Report on CIEP Assessment Project – Summer and Fall, 2014
To: CIEP Director
From: Lauren Rein, Academic Support Specialist
Date: October 30, 2014

I. Initial Research and Meetings
   A. Textbook Research
      I have been reading a large amount of theoretical and teacher-training textbooks on assessment practices and analysis. The most beneficial texts include N. Carr’s Developing and Analyzing Language Tests (2011), Bachman and Palmer’s Language Testing in Practice (1996), and Fulcher and Davidson’s Language Testing and Assessment (2007). I’ve incorporated what I’ve read from these resources into feedback to the reading committee as they write exams, for myself as I write the CIEP Assessment Guidelines, and making decisions on analyzing pass/fail data.

   B. CIEP Assessment Survey
      A survey was sent to current and incoming CIEP instructors using Google Docs during summer 2014. The questions focused on assessment theory and practice in CIEP. I compiled and analyzed responses. A report was sent out on August 29, 2014. Through the survey, I found there is a lack of common understanding of what assessment means; I also found a desire for guidance on that issue as well as variety of useful comments that I included in the report.

   C. Faculty Meetings
      i. Susan Hill; Sept. 4, 2014
         Mike Williams and I met with Susan Hill, director of Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at UNI. We learned that by having SLOs and standardized exams, we have already “won half the battle” in assessments. I sent out meeting minutes of Sept. 17.

      ii. Donna Vinton; Sept. 10, 2014
         Carolina Coronado, Mike Williams and I met with Donna Vinton, director of Academic Assessment at UNI. Highlights from this meeting include suggestions on making a schedule or calendar to regularly evaluate assessments. I sent out meeting minutes on Sept. 18.

   D. Statistical Program Assistance
      I have been getting excellent help on using the SPSS data analysis program from Mark Jacobson in the Mathematics Department.

II. Meeting with Reading Committee
   I met with the Reading Curriculum Committee (Mike Williams, Jaime Lyons, and Emily Luttrell-Narigon) on September 5, 2014 to share what I have been learning about assessments in order to give them helpful ideas as they write new standardized exams. I shared comments related to the reading curriculum from the CIEP Assessment Survey that was sent out in the summer. During the meeting, we brainstormed how the new exams could answer the concerns brought up in comments, follow a structured test design plan, and meet CEA Accreditation Guidelines.
III. Data Analysis
A. Graduation and Dismissal Rates Analysis
On October 20, I completed a report on “Statistical Analysis of Graduate and Dismissal Rates in CIEP,” which was sent out to the CIEP director, academic coordinator, and OIP director. It analyzed CIEP graduation and dismissal data for Fall 1 2010 to Summer 2014. General findings include the fact that most students place in either Bridge or Level 4. Additionally, after a binary logistic regression, it was determined that students who were initially placed in bridge only had 31% probability of CIEP graduation. The probability of graduation at the next level, 2, shows a large increased probability of 49-61%, indicated a lack of solid language preparation in Bridge. The subsequent levels show an increased probability, especially to level 5-7, when there is a high probability in the 80-98% range.

B. Forthcoming Analysis
With the help of the student worker De’Sean Taylor, I will complete analysis of student grades and success or failure to analyze in what skills and at what levels students are passing or failing. I will also compare across terms and between native countries.

C. Writing Analysis Procedures
I am in the process of writing a document on the procedure of completing pass/fail and student success analysis. Currently, De’Sean is working on completing coding formulas, and after he has finalized this task, he will send me copies of the formulas so I can include these in the procedure document.

IV. Writing Assessment Guidelines
Currently, I am writing a document for current and future CIEP instructional staff about our assessment philosophy and guidelines on testing. This will be a separate document from the CIEP Staff Handbook, though the handbook will contain information that corresponds with these guidelines.

V. University of Arizona Online Course “Classroom-based Assessment”
Through CIEP sponsorship, I’ve enrolled in a 30-hour online course through the University of Arizona, given by the Assessment Coordinator of the IEP there. The other participants are practicing ESL/EFL teachers from various countries. Since the start on October 25, I’ve been given assigned readings and discussion tasks. So far, the readings have benefited me in further detailing the CIEP Assessment Guidelines and revising my own teacher-created assessments.

VI. Norming (Side Projects)
A. In addition to this assessment project, I am coordinating the creating of an online norming training of writing placement on eLearning. Working with Sara Penning and Carol Floyd, we have selected 10 placement compositions and analyzed each for features that place them at each level. We have written scripts to be spoken aloud and displayed on-screen.

B. I took lead of two other minor projects this term. I lead a norming session on the newly-created writing placement rubric on Oct. 20. Beforehand, I pre-selected samples to use for norming, met with Tom Reidmiller to edit the new rubric, and met with members of the rubric team to prepare to help instructional staff with norming.
VII. Future Plans

A. CIEP staff should agree on a guiding philosophy in regards to reasons for assessments.

B. We are currently waiting on the Registrar’s Office to finish adding program codes to former CIEP students in order to track success or non-success of our students in academic classes.

C. Working with the CIEP director and academic coordinator, we should formalize an assessment plan or schedule to assess reliability and validity on exams and to revise as needed. Also, there needs to be a regular schedule for analyzing pass/fail data and overall student performance.

D. A future CIEP workshop to share effective classroom technology would likely be of interest to many staff members.