CSUSB First-Year Composition Faculty Guide

Revised June 2020

Introduction

This First-Year Composition Faculty Guide, prepared by members of the Composition Committee (2019-2020) with input from faculty teaching First-Year Composition (FYC), seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of CSUSB's FYC program, including program structure, relevant program and/or university policies, relevant pedagogical practices, and additional resources.

This version of the FYC Faculty Guide was created as part of our final preparations for CSUSB's transition from quarters to semesters. As such, it seeks to carry over practices and philosophies from the quarter-based program that will continue even as we move to semesters and to share elements of the program that will be new or revised for semesters.

Because the Composition Committee has prepared this guide for the semester program, it is designed to be a living document. While some parts will change rarely--like the program structure or program learning outcomes--other sections will evolve along with the program. In particular, we hope that the sections on pedagogical practices, further readings and resources, and program assessment will continue to be periodically updated as we better learn how to enact our plans for semesters and learn from experience.

With that in mind, members of the Composition Committee invite all FYC faculty to share resources, feedback, and ideas for this Faculty Guide, so it can continue to reflect and share our collective experience and insights.

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Section 1: FYC Program Structure and Overview

Program Overview

The First-Year Composition program at CSUSB provides first-year students with a meaningful introduction to college-level reading, writing, and literacy practices: the types of practices that students can only learn while they are actually in the college context. No matter how focused students' high school education has been on preparing students for college writing, all first-year students are first-time college writers, and all students become stronger writers through consistent exposure to writing-centered courses. First-year writing courses for all students must immerse students in college-level reading and writing from the beginning.

Since 2009, CSUSB has offered a Stretch Composition model of FYC, a model which offers students FYC sequences of different lengths to best support their growth as college-level writers. Students have the option of taking a one-semester composition course or a two-course sequence that is "stretched out" over two semesters, taken with the same instructor and cohort of students. Our program also offers sections specifically designed to support multilingual writers for both the one- and two-semester courses. None of our courses are remedial, regardless of which sequence or course students take.

The learning goals and kinds of work done are the same whether students opt for a one- or two-semester course; the primary difference between the options is time. We know from scholarship and experience that writing and reading practices are acquired recursively, meaning that they need to be acquired and re-acquired, practiced and practiced some more. Thus, the longer the stretch sequence students are enrolled in, the more chances they have to reinforce college-level reading and writing practices.

Program Structure

First-year students at CSUSB satisfy their first-year writing requirement* (G.E. A2) by completing one of the following options:
- Stretch Composition: ENG 1050A-1060A
- Stretch Composition for Multilingual Students: Eng 1050B-1060B
- First-Year Composition: ENG 1070A
- First-Year Composition for Multilingual Students: Eng 1070B

Students who take a Stretch Composition sequence take both courses in the sequence with the same instructor and the same students at the same day and time each semester. Both courses in the sequence provide credit towards graduation, and the final course in each sequence fulfills the G.E. A2 requirement.

*Note: some students satisfy their GE A2 requirement by other means prior to enrolling at CSUSB (e.g, via AP test scores) or after enrolling (e.g., via the Honors program version of FYC). However, these groups of students are relatively small and don't affect how the FYC program is structured or taught.

Placement

Since 2012, our FYC program has used Directed Self-Placement (DSP) for placement into FYC courses or sequences. DSP is an alternative to timed placement tests or other processes for choosing FYC classes. Instead of being placed into classes by a standardized test or by a multiple measures score (the process currently used by the [CSU Chancellor's Office for placement on CSU campuses](#)), students choose the appropriate sequence for themselves with the support of an interactive online survey that engages them in reflective assessment of their reading and writing practices. The system also provides an overview of FYC course options and offers suggestions about placement based on survey results. Students will complete the DSP process prior to registration and select the course option that best "fits" them.

You can read more about the [DSP process here](#); you may also complete the DSP survey yourself. Please use all zeros for the student ID and use "Guest" as first name and last name so that your responses can be easily disregarded.

Grading

The grading structure for the FYC program reflects the idea that stretch sequences should act as one holistic course stretched across the two semesters of the sequence. Thus, students do not receive letter grades until the second course in their sequence. The first course in a sequence is graded credit/no credit:

- 1050A, 1050B – Credit/No Credit

- 1060A, 1060B, 1070A, 1070B – A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-/No Credit. A grade of C- or better fulfills GE A2.

Given that the first semester in a two-semester class builds toward the culminating course, instructors should consider how the grade of "Credit" will be determined within 1050A and 1050B in relation to what it will signal to students as they move into the second course in the sequence.

Conceptually and pedagogically, student success (and therefore their grade) in the final semester of a sequence is contingent upon the work they have done in the previous semester. We know, for example, that students will not do well in ENG 1060A if they have not done the work (the reading and writing assignments) in ENG 1050A. Logistically, however, grades for a given semester must be determined by the work that takes place in that particular semester. Thus, instructors should seek to foster within students self-awareness of their own accomplishments as writers as they make their way through the sequence and an appreciation of the ongoing project of writing across semesters. Within these terms, each instructor has latitude to establish their own grading policies.

Programmatic Coherence and Academic Freedom

CSUSB's FYC program has historically valued and continues to value faculty academic freedom in the design and teaching of FYC courses. At the same time, all FYC courses are guided by shared program structures and learning outcomes, and student learning is assessed at the program level in relation to these shared learning outcomes.

What does this mean in practice? Our FYC Program has been developed through collaborative processes wherein all FYC instructors have been encouraged to share ideas and feedback in the development of FYC Learning Goals and Assessment. Individual faculty have the flexibility to design FYC classes that reflect their own disciplinary knowledge and pedagogical approaches as well as the responsibility to ensure that shared general education and program learning outcomes are supported in their class designs and teaching. For example, all FYC courses or sequences should include a version of the Common Assignment Project (see details here), but all faculty can design such assignments in ways that make sense in the context of the courses while also addressing program assessment criteria.

Section 2: Program Learning Goals and Program Assessment

Introduction

All FYC courses are guided by and support several, sometimes overlapping, sets of learning outcomes. Those learning outcomes are:

- Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs): These learning outcomes are campus-wide and students are meant to work toward these learning outcomes over the course of their years at CSUSB.
- General Education Learning Outcomes (GLOs): These learning outcomes were crafted by members of the campus community during the Q2S process and reflect the core learning that students will do across their general education courses and experiences. Students will engage with GLOs multiple times across their GE courses, so while our FYC courses support these learning outcomes, we are not solely responsible for them.
- Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs): These learning outcomes were developed by FYC faculty during the FYC Q2S process. They are grounded in threshold concepts specific to writing and writing studies. All courses in the FYC program should support these learning outcomes, though faculty may address them in different ways.
- Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs): These learning outcomes will be developed by individual faculty and may be specific to individual courses. These are learning outcomes that individual faculty may add to their own sections if they feel additional learning outcomes are necessary or beneficial for students. Faculty are not required to add course learning outcomes.

More details about these different sets of learning outcomes follow below.

Learning Outcomes

ILOs

All courses at the university are guided by the Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), though no single course addresses all ILOs. The specific ILOs that are supported by our FYC program are:

- Critical Literacies: Students analyze the ways artistic, oral, quantitative, technological and written expression and information both shape and are shaped by underlying values, assumptions and contexts so that they can critically contribute to local and global communities. (ILO 3)
- Ways of Reasoning and Inquiry: Students engage in diverse methods of reasoning and inquiry to define problems, identify and evaluate potential solutions, and determine a course of action. (ILO 4)

Courses that attend to the FYC Program Learning Outcomes listed below will necessarily be working to support these goals.

GLOs

As part of the General Education program, FYC courses support several campus-wide General Education Learning Outcomes (GLOs). Specifically, our courses support the following GLOs:

- Critical Literacies: Analyze the ways that information, including quantitative and technological, oral and written, both shape and are shaped by social contexts.
  - Information Literacy. Read more.
  - Written Communication. Read more.
- Learning How to Learn: Develop awareness of their learning processes, becoming reflective, self-directed learners who are able to apply and adapt their processes of learning in new contexts. Read more.
- Thinking Critically: Think critically, evaluate, analyze, and solve problems employing multiple methods of reasoning. Read more.

More information about the General Education program can be found here and an overview of all GE Learning Outcomes (GLOs) can be found here.

