

**Minutes of the Curriculum Committee  
Subcommittee on Course Evaluation**

The committee convened in Colston Hall Room 347 on Tuesday, February 23, 1999, at 2:10 p.m.

Members Present: Professors D. Gonsher, M. Kanuck, J. Ryan,  
M. Wenzel (chair)

Guests: Department of Education, Reading & ESL  
Professors Gear, Irby, Cukras and Shenkman

- A. Minutes of the meeting of February 2, 1999 were approved as presented.
- B. Representatives from the department first addressed questions asked concerning Reading remediation courses. The department indicated that there was no planned pattern of assigning part-time instructors to the most basic level of courses.
  1. **Concerning RDL 05:**  
This course is being phased out as lower level ESL students go into LIPC.
  2. **Concerning the relationship of RDL instruction to the CRAT:**  
Course instruction includes the skills necessary to pass the DTLS (CRAT) but goes beyond, into study skills. The department noted that the DTLS, based strictly on comprehension, only tests part of the skills set of reading. It is valid for placement but must be supplemented by the skills test used for the exit criteria of RDL 02. All RDL courses have rationales and objectives which include reading comprehension, study skills, vocabulary, organizational ability, and critical thinking. All the skills are integrated and new syllabi are under preparation to enhance uniformity of instruction. In the past, a limited number of texts were identified as acceptable for use in teaching the course, but in future there will be a choice of only one of two texts per course. The syllabi for RDL 01 and RDL 02 provide a sequence of integrated skills which are constantly reviewed and reinforced as students progress. The learning objectives in the syllabus are currently being updated as a new syllabus is created.
  3. **Concerning exit criteria for these courses and grading policy:**  
All students take the skills test. There is a clear guide as to how to mark each question. There is a wide range of grades from section to section primarily because so many adjuncts teach the course. "It is difficult to control adjuncts," but with the mastery test there is a way to check on adjuncts' performance. Grades are determined by a combination of the DTLS scale score and grades on the mastery exam. Seventy per cent (70%) for a passing grade with high DTLS, 75% if DTLS is low. Grades are also based on quizzes, mid-term exams, class participation, and independent projects. Success rate in RDL has been improved (and could be further improved) by ten-day intersession workshops for students who fail the course but are close to passing.



**4. The grading policy for RDL:**

First failure equals R; second failure in the same course equals F. The sequence of instruction might be shortened by building bridges between non-credit and credit courses so that skills in RDL are reinforced in subsequent credit courses. Lastly, the department does not track passing the CRAT but affords students opportunities to retake that test each semester.

**C. Concerning ESL:**

ESL instruction emphasizes both oral and written skills—a holistic approach—but principally focuses on writing which is key to passing the course, the mid-term, and final. Instructors do not read their own students' final exam. The apparent poor rate of progress in ESL is accounted for by the difficulties of the task. "Progress to English 11 was never the aim of the ESL sequence." The apparent gap may be bridged by a proposed new ESL course which would lead to English 11. In addition, there is a proposal to combine ESL 02 and 11 for students who are on a "higher level." ESL instructors need a more sophisticated assessment tool than the CWAT (the chief placement tool). The rate of progress for ESL may be accelerated for some by the use of more sophisticated assessment and frequent testing. The department offerings in ESL are changing because of CLIP. There is now virtually no ESL 01 or RDL 05 being offered. The proposed new sequence for ESL will be ESL 02, ESL 11 (non-credit), and a new ESL 12 (credit). The latter course is intended to replace English 01 and 02 for those students. Exit from ESL 12 will be the ENG 02 exam.

**D. Concerning ESL instruction in general:**

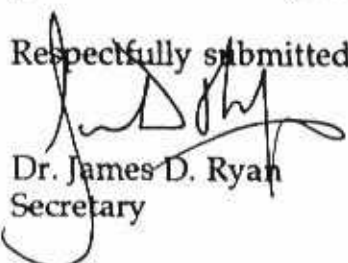
Yes, there are objectives for each course assessed by a wholistic exam. The courses have no syllabus and do not have required texts, but there are recommended books for reading and students are required to keep a journal. There are also grammar books. There is a departmental holistic exam at exit for every ESL course. Grades in each course are determined by a combination of factors: passage of the final exam, in-class essays, in-class quizzes, and class work. A grade of R for the first failure; a grade of F for the second failure in the same course.

**E. Concerning progress through CLIP:**

CLIP generally moves students who succeed into ESL 11. Progress through ESL can be enhanced by intersession workshops for borderline failures.

**F. After a period of further questioning the committee adjourned at 4:15 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

  
Dr. James D. Ryan  
Secretary