

### ***Introduction to Model Course Outline for Degree Credit ESL Course***

The purpose of this document is to give ESL professionals guidelines for developing degree applicable courses that focus on academic, text-based writing. Such courses meet the standards of rigor for degree applicable courses as set out in Standards and Criteria for Courses and Classes, § 55002(a) of Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations. Title 5 also sets out the types of courses that are appropriate to the associate degree in § 55805.5 (a – e). Part (a) says that “All lower division courses accepted toward the baccalaureate degree by the California State University or University of California or designed to be offered for transfer” are appropriate to the associate degree. As of fall 2000, according to college catalogs, 43 % of degree applicable ESL courses were transferable to the California State University, and 17 % were transferable to the University of California. Thus, it appears that some colleges design ESL courses to be offered for transfer and that they are accepted toward the baccalaureate degree. Part (c) states that “English courses not more than one level below the first transfer level composition courses, typically known as English 1A ” should receive degree credit. As of fall 2000, according to their catalogs, two-thirds of the colleges assigned degree applicable credit to ESL courses. However, only seven of these colleges limited degree applicable credit to ESL courses equivalent to freshman composition or one level below. At the rest of the colleges, degree credit was assigned to ESL courses irrespective of their places in a hierarchy of courses leading into freshman composition. A few colleges identified their ESL courses by their prerequisites in relationship to freshman composition and granted degree credit to courses identified as being two or more levels below freshman composition. A number of these courses also transferred to the California State University and the University of California.

ESL is a discipline distinct from English that serves the specific needs of ESL students in courses offered in separate ESL departments as well as in a number of other departments including English, speech, and foreign language. ESL students are in the process of acquiring English after having acquired another language. *California Pathways* sets out the unique needs of L2 learners, a group that includes ESL students.

Because L2 learners may not have grown up with the English language and with U.S. culture as part of their primary experience, their educational needs differ greatly from those of native English speakers in our schools. While instruction for native speakers, for example, often tends to emphasize reading and writing, L2 learners at all levels need to learn English as a part of an integrated curriculum which includes listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They need to receive instruction that recognizes language learning as a unique developmental process, one in which what may be perceived as accent or error is actually a natural part of this learning process. Early in the language acquisition process, L2 learners produce language influenced by the stage at which they are in acquiring English and by their first language. To an even greater degree than native English speakers, L2 learners need to learn the syntactic structures and organizational patterns of both written and spoken English. They also need to learn about U.S. culture and at the same time receive instruction that validates their primary language and culture. (p.8)

Historically, the Chancellor's Office staff has recognized the unique needs of ESL students and the need to supplement Title 5 criteria to assist colleges in assigning appropriate types of credit to ESL courses. In January 1985, specific Board of Governors policies were adopted in the form of eight recommendations requiring further staff work specific to ESL. Even then, recommendations were made that recognized the need for supplemental criteria to Title 5 that would help faculty assign appropriate kinds of credit to ESL courses. Recommendation 2 stated, "Complement Title 5 criteria for credit/noncredit offerings with additional operational criteria to help in the differentiation between credit and noncredit ESL." Later, in 1988 a need was seen by Chancellor's office staff to provide additional criteria, to supplement Title 5, to be used to identify degree credit ESL courses because of the unique student characteristics applicable to ESL. These criteria focused on: (a) The use of placement test scores as prerequisites for entrance into a credit course, and (b) the course focus – whether the course was offered in support of, or as part of an academic program or whether the course transferred to a four-year college. Minimal criteria were suggested to facilitate the classification of ESL courses as degree credit courses:

- The course prepares students for academic work.
- The course is a vocational ESL course concurrently taken with credit Vocational Education.
- The course is equivalent to English 1A

- Test scores are used as a prerequisite for the course.

The supplemental criteria were presented in a progress report to the Board of Governors and were disseminated to all colleges and to ESL professional networks including CATESOL. The course outline that is a part of this document describes a course designed to address the needs of ESL students while meeting the standards for rigor defined by Title 5. The sample course outline is designed to address the needs of students at the intermediate high level of proficiency as defined in the Second Language Writing Proficiency Descriptors in *California Pathways*. Practice confirms that this is a viable level at which to offer degree credit. In fact, based on a California Pathways survey returned by 77 of 107 community colleges in spring 2000, 47 colleges reported that they gave degree credit to ESL courses, and 76.6 % of these colleges assigned degree credit to their courses beginning at the intermediate level. Courses at the intermediate level, which includes low, mid, and high intermediate, have been accepted by local college curriculum committees as meeting the standards for rigor in Title 5.