PLOs

During Winter and Spring 2017, FYC faculty collaboratively identified key threshold concepts for our FYC courses and developed the following learning outcomes for the FYC program. These goals reflect a revision and rearticulation of our previous program philosophies, goals, and outcomes, and our program's commitment to these goals is

grounded in both disciplinary research on learning and teaching writing and in our local experience and expertise. For more on the disciplinary research on these threshold concepts, please see Section 5: Further Reading.

The FYC Program Learning Goals, approved by the English Department in September 2017, are as follows:

1) Writing as Inquiry: Students will understand that writing is a knowledge-making process and that through their writing, students contribute to on-going conversations within particular discourse communities. As readers and writers, students will engage in the processes of identifying, studying, entering into, and contributing to these conversations so that they can participate in meaningful inquiry and knowledge-making.

2) Language and Meaning: Students will understand that, first, that language both creates and reflects meaning, and, second, that the relationships among language and meaning shift across texts, contexts, time, and space. As readers and writers, students will learn to analyze the relationships between language, meaning, and context and draw on the meaning-making power of language in their own writing.

3) Intertextuality: Students will understand that reading and writing critically involves seeking out and building connections across and between texts, contexts (social, cultural, historical, ideological, rhetorical, linguistic, political, and personal), concepts, and experiences. As readers and writers, students will learn to see and make meaning from text-context relationships and will write and revise their own texts in ways that engage with the ideas and writing of others, including practicing the text integration and citation practices of particular communities.

4) Discourse Communities: Students will understand that language practices of a community, discipline, or profession reflect its ways of knowing, valuing, doing, and being as well as reading, writing, and speaking. Students will learn to identify and critically analyze the discourses of the communities they already participate in, as well as those that they seek to enter into. They will learn to make more informed and deliberate choices in their writing, including choices about content, language, genre, and style.

5) Genre: Students will understand that genres, which are recognizable yet flexible forms of texts, shape how writers engage with others in particular rhetorical, discursive, or cultural contexts, and that writers, in turn, also shape genre as they intentionally select and mix genre conventions to achieve their purposes for writing. As readers and

writers, students will learn to identify and analyze the ways that genres operate within and across contexts and to make rhetorically and discursively purposeful choices about conventions to construct meaning in their own writing.

6) Writing as Revision: Students will understand that the process of writing is recursive, collaborative, and rhetorically situated. Students will learn to identify and pursue meaningful inquiry in their writing, make use of substantive feedback from others, and meaningfully revise texts.

7) Critical Information Literacy: Students will understand that information carries certain purposes, authority, values, and perspective which are shaped by cultural, economic, and political contexts. Moreover, students will understand that power relations often determine the distribution of and access to information. Students will analyze what, where, and how to retrieve information consistent with their own purposes and make ethical choices about using that information in their writing.

All FYC courses should support student learning with these goals in mind, and faculty should work to make these goals explicit for students in a variety of ways (e.g., in syllabi, specific assignments, reflective writing, etc).

While faculty should include these learning outcomes in their syllabi (in addition to any course-specific learning outcomes), faculty are invited to revise the wording of the PLOs in ways that are more accessible to students.

Course LOs

All faculty have the option of developing additional course-level learning outcomes to the above Program Learning Outcomes, though doing so is not recommended given the demands of supporting the PLOs.

Program Assessment

As the FYC program transitions to semesters, we will also be implementing more robust program assessment. The FYC program assessment plan was developed as part of the Q2S transformation process and will continue to be developed and refined as we transition to semesters.

Assessment Goals

In developing an assessment plan, faculty are committed to developing an assessment plan that:
- Offers meaningful feedback for teaching and learning in our FYC program.
- Focuses on direct assessment of student writing while incorporating other sources of data.
- Supports on-going program and professional development for FYC faculty.
- Is a sustainable and equitable approach to assessment work.
  - This goal is particularly important given that the vast majority of FYC courses are taught by non-tenure track lecturers, including both full- and part-time lecturers. Because we believe that meaningful assessment must involve those faculty who are teaching in the program, we are committed to advocating for university-level support for program faculty participation (in the form of reassigned time and/or stipends for assessment activities and funding for on-going professional development activities to close the assessment loop).

Assessment Cycles

Our plan will implement student learning outcomes assessment over the course of a four-year cycle, focusing on one or two Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) each year over the course of the cycle.

Assessment Data and Methods

FYC program faculty identified two primary approaches to guide program assessment: course portfolios and direct assessment of student writing samples. Initial program assessment efforts, however, will focus on direct assessment of student writing, via the Common Assignment Project described below.

Common Assignment Project
The focal point of our assessment plan will be direct assessment of student writing, via the Common Assignment Project. **As part of this project, all sections of 1060A, 1060B, 1070A, and 1070B should incorporate an assignment that meets the criteria listed below.** Each year, the Composition Coordinator, working in conjunction with the Composition Committee and other program faculty, will collect a sample of student projects and use collaboratively developed rubrics to assess student writing samples.

The common assignment must incorporate the following (Individual criteria connections to PLOs are indicated in parentheses):

- Writing as a means to participate in meaningful inquiry and knowledge making (PLO 1, 4)
- A variety of research strategies to locate, evaluate, and synthesize different sources of data, including scholarly, popular, primary, and secondary (PLO 3, 4, 5, 7)
- Engagement with multiple genres and contexts via the use of sources, student writing, or both (PLO 2, 3, 4, 5)
- A reflective component, which can be part of the paper or done separately (PLO 2, 6)
- Consideration of both peer and instructor feedback via a recursive, multi-draft writing process (PLO 2, 6)

These criteria were designed to be broadly flexible, ensuring that faculty will be able to develop their own approaches to teaching FYC and supporting program learning goals while also ensuring consistency across individual sections of FYC.

The common assignment will likely be one of the final formal assignments that students complete in their FYC course or sequence, but it does not necessarily have to be the last assignment as long as it fits these criteria.

Using the ePortfolio platform, students will tag their common assignment projects so that the Composition Coordinator will be able to access samples and prepare them for collaborative assessment.

All FYC faculty will be eligible to participate in the reading and scoring process, and the Composition Committee will work to secure funding, where possible, to pay faculty for participating in the process. The Composition Coordinator will be responsible for reporting on the results of the scoring and discussions and will facilitate any necessary follow-up indicated by the results of the assessment process.

Section 3: Principles of Course Design and CSUSB Policies

Introduction and Overview

While CSUSB's FYC program continues to value faculty academic freedom in the design and teaching of FYC courses, all FYC courses are guided by shared program structures and learning outcomes, and student learning is assessed at the program level in relation to these shared learning outcomes. With these commitments to both academic freedom and programmatic coherence in mind, this section provides an overview of foundational principles of course design. This overview is informed by our FYC Program Learning Outcomes and was developed to help ensure that all FYC classes are working to support student learning in those areas while still ensuring that faculty have flexibility in course design.

The second part of this section reviews university requirements for syllabi and class policies, as well as some recommendations for optional additions to syllabi.

The last part of this section includes some tips and strategies for creating accessible and inclusive syllabi, policies, and classes.

Principles of Course Design

Choosing Readings

Decisions about the quantity and pacing of course reading should reflect these purposes for reading in a composition class. Careful selection of readings can also support many of the program learning outcomes (PLOs) for the FYC program (bolded here).

The selection of readings should be guided by consideration of **genre** ([FYC PLO 5](#)), thematic content, and rhetorical and linguistic features. Readings should reflect a set of ideas or subject of inquiry (a theme) that the course will address or raise and that students write in relation to. A thematic connection will also provide students the opportunity to see the **connections among language, meaning, and context** ([FYC PLO 2](#)) and can serve as examples of **intertextuality** ([FYC PLO 3](#)). Readings will also

serve as rich examples of the kinds of choices, strategies, and options available to writers.

Readings should offer students the opportunity to explore a variety of genres and a range of rhetorical practices and linguistic features. This means that readings can include both academic and non-academic texts to allow readers to note the ways genre, **discourse community** (FYC PLO 4), and rhetorical situations affect the meaning-making process of writers.

Affordability and access are also important considerations in choosing readings. Textbooks should be reasonably priced. Consider open-access texts and texts that are easily readable on computer screens for visually impaired students or learning differences and disabilities. Some recommended affordable and/or accessible readings that many faculty in our program have used include:
- *Writing Spaces*, an open-source textbook. https://writingspaces.org/essays
- Joseph Harris, Rewriting: *How to Do Things with Texts* (available free through the library)

For additional recommendations on selecting readings, please also see the following in Section 4: Teaching FYC with Multilingual Students:
- Select course texts that relate to multilingual students' interests and expertise
- Create a coherent "text set" for your course

Using Readings

Writing—text production—ultimately drives the central subject of the course. Course readings should be selected and assigned so as to provide a context and conversation for writing. They should be discussed as rhetorical acts, as material shaped by and shaping specific generic choices for specific purposes. They also serve as materials that students integrate into their own writing as they enter into the conversation that the coursework defines.

