

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO
DEPARTMENT OF RHETORIC AND LANGUAGE
ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW
2012-2013

In 2009, changes and moves based on a program review of the then Department of Communication Studies resulted in the formation of a new department. The Department of Rhetoric and Language is composed of three areas—ESL, composition, and public speaking, each with an area director who oversees curriculum and faculty in that area. There was some discussion about whether we could truly be called a department, since we had no major. However, given the service nature of our courses, the sheer size of the department (currently 18 full-time and 70 - 80 part-time faculty, plus two full-time faculty from Communication Studies who teach at least one class per semester in our department), and our intent to eventually develop a major (Rhetoric and Literacy) and one or more minors (Rhetoric, Linguistics), the Dean felt that departmental status was appropriate. The focus of the 2008-2009 review was on Communication, since it had both a major and a minor. Given the tremendous growth in the current programs, especially ESL, our department and the administration both felt that it was time for a review of the new department structure and programs. We look forward to this review with a great deal of anticipation and the hope that it will help our department chart a meaningful and sustainable course for the future.

I. Mission

The mission of the Department of Rhetoric and Language involves three components: first, to assure that students develop the skills in written and oral communication that will allow them to be successful in academic, civic, and professional contexts; second, to promote understanding of and proficiency in rhetoric and literacy; and third, to offer a variety of classes and co-curricular activities that promote excellence in writing and speaking, and their corollaries: reading, listening, and responding.

Our focus on excellence in written and oral communication situates our mission centrally within the University's Jesuit Catholic tradition, of which *eloquentia perfecta* is a foundational element. The Department houses nearly every class that meets two Core areas--A1: Oral Communication and A2: Written Communication. Between those two outcomes and the ESL program, we have contact with almost every new and transfer student at USF, usually within their first or second semester here. Our mission is primarily one of service, then: students who complete coursework in our program should be prepared for success speaking and writing in other courses, and they should have a basic understanding of norms and conventions of academic communication and research to facilitate their work in other core classes and upper-division classes. Academic success is our prime goal, but we also expect students in our classes to learn how to read rhetorical situations, to develop the skills to grasp complex social and cultural discourses, and contribute to the ongoing conversations that constitute our civic lives. Through encouraging this kind of studied awareness, we contribute to the university's strategic priorities, assuring that our students have the analytical foundation for understanding how they may serve as "men and women for others," how they may gain insight into the "fundamental questions of purpose and

meaning in a global context" and how they may work to promote justice
<https://www.usfca.edu/about/values/>.

Our efforts to accomplish this are associated with our emphasis on rhetoric and literacy. Literacy itself relates to a basic ability to participate in the conversations that make our world, including foremost the ability to operate competently within a linguistic community. But literacy also means to have the skills to "read" those world-making conversations in all their complexity. Rhetoric builds on this: at its core, it can be thought of as skillful argument and persuasion, as the power to determine what will be effective in a given situation. However, we see rhetoric also and simultaneously as an understanding of all the processes we use to make and interpret meanings socially. Promoting rhetoric means to assert the "world-making" and relational functions of communication, and it means to reflect on the ethics of communication, which also squarely situates our mission within the university's mission. The USF mission and values call on us to understand the moral dimension of every significant human choice, and its strategic priorities call on us to always reflect, to "understand . . . the ethics of what is done." By promoting a rhetorical understanding of written and oral communication, we encourage analysis and reflection on how communication may articulate a humane and just world. It enables us to see how the "right reasoning" of *eloquentia perfecta* contributes to a humane and just world, and it enables us to critique the ways that communication based on self-interest and power over others can diminish a humane and just world.

In our courses, then, we teach excellence in speaking and writing through learning outcomes that emphasize rhetoric and argumentation and literacy. We approach communication dialectically, exploring the connections between writing and speaking, between oracy and literacy, between writing and reading, speaking and listening. Beyond the classroom, we enact our mission through events and activities that promote these aspects of our mission, including in our showcase events--the department's selective journal of student writing, *Writing for the Real World*, and our annual celebration of student speaking, The Speaker's Showcase. Further, we enact it through our support services for excellence in literacy and rhetoric--The Conversation Partners program, The Writing Center, The Speaking Center.

II. Department History

The Department of Rhetoric and Language is now three years old and has not previously been reviewed as a department. There is a long, and somewhat convoluted, history of how we came to be a department that is perhaps best explained by looking at the history of each of our three areas—English as a Second Language, Composition, and Public Speaking.

English as a Second Language

The University of San Francisco has a long history of educating students from around the world, and over the years, international students have contributed much to the University. The 1970s and 1980s were decades of growth in the number of international students in the United States, and like other U.S. universities, the University of San Francisco sought ways to better serve these students, prepare them for academic work in an English medium environment, and integrate them into the academic community. Throughout its history, the basic goals and mission of the ESL program have remained constant. The ESL program is focused on developing English academic literacy and oracy skills, on academic preparation for U.S. universities, introduction to

U.S. culture and life, and a focus on developing an understanding and appreciation for other peoples and cultures.

Beginnings

In the early 1970s, the University of San Francisco decided to examine how they could best serve the international student population, so a group of professionals, through a program offered by the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors (NAFSA) and the Association of International Educators, came for a site visit and offered advice. One suggestion from the NAFSA consultants was that USF establish an intensive English program. USF asked Professor Shigeo Imamura, professor of English and the director of the English Language Center at Michigan State University and one of the NAFSA consultants who visited USF, to come to USF to do just that. Professor Imamura took a leave of absence from MSU and came to USF to found the *English Language Center (ELC)*, as it was named then. He stayed for two years. The director of the English Language Center reported directly to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The first year, 1974-1975, there were six full-time faculty members with lecturer contracts and numerous adjunct faculty. Enrollment was good, with slightly over 100 in the fall semester and over 160 in the spring. For the 1975-1976 academic year, Professor Imamura successfully negotiated an increase in the number of full-time faculty to eight and a change in the full-time positions to tenure-track. Students were both non-matriculated, those who studied English 20 – 25 hours a week, and matriculated students, who were admitted to degree programs and took one or two ESL courses in addition to other USF courses. The ESL courses did not carry credit. A score of 520 or higher on the pbt TOEFL test was required for full admission to a degree program.

The 1970s and early 1980s

The late 1970s and early 1980s were tumultuous years for ESL faculty and the University as a whole. This was especially true in the ESL program, with faculty workload and conditions often an area of contention. The fluctuating enrollments also made the program vulnerable to reorganization, and changes. At times, the Administration held up the threat of closing the program. In summer 1976, after Professor Imamura left, several major changes were implemented in the English Language Center: a) two full-time instructors and six adjunct faculty were dismissed with no reasons given; b) the tenure-track faculty positions were eliminated and 11 full-time faculty were given the title of ESL specialists with lower pay than the previous years, c) the name of the program was changed to the *World English Center (WEC)*.

In 1977, the USF Faculty Association, which had been established in fall 1975, working with the ESL faculty, filed a grievance, charging that the Administration had unilaterally eliminated eight bargaining unit positions and that ESL specialists were, in fact, doing the same work in 1976-1977 that they had done as tenure-track faculty the previous year. The Administration agreed to settle this grievance. As a settlement, in spring 1978, seven tenure-track positions were reinstated, including two of the fired full-time faculty. Shortly after the settlement in spring 1978, six full-time faculty were given increased workloads in violation of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. All six filed grievances; four faculty were terminated at the end of the semester. The grievances regarding workload were upheld by an arbitrator in a February 1980 ruling, and faculty received back pay for working an overload. The arbitrator's ruling affirmed

that ESL faculty were to have the same teaching load/work load as other faculty under the USFFA Collective Bargaining Agreement.

With the help of the USFFA and after filing grievances, two tenure-track faculty (Hafernik and Vandrick) were awarded tenure and promotion. A third faculty member (Carleton) was granted tenure and promotion.

The World English Center moved to a program in the College of Arts and Sciences, with the director being appointed by and reporting directly to the Dean.

During these years, enrollment continued to increase with enrollments consistently well over 200, climbing to a high of 292 in 1980 and 1981. The curriculum was evaluated and improvements made throughout this time.

The mid and late 1980s

1983 brought several changes with a new administrative team (Rev. Edward Justen, S. J., Director, and Leila Kellow, Assistant Director) and several new tenure-track faculty.

In December 1984, faculty were informed that the World English Center was being reorganized, and all non-tenured ESL faculty received termination notices because their positions were being eliminated. The three tenured faculty kept their positions.

The name was changed to the *Intensive English Program (IEP)* in fall 1985. From fall 1985–fall 1989, only matriculated students were enrolled in ESL courses. In 1989, the IEP was reorganized so that non-matriculated students as well as matriculated students could enroll. The IEP director reported directly to the Associate Dean and Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences.