The course outline describes a composition course since reading and writing skills are the linguistic benchmarks against which students' academic competence is most often measured in college. ESL students need to learn speaking and listening as part of an integrated curriculum, but we have chosen not to address those skills for the purposes of this document. Such courses, if they meet the standards of rigor in Title 5, however, are also worthy of degree credit.

The system of assigning credit to courses can serve ESL students and their institutions well. Colleges may choose to grant credit for ESL courses so that they count towards the degree and shorten students' time to graduation. Students may be motivated to choose appropriate classes and to study harder in courses for which they earn degree credit. Students receive equitable treatment when they earn credit for courses that are academically rigorous taught by instructors who are trained to meet their specific needs. However, some ESL students may not benefit directly from the granting of degree credit. They may have job-related or personal development goals that do not include earning a degree or transferring to a four-year university. Local colleges are best suited to make decisions about assigning credit because they understand their local population and institutional constraints best.

To assist ESL professionals in developing composition courses that meet the standards for rigor in Title 5, in addition to the sample course outline, we have attached the Title 5 standards that define degree applicable courses. We have also included the Second Language Writing Proficiency Descriptors from *California Pathways* and a sample of unedited timed writing at the Intermediate High level.

**ASSOCIATE DEGREE CREDIT COURSE OUTLINE  
FOR AN INTERMEDIATE-HIGH ESL  
WRITING COURSE**

(This outline follows the model for an Associate Degree Credit Course Outline presented at the 1999 Curriculum Institute of the Academic Senate of California Community Colleges)

SECTION 1

SUBJECT AREA AND COURSE NUMBER: English as a Second Language \_\_\_\_

COURSE TITLE: UNITS: (3-4 units depending on local college programs)

CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This is a text-based writing course at the intermediate-high level for students whose first language is other than English. Students write paragraphs, informal texts, and academic essays in response to selected readings. Grammar and vocabulary development and critical reading in support of writing are also stressed.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of this course the students will be able to:

1. Organize academic paragraphs and essays on a variety of topics using adequate support.
2. Produce original sentences that display developing control of basic sentence structure, grammatical constructions, and punctuation appropriate to the intermediate-high level.
3. Identify ESL and other writing errors employing common grammatical terminology. Revise for clarity and accuracy.
4. Demonstrate the ability to analyze and comprehend a variety of authentic texts of level appropriate conceptual and/or linguistic complexity and to respond in writing.
5. Identify and interpret common cultural references in authentic texts.
6. Recognize and use a variety of discourse markers, such as sentence connectors and pronoun reference.

7. Apply a variety of strategies to learn new vocabulary for receptive and productive purposes.

## SECTION II.

### 1. COURSE CONTENT AND SCOPE:

#### A. OUTLINE OF TOPICS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE COURSE.

##### 1. Writing on personal, academic, or career-related topics

###### a. paragraphs

- creating topic sentences
- establishing unity
- developing with different methods of support

###### b. academic essays

- considering audience and purpose
- using writing process appropriate for task (i.e. informal writing, timed impromptu writing, multi-draft out-of-class writing)
- focusing essays with a thesis
- organizing ideas in conventional English rhetorical style.
- developing ideas with sufficient and logical support
- using appropriate transition and cohesive devices

###### c. informal texts, such as journal writing in response to readings and cultural experiences

##### 2. Sentence level grammar

- complete English sentences using a variety of syntactic structures.
- grammatical constructions (e.g.)
  - verb tenses and modality
  - passive voice
  - conditionals
  - adjective and adverb clauses
  - gerunds and infinitives
  - noun phrase - number and agreement; review of article usage
- end punctuation and commas
- semi-colons, colons, and quotations

###### Grammatical terminology

- a. parts of speech (e.g. verb, noun)
- b. subject

- c. object
- d. clause
- e. phrase
- f. prepositions

### 3. Proofreading skills

### 4. Reading comprehension

#### Assignments

authentic English texts of level-appropriate complexity from a variety of academic disciplines and sources, such as short paragraphs, fiction, textbooks, periodicals, and articles.