Critical reading is an important component that allows students to identify the rhetorical acts used by writers. Incorporating pre-reading and post-reading activities can provide students with strategies for understanding the rhetorical situation of a text, the ways authors use rhetorical appeals, and the different ways of engaging with secondary sources.

Teachers can sequence and scaffold readings in a number of ways. Texts that deal with a similar theme/issue can be used to show the ways an academic or public

conversation is developing. Scaffolding texts can also incorporate the type of text and the length of the text. Students may begin with shorter more accessible texts and move toward longer academic texts.

Please also see "Supporting students' understanding of course readings" in Teaching FYC with Multilingual Students.

Designing and Scaffolding Writing Projects

Because **writing is a knowledge-making process** (FYC PLO 1), writing activities should be designed to build across the semester(s), giving students an opportunity to continue working with strategies used in earlier papers to support text production in later ones. Thinking in terms of projects rather than isolated papers may best foster this approach. Each project unit should include a culminating text (e.g., a formal paper or other polished project text), as well as a number of less formal activities that support the reading, writing, and thinking required of the culminating text. These less formal activities can make space for students to begin **building connections across and between texts, contexts, concepts, and experiences** (FYC PLO 3) and can foreground the **recursive and collaborative nature of writing** (FYC PLO 6).

There is no fixed or required number of culminating writing assignments in our composition courses, but instructors may find it useful to have between two and four. (More complex, multi-component culminating texts will necessitate fewer such assignments during the semester.) Specific writing assignments should ask students to think rhetorically about genre and discourse communities; isolated "modes" papers (e.g. the compare/contrast essay, the persuasive essay, the narrative, and so on) do not help students attend to the complexities of writing we highlight in the program.

By the end of each term, students should have completed the equivalent of 10-15 final/revised pages. Accounting for the multiple drafts and revisions students will do for each culminating project, along with the variety of less formal writing assignments you design, students will ultimately produce many more pages of written work.

Incorporating Critical Information Literacy

Assignments and writing activities should engage students in the ways **information shapes meaning and power structures** (FYC PLO 7). Scaffolded assignments would ask students to examine how information is influenced by purposes, authority, values, and perspectives, which are shaped by cultural, economic, and political contexts. Students need to also have the opportunity to explore how power relations are

determined by the distribution and access to information. Finally, activities and assignments need to help students analyze what, where, and how to retrieve in consistent with their own purposes and make ethical choices about using that information in their writing. Librarians are available for consultation and collaboration on these assignments. Library tutorials for students are available on the library's website, as are faculty resources. See both the Instructor's Corner and the https://www.csusb.edu/cillab.

The library, in conjunction with the Undergraduate Studies' Student Mentoring program, has also offered a peer Library Ambassador program, described here:

- Who comes to my classroom? Two Student Mentors who are trained as Library Ambassadors.
- What will Library Ambassadors do in my classroom? Library Ambassadors provide an overview of library services and resources and demonstrate how to conduct basic college-level research (find books, articles, items on course reserve). What they cover is meant to supplement learning already taking place in the classroom.
- How long is each visit? 45 minutes, which includes time for questions and a quick survey.
- How do I set this up? You will receive an email from Gina Schlesselman-Tarango, Coordinator or Library Instruction, and/or Barbara Herrera, Student Mentoring Coordinator, with instructions.
- Can the Library Ambassadors give a specialized session for my students? No. While Library Ambassadors can answer many questions you and your students might have, they are not trained to provide in-depth or advanced research assistance. If the Library Ambassadors are asked about advanced or subject-specific databases, source types, etc., they will refer your students to the library for additional assistance. Again, the Library Ambassador program is meant to supplement, not replace, information literacy instruction students get in the classroom.

Note: The peer Library Ambassador program is contingent upon funding and was suspended for Spring 2020 due to COVID-19 closures. Please check with the program coordinators to see if the program will resume in Fall 2020 or subsequent semesters.

Please also see "Integrating Source Material" in Teaching FYC with Multilingual Students.

Writing as Revision

Assignments and activities should help students make rhetorical decisions that ask them to identify and pursue meaningful inquiry in their writing. These assignments should also engage students in the recursive and collaborative process of writing, through substantive feedback from others, and meaningfully revise texts.

It's often productive to think of revision expansively, as moving from project to project, as well as from draft to draft of a particular project. For example, students might begin exploring an idea, concept, or line of inquiry in a first formal project; then deepen their inquiry via an annotated bibliography or other guided research project; and finally synthesize their learning from the first two projects into a third writing project. In this way, students can practice revision as re-visioning and rethinking as they move from project to project, as well revision as refining and reshaping a particular text across drafts.

Grammar and Vocabulary

Sentence mechanics, grammar, vocabulary, usage, and punctuation should be taught in relation to real rhetorical contexts and purposes (the students' texts, the texts of other course readings) and not as discrete skills via acontextual exercises. Form, at all levels, from the sentence to the document, matters, but only in relation to the writer's rhetorical project.

Please also see: "Integrate explicit attention to vocabulary and grammar" in Teaching FYC with Multilingual Students.

Syllabus and Policies

As you create your syllabi, please be aware of some university requirements for syllabi and relevant campus policies.

Required Syllabus Information

- Learning goals for the course. While you may wish to reword the FYC Program Learning Outcomes to be more accessible to students, it is important for all syllabi to include these common learning outcomes, in addition to any course-specific learning outcomes you might add.

- Instructor's name, office location, campus phone number and/or e-mail address and office hours.
- Class term, meeting times, location(s).
- Required text(s) and/or materials.
- Types and descriptions of major assignments.
  - Faculty are required to have some kind of activity during the Final Exam period for each course.
  - The Final Exam Schedule can be found on the Academic Scheduling website.
- Basis for assigning a course grade.
  - See FAM 840.4 Policy on Grades and FAM 840.72 Student Grade Posting Policy.
- Statement of ADA compliance (see below), including contact info for the Services to Students with Disabilities office.
- Referral to the 'Academic Regulations and Procedures' in the CSUSB Bulletin of Courses for the university's policies on course withdrawal, cheating and plagiarism. See FAM 803.5 Policy and Procedures Concerning Academic Dishonesty.

Accessibility Requirements

As described on the Teaching Resource Center site, faculty are responsible for designing syllabi that meet accessibility standards and for including information about ADA accommodations and Services to Students with Disabilities in their syllabi. In this section, we share the campus requirements regarding accessibility; below, you will find ideas and strategies for going beyond the minimum.

Faculty must include this language in their syllabi:

Main Campus:

If you are in need of an accommodation for a disability in order to participate in this class, please see the instructor and contact Services to Students with Disabilities at (909)537-5238.

If you require assistance in the event of an emergency, you are advised to establish a buddy system with a buddy and an alternate buddy in the class. Individuals with disabilities should prepare for an emergency ahead of time by instructing a classmate and the instructor.

Palm Desert Campus:

If you are in need of an accommodation for a disability in order to participate in this class, please let me know ASAP and also contact Rosie Garza in Services to Students with Disabilities at the Palm Desert Campus in RG-209, 760-341-2883 extension 78117, or at the San Bernardino Campus in UH-183, 909-537-5238, ssd@csusb.edu.

If you require assistance in the event of an emergency, you are advised to establish a buddy system with a buddy and an alternate buddy in the class. Individuals with disabilities should prepare for an emergency ahead of time by instructing a classmate and the instructor.

Optional Syllabus Information

- Policies on participation and attendance, especially as those items affect final grades.
- Consequences for cheating and/or plagiarism.
- Provisions for the makeup of missed or late assignments, if any.
- Other information essential to the course, such as:
  - accessing online resources. Note that faculty using non-university-supported resources must state in their syllabus that the university will not provide technical support for those resources and that the university does not endorse any products which may be advertised through those resources
  - individual department or program guidelines (e.g., information about the Stretch Composition program)

Resources for creating accessible syllabi and more information about required and optional syllabi information can be found on the TRC website.

Teaching Writing and Accessibility

While the above guidelines and language regarding ADA Compliance and Services to Students with Disabilities address the minimum requirements for accommodations, they are just that--the minimum. This section includes recommendations for planning classes and teaching in ways that are more broadly accessible to students and more inclusive.