From 1985, there was a decrease in enrollment, with fall and spring semester enrollments in the mid to late 1980s under 100 and summer enrollments over 150 from 1988 – 1991, with 227 in summer 1991. This decrease was partly due to the fact that from 1985 - 1989 there were no IEP students in fall and spring semesters.

In 1985 the pbt TOEFL score requirement for full-admission was raised from 520 to 550 due to complaints from faculty and administrators that international students were not prepared for academic work at USF.

The 1990s and early 2000s

In summer 1990, Professor Stanley Nel became Acting Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and subsequently he became Dean. The ESL program reported directly to the dean. In 1991, Dean Nel reorganized the ESL program so that it was in line with other academic units and had a chair who oversaw the academic aspects of the program. The 1991-1992 academic year was one of transition in that there was an academic chair (Hafernik) elected by the full-time faculty and a director (Leila Kellow). In fall 1992, the ESL program became the *Department of English as a Second Language* in the College of Arts and Sciences with a faculty chair. The director's position was eliminated. (Kellow moved to a new position and then left the university after one year.) ESL was its own department from 1992-1998.

In fall 1998, the ESL Department became part of the *Department of Communication Studies*, which included the Communication Division, with a major in Communication Studies, Rhetoric and Composition, and the ESL Program. This configuration was advantageous at the time for several reasons: (1) combining programs that deal with literacy and communication skills together, (2) providing an academic department home for the Rhetoric and Composition Program which previously had been a program under an appointed administrator who reported to the Dean's office (College of Arts and Sciences), (3) providing a more secure academic home for the ESL Program, and (4) providing a critical mass or sufficient number of faculty in Communication Studies after faculty in media studies split off to form a separate department (Department of Media Studies). This configuration was from 1997-2009.

2009 – Present

In 2009 the Department of Communication Studies became a separate department and the Program in Rhetoric and Composition and the ESL Program became the Department of Rhetoric and Language, composed of three areas: Composition, Public Speaking, and ESL. Each area has its own director; the area directors report to the Department Chair.

Composition

The goal of the composition area is to strengthen the written communications skills of our students and to introduce them to the research, argumentation, and critical thinking skills that will be necessary to succeed in both their USF classes and the larger world.

The composition program has its roots in the English Department, and the early curriculum was largely literature-based. In the 1980s and early 1990s, responsibility for the program, then called Expository Writing, moved from the English Department to the Dean of Arts and Sciences. In Fall 1998 the program, still called Expository Writing, was joined, along with the ESL program, to the Communication Studies Department, which served the program well at the time and enabled faculty to accomplish several goals: changing the focus of the program from literature-based, expressivist writing to academic argument and composition; cooperating more closely with Communication and ESL in programs and issues of common interest such as the Speakers' Showcase; developing Core outcomes for each area; developing an integrated composition and public speaking course; and changing the name of our program to Rhetoric and Composition.

The first full-time term faculty member was hired in January of 1999 and two more were hired in Fall of 1999. Until then, all faculty had been part-time.

Since that time, we have developed two new Communication in the Discipline (CID) courses, strengthened ties with both the ESL and composition programs, expanded the Speakers' Showcase, and established a Speaking Center. In addition, each semester at least one or two full-time faculty members teach sections of Public Speaking. Four First-Years seminars in Public Speaking have been developed. Although these are listed as COMS 195 class in the catalog to avoid confusion with RHET 195, the writing seminars, they are run through our department.

A significant step this year includes the first year of an assessment plan for public speaking courses, including the Written and Oral Communication course.

Public Speaking

Prior to 1998 there was a Department of Communication that comprised the Department of Media Studies and the Division of Communication Studies. The Division of Communication Studies was then paired with two non-degree programs (the Expository Writing Program and the Program in English as a Second Language) to form a new Department of Communication Studies.

Initially, the three divisions were brought together with a vision of pedagogical collaboration between the three divisions based on core courses in writing and speaking. The development of the combined writing and speaking core course, Written and Oral Communication (130/131) is an example of such collaboration. However, it soon became the sole province of Rhetoric and Composition.

The required public speaking class, taught exclusively by adjuncts, was largely overlooked in curriculum reform and expansion. Therefore, after the last program review the Dean at that time decided that if the department was to be split, the required public speaking class would be given to the new Department of Rhetoric and Language. It should be noted that the Communication faculty supported this move.

III. Curriculum

Learning Outcomes by Area

Each program area has its own set of Learning Outcomes. These will be discussed more thoroughly in the Student Learning Assurance plan, included in Appendix A. However, it is useful to list them here prior to discussing curriculum:

ESL Learning Outcomes

1. Students will increasingly demonstrate the ability to use language for a wide range of communicative purposes.
2. Students will increasingly demonstrate the ability to use language for these communicative purposes with a wide range of sources.
3. Students will increasingly demonstrate the ability to communicate a wide range of knowledge for a wide range of purposes requiring language that is fluent, clear, and accurate

Composition Learning Outcomes (University Core A2)

1. Critical analysis of academic discourse: Students critically analyze linguistic and rhetorical strategies used in long and complex texts from a variety of genres, subjects, and fields.
2. Integrating multiple academic sources: Students incorporate multiple texts of increasing length and complexity within a unified argumentative essay, addressing connections and differences among them.

3. Academic research: Students develop sophisticated research questions and compose substantial arguments in response to those questions, incorporating extensive independent library research and demonstrating mastery of documentation in MLA and APA modes.
4. Style: Students edit their own prose to achieve a clear and mature writing style in keeping with the conventions of academic and/or professional discourse.
5. Revision: Students develop their own revision strategies for extending and enriching early drafts and for producing polished advanced academic writing.

Public Speaking Learning Outcomes (University Core A1)

Students will:

1. Craft and present well organized, thesis-driven speeches.
2. Present well-reasoned and appropriately supported oral arguments that are responsive to topic, purpose, audience, and occasion.
3. Deliver speeches using an audience-centered, extemporaneous approach.
4. Use rhetorical concepts and principle to evaluate the effectiveness of their own and others' communication in both academic and civic contexts.
5. Use rhetorical concepts and principles to practice ethical and socially responsible public speaking, and to identify and evaluate ethical problems in public address.

Overviews by Area

Both composition and public speaking are required elements of the USF Core Curriculum. The public speaking requirement (Core A1) can be fulfilled by taking Public Speaking, Argumentation and Debate, Public Speaking for the Health or, Presentational Speaking for Business, or a First-Year Seminar designated as a public speaking class. The composition requirement (Core A2) can be fulfilled by taking Written Communication II, one of the WID courses, Academic Writing at USF for transfer students, or a First-Year Seminar designated as a composition class. Two of our courses fulfill both Core A1 and Core A2: Written and Oral Communication and the Martin Baró Living-Learning Community program. There are no prerequisites for the public speaking core courses; composition core courses require at least one semester of composition as a prerequisite.

It is difficult to compare our program to others because of our unique structure and departmental interrelationships. However, we are constantly re-evaluating our courses and curriculum based on participation at local and national conferences, as well as our conversations with colleagues at other institutions. Particularly beneficial is our involvement with the Jesuit Consortium (which is used for comparative purposes on the NSSE) and other programs in the Northern California area with which we dialogue as founding members of the Northern California-Nevada Writing Program Administrators affiliate.

ESL Curriculum

The ESL curriculum is designed to meet the academic language development needs of ESL conditionally-admitted students. International students for whom English is not their first language must meet English language requirements based on standardized test scores (Internet-based TOEFL, Paper-based TOEFL, IELTS) to be admitted to the University. The University determines the scores necessary both for full admission and for conditional admission.

Originally, the ESL courses for degree-seeking students did not carry academic credit. ESL faculty presented several proposals to grant academic credit for ESL courses over the years. The proposal was approved in spring 2000, and since fall 2000, ESL courses for matriculated students have carried elective academic credit. The number of ESL credits that can be used for graduation is determined by each college and is typically 8 units. USF students need 128 units to graduate. ESL credits not counted as electives in the 128 still appear on students' transcripts and are used in GPA calculations. The foreign language requirement, which some majors have, is waived for all international students.

The ESL Program's main distinguishing characteristics are its clear academic focus, its rigor, its integration of treatment of social and cultural issues, and its integration with the rest of the department and the wider College and University. Unlike at many colleges and universities, the ESL program and the faculty are well integrated into the larger workings of the university. We have the ear of the College of Arts and Sciences Dean and Associate Dean; both full-time and part-time faculty have the same pay, benefits, and working conditions as other university faculty; department faculty participate in many college-wide and university-wide governing bodies, committees and activities.

