Writing Placement Meeting
Wednesday, January 27, 3:00 p.m., Ankeny 2-7

We have all of our resources and meeting minutes online at https://myweb.dmacc.edu/personal/sdmgregor/instructor/placement/.

During Wednesday’s meeting, we took a step back to review the process from Saxon and Morante’s article (attached) that helped us focus this summer. We then reviewed several of our thoughts and made a few decisions about the process. Jim Stick attended and confirmed that we have the college support for the pilots we want to run, so we will work through the proposals below and seek approval and funding from the college to complete the pilots. After yesterday’s meeting, our direction feels more clear, and we can begin forming work groups.

**Multiple Measures:** We have discussed some of the problems with our assessment process, and one major one is an element that all of the research agrees: Multiple measures are crucial to placing students in the right areas. We will work directly with Rachel Erkkila, Heidi Heilskov, Kari Hensen, and Jim Stick as well as IT to move forward with having multiple measures to place students. Shannon will contact Rachel and Stephanie Oppel to see where we are in the process and how it can tie into our master plan for placement.

**Placement Flags/Blocks:** Kari Hensen emailed Rachel Erkkila and Heidi Heilskov during week one of the term, communicating some of the issues we have during the first week when we see our students’ writing with our first assignments and see that they need to be placed in a lower level of course. Some faculty check their rosters before the term begins and contact students who have not passed at the appropriate levels, but too many students slip through the system. The group supported the idea, and since we are moving forward with placement recommendations, then we agreed to pursue this, too—that it is in the students’ best interest.

**ACCUPLACER:** DMACC seems to be conflicted about the direction with placement assessments, and while Joe DeHart has communicated that DMACC will use ACCUPLACER until the English Department decides on a placement mechanism, we need to confirm this with deans, provosts, and Testing Centers. We will write to Kim Linduska, Joe, and the Deans and Provost regarding ACCUPLACER, recommending that the college move forward with the English and reading assessments through ACCUPLACER and possibly adding a WritePlacer Pilot. (See comments about a WritePlacer Pilot below.) See the scoring recommendations below, which we discussed at the November meeting.

- **WritePlacer Pilot (2 years):** After the meeting, a few faculty mentioned that if we can, we should pilot WritePlacer for a couple of years to compare it to the diagnostic’s results. It would offer more data for us to consider for our long-term placement options.

**Small Group Meetings:** We decided by the end of the meeting to break into small groups that focus on specific areas of the assessment goals.

- **ALP Group:** We have agreed for some time that creating ALP courses are a wise option for students, as they provide the support services for students to develop weak writing skills while helping the students move forward with their writing goals. The ALP cannot begin until Fall 2017 since we do not have course competencies, so the goal is to have a course written by the end of spring, propose it to the English Department at our June
meeting, and prepare everything for Curriculum Commission approval by October 2016. This group will also need to develop materials for advertising the next developmental English plan and work with Student Services to help implement these changes. See also the November Meeting Minutes to see what other considerations we need to make for the ALP.

Members of this group include Meridith Nelson, Darwin Pagnac, Beth Baker-Brodersen, Lynn LaGrone, and Shannon McGregor.

- **Department-Wide Writing Diagnostic Pilot (2 years):** We have discussed the ideas of creating rotating prompts for placement purposes at a couple of meetings, and we have a list of potential prompts to be revised (copied below). The initial plan is to administer a diagnostic essay on day one of all sections of ENG 060, ENG 061, the ALP course, ENG 104, and ENG 105 courses to evaluate whether students are writing at the correct level. By the second class meeting, instructors will prepare a list of students who should stay and who should be moved into another class. We would need to plan for Navigators to help students register for the correct classes and take them physically to the next class, ensuring that no students are lost in the mix. This group can also explore the online essay option, where students would write the essay in Blackboard and faculty score it prior to the term as much as possible or on day one of the course. This group would be in charge of creating the diagnostics, considering the logistics on each campus, creating the communications to Student Services, faculty (full-time, adjunct, and concurrent enrollment), norming faculty and creating the rubric/guidelines for evaluation, and work with faculty to ensure the prompt is distributed to all.