The recommendations in this section are informed in part by the principles of Universal Design and Universal Design for Learning. In particular, the principles of equitable use and flexibility in use guide us toward creating syllabi that are useful to people with

diverse abilities and that accommodate a wide range of preferences and abilities. At the same time, we must recognize that no approach will be truly universally accessible, and so we may need to make modifications for particular users.

Document Design

The following strategies help make your documents more accessible for students who are using assistive technologies to access course materials:
- Use headings--helps those using assistive technologies understand document structure
- Use lists
- Use meaningful hyperlinks
- Add alternative texts for images
- Identify document language
- Use tables wisely--it is difficult for tables to be made accessible, so it is wise to use tables only when absolutely necessary.
- Use the Accessibility Checker in Microsoft Word
- Export to PDF in ways that preserve accessibility

For details on these strategies, please see the University of Washington's guide to creating accessible Word documents.

If you have a student with a documented disability in your class, you may receive an email from SSD or other CSUSB staff linking you to resources and staff who can help you prepare your class and materials. Staff in the Accessible Technology Services office are incredibly helpful in helping you ensure that the materials you are using for your class will be accessible for these students. Often, you need only email them your materials, and they can either find or create accessible versions.

You might also consider enabling Blackboard Ally for all of your classes, even if you do not have students with documented disabilities in the class. This feature does not change how you interact with Blackboard but it does help you see which of your materials are more or less accessible. It also enables alternative formats (such as audio formats) that are helpful for many students, including students with undocumented disabilities or learning preferences. To turn on Blackboard Ally, you need only submit a tech support ticket including your course section information (e.g., Eng 1070A.04) and a request to enable Blackboard Ally.

Accessibilty+

While CSUSB has standard language for ADA Compliance, you may also wish to broaden or expand your class policy beyond what is minimally required by the law. Here is one example of an expanded policy that you might add to the required policy:

> Further, I assume that all of us have different ways of learning and that the organization of any course will accommodate each student differently. Please communicate with me as soon as you can about your individual learning needs so that we can talk about how this course can best accommodate them. (Contributed by Karen Rowan)

You can also find a variety of other policies and practices for broadening the accessibility of your course via the Accessible Syllabus project. The Anthro[dendum] blog also offers a review of different accessibility policies and options.

Gender Identity

While non-discrimination is addressed by CSUSB campus policy, it can be helpful to explicitly set a policy of inclusiveness for gender identity and expression. Here is one example of such a policy:

> "This course affirms people of all gender expressions and identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than is what on the class roster, please let me know. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records, and so I may call you by your preferred name and pronouns." (Contributed by Alexandra Cavallaro)

Related Practices:
- In addition to adding this policy to your syllabus, including your own pronouns along with your name at the top of the syllabus models and enacts inclusiveness in subtle but powerful ways.
- Ask students to do in-class writing or an introduction survey in which they share preferred names and pronouns. This allows students to convey preferences to you more privately.

Trigger Warnings

Some students may live with anxiety or post-traumatic stress. To address this topic, a short section in the policies can potentially prevent or mitigate problems. Sample policy:

If you have a trigger (or triggers) that causes you distress or anxiety, please let me know as soon as possible. If you do not want to share with me, please contact the SSD office at the San Bernardino Campus in UH-183, 909-537-5238, ssd@csusb.edu, or, for the Palm Desert Campus, contact Rosie Garza in Services to Students with Disabilities, RG-209, 760-341-2883 extension 78117. The Student Health Center can also help. For more information, please access the San Bernardino Campus here: https://www.csusb.edu/student-health-center. For the Palm Desert Campus (PDC), please visit this website: https://pdc.csusb.edu/current-students/student-health-center. (Contributed by JP Whatford)

Student Well-Being and Basic Needs

You may wish to provide a statement in your syllabus emphasizing the value you place on students' well-being and/or pointing students to resources for basic needs. Here are two versions of such statements, one shorter, more focused statement and one longer, more expansive statement.

Shorter:

Any student who faces challenges securing their food, housing, or well being and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to campus resources for support. Specifically, the Coyote Basic Needs program can help provide emergency food, financial, and housing support and can help you access other campus and community resources. Furthermore, please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. I will not ask for more information than you are comfortable providing, but I may be able to provide additional resources or accommodations (like deadline extensions). (Contributed by Karen Rowan)

Longer:

I expect you to be participating fully and turning in all of your assignments on time. These acts maximize the learning that occurs in our class: You're giving yourself all possible opportunities to think and practice, you're enriching your peers' experiences, and you're keeping me on a schedule where I can provide you with productive feedback at an optimal time. Like any professor, I hope that my class can be a priority in your life. However, I know that life doesn't always cooperate to let you focus on your chosen priorities exactly when you need or want to. With this in mind, here is what you should know:

If you're having issues that are making you fall behind, I want you to email me or come talk to me. At minimum, we need to make sure that we both understand the status of your grade and that we have a plan to get you back on track before your grade is no longer salvageable. Good communication with me is the key to your success in this class, and I am willing to do everything in my power to help you. And if you're worried about how you're going to get back on track, or if you're concerned that something like a mental illness or learning disability is getting in the way of your ability to succeed in your classes, I definitely want you to reach out to someone—it doesn't have to be me, but someone. Professors, advisers, counselors, the deans of students, and others on campus can point you in the direction of excellent resources and provide you with support and guidance. **Please don't talk yourself out of reaching out when needed.** We know you're full of smarts and effort, and you don't need to prove that by pretending to be perfect. You deserve support for any issue that threatens to interfere with your ability to complete your education. (Contributed by Alexandra Cavallaro)

Campus Resources

You may wish to provide information and/or links to a variety of campus resources, both academic and non-academic, in your syllabus and/or in Blackboard. Some key resources include:

- English Language Support Center: https://www.csusb.edu/english-language-support-center
- University Writing Center: https://www.csusb.edu/writing-center
- Pfau Library: https://www.csusb.edu/library
- Student Software: https://www.csusb.edu/its/software/student-software
- Undergraduate Studies: https://www.csusb.edu/undergraduate-studies
- CARE Team: https://www.csusb.edu/care-team
  - Note: If you are concerned about the well-being of a student, you can make a referral to the CARE Team
- Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS): https://www.csusb.edu/caps
- Coyote Basic Needs: https://www.csusb.edu/basic-needs
- The Den (CSUSB Food Pantry): https://www.csusb.edu/basic-needs/food-security/obershaw-den
- Student Health Center: https://www.csusb.edu/student-health-center
- More resources can be found at the Current Students page

Section 4: Teaching FYC with Multilingual Students: Guidelines and Resources

The materials in this section offer guidance—both conceptual and practical—for designing FYC courses with multilingual students in mind. We hope that you will click through many or all of the following links and that you will find the materials useful.

All FYC Courses have Multilingual Students

Whether you are teaching an "A" (i.e., conventional) or "B" (i.e., multilingual-designated) section of FYC, you will most likely have multilingual students in your class. These are students who have learned a first language or home language besides (or in addition to) English. They may be domestic (i.e., U.S.-resident) or international —categories that are discussed further below.

Testament to the multilingual nature of our FYC student population, in a 2018 survey of first-year undergraduates at CSUSB, more than one-third (37%) of domestic students in the A sections reported speaking primarily another language at home and about two-thirds of students (67%) in the B sections reported the same (see Table 1, below). Indeed, these percentages actually underestimate the number of multilingual students in these classes, given that they do not also identify those students who reported speaking primarily English at home but who still speak or write an additional home or first language. In addition, the survey did not include international students, most of whom are multilingual.

Table 1: Primary Home Language of Domestic Students in FYC Classes (Fall 2018)*

	ENG 102A/105A/107	ENG 102B/105B
Speak primarily English at home	63%	33%
Speak primarily another language at home*	37%	67%

*Based on data from Fall 2018 CIRP Survey; taken by 42% of the Fall 2018 freshmen. Only domestic students were surveyed. Data provided by CSUSB Institutional Research.

CSUSB is not alone in its multilingual student profile. Student populations in various U.S. colleges and universities (and in their FYC programs) have become quite linguistically and culturally diverse—a fact reflected in the titles of recent teacher

resource books, including *Teaching L2 Composition* (Ferris & Hedgcock, 2013), *Second Language Writing in the Composition Classroom* (Matsuda, 2010), *Teaching U.S.-Educated Multilingual Writers* (Roberge, Losey, & Wald, 2015), *Generation 1.5 in College Composition* (Roberge, Siegal, and Harklau, 2009), *Teaching Writing for Academic Purposes to Multilingual Students* (Bitchener, Storch, & Wette, 2017), and *ESL Writers* (Bruce & Rafoth, 2004).