Composition Curriculum

What makes our program's approach to the standard two-semester sequence (Written Communication I/Written Communication II) different from many other programs is the fact that, because there is a required literature Core offered by the English Department, we do not teach literature. We emphasize the rhetorical foundations of our discipline and focus on reading and writing academic non-fiction. Many programs differentiate the first semester course from the second in large part by asking students to write about non-fiction in the first semester, and literary texts in the second. At USF, students read and write about public arguments during the first semester, and then more abstract, intellectually sophisticated issues during the second semester.

Another facet of our program that is different from many others nationwide is our combined speaking and writing course, Written and Oral Communication. Students whose scores are above average¹ are eligible for this two semester course that satisfies both the composition and the public speaking requirements.

Our program has another option for the most advanced first-year students, those scoring in the top 5% or so on the SAT. For those particular students, there is the option to complete the Core

¹ The grid showing cutoff scores for all classes is in appendix D2.

writing requirement in one semester rather than in two, by taking a First-Year Seminar. The seminars are taught by both full time and well established part time faculty. These courses are limited to 16 students, provide the instructor with a stipend of \$50.00 per student for field trips into the city, and are focused on a specific topic. Recent examples include Sidewalk Rhetoric, Nature's Rhetoric, Bohemia/Counter/Subculture, Writing about Human Rights, and Language and Power.

Students who successfully complete Written Communication I may choose to take a WID course in lieu of Written Communication II, such as Writing in Psychology, in order to fulfill the composition core. WID courses are offered - some every semester, others when enrollment dictates - in Performing Arts, Psychology, Media Studies, Sciences, Politics, International Studies, Advertising, Sociology, and Business.

Another feature of our program is a required writing course for transfer students who have had one or more writing courses at their transferring institutions. Because the quality and content of these courses vary dramatically and because the admissions office does not require submissions of test scores for these students we instituted RHET 250, Academic Writing at USF, as the standard transfer course, but transfer students may instead take a WID course (see above). Or, transfer students may opt for RHET 295 (Transfer Student Seminar), analogous to first-year seminars, but open only to transfer students. Recent transfer seminars include Race/Ethnicity/Popular Culture, Immigration Rhetoric, and Speaking Between the Lines.

Public Speaking Curriculum

Public Speaking: The public speaking program is distinguished by its organization around a rhetorical approach and the USF Mission. Though our courses emphasize public speaking as a communicative practice, we do so with an emphasis on rhetorical process of invention, development, and presentation. We also emphasize rhetorical concepts and principles in the process of teaching students how to measure the effectiveness and ethics of their own and others' communication. The rhetorical/ethical approach syncs with elements of the USF core values statement, such as understanding the ethical dimension of every human choice.
<https://www.usfca.edu/about/values/>.

We ask students to assess the choices they make when preparing and presenting speeches, thinking about their impact on others. The program's curriculum is also distinguished by its service-focus: we have developed several courses that allow Core A1 credit to be earned within the specific discursive context of diverse academic fields, departments, and learning experiences: for example, we offer public speaking courses in politics and sports for the First-year Seminar Program, and we offer public speaking courses for Business (i.e., RHET 112) and the Health Professions (i.e., RHET 111) that meet core credit.

Enrollment and Growth

The three programs we currently have are robust and rigorous, and serve important goals and populations. University enrollment has grown substantially since the last review; thus our three programs have also grown substantially. Enrollments in the three programs are listed in Appendix D. We have every reason to believe that enrollment will continue to grow, although we cannot predict how much, over the next 5-10 years. This depends on various factors such as

the growing reputation of USF, the state of the public universities nearby and their funding, international trends such as the great increase in students from China, the cap on enrollment negotiated with the neighborhood, and other factors. Admissions decisions are of course made by the university's admissions office; our department does not have any direct influence on such decisions.

Curricular Development

Curricular content is determined as follows. Each of the three areas, after discussion among area full-time faculty, proposes any new classes or changes in existing classes. These proposals are circulated to all full-time department faculty and approved by vote. The Chair signs on to any changes and these are sent to the College Dean's office for approval. Core classes also must be approved by the appropriate Core area committee and by the Provost. Larger changes such as new programs, majors, or minors, also require the approval of the College Curriculum Committee, the College Dean, and the Provost.

Course credit is decided by the department and approved by the Dean's office. Most courses are 4 units, following the university-wide norm, but our only graduate course (ESL Graduate Practicum) is 3 units, and several supplemental courses (such as Pronouncing American English, in the ESL area) are 2 units each (so that students may take the normal 16-unit load and then an extra 2-unit class for the same tuition total).

As we do not so far offer a major or minor, the predominance of our classes are "service courses" (although we strongly believe that they are much more than what the term implies). The highest level of our composition courses also fulfills a core curriculum requirement and thus earns Core curriculum credit; the Public Speaking class does so as well. The First Year Seminars offered by our department also earn core credit, some for the writing or public speaking core (A1 and A2) others for other core requirements. The curricular connections between the various areas and the department as a whole can be seen in the Curriculum Maps, which are included in the Student Learning Assurance in Appendix A.

All required classes are offered every semester. Elective classes such as How English Works or Classical Rhetoric are generally offered one semester each year as interest and enrollment dictate. The sequences of each program are as follows:

- ESL: There are four levels of classes. At each level we offer Academic Reading/Writing, Grammar, and Oral Skills. Supplementary classes such as Pronouncing American English, Vocabulary and Idioms, and Business English are offered at two levels. Students are initially placed into the appropriate level for literacy and oracy courses, and then proceed through the levels before finishing the ESL program. There is an opportunity and process for exceptional students to "skip" a level, by approval of a faculty committee.
- Composition: Almost all composition classes are offered every semester. The core courses in composition include RHET 120, 125, 195, 203, 206, 250, 295, 297, 310, and 320. As is true in many American colleges and universities, USF requires that most students take two semesters of first-year composition; at our institution, most students place into the Written Communication I and Written Communication II sequence (RHET

110 and 120). A smaller percentage of students place into Introduction to Composition (RHET 108), which they must first pass before going on to 110 and then to 120, the course that meets the core. RHET 125 refers to the Martin Baro program, a living-learning community that meets the core requirement for composition and public speaking, as well as for literature, service learning, and cultural diversity. A small percentage of incoming students, those with especially high test scores, place into RHET 195 (the First-Year Seminar). Once they have completed this one-semester course, they have completed the composition core. RHET 250 (Academic Writing at USF) is open only to transfer students who have completed composition at another institution; once they complete 250 with a C- or higher, they have completed their core requirement for composition. Another option is for these same students to take a WID course—either 203, 206, 297, or 310—instead of 250 as a means of fulfilling the core. These same WID courses are taken by students who have successfully completed 110 and who are majoring in psychology, the sciences, sociology, or business, respectively, in order to fulfill the composition core and to satisfy one of their major requirements.

- Public Speaking: To fulfill the public speaking requirement, students simply take one of the following one-semester courses: RHET 103 (Public Speaking), 104 (Argumentation and Debate), 111 (Public Speaking for the Health Professions), or 112 (Presentational Speaking). Once they have successfully completed one of those courses, they have satisfied their public speaking core.

We have enrollment caps for each of our courses; the administration has been supportive of our effort to strictly enforce those caps. Occasionally we may exceed them by one student if there are no other options, but that is rarely done. In fall 2012, for example, out of 180 sections, only 3 were enrolled at one student over the cap. However, we suggest that for some classes these caps are too high, and we would like to work with the administration to lower them.

- ESL: The cap for ESL classes is normally 20 per class, and at the upper levels, most classes are full. (Currently 12 of 36 are over 18.) In an academic literacy oriented program, 15 would be an optimal enrollment. This would permit greater personal attention to students' specific linguistic needs. A proposal for this change was submitted to the Dean's office in November, 2012.
- Composition: Classes are capped as follows: 106 and 108 are capped at 18. 110, 120, 250, and all WID courses are capped at 20. First-year and transfer seminars (RHET 195 and 295, respectively) are capped at 16. The Martin Baro Living-Learning Community (RHET 125/126/127) is capped at 25. While our faculty are grateful not to teach classes with 25, 30, or even 35 students (as is often the situation at other institutions (particularly state universities and community colleges), it is nevertheless the case that in order to teach composition as a process—and to do so effectively—20 students is simply too high a number to garner the optimal results. In the case of both the RHET 110/120 sequence, and the RHET 130/131 course, a better class size would be 18 rather than 20. 18 rather than 20 would also be a better class size for 250 and all the WID courses. In RHET 106 and 108, 15 students would be optimal. Information on comparable class sizes for other Jesuit schools is included in Appendix E3.

