

Title III Developmental Education Coordinating Committee
Writing Group

Minutes from the February 23, 2005 Meeting

The first item of discussion was concerning the use of the COMPASS Diagnostic Test for pre and post testing in the developmental writing classes taught by members of the DECC. The committee members were favorable toward the use of these tests, although there were several questions:

- Would the post-test grade be used as part of the final course grade?
- How do the test scores equate with the 100 point grading scale?
- How would we deal with students who did not take the pre or the post test?
- Which computer lab would we use?
- Could we obtain aggregate scores as well as individual scores, so the Instructor could focus on class weaknesses?
- When would the students know their scores?
- What is the cost?
- Who is responsible to order the tests?
- How would we handle the untimed aspect of the test?

Marcella will check with Sherry Hewell and the testing company to find out the answers.

The CCSSE question selection for instructional evaluation has been put on hold until we clarify that situation.

The next item of discussion was concerning the \$15,000 tutoring budget in Title III which should be available for the 2005-2006 academic year. It is important that this funding be used for tutoring connected closely with the DECC course revisions. The money would probably be divided among the three areas—reading, writing, and math.

Following this discussion, we considered the course competencies which we had been using for ENC 90 and ENC 91 which we assumed were the official KCTCS competencies. Only recently did we discover that official KCTCS competencies are either non-existent or difficult to find—the ones we are using are most likely the UK competencies. Mary Werner is going to search for those.

Mary also brought additional sample copies of textbooks for examination as we search for a new textbook. However, most of us favor the *Writing Talk* textbook.

We then worked on a definition for “critical thinking” which is an important end result of our course revisions. We arrived at the following characteristics of critical thinking as we see it in relation to these specific courses:

- Looking at an issue and seeing/considering many different perspectives

Gathering information/sorting out what is needed for a particular assignment

Deciding on a main idea/topic for a piece of writing

Looking at the various parts of a piece of writing

Presenting information in logical order

Drawing conclusions

Applying writing modes (method of thinking) to real life situations

Creating and altering conceptual schemata (Valencia)

Following a set of directions

We discussed the possibility of meeting for an extended time in the near future in order to focus on plans for the course revisions, the end-of-semester workshop, the Western Regional Faculty Workshop, etc. This has been arranged for March 18 from 8:00 to 12:00.

A tentative date for the Developmental Educators Workshop is May 9 or 10.

Greg Jewell agreed to direct the next DECC Writing Group meeting on March 2. The group will be considering the course competencies (official ones, if they have been located) in relation to specific activities designed to meet those competencies.