Given the multilingual nature of FYC, all of us should be prepared to have multilingual students classes. As writing researcher Paul Kei Matsuda writes:

> "To work effectively with the student population in the twenty-first century, all composition teachers need to reimagine the composition classroom as the multilingual space that it is, where the presence of linguistic differences is the default" (Matsuda, 2006, p. 649).

Types of Multilingual Students in FYC

Writing researcher Paul Kei Matsuda has written that in the 21st century composition classroom, "the presence of linguistic differences is the default" (Matsuda, 2006, p. 649). These linguistic differences are found not only between monolingual English and multilingual students but also *within* the diverse multilingual student population at CSUSB.

Our multilingual students have learned various languages, and also come from diverse cultural, familial, and educational backgrounds. They also may be either 'domestic' or 'international', two categories that are described further below.

Domestic Multilingual Students

CSUSB's domestic multilingual students are those who live in California at least somewhat permanently (i.e., are not on a student visa) and who completed at least part of their K-12 schooling here. Some domestic multilingual students were born and raised in the U.S., while others immigrated to the U.S. with their families. They may have completed all of their elementary and secondary education here, or part of it here and part in other countries.

Domestic multilingual students vary in how comfortable they feel listening to, speaking, reading, and writing English and other languages. Some speak and write English with the fluency and accuracy of a native English speaker. Some are strong English

speakers, but their writing reflects patterns characteristic of second language (L2) learners. This may be because they have learned spoken English quite well in naturalistic contexts, such as in interactions with friends, and from watching TV or movies, but are still developing proficiency in written academic English. That is why these multilingual students are sometimes called "ear learners" of English (Reid, 2006). Similarly, some domestic multilingual students may be fluent in listening and speaking home language, such as Spanish or Vietnamese but not read and write these languages with high proficiency.

In terms of how they see themselves linguistically, domestic multilingual students may or may not identify as ESL (English as a Second Language) or as ELL (English Language Learner), especially if they have lived in the U.S. for much of their lives or if they have had negative experiences being placed in ESL classes in K-12. In addition, although researchers often describe domestic multilingual students with terms like "Generation 1.5," "linguistic minority," "multilingual", the students themselves may not identify with these descriptors.

In terms of what FYC courses they are drawn to, some domestic multilingual students prefer to enroll in the *A* sections of FYC, while others feel that the *B* sections are a better fit for them. Interestingly, some very English-fluent domestic multilingual students feel more comfortable in the cultural diverse environments of the *B* sections.

International Multilingual Students

International multilingual students constitute another heterogeneous group, although in somewhat different ways than their domestic counterparts. At CSUSB, they hail from countries in the Middle East (e.g., Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Syria), Asia (e.g., China, Korea, Taiwan, Japan, India, Pakistan, Indonesia), and—less frequently—from Europe or Francophone Canada. Some international students are in 'partner-university' programs, whereby they take the first 1-2 years of undergraduate coursework at their home country universities, and then complete the latter 2-3 years of their bachelor's degree at CSUSB. Others, however, do all four years of their bachelor's here; others still are on short-term exchange programs, where they take classes here for only 1-2 semesters.

International students are typically highly proficient users of their first language (L1) in all skill areas: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. They vary in their experience, fluency and confidence levels in English. Some have studied English in their home countries—often in formal classroom settings with a focus on English grammatical rules, vocabulary memorization, and short reading and writing exercises—with little

opportunity to practice conversing in English. Indeed, international multilingual students have been referred to as "eye learners' of English (Reid, 206), given that prior to arriving in the U.S., their English input is mainly visual (printed) instructional media like textbooks. Such students may be novices in spoken English when they arrive at CSUSB., but their formal English reading and writing abilities can be pretty solid for first-year students. They are often more familiar with English grammatical terminology than are domestic multilingual or monolingual students.

It is also important to note, however, that some international students manifest an opposite pattern. That is, they may be skillful English conversationalists but less experienced with reading and writing English, particularly in academic contexts.

International ML students are most often enrolled in *B* sections of FYC. This pattern is due to three factors: 1) They feel more comfortable in a FYC class with other students who are learning (or who have had the experience of learning) English as a second language—whether in the U.S. or abroad; 2) they prefer that their instructor have expertise in teaching ML students; and 3) they are advised by international program coordinators to take a *B* section.

B Sections with both International and Domestic Multilingual Students

B sections often have a mix of domestic and international students. An advantage of this class make-up is that the different backgrounds and strengths of these students complement each other. For instance, domestic students often helpfully (and naturally) model conversational English for international students. International students from particular educational backgrounds may in turn be able to assist domestic students with some aspects of academic writing, grammar, and vocabulary.

Table 2 below summarizes some of these characteristics of domestic and international multilingual students. Please keep in mind that these are broad generalizations. As such, they do not account for many exceptions—such as the domestic student with high academic literacy in both English and another language, or the international student who prefers to be in an *A* section and converses comfortably with native English speaker classmates. Nevertheless, Table 2 below synthesizes common distinctions between these two student populations at CSUSB.

Table 2: Typical Characteristics of International and Domestic Multilingual Students

International Multilingual Students	Domestic Multilingual Students

Strong L1 literacy in language other than English	Varied degrees of literacy in language other than English
Still-developing spoken English abilities	Strong spoken English abilities
"Eye learners" of English	"Ear learners" of English
Non-idiomatic word choices/phrasing	Idiomatic (native-like) word choices/phrasing
Formal meta-knowledge of English grammar	Intuitive knowledge of English grammar
Experience in reading and writing short texts in English; less experienced with extended reading and writing assignments	Sometimes lacked access to rigorous middle and high school English classes (esp. if tracked as ESL)
Outsider perspective on U.S. culture	Insider perspective on U.S. culture
Often educationally privileged	Made it to 4-year university (which not many high school English Learners do)
Likely prefer multilingual *B* sections of FYC	May or may not prefer multilingual *B* sections of FYC

(See also Costino & Hyon, 2007; Ferris & Hedgcock, 2014; Kanno and Cromley, 2013; Reid, 2006).

Strategies for Designing FYC Courses with Multilingual Students in Mind

As you design your FYC courses, consider the strengths and interests of your multilingual students. In particular, you can keep in mind the following strategies to facilitate their engagement and success in your course and beyond.

Select course texts that relate to multilingual students' interests and expertise

Multilingual students have experience using, learning, navigating, and/or participating in more than one language and culture. You can connect to students' expertise in these areas via your choices of course texts. Readings of interest, for example, might deal with such topics as language learning, cultural identity, relationships between language and thought, and social norms. These topics can engage monolingual students in your classes as well.

Of course, multilingual students may have many other interests besides those linked to their multilingual backgrounds per se—and so other topics you have in mind for your FYC course (e.g., food culture, issues in health and science, pop culture, environmental topics or other themes) could also work well for your multilingual students and, indeed,

could still connect with their linguistic and cultural expertise. Indeed, it may be useful survey all of the students in your course to find out topics that they are interested in, particularly in your stretch classes where you have more time to plan or change readings across two semesters.

See Sample Text Sets in the next section.

Create a coherent 'text set' for your course

Choosing readings that form a *text set*, that is, texts that somehow 'go together' will add coherence and meaningfulness to your course. The texts in your text set might cohere around particular theme or topic but vary in genre or modality; or they might be on different topics but revolve around a rhetorical strategy you want to focus on (e.g., how authors use other texts or ways of doing research).

Your text set might include texts from such sources as a composition reader, the chapters in a 'regular' book (e.g., *The Omnivore's Dilemma*, *The World's Smartest Kids*, *Freakonomics*), open source materials, or multimedia texts like videos, podcasts, and art of various kinds.

Provided here are two sample text sets. As you will see, Text Set 1 draws on resources in varied genres but coheres around the theme of language, thought, and identity. Text Set 2, on the other hand, is composed of chapters from a single non-fiction book, Anne Fadiman's *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*, whose chapters reflect different genres and writing strategies.