- Public Speaking: 103, 104, 111, 112, and 130/131 are all capped at 20. We think 130/131 should be capped at 18 because it meets both the public speaking and writing core. Because of the written component, the department feels that a cap of 18 would better serve the students than the current cap of 20. Teaching composition as a process is best achieved with a smaller number of students. We feel that 20 is an acceptable maximum cap for all other public speaking courses, but here again a cap of 18 would allow more individual work with students.

As mentioned above we make every effort to regularly re-evaluate our curriculum, by observation and by communication with others in our fields nationally (through conferences, reading professional literature, and other conversations), and by the results of our assessment projects. A significant revision of the curriculum was done in 2003-2006 with input from a program curriculum committee led by Mark Meritt. In addition, we have a resource room with a variety of textbooks and other resources for consultation by all faculty especially when making textbook decisions. We share our own faculty publications in an area of the office suite. We have regular meetings both at the program/area level and at the department level. We have a department lecture series with presentations on various topics of interest to the faculty, generally once a semester. USF's generous Faculty Development Fund supports both full-time and occasionally part-time faculty attendance at conferences, whether as presenters or to gather ideas, about the field.

Some of the changes we have made based on this re-evaluation include:

- In ESL, due to the rapidly increasing enrollment of conditionally admitted students, we have expanded the program by two levels in the past three years, thus allowing us to work with students at four levels of proficiency. This revision precipitated a reevaluation of the curriculum. Subsequently, several courses have been added at the high end of the program to function as bridge courses: ESL 195, a first-year seminar-style topics course, RHET 101 Editing and Proofreading Workshop, and RHET 107 Reading Workshop.
- In Composition we have added RHET 195 (the First-Year Seminar), 295 (the Transfer Seminar), 206 (Writing in the Sciences), 297 (Writing in Sociology) and other WID courses listed elsewhere. We have also added RHET 304 (Theories of Argument), RHET 320 (How English Works), RHET 321 (History of the English Language), RHET 322 (Classical Rhetoric), RHET 323 (Rhetoric and Popular Culture) as well as 1-unit and 2-unit courses such as RHET 100 (Editing and Proofreading Skills), RHET 101 (Editing Workshop for Multilingual Students), RHET 107 (Reading Workshop for Multilingual Students) and 325 ("Writing for a Real World" Editing and Proofreading Workshop). In the next five years, we expect to develop more WID courses.
- Public Speaking: We have added 104 (Argumentation and Debate), 111 (Public Speaking/Health Professions), and 112 (Presentational Speaking). We are also introducing RHET 330 (Conflict Management).

In order to ensure some uniformity in grading standards, course content, and learning outcomes across the curriculum, we do the following:

- *ESL*: When someone starts teaching in our program, they are given guidance by the director, and are given access to our course descriptions and to sample syllabi. Generally the director will ask one of the faculty currently teaching the course to work with, or at least to be a resource for, the instructor beginning to teach the course. The director observes some classes, especially those of new instructors. The director also looks at all the class syllabi at the beginning of the semester to ensure a degree of consistency (although not, of course, requiring uniformity). Recently, area meetings were instituted to bring together faculty teaching in the same skill area but at different levels of proficiency (i.e. Reading/Writing) to build coherence across the levels in both content and assessment.
- *Composition*: In composition, new faculty (whether full time or part time) are given guidance by the director, including course descriptions and sample syllabi. In addition, the area director observes one class session—usually during the fall semester—in order to ensure that the new faculty member appears to be using class time and designing assignments in a manner that meets the learning outcomes. The area director also reviews the instructor’s syllabus prior to this classroom observation, and he or she also gets some contextual information from the instructor, including the class readings for the day, a copy of any current assignment sheets, etc. After the class session, the area director and the new faculty member schedule a time when they can meet to discuss the observation and to create a plan for any changes that need to be made moving forward. The area director also reviews syllabi for all part time faculty—both new and returning—prior to the start of every semester. He or she checks to make sure that all required statements have been included, that the amount and type of reading and writing assigned corresponds to department guidelines and policies, and so forth.
- *Public Speaking*: In public speaking, standard course descriptions are supplied to ensure that faculty are meeting certain basic demands, including type of assignments, learning outcomes, minimum number of assignments and speaking time. The course descriptions also include textbook lists, a standard rubric, and narrative descriptions of the program's perspective on pedagogy in these classes. Faculty are free to moderate the rubrics for their classes and their individual assignments, and to craft a learning experience that reflects their own expertise on the subject; however, these possibilities all exist within a structured framework of outcomes and shared requirements. In Written and Oral Communication, a year-long course, the learning description also includes some tentative minimum expectations for students, as they complete the first part of the course (Fall Semester, RHET 130). This helps us to ensure that students have basic competencies they need to be successful in the Spring Semester of the course (RHET 131), even if they change instructors.

By the nature of our department, writing is a major focus;

- *ESL*: In ESL Academic Reading/Writing classes, students write 3-5 major academic essays with 2-3 drafts each, as well as journals and other shorter writing assignments (summaries, responses to readings, etc.). Some short writing is also assigned in other ESL classes as well.
- *Composition*: RHET 106 focuses on preparing students for academic writing at the college level and for Rhetoric and Language courses with native English speakers. The course emphasizes the connection between reading and writing, and class writing is in response to or related to class readings. Students learn and practice the writing process, from idea to final essay (e.g., pre-writing, drafting, revising, and editing). They learn and practice finding and evaluating sources, summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, citing, and documenting conventions and skills. Individualized attention is given to grammar, vocabulary development, and rhetorical style. In RHET 108, students write paragraph-level assignments leading to shorter essays. By the end of the semester, they have written 5-6 short public arguments using their own knowledge and experience as support. In RHET 110, students write 4-5 essays total, all of which emphasize making an argument or analyzing an argument. 3 or more papers incorporate sources from assigned readings or research, and 1-2 papers incorporate library research. In RHET 120, students write 3-4 essays total, emphasizing academic argument and analysis, incorporating skills learned in RHET 110 and advancing them in terms of length, complexity, and sophistication. All 120 papers incorporate outside sources; 2 or more incorporate significant library research, with one of these papers including an annotated bibliography or review of literature. At least one essay focuses on critical or rhetorical analysis of non-fiction prose. In RHET 250, students write an essay of 1200-1500 words in which they analyze academic text(s); an argumentative essay of 1500-1800 words incorporating several texts read in common; an academic review of literature or annotated bibliography of 1200-1500 words; and a research-based essay of 3000-3600 words. Students are expected to spend a minimum of 2 hours outside of class in study and preparation of assignments for each hour in class. In a 4 unit class, assignments have been created with the expectation that students will engage in approximately 8 hours of out-of-class work per week; in a 2 unit class, students should expect to spend approximately 4 hours per week outside of class in study and preparation.
- *Public Speaking*: Students in public speaking classes are required to complete a substantive writing assignment each semester, as well as writing outlines for major speeches. The writing assignments may vary, including rhetorical analysis of a speech, written exams, annotated bibliographies, or self-assessments of speeches. Students in public speaking classes are normally required to write full-sentence outlines (not manuscripts) for each major speech, though our requirement that speeches be performed extemporaneously leads many faculty to require speaking notes only on certain major speeches.
- *Across Areas*: In Written and Oral Communication, students are required to write essays totaling at least 11,000 words (about 32 pages) over the course of two semesters. Writing assignments conform to the requirements of the other writing classes. In both Public

Speaking and Written and Oral Communication, students are required to complete at least four major, graded speeches, two of which should be informative and persuasive speeches. Informative speeches are ones in which students adopt a rhetorical purpose that aligns with informing, teaching, or clarifying; though there is an element of persuasion in any oral communication, students are asked to avoid making this speech's purpose focus on persuading or convincing or significantly changing the minds of the audience. Those functions, of course, are the purview of the persuasive speech, which may include any speech whose purpose focuses on changing attitudes or behaviors, and which may include research-focuses speeches, proposal arguments, or Rogerian arguments (which have the goal of providing a non-threatening, common-ground based form of persuasion).

V. Advising

Advising is valued in the department. It is not specifically “rewarded,” but is considered part of full-time faculty responsibilities, as it is in most other parts of the university.

- ESL full-time faculty advise all ESL-conditional students regarding their ESL placements and classes, as well as more general questions and needs. (The students also are advised by University and/or Major advisors as soon as they begin to add non-ESL courses to their schedules.) Each full-time faculty member is assigned students when they are accepted to the university, and that faculty member generally advises and checks the progress off those students until they have finished their ESL classes and are no longer ESL-conditional students. Some of them, because they are used to and comfortable with the ESL faculty, continue to ask for advice even after they have left our program, and we are always happy to help those students as well.
- Composition and public speaking full-time faculty are assigned to advise undeclared first-year and transfer students. In particular, advisors help ensure that students are fulfilling the core requirements, that they sign up for a first-year seminar during either their first or second semester at USF, and that they sign up for courses that are at an appropriate level of difficulty. Once the students have declared a major, advising duties are transferred over to the major department, usually no later than the end of sophomore year (i.e., when the student has completed 64 units toward graduation).