  Members of this group include Amanda Rodenborn, Dan Nelson, Alan Hutchison, Rose Toubes, Beth Baker-Brodersen, Lynn LaGrone, and Shannon McGregor

If you want to be a part of the small groups, please email Lynn or Shannon. We will offer the small group meeting dates as we set them if you want to attend.

**More Resources from the Meeting:**


**Next Small Group Meetings, TBA**

**Next Large Group Meetings:**
- Wednesday, March 30, Ankeny 02-07, 3:00 p.m.—We will discuss the progress from each group.
- Wednesday, April 27, Ankeny 02-07, 3:00 p.m.—We will discuss progress from each group, and we will vote for the ALP courses by this meeting so that we can present them in June to the Department and move forward with Curriculum changes.
Writing Exam Scores for Curriculum Commission:

- ENG 060: COMPASS, 01-37; ACT Score, 01-13; ACCUPLACER, 29-65; ASSET, 0-37; SAT, 200-290—Need to add WRITEPLACER __
- ENG 061: COMPASS, 38-69; ACT Score, 14-18; ACCUPLACER, 66-90; ASSET, 38-43; SAT, 290-360—Need to add WRITEPLACER __
- COM 703: COMPASS, 42-99; ACT Score, 14 or above; ACCUPLACER, 66-120; ASSET, 44-54; SAT, 340-560—Need to add WRITEPLACER __
- ENG 104: No prerequisites—Need to add WRITEPLACER __
- ENG 105: C or better in ENG 061; COMPASS, 70-99; ACT Score, 19 or above; ACCUPLACER, 91-120; ASSET, 44-54; SAT, 360-560—Need to add WRITEPLACER __

Course Competency Prerequisite Phrasing:

- ENG 060: Minimum English placement score
- ENG 061: Minimum English placement score or C or better in ENG 060
- ENG 104: Minimum English placement score or C or better in ENG 061
- ENG 105: Minimum English placement score or C or better in ENG 061 or ENG 104
- ENG 106: C or better in ENG 105

Initial Writing Placement Prompts: Starting place for small group based on November discussions

Department-Wide Writing Diagnostic Pilot: 50 min. placement/diagnostic paragraph/essay pilot that DMACC instructors will score and pilot Fall 2016?

Prompts: INSTRUCTIONS with PARAMETERS/EXPECTATIONS, introduction, body, conclusion…thesis take time…at the next class meeting, we will discuss your results, and if you need to switch to another course or section, we will have a Navigator on hand to help you transition.

1. In a 1-2 page essay, explain how your High School English classes helped prepare you for college level writing.
2. Type a 1-2 page essay describing your expectations concerning college level writing. Do you feel prepared for college level writing, or not? Explain.
3. Type a 1-2 page essay describing your high school writing experiences outside of your English classes. Do you feel they were helpful in preparing you for college level writing, or not? Explain.
4. Type a 1-2 page essay describing your expectations concerning writing in college classes other than English. Will there be a lot of writing required in the major you are considering, or not? Explain.
5. Type a 1-2 page essay describing why you think a cell phone ban in the classroom is a wise or unwise decision.

6. Type a 1-2 page essay describing why you think a Laptop ban in the classroom is a wise or unwise decision.

7. Type a 1-2 page essay describing why nice people do/do not finish last.

8. In a 1-2 page typed essay, explain what you feel are the differences between the expectations of the courses you would take at DMACC versus the same courses at Iowa State University. Are there differences? What are they? Explain.

9. Type a 1-2 page essay describing your most important writing assignment in High School and explain why it was the most important.

10. Type a 1-2 page essay explaining the college majors you are considering. Have you chosen one major, or are you still considering your options? Which one looks the most promising and why? Explain.

11. In a 1-2 page essay, describe your degree and career goals. What career do you want, and what degrees do you need to earn to achieve those goals? What is the time frame for you to finish your degrees? What barriers do you face in achieving the career goal?

12. Type a 1-2 page essay explaining what you feel DMACC English faculty will consider most important when scoring your writing for this placement exam and why.

13. In a 1-2 page essay, explain why your writing should be considered college level or not. Explain.

14. Should students be required to complete volunteer hours (e.g., help in a soup kitchen, collect donations for community groups, clean up a city park, etc.) as a graduation requirement for college? Write a one to two-page essay explaining why or why not.

15. Describe your most significant educational experience. Write a one to two-page essay explaining why or why not.