Text Set 1. Language, Thought, and Identity

1. Mother Tongue-Amy Tan
   http://theessayexperiencefall2013.qwriting.qc.cuny.edu/files/2013/09/Mother-Tongue-by-Amy-Tan.pdf
2. Living in Tongues – Luc Sante (*The New York Times Magazine*)
   https://www.nytimes.com/1996/05/12/magazine/living-in-tongues.html
3. How Language Shapes Thought – Lera Boroditsky *(Scientific American)*
   https://www.gwashingtonhs.org/ourpages/auto/2013/10/23/68598699/sci-am-2011.pdf
4. Bilingualism and thought (blog posts in *Psychology Today*)
   - Bilingual minds, bilingual bodies:
     https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/life-bilingual/201510/bilingual-minds-bilingual-bodies

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- - Second language speakers and police interviews:
      https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/life-bilingual/201607/second-language-speakers-and-police-interviews
  - Poetry in a second language:
      https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/life-bilingual/201607/second-language-speakers-and-police-interviews
5. Language as a Representation of Mexican Identity – Carmen Fought (*English Today*). See abstract here. Access via the CSUSB Pfau Library.
6. Making Meanings, Meaning Identity: Hmong Adolescent Perceptions and Use of Language and Style as Identity Symbols – Jacqueline Nguyen & Bradford Brown (*Journal of Research on Adolescence*)
   https://website.education.wisc.edu/prsg/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Nguyen-Brown-2010-Making-meaning-meaning-ident.pdf
7. Videos: (Language and thought)
   - Do you see What I See? – BBC
     https://www.reddit.com/r/philosophy/comments/uvlg9/bbc_horizon_do_you_see_what_i_see_the_himba_tribe/
   - Lera Boroditsky's TED Talk
     https://www.ted.com/talks/lera_boroditsky_how_language_shapes_the_way_we_think?language=en
   - Dreaming in Different Tongues – UC Berkeley Event
     https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I8uUjtiaXqE
8. Podcast: Radiolab: "Words"
   https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/radiolab/episodes/91725-words

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Text Set 2. Anne Fadiman's book *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*

Ch. 1: "Birth"—the Lee family's life in Laos; Hmong pregnancy/birth practices; Lia Lee's birth in Merced, CA.
Ch. 2: "Fish Soup"—background on Hmong history and countries where they have settled.
Ch. 3: "The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down"—account of Lia Lee's first seizure, the family's spiritual framing of it, and their initial encounters and communication problems with the Merced hospital personnel.
Ch. 4: "Do Doctors Each Brains?"—examples of the Hmong's general distrust of American medicine and doctors
Ch. 5: "Take as Directed"—Struggles involving Lee family not following the prescribed medical treatment for Lia
Ch. 6: "High Velocity Transcortical Lead Therapy"
Ch. 7: "Government Property"
Ch. 8: "Foua and Nao Kao"
Ch. 9: "A Little Medicine and a Little Neeb"

Ch. 10: "War"—the role the Hmong played in fighting on the American side during the Vietnam War, and their subsequent abandonment by the U.S. government at the end of the war.
Ch. 11: "The Big One"
Ch. 12: "Flight"
Ch. 13: "Code X"
Ch. 14: "The Melting Pot"
Ch. 15: "Gold and Dross"
Ch. 16: "Why did they Pick Merced?"
Ch. 17: "The Eight Questions"
Ch. 18: "Life or the Soul?"
Ch. 19: "The Sacrifice"

To get a sense of issues Fadiman takes up in this book, see these reviews of the book. . .

"A vivid, deeply felt, and meticulously researched account of the disastrous encounter between two disparate cultures: Western medicine and Eastern spirituality, in this case, of Hmong immigrants from Laos."—Kirkus Reviews

"[This book] has no heroes or villains"—Melvin Konner, *The New York Times Book Review*

"Fadiman's ability to empathize with the resolutely independent Hmong as well as with the remarkable doctors, caseworkers, and officials of Merced County makes her narrative both richly textured and deeply illuminating."--Michael Berube, author of *Life As We Know It*

"A wonderful aspect of Fadiman's book is her evenhanded, detailed presentation of these disparate cultures and divergent views--not with cool, dispassionate fairness but rather with a warm, involved interest. -- Carole Horn, *The Washington Post Book World*

Other facts about the book:
● The book was published in 1997.
● It won the National Book Critics Circle Award for General Nonfiction.
● It has been required reading for medical and nursing programs, and for common-book-of-the-year programs for first-year college students.

Choose texts that are challenging yet accessible

Think about putting together a text set that will be overall accessible to students but still is challenging enough to promote learning. For example, you might choose some texts that are on topics that will be familiar to students but that still have new vocabulary or

grammatical structures you want to focus on in class. The genres represented in your text set might also vary in their familiarity to students (e.g., editorial, interview, research article, tweet, photograph).

As you consider accessibility and challenge, keep in mind what different students may or find difficult in the texts you've chosen. Depending on how long they have lived in the U.S., students will vary in their knowledge of U.S. culture, for example, so cultural references in texts may need to be unpacked. In addition, all students multilingual and otherwise—will also have different experience levels with the discourse organization and language of particular genres. Students will vary as well in their knowledge of vocabulary in texts you select. Some informal vocabulary and idiomatic expressions will be less familiar to international students than to long-term U.S. residents. And many students will be new to vocabulary found in academic writing, even words that you consider basic like *implement, acknowledge, adjust*, *imply*, and *assess*.

Again, it is good to include course texts that are challenging in various ways, as long as students have enough support (via their background knowledge or scaffolding in your class) to engage with and learn from them.

The following check-list of questions can help you guide you in planning, building, and revising a course text set with ML students in mind.

- Thematic Content and Cultural Connections
    - Do the selections in your text set delve into themes that are meaningful and interesting to culturally-diverse students?
    - Do the selections take into account (and capitalize upon) the cultural assumptions and varied world views students may have?
- Genre
    - Does your text set offer opportunities for students to explore genres and genre features relevant to their lives (academic or otherwise)?
    - Do the selections reflect a helpful range of rhetorical patterns and purposes?
- Linguistic Features
    - Does your text set offer opportunities for students to examine and learn new grammatical features?
    - Does the text set lend itself well to learning new vocabulary, while still being accessible in meaning?
- Coherence
    - Do your text selections constitute a coherent set—thematically, genre-wise, or in some other way that is recognizable to you and your students?

Design writing assignments that are meaningful for students

When designing writing assignments, the following principles may prove helpful, particularly in classes with multilingual students but also for FYC courses in general.

<u>Design writing assignments that connect with your course theme(s) and course readings</u>
If your major writing projects align with the course themes and readings, students are more likely to see them and your whole course as coherent and purposeful. Also, asking students to incorporate assigned readings into writing assignments actually helps them: If they have been working with the readings at home and in class, they will have ready fodder to incorporate into their writing project.

<u>Create writing assignments that your students will be invested in</u>
Writing projects that tap into students' expertise or interests are more likely to be engaging and promote learning than those that do not. Thus, consider designing assignments where students can draw on their experiences or areas of intellectual curiosity.

<u>Write prompt sheets that offer students clear purpose and direction</u>
Clear, hard-copy (i.e., not just posted on Blackboard) assignment sheets that students can hold, read, and take notes on, are so helpful, especially for multilingual students whose listening abilities in English are still developing and who thus may not be able to follow your spoken instructions about an assignment.

To be maximally helpful, these assignment sheets can include information about the following, preferably within one succinctly-written page:
- Context, purpose, and relevance of the assignment at hand
  - How this assignment fits into the course and what the class has been doing lately
  - What students will get out of doing the assignment
- Assignment itself
  - What students are to do in this assignment (A 1-2 sentence 'core prompt statement'—something that students can refer back to if they ever feel lost)
  - Who the audience is
  - What genres and media students may be composing in for this assignment and why
- Mechanical expectations for the task
  - What expectations there are for format, length, and source use

- Guidance for the Journey
  - What resources or strategies students can use to get started on the assignment
  - What the due dates are for different parts or drafts of the assignment
  - What sources students can consult or integrate into their assignment

Here are some FYC writing assignment sheets that reflect the strategies for writing-assignment creation above. You may also think of ways to further improve these assignments!

Incorporate scaffolding activities to support reading and writing

Scaffolding activities are those that give students support and guidance for completing class reading and writing assignments. The following sections connect to sample scaffolding activities aimed at helping students to interpret course readings, learn discourse strategies, and integrate source materials.

Supporting students' understanding of course readings

Pre-reading activities

Students better comprehend a text when they have prior knowledge of its content, structure, and language. One way of building such prior knowledge is through "pre-reading" activities—i.e., tasks that engage students in thinking about or sampling a text before they fully read it.