When ESL-conditional students are admitted before the beginning of each semester, the full-time faculty divide up the lists and assign initial placements, based on test scores. (These placements are later confirmed by our own placement test when the students arrive on campus.). Faculty members set up and maintain email correspondence with these international students until they arrive on campus, and then continue to correspond and meet with them, especially when the time arrives for advising before early registration for the following semester. Faculty meet regularly to discuss advising and placement.

In composition and public speaking, our unofficial advising coordinator and our program assistant distribute students among the advisors, helping to ensure that the advising burden is distributed as evenly as possible across faculty.

There is no formal evaluation of the advising process, but we have revised the process over the past few years based on perceived needs and problems in the process. Advising is an area that often scores below average on the USF NSSE, and we have attempted to make sure that every student who is assigned to us has an opportunity to meet with their advisors at least twice during the year—often much more. Students often ask advisors about academic and non-academic issues, and we all work hard to be available and supportive to all our advisees, even though we have in the past few years had very large numbers of advisees, especially in ESL. So “advising” consists not only of formal meetings and appointments, but ongoing emails, calls, visits, chats in the hallway, etc.

VI. Program Quality and Assurance

The overall quality of the department is improving, as evidenced by the initial and ongoing assessment efforts being made by all three areas (see section VII). According to the faculty survey (see appendix B), 89.6% of the faculty rated our program as excellent or very good. Some of the comments cited small class sizes, faculty collegiality, good environment, and rhetorically based curriculum as features that indicate quality. Although the faculty in general seems to rate the quality highly, it must be said that maintaining high quality instruction is especially difficult in a department as large as ours.

The strengths of our ESL program include its academic rigor, its connections among classes and levels, its excellent faculty (because of the good pay, benefits, and working conditions, we are able to attract the best part-time faculty in the area, to complement the full-time faculty), the individual attention its faculty provide, and our close connections with other parts of the College and University (unlike the situation at many universities, where the ESL program is marginalized and quite separate). Several of the full-time faculty members, and a few of the part-time faculty members, do research relevant to ESL theory and practice, present regularly at conferences, and publish articles and books.

The Composition and Public Speaking programs are working to improve the quality based on the assessment results. Both programs benefit from the RHET 130/131 course. Faculty find it interesting and challenging to combine the teaching of composition and public speaking; at the same time, students’ writing and speaking skills benefit from studying written and oral discourse as interconnected and complementary. Because it is a year-long course, close bonds and a supportive dynamic tend to develop within the class. This close-knit atmosphere contributes to student retention. (See retention data in appendix D3.) The first-year seminars are a strength as well. Both full time and experienced part-time faculty have the opportunity to design courses that are in areas of particular interest to them, but that also fulfill the composition core requirement. Like the 130/131 combined course, the RHET 195 seminars are good both for faculty morale, and for retention of first-year students. In addition to essays and the same sorts of tasks as in other composition courses, RHET 195 involves field trips into the city of San Francisco, and often guest speakers that help them to gain a deeper understanding of the university and/or the larger Bay Area.

We believe that we have an unusually collaborative and supportive department, and that all faculty have benefitted from composition, ESL, and public speaking being housed in the same department. There is a real dedication to student learning that is apparent in all three areas. In composition and ESL, most faculty—whether full time or part time—hold one-on-one

conferences with students to discuss essay drafts and strategies for revision. Many students over the years have made a special point to praise this aspect of their experience in first-year composition courses.

Curriculum Challenges

- *ESL*: The program continues to be strong in terms of curriculum and faculty. However, with the rapidly increasing size of the program, and the necessity to offer multiple sections of the same course with different instructors, we will need to more aggressively and systematically improve our means of assessment for consistency among sections of the same course and coherence between the four levels.
- *Composition and Public Speaking*: As noted above, the program has grown over the last several years, and in the composition division, this growth is especially apparent in the area of Writing in the Disciplines (WID) courses. The additions of RHET 202, 203, 206, 297, 310 and 321 have led to positive collaborations with faculty in psychology, the sciences, sociology, Performing Arts, English, and the School of Management. One aspect of the composition division that is both strength and a weakness is its size: not counting 130/131 (the combined composition and public speaking course), there are 20 courses that fall officially under the composition umbrella. It is challenging to keep track of such a large number of courses; especially with the discipline-specific courses, it is a challenge to ensure that core A2 outcomes are being met along with the discipline-specific focus, and to ensure consistency across so many sections. Additionally, there are a limited number of faculty qualified to teach some of these discipline-specific courses (e.g., Writing in the Sciences). Given the growth we are currently experiencing in terms of student enrollment, it is likely that we will need to offer an increasing number of sections of these courses, which may necessitate hiring even more faculty. Unless more full-time positions are made available to our department, these new faculty will be hired as adjuncts, which is a concern both to our department and to the university.

Student Learning Assurance and Assessment

All three areas have begun the long and difficult yet crucial process of assuring student progress, though they are different stages in that process.

Summary

Given support and direction from the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs several years ago, Composition has developed and refined rigorous methods of assessing the learning of the majority of first-year students in the Core area (A2: Written Communication) for which it is responsible. Composition has also taken moderate actions to refine teaching and curriculum in response to such assessments, though it has much work to do in further refinements (including possible revision of outcomes), in assessing courses outside the “standard” first-year composition sequence, and in assessing transfer of learning to courses outside of composition.

Public Speaking has already undergone considerable changes, even as it completes its first learning assurance study since being housed in this Department; the learning outcomes have been revised to make a more thorough assessment possible and to guide continued revision of the

course description. The assessment study for AY 2010-2011 reveals a need to improve teaching efforts in extemporaneous speaking, and professional development opportunities have been arranged to meet this need.

English as a Second Language (ESL) has done much work on refining its system of placing students in appropriate courses, a crucial form of student learning assurance since students will learn most effectively if placed within the learning environment that offers them the best chance for successful development. ESL has also outlined a clear course of action and set of goals for student learning assurance that includes examination and revision of learning outcomes, examination and refinement of placement for greater effectiveness, and gathering data for assessment of student progress within and beyond the program. In what follows, each area's goals and procedures for assessment are presented separately.

Composition

The Department of Rhetoric and Language's Composition Area is responsible for teaching first-year and incoming transfer students the writing and other academic literacy skills foundational to success in their other coursework, in future academic writing, civic participation, and professional life. Our first-year courses aim at helping students reach the following five outcomes: critical analysis of academic discourse, integration of multiple academic sources, academic research, style, and revision. These outcomes were developed by faculty in Composition, and were approved by the university's Core Area A2 committee, as well as by the Provost. All composition courses that carry Core credit indicate their outcomes on the course syllabus, and all students are expected to meet those outcomes upon passing such courses. Assessing student progress in these outcomes has been crucial in evaluating our preparation of first-year students for the demands of college-level writing. As the discussion below demonstrates, our assessment process (which so far has focused almost entirely on our first-year course sequence with the largest enrollment, RHET 110-120) has taught us much not only about student learning but also about assessment methodology, about framing more useful outcomes, about possible curricular changes, and about possible future assessment projects.

Student progress toward our written communication outcome in our Core two-semester writing course sequence (RHET 110/120) was first assessed during the 2006-2007 academic year. We collected first papers written from a randomly selected group of students in the first-term course (RHET 110) and final papers written for the second-term course (RHET 120). Each essay was scored by two readers (on a 0-3 scale for a combined 0-6 score) on each of the four following learning outcomes: critical analysis of academic discourse, integrating multiple sources, academic research, and style. Readers were full-time professors and teachers of composition in the Department of Rhetoric and Language.

Readers compared RHET 110 essay scores with RHET 120 scores to determine progress made toward the four learning outcomes. Results (see Table 1) seemed to suggest strong progress toward most outcomes after a year of writing instruction, as seen in the table below. (This process was followed again for 2007-2008; however, the sample size collected during that year was too small to test for significant results.)

