clause, and ignore one or two other verbs in relative or dependent clauses. If a verb consisted of an auxiliary or a modal and a participle, the student might only mark one of these, making it difficult to determine if there was an inappropriate shift in verb tense.

Nonetheless, every student’s control of English grammar, syntax, and academic vocabulary improved over the quarter in not just their drafted essays, but also their class website postings. This is something I have rarely been able to say when teaching ESL composition courses. The strides the English 2i students made in command of academic English were no doubt due to a number of factors: concentrated exposure to academic texts and lectures in their other courses, the literacy demands of their other courses, the literacy development that occurs in all first year university students. But I can also say with some confidence that an important contributor to their impressive progress was the consistent focus on grammar and style built into the course.

### ***What the Future Holds***

At the time of this writing, it appears that English 2i was successful and will, therefore, become a regular course offering every fall quarter. We are planning to change the placement procedure for the Generation 1.5 freshmen. Instead of requiring students to wait until the fall quarter, we will reread stu-

dents' Subject A exams and make a provisional placement recommendation in June after receiving the campus Subject A results. Their final placement will still depend on a combination of their ESL Placement Test results, the Subject A exam results, and a discussion with them about their placement. This should enable students to better plan their fall schedules when they attend freshmen orientation.

Teaching the course and receiving the students' course evaluations gave me important insights into what worked well in the course and what should be changed. The majority of students commented (either on the course evaluations or to me directly) how much they valued the individual attention they received in the course. They also appreciated that grammar was an explicit and constant thread that ran through the course. Some even expressed pride in the fact that they would probably know more about grammar in writing than their peers in subsequent writing courses. Finally, despite the heavy workload all the writing put on them, they accepted it because they knew that the only way to become better writers was to write, something that several students discussed in the final conference with me.

Students recommended several changes in the course. One was to drop the Kolln text, both because it was too difficult for them to understand and because we didn't use enough chapters in it. Surprisingly, they also asked for more extended, academic (rather than journalistic or essay type) readings. From my own observation, I also learned important lessons about the language component of the course. One day, as we began yet another language activity, one student gave out a sigh and said, "Are we going to look at our problems again?" This verbal "two-by-four" is sufficient warning against an approach to language instruction that focuses primarily on student errors. While it is important to focus on what students do wrong with the language, that should be balanced with attention to what they do well linguistically.

### Conclusion

As human beings and experts in language, we believe that naming a thing helps us better understand the thing we name. This is true and not true in the case of Generation 1.5 students in college composition courses. On the one hand, when the term "Generation 1.5 learners" began to appear in the second language writing literature, it replaced less satisfying terms such as the general term "second language writer" or "ESL writer" and pejorative terms such as "immigrant student" or "language minority student." The term also accurately captured the cultural, educational, and linguistic reality of those students who had been educated in U.S. schools and for whom English was the only language of academic literacy. On the other hand, the coining of the term has not removed the fundamental challenges these students present to California's colleges and universities, challenges in appropriate placement, in the design of courses that address their needs and take appropriate account of their personal, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds.

In the same way, creating this special course for Generation 1.5 students does not remove or diminish the challenge they present to the UCLA community. It has, however, made these students and their needs visible to fac-

ulty outside of the ESL program. And it has helped ESL faculty more clearly define the students who comprise UCLA's Generation 1.5 population. Seeing them more clearly can't help but transform our approaches to creating curriculum and teaching composition.

### **Author**

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### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> This is the UCSB model. In this model, students who fail the Subject A and receive an "E" designation are either required to take the 2-unit workshop or they are strongly recommended to do so.

<sup>2</sup> As far as I know, she did not follow my advice.

### **References**

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## Appendix A English Composition 2i Syllabus

### **English 2i Approaches to University Writing Fall Quarter, 2001**

#### **Course Description**

English 2i serves as an introduction to academic writing and critical reading. We will read essays and articles that treat issues that are of interest within the wider university. More importantly, you will have a chance to join the conversation about these issues through your writing and our class discussions.

The course readings will center on the topic of Los Angeles, both as a place and as a state of mind. We'll explore notions of personal identity, social change, ethnicity, and community in recent events and problems that have faced our city. You will then have a chance to explore different perspectives on the issues that we read and discuss.

While the readings and class discussions are important and much class time will be devoted to them, these are not the course. The course is devoted to writing itself. We'll concentrate on four aspects of academic writing:

- The writing process
- The uses of readings and source materials in academic writing
- Strategies for developing and organizing effective pieces of academic writing
- The role grammar and vocabulary play in effective and clear academic writing

All of these will be developed within the context of responding to academic reading and writing tasks. Emphasis will be placed on individual students' needs.

#### **Course Text and Materials**

- *Set of Course Readings*. (The packet of readings is available to photocopy in Rolfe 3308. See Lyn Repath-Martos in Rolfe 3300C to get these readings.) Please purchase a 3-ring binder in which to keep these readings together and organized. (REQUIRED)
- *Rhetorical Grammar: Grammatical choices, rhetorical effects* – Martha Kolln. (REQUIRED – Available at Ackerman Bookstore, Textbook Section)
- Writing handbook (RECOMMENDED – *A Writer's Reference* by Diana Hacker or *St. Martin's Handbook*).

#### **Grading and Assignments**

The final grade for this course will be based on the following:

- 60% Drafted Essays (taken through multiple drafts)
- 30% Graded Assignments, Peer Response, and Conferencing
- 10% Class Participation

#### **Essays**

You will complete four writing projects throughout the quarter. These will be taken through at least two drafts. Grades on individual essays will be lowered significantly for incomplete drafts (these are drafts in which you do not attempt to incorporate the suggestions of your peers or instructor). You will submit final drafts of each assigned essay. At the end of Week 5, you will submit the final drafts of Writing Projects 1 and 2 for grading; at the end of Week 10, you will submit the final drafts of Writing Projects 3 and 4 for grading.