During reading activities

During-reading activities can help students to engage with a text while reading it and to pay attention to particular elements that you want to discuss in the next class or that will be important for their upcoming writing project.

Post-reading activities

Post-reading activities (either done at home or in-class) are useful for leading students to think deeply about a text and for preparing them to participate actively in class discussion.

Click here for examples of activities to support students' reading practices.

Raising students' awareness of genres and their moves
All students—whether multilingual or not—benefit from understanding how genres (i.e., textual categories) work. Such genre awareness is important for students in recognizing

why, for example, scientific findings in a blog post have a different 'feel' to them than the same findings reported in a journal article—and why writers choose to compose in these different genres. Students themselves also become more rhetorically savvy writers when they are sensitive to the different genres available to them.

A genre is perhaps most readily identified by its *moves*, that is, those 'chunks' that make up the genre's structure and that perform specific functions within it. The job application letter genre, for example, is characterized by such moves as: Salutation, Intention for Writing, Candidate Qualifications, Availability for Interview, Contact Information, and Polite Closing. These and other genre moves *do* things in a text. So if you are having students describe moves in a text, remind them that moves relate to what the author is *doing* in particular sections rather than just what the author is saying.

Moves can sometimes be recognized by vocabulary and grammatical choices. For example, within a 'Candidate's Qualifications' move in a job application letter, we expect to see first person pronouns like *I* or *me*, along with present perfect verb structures, such as in *I have worked in the non-profit sector*, *have served as a consultant to . . .*, and so on. These linguistic choices also express different levels of formality and informality, objectivity and subjectivity, and other elements of writer stance.

Knowledge of genre moves is powerful for students because it gives them strategies to use in their own texts. This knowledge can be particularly useful for some multilingual students who lack experience in how to write within particular genres.

Once students recognize genres and their moves, they may treat them as set templates for composing texts. But it is also important for students to know that genres and their moves are usually not static formulas but rather vary according to the situation.

[Click here for examples of activities for building students' awareness of genres, genres moves, and genre variability.](#)

Integrating source material

First-year writers are often unsure of where, why, and how to integrate source material (such as course readings or outside research) into their own writing. Such source integration is a means of developing one's own thoughts in relation to other' thoughts and, as such, is a hallmark of academic writing. Students benefit from guidance on how to integrate source material, and multilingual students may especially appreciate

practice in this area if they are unfamiliar with approaches to quoting and paraphrasing others' texts.

[Click here for examples of activities related to integrating and citing source material.](#)

Integrate explicit attention to vocabulary and grammar

The idea of teaching vocabulary and grammar in FYC is at times controversial. According to some schools of thought, such teaching is unnecessary if students will automatically learn the vocabulary and grammatical structures they need from listening to and reading the language around them. However, scholarship in the field of Second Language Acquisition indicates that students who are still in the process of acquiring a second language (L2) often benefit from explicit attention to L2 grammar and vocabulary. Also note that the term lexicogrammar is used as an umbrella term for words (lexicon) and grammar, as well as for phrasal "chunks" like I am concerned that, the majority of, and a well-researched argument. (For more on lexicogrammatical chunks, see Hinkle, 2016.)

In 'no-grammar ' schools of thought, there is also a belief that lexicogrammatical instruction in FYC classes will be boring and, as a result, any intended learning from such instruction will not be retained by students. This concern is understandable given that linguistic lessons detached from meaning or student purposes can indeed be disengaging for students.

But it is important to remember that words and grammar as they are used in authentic discourse—whether spoken or written—are inherently meaningful. Just consider these pairs of sentences that illustrate how slight only changes in sentence wording create different nuances in meaning or focus. Can you describe these nuances?

I tried calling you last night.
I tried to call you last night.

She has had four shots of scotch.
She had four shots of scotch.

It was a young boy who stole the pears.
A young boy stole the pears.

Given the meaningfulness inherent in linguistic choices, it is absolutely possible to make language-focused lessons engaging to students and relevant for specific reading and

writing assignments that they are working on in your FYC classes. The following are some suggestions and illustrations for designing such lessons in FYC.

Principles for Designing Vocabulary Activities
The following list offers suggestions for helping students understand and use new vocabulary.
1. Pre-teach a few essential target terms in the reading before students do the reading.
2. Integrate new words with old, as words in our mental lexicon are very much "networked" with each other.
3. Provide multiple encounters with a new word. Research has shown that students need 5-16 encounters with a word to truly learn it. Also, by recalling a word we can retain it better.
4. Include novel words in post-reading tasks.
5. Promote a deep level of processing--processing that goes beyond memorizing a definition. For example, you can focus on lexical relationships (synonyms and antonyms), components of meaning, collocations, and how words fit into particular categories.
6. Facilitate verbal and non-verbal associations with words, through images and personal connections.
7. Model inferencing
8. Devote instructional time to examining multiple meanings and collocations.

> Adapted from Sokmen, A. J. (1997). "Current trends in teaching second language vocabulary." In N. Schmitt, & M. McCarthy (Eds.), Vocabulary: Description, acquisition, and pedagogy (pp. 237- 257). Cambridge: CUP.

Principles for Grammar Instruction in FYC with Multilingual Students
1. **Connect grammar instruction to course reading and writing assignments.** As much as possible, tie grammar activities to the reading and writing projects students are doing for your FYC course. Doing so will go a long way in making the grammar work meaningful, relevant, and memorable to your students.
2. **Anticipate the grammar students will need for particular assignments.** Brainstorm (on a list for yourself) grammatical structures and vocabulary relevant for an upcoming writing project. For example, if you have assigned your students to write a critique of an article, you can anticipate that the students will need to use simple present tense for quoting the author (e.g., Fadiman writes, " . . .") and subject-verb agreement (e.g., the 3rd person singular -s suffix on writes), evaluative vocabulary (to express praise and/or criticism of the book), and

particular sentence structures for softening criticism. Watching out for run-ons and fragments is also useful for many writing assignments. In addition, you can make a list of some grammatical structures helpful for students in understanding an upcoming reading.

3. **Plan mini-grammar lessons relevant to the class projects** (and timing is important). Look at the brainstorm list of grammar points you generated in 2. Select a few that you think will be particularly relevant to your upcoming writing assignment and plan a mini-lesson for each. Timing of these lessons is important here: It's probably plenty to have one grammar mini-lesson during any given class session—so you can spread your different mini-lessons across different class sessions. Also, it's helpful to do these lessons when students have a draft of their paper with them so that they can apply the grammar lesson directly and immediately to their paper (and thereby reinforce what they've learned in meaningful ways). You therefore might do a grammar mini-lesson on a day that students are turning in a second or third draft of their paper and can 'pencil in' some edits after the lesson, or on a day when you're handing back a second draft of their paper that they can then work on that day in class.

4. **Incorporate active learning techniques in your grammar mini-lessons.** In your grammar lessons, consider ways to engage students. Think active learning rather than droning lecture. Here are some active learning techniques you might incorporate into your lessons:
   ● Students discussing and figuring out grammar patterns or rules from examples sentences that you provide or that are provided in the reading.
   ● Students looking for examples of a grammar pattern in a text.
   ● Students debating differences in meaning between two chunks of text that differ slightly in grammatical structure.
   ● Students practicing using a grammatical pattern in a guided activity.
   ● Students applying a grammatical pattern in their own writing.

[Click here for examples of activities related to use within grammar mini-lessons.](#)

Offer multilingual students helpful feedback on their writing

One of the areas that FYC faculty often struggle with/wonder about in working with multilingual students is how to respond to their writing/how to give helpful feedback on their writing. FYC faculty are sometimes uncertain about how best to respond to multilingual students' writing. One source of their uncertainty may be that what stands out to them in looking at multilingual students' papers are lexicogrammatical errors not typically found in monolingual student papers/[or] In particular, instructors may wonder about how much to focus on lexicogrammatical errors in multilingual students' writing

that mark them as different from that found in monolingual students' writing/may feel overwhelmed by/may be struck by the lexicogrammatical errors in multilingual students' writing that are different from those in monolingual students' writing, and wonder about if or how to comment on them. The following are several tips for responding to multilingual students' writing in ways that are both supportive and constructive for the students.