Table 1. *RHET 110-120 Assessment Results, 2006-2007*

Learning Outcome	110 (Fall Course) Average Score (Scale 0-6)	120 (Spring Course) Average Score (Scale 0-6)	Average Degree of Improvement
A. Critical analysis of academic discourse	2.03	3.29	+1.26
B. Integrating multiple academic sources	1.06	3.58	+2.52
C. Academic Research	0.67	3.32	+2.65
D. Style	3.29	3.9	+0.61

The readers considered these apparently encouraging results invalid for several reasons (most anticipated early in the process). First, early first-term and late second-term assignments were in almost all cases dramatically different. First-term assignments in only some cases required the incorporation or discussion of any texts our sources at all, and those that did typically asked students to discuss only one or two, almost never asking for outside research. In contrast, second-term assignments frequently demanded use of multiple sources often found in outside (library or internet) research. As a result, RHET 120 scores were much higher on outcomes A, B, and C. And while these higher scores suggested progress (in the case of our numbers, apparently dramatic progress), the increase more likely reflected task differences between early foundational assignments and later more advanced ones. Of course, the increase still reasonably suggests that students were at least meeting the challenge of more demanding assignments (scores likely would have stayed flat or even decreased had they faltered), but the scores could not be seen as necessarily reflecting progression in competence in any outcome area, except perhaps “style” (the criteria for early and late assignments being roughly the same in this category), in which student improvement was less dramatic, though still substantial.

Another difficulty was that several outcomes were hard to assess separately. For example, critical analysis of texts and integration of sources overlapped considerably, suggesting the need for revision in the language of our outcomes.

Both of these problems were addressed in the 2008-2009 assessment. We again scored “first and last” essays from the first-year writing sequence. However, two changes marked this assessment cycle. First, perhaps due to our earlier findings, more instructors were beginning the first-term (RHET 110) course with an assignment that required addressing or incorporating some kind of text. This change allowed us to more accurately compare beginning and ending performances and to compare the progress of students who began the year-long sequence writing in response to a text with that of those who began with an assignment that was not text-based. Second, to assess student progress more accurately and efficiently, we revised our scoring rubric to assess only two key skills: integration of sources and style. As noted above, three outcome areas – critical analysis of discourse, integrating multiple sources, and academic research – seemed to overlap (and perhaps need revision). Therefore, we “folded” all three into a single area,

“integration of sources,” that would allow us to evaluate students’ incorporation of sources (a skill that can be used in different ways and for varying assignment-specific purposes, from textual analysis to use of sources in support of an argument) more flexibly.

The results of this assessment process were felt to be more valid, since they did not apply inappropriate criteria (e. g., inclusion of multiple research sources) to brief early assignments not aimed at meeting those criteria. Also, they did seem to reveal modest but significant student progress in the two skill areas assessed, as seen in Table 2:

Table 2. *RHET 110-120 Assessment Results, All Students, 2008-2009*

	110 score (average)	120 score (average)	Difference
Integrating Sources	2	3.6	+1.6
Style	3.6	3.6	0

The results showed a steady improvement in integrating source materials into student writing. Again, however, many selected students were not asked in the first-term RHET 110 course to incorporate sources in their first assignments, resulting in a perhaps inflated indication of progress (though this problem was less marked than in previous studies). As seen in the chart, style scores remained apparently “flat” over the course of the year. However, since the second-term course generally asked students to write longer papers on more challenging topics and incorporating more demanding reading and research (factors that composition scholars agree lead to higher incidences of mechanical error and stylistic awkwardness), the steady scores suggested that students were becoming more stylistically capable, since they were able to minimize errors and awkwardness while engaging more demanding content.

We were able to learn more from these results, however, by separating the scores of students whose first-term paper required the incorporation of sources from those whose first paper did not. As seen in the Table 3 and Table 4 below, students required to use sources in their first RHET110 paper scored noticeably higher on “integrating sources” for their spring 120 papers than 110 students who were not required. These results suggested that students who began practicing incorporating sources early made more progress in this important academic writing skill area. The “style” scores are similarly revealing. Students not required to incorporate sources initially (in their RHET110 courses) scored higher in “style” for the first semester than those required. However, their style scores noticeably decreased in the second-term as they were required to write from sources, while students who had been required in 110 to incorporate such material in fact improved in style as they moved on to the RHET 120 course. These results suggested several conclusions. First, they imply that the higher RHET 110 scores in style among those students not writing from sources likely resulted from their being given less conceptually challenging, more familiar writing tasks. Second and more important, the results suggest that requiring students to write using sources (requiring them to quote, paraphrase, comment on, and cite others) earlier results in greater stylistic and grammatical facility in writing source-based prose as the year progresses. For students not required to write from sources in RHET110, levels of stylistic competence in RHET120 deteriorated to a level below that of RHET110 students required to write from sources. As seen in the next section, these findings led to some changes in pedagogical practice.

Table 3. *RHET 110-120 Results, Students Writing Source-Based 110 Essays, 2008-2009*

	110 score (average)	120 score (average)	Difference
Integrating Sources	3	3.8	+0.8
Style	3.45	3.75	+0.3

Table 4. *RHET 110-120 Results, Students Writing 110 Essays without Sources, 2008-2009*

	110 score (average)	120 score (average)	Difference
Integrating Sources	0	3.32	+3.32
Style	3.9	3.3	-0.6

Though the 2008-2009 assessment project provided somewhat reliable evidence of student progress toward key learning outcomes (and revealed the need both to write more measurable outcomes and increase focus on instruction in writing that integrates source material), we still desired more valid evidence. We therefore devised a more thorough and intensive process to assess our primary first-year writing sequence for the 2009-2010 academic year. Instead of collecting only first and last essays from the sequence, we collected all major papers for each course (RHET 110 and 120) from selected students. As a result, for each selected student, we collected two course folders, each containing three or four complete essays. The purpose of this approach was to obtain a more complete and less idiosyncratic view of each student's work and to avoid the pitfall of looking at a single atypical example for any student. With updated rubrics for the two outcome areas (integrating sources and style), two different readers scored each folder on a scale of 1 to 4 to obtain a composite score of 2 to 8 (with 6 indicating competence or success in meeting the desired outcome).

Pursuing this more thorough (and we hoped more valid) assessment process for two academic years (2009-2010 and 2010-2011), we found that students were in fact progressing modestly, but significantly, toward desired learning outcomes in both years, though at different rates. As Table 5 below indicates, students during the 2009-2010 academic year made gains in both categories.

Table 5. *RHET 110-120 Assessment Results, 2009-2010*

	110 Folder (average)	120 Folder (average)	Difference
Integrating Sources	5.28	5.72	+0.44
Style	5.33	5.72	+0.39

Having read a substantial selection of writing from each student for each course and semester, we felt assured that, though some students (a minority) were still not reaching the benchmark of solid competence represented by the score of 6, the increase in scores from RHET 110 to RHET 120 indicated real advances overall both in integrating sources from reading or research and in mechanical and stylistic competence. At the very least, these scores suggest that they could contend with assignments of increasing challenge and complexity.

Our most recent assessment (academic year 2010-2011) yielded slightly different results, though ones that also suggest progress in integrating sources, as seen in Table 6.

Table 6. *Assessment Results, 2010-2011*

	110 Folder (average)	120 Folder (average)	Difference
Integrating Sources	4.89	5.72	+0.83
Style	5.33	5.44	+0.11

RHET110 students during the second year of this assessment process scored noticeably lower on integrating sources than in the previous year. However, by Spring in RHET120 those same students had risen to the same level of competence as students from the previous year. Thus, 2010-2011 students improved by a greater margin, perhaps suggesting that our increasing focus on teaching reading skills as a foundation of source-based writing and source-based composition was effective. Students scored at a lower level, however, on style in the spring course than in the previous year (even though fall style scores for the two years were identical). Reasons for this difference (and its degree of significance) are unclear. As described below, we hope to develop a way to measure stylistic and grammatical skill more precisely, so that we can confirm whether we have rightly detected a decrease in proficiency for this outcome.

Throughout the assessment process, we refined our methods of scoring sample essays in order to maximize validity. As noted above, after the first two years of assessment (academic years 2006-2007 and 2007-2008), we “collapsed” three outcome areas into one (“integrating sources”) for academic year 2008-2009 both to eliminate redundancy and to more accurately gauge student effectiveness in integrating sources for various purposes in their writing. Also as noted above, beginning in academic year 2009-2010, we collected much larger samples of students’ work in order to assess their progress over the course of two semesters more fully and accurately. Our scoring rubrics from 2008-2009 were again refined in order to more fairly and accurately gauge student success.

We plan to refine our methods in more far-reaching ways in the future. Our evaluation of stylistic competence has been largely impressionistic, not based on counts of errors, measurement of sentence length or complexity, or similar quantitative elements. Especially in light of the drop in student scores on “style” in 2010-2011 from the previous year, we need to develop a more rigorous and precise way to measure student progress in writing correct and polished prose. As part of this process, it would also be desirable (if possible) to determine differences in frequency of error and stylistic awkwardness between students for whom English is a first language those for whom it is not, as we have enrolled an increasing number of international students in recent years.

The assessment process also taught us that our learning outcomes could be made more measurable. Changing outcome language is a long process with many steps. As a result, we modified the rubric in such a way as to measure three inter-related outcomes simultaneously, though imperfectly. In the long term, however, outcome language that more clearly and concretely specifies the skills we want our students to demonstrate is needed. Members of the

assessment team have begun discussing such revisions, yet we need to develop a specific proposal for revision to bring to our department and the university administration.

