Project Report: Norming for New Writing Placement Rubric

To: CIEP Director
From: Lauren Rein, Academic Support Specialist
Date: Oct. 27, 2014

Background: Over the Fall 1, 2014 term, Tom Reidmiller worked with Jeannie Kleinhaus and Lucas Plouff to develop a new writing placement rubric that was shorter than the old rubric and aligned to new 2013 writing SLOs. I have been working with Sara Penning and Carol Floyd to prepare online writing norming training for CIEP staff through eLearning.

Preparation: During October 2014, I worked with Tom Reidmiller to edit the rubric and clarify items. I reviewed old writing placement samples to select appropriate student composition samples to give to staff during norming. In preparation for norming, I sent three samples and the new writing placement rubric to the abovementioned staff members to review and prepare for norming. I met with Tom, Lucas, Jeannie, and Sara on Oct. 17 to review the pre-selected samples and discuss our rating and placement using the new rubrics.

Norming, Oct. 20: CIEP instructional staff met at 8:00am before Fall 2 placement. All staff was given copies of the 3 samples and the old rubrics. Staff members were arranged into groups with Tom, Sara, Lucas and Jeannie leading. Each group read the sample and rated it on the rubric. After approximately 15 minutes, the composition sample was discussed with all staff. This was applied to all three sample compositions. The full 90 minutes was required for this.

During Placement: The new rubric was piloted on newly written student compositions. Each composition was placed using the old rubric by 2-3 experienced staff and using established placement protocols. Then the compositions were placed using the new rubrics to pilot its use with new staff.

Follow-up: Tom prepared a Socractive survey which remained open on Oct. 20 to gather comments and feedback on the new rubric. I compiled the results and sent them out in a memo on Oct. 22.

Future Work: More descriptors should be added to the rubric to clarify items. General instructions should be added as well. These can all be written on the back page of the rubric. Cut scores between levels should also be established.

The new writing rubrics that were piloted should be analyzed for appropriate use and fit, comparing old rubrics and new and ensuring these match. Any necessary revisions should be made.

Additionally, the online norming training needs to be put up on eLearning.