

English Composition (ENGL 1101) Course Redesign at the University of North Georgia

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The Gateways to Completion English Department Committee was charged with developing and implementing pedagogical intervention(s) in English 1101 (ENGL 1101) during Fall 2019 to lower DFWI rates with an eye toward equity in student outcomes. We redesigned the ENGL 1101 course with process pedagogy as an overarching pedagogical intervention. We piloted 18 sections of ENGL 1101 during Fall 2019 with macro- and micro-level interventions designed to support this overarching pedagogical intervention. Our mixed methods assessment plan highlights the effectiveness of such an intervention for students' learning while also highlighting adjustments to make as we scale up our redesigned course to additional sections of ENGL 1101.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

ENGL 1101 focuses on informational, analytical, and argumentative writing skills that prepare students for college-level writing. This class comes with challenges for faculty and students. It is taught by English faculty with varied levels of expertise and research interests. In-class content and activities, therefore, varied; some faculty emphasize literature and some faculty emphasize rhetoric. These varied approaches posed challenges for our student population because the English Department was not offering a clear curriculum. Additionally, student populations represent different levels of college-preparedness and different demographics such as first-generation, Latinx, and dual-enrolled populations, which also varies across of 5 campus system. Consequently, we approached the redesign effort as an opportunity to provide pedagogical coherence for our varied student populations. To achieve our goal, we first ensured that the G2C English Department Committee (hereafter "Committee") was composed of faculty representatives from across our campuses and with varied backgrounds in teaching a course like ENGL 1101. We then developed an overarching pedagogical intervention termed process pedagogy. In this pedagogical approach, instructors focused on teaching writing as a process wherein drafting and revision figure prominently over the final written product during individual assessment.

As we further explain in the next section, process pedagogy helps students conceptualize writing as an extended and multi-level effort at drafting, reflecting, and revising, and the assessment of student

goal with continuation of pilot interventions in year 3 focuses upon expanding our scope of pilot sections across campuses. In Fall 2019, we had 6 pilot faculty in 18 sections; in Spring 2020, we had 7 pilot faculty in 11 sections. It is our hope to double our faculty engagement for Fall 2020.

LESSONS LEARNED AND POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS

Though our course redesign is still in process, we look back over our work and see two lessons learned that will have implications for our continued redesign efforts: First, redesign is a university-wide effort. To do this work well, we need to work in partnership with staff and students and additional units. For example, the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Leadership led discussions on course design, introducing many of us to foundational work on developing effective courses. The Office of Institutional Effectiveness tracked student data points that guided our decision-making. For redesign to lead to substantial and sustainable change, we learned that we need to work with faculty and staff across our university. We have a faculty-led committee, but we are doing this work with our broad university stakeholders. Second, we learned to complement quantitative data with faculty voices. Our committee was charged with designing the course with an eye toward lowering DWFI rates, a charge that would be assessed with quantitative data on student grades. When assessing the effectiveness of our redesign efforts, however, we offered not only DWFI rates but also offered qualitative data. We interviewed our pilot faculty and offered rich nonnumerical responses from our colleagues, thinking through the challenges and opportunities of these redesigned course. As we continue with our work, we learned the importance of complementing quantitative data with narratives offered by those doing the work in the classroom.