Though our focus has remained largely on refining assessment methods, the findings from our assessments have led to some actions to improve instruction within our department as well as to the posing of new and exciting assessment questions. As discussed above, our 2008-2009 assessment revealed that students who were required in their first major writing assignment to draw upon source material (rather than writing only from personal experience) performed more strongly over the course of the year both in integrating sources and in style and mechanics. These results suggested that more emphasis be placed on reading non-fiction prose texts about which students would write and on how to write using sources. In the Fall of 2009, our department dedicated its beginning-of-year workshop to reading and discussing articles on the uses of reading and the importance of source integration in college composition. Incoming faculty were also made clearly aware of the need for emphasis on reading and source-based writing skills. As a result, an increasing number of first assignments for Fall RHET 110 courses in the ensuing years required the integration of one or more sources (as seen in samples of student work).

As noted above, the results of our assessment suggest that students are overall making steady progress in the two outcome areas over the course of two semesters (more consistently in integrating sources). We would like to see greater progress (i.e., all students scoring at a level of 6 or above). However, since our one-year writing sequence is a foundational course, it is perhaps more important to determine whether students are continuing to develop or at least maintaining those skills as they proceed to further coursework. (In fact, many composition scholars believe that writing skills tend to deteriorate after students leave composition coursework if these skills are not explicitly reinforced, which they seldom are, in other courses). To address this question, we have just implemented a project to assess transfer of learning from composition courses to other courses. In order to determine whether students are applying skills learned in writing classes in their other coursework, we have begun collecting samples of writing produced in “post-composition” coursework by students assessed in our 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 first-year writing studies. We plan to score these writing samples according to the same rubric used in our composition studies to see whether students at least maintain or perhaps improve in the key skill areas we are trying to teach. Also, by examining students’ final grades in courses for which these samples were produced, we hope to determine (at least roughly) whether the writing skills learned in these courses produce success in courses outside and after composition coursework. Our first sample of such student work is fairly small, perhaps too small to reach valid general conclusions. However, at the very least, we can gain practice in assessing learning transfer of composition skills, laying the foundations and establishing valid methods for later, larger studies.

The question of learning transfer has motivated the implementation of writing courses in specific disciplines at USF. In order to reinforce and specialize writing skills obtained in general composition courses, our department has designed courses in writing for specific disciplines (such as Writing in Psychology, Writing in Sociology, Writing for Performing Arts, and Business Writing). Some of these courses are taken after the whole first-year sequence, while others can be taken in lieu of the spring semester first-year course (RHET 120). In the future, we

will need to assess student work from these courses in order to determine whether or not students doing this work are meeting Core writing outcomes. Also, we can determine whether these students make stronger progress towards outcomes in these classes or in more traditional second-term composition classes. Finally, we can determine whether students who take discipline-specific writing courses perform more strongly in other courses than do students who do not take discipline-specific writing. Such assessment will help us determine the future direction of our department, which has been moving in the direction of establishing such discipline-specific courses but does not yet have the evidence to suggest that they represent a promising alternative to the more traditional curricular structure.

Public Speaking

The Public Speaking Area is responsible primarily for teaching oral communication skills that will prepare students for doing presentations in other classes and in civic contexts, and which meet Core A1, Oral Communication. But it also aims to increase students' analytical abilities in rhetoric and communication. The newly revised learning outcomes emphasize oral communication skills, such as crafting thesis-driven speeches and practicing extemporaneous delivery, but they also require the use of rhetorical concepts and theory as a means of assessing the effectiveness and the ethicality of communication. Speech analysis, self-analysis, and rhetorical criticism encourage students to think broadly about the efficacy of rhetoric, contributing to their ability to assess their own communication behaviors. Public Speaking has begun the task of crafting assessment studies that will help us to understand how both the skill and the analytical outcomes are being met in our classes, and how to further revise its curriculum to better meet those outcomes.

When Public Speaking became part of the department, in AY 2009-2010, assessment was not prioritized because there were more impending issues, such as integrating the curriculum and the faculty into the newly formed Department. Further, the previous set of learning outcomes contained a good deal of vague or non-behavioral based language, and it became clear that ongoing assessment efforts should be based on a revised set of outcomes. The process of revising the learning outcomes included consultation with a number of constituencies, and the outcomes finally were approved in Spring 2011. Since the former outcomes were still in effect for faculty during that semester, the assessment project launched in Spring 2011 was limited to the outcome focused on delivery, which we felt to be most closely amenable to assessment and the least changed in the new outcomes.

The assessment project was launched in January of 2011. Ten sections of RHET 103 (Public Speaking) and 10 sections of RHET 131 (Written and Oral Communication) were selected, randomly, though limited in that no more than one course per instructor would be included. Instructors were asked to identify a major, graded speech assignment for data collection. In the case of RHET 103, faculty were asked to select either their informative or persuasive speech (these are the two speech assignments required of all classes); in RHET 131, faculty were asked to choose a major speech assignment. Since we wanted to create a point of comparison for the two courses and because we are interested in measuring the effects of instruction, instructors were asked to pick an assignment that occurred late enough in the semester that students would have already given one or more graded speeches and received feedback from faculty. Faculty

were asked to have ITS video record one day's worth of speeches (about 3 to 8 speeches in most classes), though some faculty opted to record all the speeches so as to treat their students equally. In cases where one day's speeches were recorded, the assessment team assigned a day randomly to the instructor; in cases where faculty had recorded all the speeches, one day's worth of speeches was chosen randomly after the fact. The Office for the Associate Dean for Academic Effectiveness then selected speeches at random from the total pool of speeches recorded for the study, picking 3 or 4 speeches from each section (in the end, 10 sections of 103 and 8 sections of 131 were included). Five faculty assessors (two full-time faculty, three part-time) were recruited to assess the speeches, giving a score of High Pass, Pass, or Low Pass on three measures for each speech (extemporaneous delivery, verbal elements of delivery, nonverbal elements of delivery). Each speech was rated twice, except in cases where the scores of two raters were greatly divergent; in those 12 cases, a third rating was added.

Our results have yielded few surprises, suggesting that our students are developing efficient, if not in all cases exceptional, skills in delivery, and suggesting that work is most needed in improving their ability to perform extemporaneously (i.e., speaking coherently and conversationally from notes, as opposed to reading or memorizing their speech). Of the 68 speeches included in the study, 61 of them achieved a passing score. The average for RHET 103 and RHET 131 were comparable, though the RHET 131 average was higher. Students in RHET 131 also scored somewhat higher than RHET 103 in the verbal area, which is not surprising as RHET 131 students all must achieve a relatively high SAT to enroll in the course. We expect that they will have more refined skills with vocabulary and crafting of language in speeches. Also, although both courses scored similarly in the extemporaneous area, some secondary measures indicate that RHET 131 students were not as polished in extemporaneous delivery. First, a significantly larger number of 103 students received at least one HP in extemporaneous speaking; also, 103 students scored much higher in the non-verbal measure. Nonverbal communication includes many skills related to how speakers use their bodies in presentation: eye contact, movement, posture, etc. Students who do not perform extemporaneously--say, because they read their speeches--are often lacking in these nonverbal elements. Further, the extemporaneous measure received the lowest scores for any area of assessment.

This study indicates that students in oral communication courses, though passing, are not necessarily achieving the level of extemporaneous speaking we'd like to see in this course. There are many possible benign reasons for this: the small sample size of the study may overrepresent weaker speakers, the kinds of assignments included in the study may encourage students to read rather than speak from notes (e.g., many speeches with a heavy research component were included in the 131 group), video recording may have created an observation effect. More substantive possibilities, though, indicate areas for improvement: students may not "get it," as far as presenting from notes, goes (a frequent complaint of public speaking instructors); the assignment may not have required extemporaneous speaking (contrary to the learning outcomes); instructors may be failing to teach extemporaneous style; some instructors, themselves, may not "get it" or may not be convinced of the importance of the style. Most significantly, many of our RHET 131 instructors have backgrounds in areas other than communication and public speaking, having learned to teach public speaking only in teaching this particular course. This reason does not explain, however, why such a large number of RHET 103 students did not pass on the extemporaneous speaking measure.