#### Critical reading strategies

- distinguishing main and supporting ideas
- making predictions while reading
- interpreting text
- identifying audience and purpose
  - making inferences and drawing conclusions

### 5. Discourse analysis- content

- activating information, knowledge, emotion, experience, and culture so they can be brought to the text
- identifying and interpreting American and English language cultural references

### 6. Discourse analysis- structure

- identifying types of discourse markers (e.g. sentence connectors, pronoun reference) that signal relationships among ideas

### 7. Vocabulary strategies

- a. using context clues
- b. expanding personal inventory of vocabulary
- c. interpreting figurative language
- d. word analysis
- e. recognition and use of
  - synonyms and antonyms
  - idioms and collocations
  - phrasal verbs and verb/preposition or adjective combinations

## A. APPROPRIATE ASSIGNMENTS

Both in and out-of-class paragraphs and essays are assigned. All written work will require application of critical thinking skills. Appropriate writing assignments may include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Paragraphs and essays on personal, academic, or career-related topics using different methods of development.
2. In-class timed essay writing.
3. Informal texts, such as journal writing.
4. Academic essays in response to readings.
5. Reading and grammar assignments in support of writing.
6. Observations, e.g. field trips to exhibits or performances on campus or in the community.
7. Field research, e.g. contact assignments or surveys.
8. Introductory library and electronic research projects.

## B. APPROPRIATE ASSIGNMENTS THAT DEMONSTRATE CRITICAL THINKING

Critical thinking assignments are required and may include but are not limited to the following:

1. Analyze authentic texts in a variety of genres for literal meaning, main ideas, and inferences.
2. Identify and interpret common cultural references.
3. Analyze, evaluate, or compare readings as the basis of writing assignments.
4. Apply knowledge of the stages and strategies involved in the writing process when composing original compositions.
5. Organize writing using culturally appropriate methods of development dependent on audience and purpose.
6. Apply knowledge of grammatical structures and punctuation when writing and editing original compositions on a variety of topics, e.g. comparing cultural traditions and practices.
7. Apply a variety of strategies to learn new vocabulary for receptive and productive purposes.

## 2. METHODS OF EVALUATION

A student's grade shall be determined by the instructor using multiple measures of performance related to the course objectives. Methods of evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

1. In-class writing
2. Out-of-class writing
3. Revision of written work
4. Writing, grammar, reading, and vocabulary assignments
5. Reading comprehension, grammar, and vocabulary quizzes
6. Journals, reading and vocabulary logs, and/or portfolios
7. Written final exam

### 3. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

Methods of instruction may include, but are not limited to:

1. Class discussion, often focusing on issues specific to second language learners
2. Journal writing and vocabulary logs
3. Writing assignments, using a writing process approach
4. In -class writing practice
5. Presentation of grammatical structures useful for reading and writing assignments.
6. Vocabulary and grammar exercises
7. Reading assignments
8. Pair and group work
9. Instructor feedback and correction of ESL errors
10. Technologically mediated instruction including ESL websites and software

### 4. REQUIRED TEXTS AND SUPPLIES

The required college-level texts may include but are not limited to the following:  
ESL Writing Texts.

English, Laura Monahon and Andrew English. Northstar: Focus on Reading and Writing High Intermediate. White Plains, NY: Longman, 1998.

Smoke, Trudy. A Writer's Workbook, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. New York, NY: St. Martin's , 1996.

Blass, Laurie and Meredith Pike-Baky. Mosaic I Writing, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2002.

Weidauer, Marie Hutchison. Tapestry Writing 3. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle, 2000.

Folse, Keith, A. Muchmore-Vokoun, and E. Vestri Solomon. Great Essays: An Introduction to Essay Writing. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1999.

Oshima, Alice and Ann Hogue. Writing Academic English, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. New York, NY: Longman, 1999.

Reid, Joy and Patricia Byrd. Looking Ahead 2. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle, 1998.

Hartmann, Pamela. Quest 2. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1999.

#### ESL Grammar support texts

Azar, Betty. Understanding and Using English Grammar, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall Regents, 1999.

Fuchs, Marjorie and Margaret Bonner Focus on Grammar: a High-Intermediate Course for Reference and Practice, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. White Plains, NY: Longman, 2000.

Werner, Patricia K. and Lou Spaventa. Mosaic 1 Grammar, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2002.

Ascher, Allen. Think about Editing Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle, 1993.