<u>Remember that multilingual student writing is not just about grammar errors/Evaluate all aspects of multilingual students' writing—not just its marked linguistic features and errors.</u>
Sometimes when looking at a multilingual student's paper, instructors may be so struck by its atypical lexicogrammar/lexicogrammatical errors that that is all that they see. But it is important to remember that multilingual student writing—just like the writing of any student—is much more than its 'errors' and deserves to be evaluated and commented on in terms of all of its dimensions/should be read and evaluated in terms of all of its dimensions.

An evaluation/assignment rubric can be a helpful reminder that accurate lexicogrammar is only one of multiple dimensions along which student writing can be evaluated.

[Click here for a sample rubric.](#)

<u>Evaluate the lexicogrammar in your students' paper not only for correctness but also for linguistic variety and risk-taking. In your commenting practices, Evaluate/Encourage not only correctness in (your students') lexicogrammar but also linguistic variety, risk-taking, and experimentation.</u>
Sophisticated and skillful writers and thinkers use a range of vocabulary and grammatical constructions to express their meanings. These words and constructions may be new to students, particularly for those who are not as familiar with English. So as students try them out, they will inevitably make errors of various shapes and sizes. For example, if a student has just learned the phrase *in retrospect*, they may overextend it in places it does not usually appear but have to do with memory, producing sentences like, say, *I thought of my keys in retrospect* (to mean "I remembered by keys."). These and other errors are okay in the context of learning within an FYC class; in fact, errors are a natural part of the language learning process/a natural part of learning new linguistic forms.

The sample rubric allows for linguistic experimentation and error. Notice in particular that the "Language/Grammar" dimension of the rubric encourages students to "try a range of words and phrases" and to have sentences that "vary in structure and style." Perfect grammatical accuracy is not expected. Rather, the focus is on "making progress

toward accurate sentence structure, punctuation, and spelling." Such progress will inevitably involve experimentation, errors, and practice.

<u>When giving error feedback, focus on major error patterns, not every error.</u>
It is unfeasible for you and overwhelming to your students if you try to mark every lexicogrammatical error in their papers. Much more productive is attending error patterns, whereby you offer focused feedback on a few key error patterns in a student's paper—errors that occur frequently throughout their paper. Your student can then concentrate on correcting those errors (and on noticing these key error patterns so they can get more accurate with them in the future) without having to worry about being 'perfect' on all other grammar items too.

<u>Time error feedback wisely within the sequence of your assignment drafts.</u>
If your assignment requires, say, three drafts of an assignment, it probably makes most sense to offer feedback on lexicogrammatical errors (along, of course, with feedback on thought, organization, development, use of sources, and so on) on the *second* of those three drafts. Why? On the first (rough) draft, error feedback could be non-useful as students may still be figuring out the overall direction of their paper and may need to not just correct but chuck whole sentences as they develop their ideas. On the third (final) draft, students will likely not pay close attention to micro comments on their errors but rather just read your overall end comment and the grade for the paper. On the second (middle) draft, students are more likely to pay attention to all of your comments—including error feedback—because they have a required opportunity to revise their paper for the final draft.

<u>Give error feedback that encourages students to become independent self-editors.</u>
Students will not always have you or someone else to help them correct their lexicogrammatical errors. Therefore, the purpose of your feedback should be to raise students' awareness of their particular error patterns and ways to rework phrasing and structure so that it is more accurate.

Toward these ends, your error feedback should probably not involve too much direct correction of students' errors, but rather techniques like underlining or error-coding that leaves it up to a student to figure out how to fix the error. Some instructors like to use a combination of these strategies, coding key error patterns right on top of the first few error spots (e.g., *v* for verb errors), underlining some of these errors later in the paper, and then leaving some toward the end of the paper unmarked but asking students to find them and correct them. See Ferris (2012) for a description of these strategies.

[Click here for two handouts that can help students become more independent self-editors.](#)

Plagiarism, Textual Borrowing, and Multilingual Students

FYC students—multilingual or not—are relative novices in incorporating and citing source material. As such, a helpful orientation for us teachers is one of helping students learn expectations for source use rather than punishing them for every infraction of these expectations.

Having an educating rather than punishing orientation toward source use and plagiarism is particularly important in working with international students from educational systems with different notions of acceptable source use. International students may also not have had much experience writing papers that required source material.

International students and the cultural relativity of plagiarism norms are explored by Alistair Pennycook (1996), in his fascinating article "Borrowing Others' Words: Text, Ownership, Memory, and Plagiarism." Pennycook also points out that even in Western and Judeo-Christian culture, views about textual ownership have evolved historically with changing perspectives on human (vs. divine) authorship and property laws.

For FYC faculty interested in how to support multilingual students in learning western university textual integration practices, a useful resource book is Diane Pecorari's (2013) *Teaching to Avoid Plagiarism*: *How to Promote Good Source Use*. In it, Pecorari offers classroom activities for gathering, extracting, using, quoting, and paraphrasing source material in one's writing; as well she has a helpful chapter on issues related to international students and plagiarism.

Teaching Multilingual Students in *A* versus *B* sections of FYC

The teaching principles and sample activities described in these resource materials have relevance for the multilingual-designated *B* sections of FYC and the conventional *A* sections.

In the *B* sections, multilingual students benefit from course designs and activities that explicitly attend to their interests, goals, and needs. These students often self-place into

the *B* sections because they seek the specific cultural and linguistic support these sections offer, with faculty who have expertise in L2 learning and teaching, and in working with multilingual students.

In the *A* sections, there are also a number of multilingual students who appreciate readings and assignments that draw on their linguistic and cultural expertise. In addition, depending on their experience, both multilingual and monolingual English students in the *A sections* may benefit from scaffolding activities in academic lexicogrammar and genre awareness.

One potential challenge in the A sections is making sure that both multilingual and monolingual students feel included and have their interests addressed in the course. To such an end, Paul Matsuda and Tony Silva designed a "cross-cultural" FYC course that fostered inclusion (Matsuda & Silva, 1999). Specifically, their course assignments engaged native English speakers and international ESL students in joint research and writing assignments whereby both populations of students relied on and learned from each other. To read about this cross-cultural course curriculum, click here.

Section 5: Further Resources

This section is an on-going work-in-progress.

Resources for Section 1: FYC Program Structure and Overview

Stretch Composition

- [WAC-CompPile Annotated Bibliography on Stretch Composition](), prepared by Gregory Glau, 2010.
- Davila, Bethany A.; Cristyn L. Elder. (2017). Welcoming linguistic diversity and saying adios to remediation: Stretch and studio composition at a Hispanic-serving institution [program profile]. Composition Forum 35. https://compositionforum.com/issue/35/new-mexico.php
- Elder, Cristyn L.; Bethany Davila. (2017). Stretch and Studio Composition Practicum: Creating a Culture of Support and Success for Developing Writers at a Hispanic-Serving Institution [Course Designs]. Composition Studies 45.2, 167-186.

Directed Self-Placement

- [WAC-CompPile Annotated Bibliography on Directed Self-Placement](), prepared by Asao Inoue, Miriam Fernandez, Lemuel Gary, Mathew Gomes, Diana Harriger, Kristen Johnson, Sean Maddox, Brice Nakumura, Tyler Richmond, Aparna Sinha, and Daniel Speechly, 2011.
- Estrem, Heidi; Shepherd, Dawn; and Sturman, Samantha. (2018). "Reclaiming Writing Placement". WPA Journal, 42(1), 56-71.

Resources for Section 2: Program Learning Goals and Program Assessment

Threshold Concepts

- *Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts of Writing Studies*. Edited by Linda Adler-Kassner and Elizabeth Wardle, U of Colorado UP, 2015. [Available online via Pfau Library.]

Resources for Section 3: **Course Design and Policies**

- [WAC-Compile Annotated Bibliography on "Transfer-Ability: Issues of Transfer and FYC](#), Prepared by Robin Snead, 2011.
- WAC-Compile Annotated Bibliography on [Teaching Grammar-in-Context in College Writing Instruction: An Update on the Research Literature](#), Prepared by Zak Lancaster and Andrea R. Olinge, 2014.

Teaching Writing and Accessibility

- Kerschbaum, Stephanie L. "Avoiding the Difference Fixation: Identity Categories, Markers of Difference, and the Teaching of Writing." *College Composition and Communication* Vol. 63, No. 4 (2012), pp. 616-644.
- Womack, Anne-Marie. "Teaching is Accommodation: Universally Designing Composition Classrooms and Syllabi." *College Composition and Communication*, 68(3), 494-525.
- [Anti-Ableist Composition](#)
- [Accessible Syllabus](#)

Resources for Section 4: Teaching Writing to Multilingual Students

[To be added.]