### **Class Participation**

The success of the course depends upon your participation in all class activities. I'll assess your effectiveness in class discussions, group work, peer response, and reading response journals on an on-going basis throughout the term. It is important to note the obvious: if you miss classes (or arrive late), or you do not do the readings when assigned, you cannot participate fully. More than three unexcused absences will result in automatic failure.

### **Portfolios**

Instead of a final examination, you will submit your writing at two points over the course of the quarter. The first portfolio essay will be turned in at the end of Week 5. The second portfolio will be turned in at the end of Week 10.

### **Writing and Assignments**

- A reading response journal kept on the course website
- 4 drafted essays (the drafts and the final revised version count towards your final grade)
- Occasional in-class exercises
- Essays written by English 2i participants
- Exercises from Kolln text

### **Reading Response Journals**

**What is a reading response journal?** A reading response journal is a record of your thoughts and reactions to the readings we do throughout the quarter. I will expect you to write a response to most of what you read and analyze as part of the class. Most of the responses will be done on the discussion page of the course website. In addition to writing your own response, you will be asked to respond to the entries of three of your colleagues each week. This electronic response journal is designed to allow for the exchange of ideas that is essential to the writing process.

**What do I write about in the journal?** Frequently, I will give a specific question for you to respond to; at other times, however, your responses should grow out of the aspects of the reading and topic that are of interest to you. Here is a list of questions that you might consider when responding:

- What is the most important or most interesting point raised by the author or text? Why is it interesting or important?
- What is distinctive about the way the writer makes a point? How does the writer succeed in persuading or involving you in the issue?
- Is there a part of the text that you strongly agree or disagree with? What and why?
- How does the subject or argument made in the text relate to something that you are interested in or have experienced?
- Does the author use any example that is especially effective (or clearly inappropriate) to his or her larger purpose or argument?
- Is there some point that the author neglected to discuss or overlooked that he or she should have addressed? Why is this so important?
- How does this text relate to other things we have read? Does it contradict or complement or provide a different perspective from previous reading?
- Is there something about the tone of the text that you liked or didn't like? Can you define the tone? How does the writer create that tone? Why do you find it effective or ineffective?

**How long is each response?** The length of your responses will vary depending on the topic you choose and your interest. The minimum is three paragraphs of about 5-6 sentences each. There is no maximum. The journal is NOT disconnected from the rest of your writing since the reading response journal might be the beginning of a longer essay.



Your responses to your peers (three different students each week) should be thoughtful and acknowledge the thought and writing that each person has put into their original response. The minimum response is one paragraph of about 5-6 sentences. Again, there is no maximum.

#### **Conferences and Peer Response**

After the first draft of each paper, you will be reading and responding to your colleagues' papers. Reading and responding to papers written by your classmates is also an essential component of this course. It is your responsibility to read the draft of your peers' essays and to prepare the peer response guide **BEFORE** you come to class. In addition, a signup sheet will be available for instructor conferences outside of class. Conferences are a very important part of this course; they are your opportunity for more personal instruction on your writing. If for any reason you cannot make your scheduled conference time, please let me know in advance. Your preparation for peer response sessions and individual conferences with me is a part of your graded work in English 2i.

#### **College Tutorials: Composition Tutoring**

College Tutorials, located in 228 Covell Commons (near the dormitories), offers help in writing by trained composition tutors. The hours are 9a.m.-5p.m., Monday through Friday. Regular weekly appointments with a tutor are highly recommended.

#### **Academic Honesty and Plagiarism**

UCLA is a community of scholars in which all members, faculty, staff, and students alike are responsible for maintaining standards of academic honesty. As a student and member of the University community, you are evaluated on your own merits. Academic dishonesty in any form is considered unacceptable behavior and will result in formal disciplinary proceedings, usually through the Dean of Students Office.

As specified in the *UCLA Student Conduct Code*, violations or attempted violations of academic honesty include, but are not limited to, cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, multiple submissions, or facilitating academic honesty.

In this course, we are most concerned with two areas: plagiarism and multiple submissions. "Multiple submission" means you submit one paper (with exact or similar content) for two courses without the knowledge or consent of the instructor. This includes courses you are currently taking as well as courses you might take in another quarter.

Plagiarism, as defined by the *MLA Handbook*, means giving "the impression that you have written or thought something that you have, in fact, borrowed from another" (p. 5). Just a few reminders about what constitutes plagiarism:

- Copying directly from a book without quotations or citations is plagiarism.
- Submitting as your own part of or an entire paper produced verbatim by someone is also plagiarism. This can be either a work you have purchased or obtained in some other way.
- Paraphrases or summaries that are too close in vocabulary and sentence structure to the author's original writing and ideas constitute plagiarism.
- Unauthorized transfer and use of someone else's computer files as your own.
- Getting too much help with the ideas and the language of a paper that bears your name may also be considered plagiarism. You may get help from tutors at College Tutorials because they are trained to teach you as they help you. Since the university evaluates you on your merits, getting help from untrained friends or relatives is not permitted because these un-

trained editors are often unable to draw the line between "helping and teaching" and "editing and writing it for you."

The course is designed to help you learn the academic conventions for giving credit for the ideas and words you take from other authors and sources. In your papers for the course, we will review the conventions for citing, quoting, and creating bibliographies.