Raimes, Ann. Grammar Troublespots: An Editing Guide for Students. Cambridge University Press, 1993.

### Associate Degree Applicable Courses

For any course that will apply toward the associate degree, Title 5 regulations require that the curriculum committee determine that the coursework is truly at a college level, and that the course incorporates critical thinking. Every course is required to have an official outline of record which includes specified elements:

**55002. Standards and Criteria for Courses and Classes.**

**(a) Associate Degree Credit Course.** An associate degree credit course is a course which has been designated as appropriate to the associate degree in accordance with the requirements of Section 55805.5 and which has been recommended by the college and/or district curriculum committee and approved by the district governing board as a collegiate course meeting the needs of the students eligible for admission.

... (2) The college and/or district curriculum committee shall recommend approval of the course for associate degree credit if it meets the following standards:

(A) Grading Policy. The course provides for measurement of student performance in terms of the stated course objectives and culminates in a formal, permanently recorded grade based upon uniform standards in accordance with section 55758 of this Division. The grade is based on demonstrated proficiency in subject matter and the ability to demonstrate that proficiency, at least in part, by means of essays, or in courses where the curriculum committee deems them to be appropriate, by problem solving exercises or skills demonstrations by students.

(B) Units. The course grants units of credit based upon a relationship specified by the governing board, between the number of units assigned to the course and the number of lecture and/or laboratory hours or performance criteria specified in the course outline. The course also requires a minimum of three hours of work per week, including class time for each unit of credit, prorated for short-term, laboratory and activity courses.

(C) Intensity. The course treats subject matter with a scope and intensity that require students to study independently outside of class time.

(D) Prerequisites and Corequisites. When the college and/or district curriculum committee, determines, based on a review of the course Outline of Record, that a student would be highly unlikely to receive a satisfactory grade unless the student has knowledge or skills not taught in the course, then the course shall require prerequisites or corequisites that are established, reviewed, and applied in accordance with the requirements of Article 2.5 (commencing with section 55200) of this Subchapter.

(E) Basic Skills Requirements. If success in the course is dependent upon communication or computational skills, then the course shall require, consistent with the provisions of Article 2.5 (commencing with section 55200) of this Subchapter, as prerequisites or corequisites eligibility for enrollment in associate degree credit courses in English and/or mathematics, respectively.

(F) Difficulty. The course work calls for critical thinking and the understanding and application of concepts determined by the curriculum committee to be at college level.

(G) Level. The course requires learning skills and a vocabulary that the curriculum committee deems appropriate for a college course.

(3) Course Outline of Record. The course is described in a course outline of record that shall be maintained in the official college files and made available to each instructor. The course outline of record shall specify the unit value, scope, objectives, and content in terms of a specific body of knowledge. The course outline shall also specify types or provide examples of required reading and writing assignments, other outside-of-class assignments, instructional methodology, and methods of evaluation for determining whether the stated objectives have been met by students.

(4) Conduct of Course. Each section of the course is to be taught by a qualified instructor in accordance with a set of objectives and with other specifications defined in the course outline of record.

(5) Repetition. Repeated enrollment is allowed only in accordance with provisions of Chapter 2 (commencing with Section 51000), sections 55761-55763 and 58161 of this Division.

There is also a description in Title 5 of the types of courses that may be considered associate degree-applicable. Courses that fall outside the categories listed in the regulation may not be offered for associate degree credit:

**55805.5. Types of Courses Appropriate to the Associate Degree.**

The criteria established by the governing board of a community college district to implement its philosophy on the associate degree shall permit only courses that conform to the standards specified in Section 55002 (a) and that fall into the following categories to be offered for associate degree credit:

(a) All lower division courses accepted toward the baccalaureate degree by the California State University or University of California or designed to be offered for transfer.

(b) Courses that apply to the major in non-baccalaureate occupational fields.

(c) English courses not more than one level below the first transfer level composition course, typically known as English 1A. Each student may count only one such course as credit toward the associate degree.

(d) All mathematical courses above and including Elementary Algebra.

(e) Credit courses in English and mathematics taught in or on behalf of other departments and which, as determined by the local governing board, require entrance skills at a level equivalent to those necessary for the courses specified in sections (c) and (d) above.

In paragraph (b) of the section, the Chancellor's Office interprets the phrase "courses that apply to the major in non-baccalaureate occupational fields" to mean courses within a T.O.P. code designated as vocational, which are part of an approved program (degree or

certificate), or are approved by the Chancellor's Office, either under a blanket approval, or by individual course approval.

