

**Tapiero-Kight Self-Assessment**  
**Spring 2014**  
**Kapiolani Community College**

**1. What strategies, methods, materials, and/or assignments did you employ to create a positive learning environment and to assist students in achieving the course competencies? How well did your students attain these competencies? How do you know?**

ESOL courses are intensive, which I really enjoy because they require a lot of contact hours. Longer class periods definitely allow us to focus on specific knowledge or skill acquisition. Every semester I use a series of basic assignments (papers and presentations) and I try to supplement them with other more creative projects in order to keep the students interested and motivated.

For example, I use a writing cycle in order to improve my students' writing skills. A writing cycle is a fairly simple concept: the students go through a series of 3 drafts and revisions about a topic; the cycle ends in a writing test. The writing test consists in having the students revise their first draft on their own based on grammar. Although a writing cycle requires a lot of work (each draft is carefully edited by the instructor) it is a very positive learning experience. It allows me to find similar difficulties among students and address them in explicit grammar/content instruction lessons. It also allows the students to address their own mistakes and recognize their own error patterns, which is a big step towards improvement because it makes them less likely to make the same mistakes as often.

At the end of the semester, the students are given 2 final writing assignments: a take-home paper and an in-class essay. These two papers only get one draft and therefore should show the improvement of the students. Throughout the semester, I also keep track of the students' accuracy and fluency (how many mistakes they make for each paper, and how much they write). At the end of the semester I am able to do a comprehensive semester analysis and assess their progress based on my semester records but also their finals writing assignments. So far, the writing cycle has proven successful when applied to all the papers throughout the semester – whether they are formal papers or chapter reflections.

More creative, and yet pedagogical, projects are usually the presentations that the students have to perform throughout the semester. The creativity resides in their interpretation of the topics as well as the media they choose to perform. The presentations aim at improving their speaking skills but also their group work skills and communication skills. For each presentation assignments, the students are divided into groups, in which they have to prepare. Their grades are individual, however, and based on a wide variety of criteria (from eye contact, to content and delivery, just to name a few). All the presentations are evaluated on the same criteria in order to let the students target the areas that need to be improved every time. The final presentation is the only different one. It is still evaluated on the same criteria, but the students have to present alone, applying all the skills they have learned throughout the semester. This last presentation is usually their best performance as they have gradually learned what to improve and how to do it from the feedback they received throughout the term.

**2. What do your peer evaluation and the data from [ecafé](#) tell you about your teaching? What changes would you like to see your students take away from your classes?**

My evaluations usually mention a sense of organization and clarity. I put a lot of effort into organizing my classes, the tasks and the curriculum in a logical and accessible manner for the students. I try to establish working routines from the beginning of the semester in order to create a comfortable environment from the students.

On a daily basis, my classes proceed in a similar way, starting with attendance, followed by a brief recap of the previous class and the topic, and then going into the task at hand for the day. The familiarity and repetition allows the students to really focus on their learning, rather than possibly be confused by proceedings.

I am hoping that organization is something that my students can recognize as a valuable tool, and I hope that they can try to apply it outside of the class. I believe that it is a great life skill but also very important for college.

**3. What changes, if any, would you like to make to improve the course for you and your students should you be assigned the course again?**

I would like to try to introduce more explicit writing skills development. The course focuses on argumentation and academic writing, which is the style the students need to acquire and develop. However, because there are different styles of academic writing, it would be a good idea to include them in the curriculum. As of now, the students have to write between 4-5 papers of about 4-5 pages each. I think it would be a good idea to make each assignment in a different style, for example: 2 research papers, 1 descriptive paper, 1 argumentation paper, and 1 reflection.

**4. If you submitted a self-assessment the previous year, how have you implemented any improvements you, your peer evaluator, or your department chair suggested?**

In my last self-assessment I said that I would try to re-enforce my open door policy with the students and make myself more available. I think I have somewhat succeeded overall. I have made more efforts in responding to emails and being in my office during office hours. I have also implemented an appointment schedule, and students can request an appointment any day of the week to meet with me and discuss anything they would like to talk about.

Another point that I mentioned in my last self-assessment was to make the materials and contents of the courses more accessible to students. Although this aspect of teaching constantly evolves, I have been actively preparing for my classes and I am always on the look-out for new materials that I can use in class that can bring the topic of the moment into context, or just help the students understand better.

In my peer-evaluation last semester, my colleague mentioned that most of the lesson she observed was teacher-fronted. Since then I have made extra efforts to include student-led activities and class sessions. For example, at the end of every chapter, the students are divided into groups and each group has to provide a recap of their section to the rest of the class. This allows everyone to review, but it also allows me to assess how deeply the students have understood the topic. At the same time, it provides the students with opportunities to be in charge and express themselves. I also do the same for vocabulary and grammar lessons. I provide guidance and feedback, but the biggest part of certain lessons are student-fronted.

**5. Which General Education Student Learning Outcome does your course/courses meet and at what level? (see attached General Education Student Learning Outcomes) *Choose one GSLO that your course meets and provide the level next to the outcome. List one or two assignments that speak specifically to the outcome that you have chosen.***

**1-2 Communication** – Ethically compose and convey creative and critical perspectives to an intended audience using visual, oral, written, social, and other forms of communication.

At the end of the semester, my advanced students have to put together an individual presentation, in which they reflect on the semester. They then have to present in front of their classmates on the last day of class. Following are the basic guidelines:

Reflection on the semester topic:

- What did you know about the topic before this semester?
- Has your opinion about the topic changed throughout the semester?
- What was your favorite mini-topic? Why?
- What was your least favorite mini-topic? Why?

Reflection on your experience:

- What was your favorite activity this semester? Why?
- What was your least favorite activity this semester? Why?
- Talk about your learning opportunities:
  - Input? Output? Feedback? Enough? Too much?
- Reflect on your improvement:
  - Speaking
  - Listening
  - Reading
  - Writing

There are only 3 constraints for this project: 1) it must be an individual presentation, 2) the students must use a visual aid, 3) the presentation has to

last 6-7 minutes.

With such a broad topic, and so little constraints, the students have a lot of possibilities for creativity. They are given a lot of time (about 2 weeks) to prepare for this presentation, and they are also given time in class to practice and get feedback from their peers and from the instructor.

The opportunity for creativity and feedback allows the students to really focus on their audience and think about the information they want to convey. They are able to make their presentation meaningful and focused at the same time. From the teacher's perspective, allowing students to provide their own opinions is a good way to gain insights on their opinions about the course, and on the knowledge they have gained throughout the semester. From the students' perspective, this project allows them to express themselves and demonstrate the skills they have acquired throughout the semester.

At the end of the presentation, the students in the audience can ask questions or comment on the presentation, which usually gives way to some classroom discussion. If there are no questions from the audience, the presenter can also bring up an idea or topic to start a quick classroom discussion, led by the presenter.

This is one of my favorite activities because I get to admire how much the students have learned all semester. I can see how their skills have improved along with their confidence. It is truly rewarding.