Paragraph (e) of this section means that courses whose content is primarily English or mathematics, regardless of what the course is called or what department it is taught in, may not be applied for associate degree credit unless they are at a level comparable to the course whose completion satisfies the entrance requirements for transferable freshman composition (in the case of English), or comparable to elementary algebra (in the case of math). This rule applies to English as a Second Language as well as all other disciplines. For English and ESL, the standard is interpreted to mean that the course must require the student to write several full-length essays for it to be associate degree-applicable. Thus, courses whose primary focus is the acquisition of spoken English skills, or writing skills at the sentence and paragraph level, are not applicable to the associate degree.

***California Pathways Writing Descriptors and Sample***

*California Pathways: The Second Language Student in Public High Schools, Colleges, and Universities.* California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, pp. 96-98.

INTERMEDIATE: Writers at this level demonstrate competence in communicating through writing and developing control of vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure.

INTERMEDIATE-HIGH

COMMUNICATIVE SUCCESS:

produces consistently comprehensible text

WRITING SKILLS/ORGANIZATION:

addresses topic, but relies on formulaic essay structure to maintain focus

DEVELOPMENT/SPECIFICITY:

development may be uneven; may support ideas with some specific detail

VOCABULARY/WORD CHOICE/WORDFORM:

has good command of vocabulary; errors in word choice or word form occasionally interfere with meaning

SENTENCE STRUCTURE/GRAMMAR:

uses a range of sentence structures; makes some grammatical errors, but they rarely interfere with meaning

SPELLING/MECHANICS:

has good control of sentence boundaries, spelling, and mechanics

### Sample #6 Intermediate-High

Especially, in America, it's seems pretty difficult to say Do NOT to children. Since it is a very known country with great amount of freedom to individuals, for me who have immigrated from an asian country, it's difficult to decide how much I can say something to others. I believe that for parents who have teenagers as their children, it's not easy to say just Don't even though it's the real situation they have to say that because the teenagers might take every action they do as their given freedom. I believe that a teenage pregnancy is one of the serious problem in this country since lost of teenagers have unprotected sexes because they might believe having sex is one of their freedoms. It's pretty difficult situation to me to accept since I have been grown up in different place. which doesn't allow sexual relationship during teenage. I'm not sure if many parents or schools allow the teenagers to have sex or not. However, I am sure that they should be first told their responsibilities or riskses from their actions.

Moreover, taking drug is also a serious problem among teenagers. It's a real situation to say Don't; however, it seems it's too late to say that because they are easy to be addicted and tough to stop doing that. Since many parents in America do care their children's privacy. sometimes the parents cannot capture right time and right situation to control their children.

The following example is from my experience when I worked as a private tutor for a teenage boy. I wished I could say something very serious to him directly, and I wished I could give him serious punishment when he didn't listen to me. Only thing I was able to do was patiently explane to make him realize what he was doing wrong. I knew he wasn't used with directed serious warnings and hard punishments from neither a school or his parents. Sometimes, he didn't really listen to me because he knew I wasn't going to give him worse punishments than their parents or teachers.

I believe that all difficulties teenagers have growing up are because they sometimes don't see a border line they shouldn't accross. Parents and teachers seriously take their responsibilities; letting the teenagers know what are their real privacy and not.

## Commentary

*This writer explores the issue of permissiveness in relationship to teen-age pregnancy and drugs. She communicates clearly despite errors. The introduction introduces the topic and puts it in the context of the writer's experience as an immigrant from an Asian country. The first two body paragraphs focus on the problems of teenage pregnancy and drugs while the third body paragraphs supplies an example from the writer's own experience when she tutored a teenage boy. Her conclusion reemphasizes the dangers of permissiveness in raising teenagers.*

*The writer sets herself a fairly narrow task and maintains her focus on the issue of permissiveness. The structure of the essay is formulaic but the writer has used the formula effectively. The writer misuses some words such as a very known country and unprotected sexes however, is the use of imprecise language such as real situation when it's not clear exactly what the real situation is. Scattered grammatical errors occur in article usage and verb form. The writer uses complex, extended sentences and generally controls internal as well as end punctuation and quotation marks.*

California Pathways: The Second Language Student in Public High Schools, Colleges, and Universities. California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, pp. 96-98.