We are currently formulating several responses to the situation: instituting professional development opportunities for faculty (including a Great Ideas For Teaching Speech panel, focusing on how to teach extemporaneous speaking); assessing delivery again with our revised learning outcomes, which may help us to more accurately measure this area; creating a Speaking Center, where students may get one-on-one assistance from a speech course to improve delivery; and creating new submission requirements for our annual "Speaker Showcase" events, so that we can identify more exemplary speeches that truly model extemporaneous speaking. To explain: previously, we identified top speeches each semester by having faculty submit the best outlines from their classes to a steering committee, who then selected the "best" 5 or 6 speeches of the semester to include in the Showcase, a public event attended by up to 150 students and faculty. For the past two years, the Showcase videos have been posted online, for faculty to use in their speech classes, to present as model speeches. However, since these speeches were selected based on outlines, we wound up selecting more well-crafted, well-researched speeches than expertly delivered ones. Having a new set of sample speeches should help new students to understand what's expected in terms of extemporaneous delivery.

Finally, assessment efforts will play a role as we revise our curriculum, creating new courses for students to meet Core A1 and adjusting our standard course description so that it can better meet the outcomes. Delivery skills are only one part of this.

Consequently, our assessment-related plans include the following:

1. Expand the focus of our assessment over the next few academic years to include each of the recently revised learning outcomes; in particular, outcomes related to argument connect to larger programmatic goals in supporting academic writing
2. Expand the nature of assessment so that we can understand how the more analytical outcomes are (and are not) being met in courses; in other words, how do students use rhetorical concepts, principles, and theory to assess their own and others' communication.
3. Develop formal procedures for understanding the contributions of the Speaking Center in developing students' skills.
4. Integrate assessment efforts with ESL to better manage articulation between their oral skills component and Core A1.

English as a Second Language

The English as a Second Language (ESL) Area in the Department of Rhetoric and Language is responsible for assisting in the English language development of conditionally admitted undergraduate students during the regular academic year, and providing an intensive pre-academic preparation program (IEP) during the two summer sessions. Due to the rapid increase in the number of conditionally admitted international students over the last three to four years, the program has grown considerably both in the number of courses it offers for different levels of English language proficiency and in the number of sections of individual courses.

International students for whom English is not their first language must meet English language requirements based on standardized test scores (Internet-based TOEFL, Paper-based TOEFL,

IELTS) to be admitted to the University. The University determines the scores necessary both for full admission and for conditional admission. Although there is a minimum requirement for conditional admission, there are a number of students admitted who do not meet the minimum requirement. Over the years, we have lobbied, meeting with limited success, to raise the entrance requirements particularly for the IELTS since each score covers a large proficiency range and is not well calibrated with the scores required on the TOEFL tests.

The ESL program is responsible to provide developmental academic language preparation courses for the conditionally admitted students. As the number of conditionally admitted students has grown and, thus, the number of ESL levels that can be offered, it has become necessary to develop internal guidelines for placement decisions (see Appendix C2). In addition, concern over test score reliability has led to the implementation of an internal placement test administered to all incoming conditionally admitted students (see Appendix C3). The purpose of this test is to verify the standardized test scores and to assist in a more accurate placement, particularly for students with IELTS scores since these scores do not capture much variation in the population of students we are working with. The appropriate placement of students in the ESL developmental language courses is the first step in our efforts to assure student learning and to promote success in subsequent non-ESL coursework. The EPT has been used for three semesters and has contributed to more accurate placement of students as measured by the number of students needing to change levels after diagnostic activity in classes during the first week of the semester.

The sequence of courses offered in the ESL program covers the four skills at four levels of instruction, with some additional special skills courses at several levels of instruction. Each course is shaped by departmentally defined learning outcomes, which are included on every syllabus (see Appendix E2). These learning outcomes have been generally revised in 2007/08 and in 2010/11 and specifically in relation to new levels and courses that have been added over the last four years as the student population has increased (Level III in 2008, Introductory Level in 2011).

Since international students have been admitted to the University of San Francisco and the founding of the ESL program in 1974, there have been questions and concerns about **their** language and academic readiness for academic studies. This concern from the university community has fluctuated over the years and has largely been tied to the number of international students on campus, either as fully admitted students or English conditional students. The rapid increase in the number of students exiting the ESL Program in the last few years along with the increase in fully admitted undergraduate students has created a critical mass in the undergraduate courses so this concern is more widespread and voiced more loudly. Therefore, we in the ESL Program need to review and possibly revise the learning outcomes and the measures used to assess them.

Prior to fall 2011, students' progress through their ESL courses and into non-ESL courses was based on multiple factors: standardized test scores at the end of the semester (the pbtTOEFL was administered to all students), course grades, teachers' recommendations, and other factors such as length of study and work ethic. Beginning in fall 2011, the process was streamlined to increase consistency and transparency. Now students' progress through their ESL courses and into non-ESL course work is based on the final grades they receive from each instructor. While

ESL professionals are well-qualified to make judgments of proficiency, the greater the number of courses, sections, levels, and instructors in a program, the more difficult it becomes to assure the reliability of these judgments across the entire program. Course and level meetings to align instruction and assessment measures were instituted in fall 2011. More needs to be done. The learning outcomes need to be aligned with assessment measures that are applied similarly across all sections of a course, as well as measures that reliably assess the readiness to change levels in the program.

An important measure of the success of ESL courses in a university developmental program is whether students who complete this course of study can succeed in their subsequent non-ESL coursework. This has always been a concern for the ESL Program and with increased international enrollment is more important. Student success has primarily been assessed in the past by occasional institutional studies of ESL students' performance in USF courses (e.g., 2010, early 1990s), informal checking of student performance when questions arise, follow-up student advising and faculty conversations. The rapid increase in the number of students necessitates a more systematic plan for ongoing qualitative and quantitative evaluation of our program value.

The current home of the ESL program in the Department of Rhetoric and Language is advantageous for undergoing the kind of review, revision, and evaluation suggested by this report. The expertise of the Public Speaking and Composition faculty in understanding the language readiness required for success in typically the first or earliest courses students take is particularly valuable in designing outcomes that lead to success in these areas. While no second language program can prepare students for all possible language uses and needs, we can work closely together to build a developmentally appropriate sequence of courses within and across these three areas. Furthermore, already established assessment projects in these other areas will provide valuable information on student success that can inform the review of learning outcomes in ESL courses.

The ESL Program is committed to developing a more systematic approach to the assessment of student progress building on previous assessment efforts. This approach will necessitate both sequential and contiguous activity, as the list of tasks below reveals:

1. Revise the mission statement specific to the ESL program to better fit within the larger purposes of the Department.
2. Clarify/streamline placement procedures in order to increase and demonstrate reliability.
3. Review/revise the learning outcomes to determine their fit with the current understanding of second language learning and the readiness expectations of post-ESL courses in our department.
4. Develop mechanisms (i.e. course/level rubrics for final "performances") for individual teachers to use that will allow for teacher differences but lead to reliable student assessments.
5. Track admission test scores, program placement scores, teacher diagnostics, and grades to evaluate the reliability of our placement procedures.
6. Gather and analyze GPA, retention, and student/faculty satisfaction once students have completed their ESL courses.
7. Work with the Administration to refine admission standards for conditionally-admitted students.

VII. Faculty

Our faculty is the major strength of the Department of Rhetoric and Language. In the past few years, attention has been paid to hiring full-time faculty with teaching specializations that will supplement our curriculum and complement current faculty expertise. We have recently added two applied linguistics faculty in ESL, one composition faculty member with technology expertise, and one with expertise in writing studies. Within our existing full-time faculty we have people with specialties in classical rhetoric, composition pedagogy, communication, political rhetoric, publications, Asian-American studies, modernist studies, and literature.

We have developed over the past ten years a remarkable spirit of support and collegiality, especially noteworthy given our size (over 3000 students enrolled in F12) and the number of part-time faculty (84). Not everyone is satisfied, of course. But on the whole, the group seems happy and dedicated to the mission of the department and the university. The results of our faculty survey (see appendix B) support this general observation.

Demographics

Although the ESL program had three full-time tenure-track faculty members as early as 1974, the first full-time term faculty member in composition was hired in January of 1999 and two more were hired in Fall of 1999. Until then, all composition faculty had been part-time. (At USF, term faculty can be reappointed without limit, are full members of the faculty union, and have the same salary, benefits, and promotion opportunities as tenure-track/tenured faculty. There is no expectation of research, but they teach a 3-3 load. Some faculty members feel that term status relegates them to the position of “second-class citizens.”)

The number of full-time faculty has steadily increased (to 18 for AY 2012-13 and the number has not kept up with our increasing enrollment. In the Public Speaking program, all classes had been taught by adjuncts except for an occasional class taught by a full-time faculty member to fill out the teaching schedule. Even though we have made significant strides in hiring more full-time faculty, because of a steady increase in the number of first-year students, there is clearly a need for many more to reach the goal of having all—or even a majority of—freshman-level Core classes taught by a full-time faculty member. A chart showing the growth of our program, largely due to increased enrollment, can be found in appendix C1b.

Our faculty is quite diverse in terms of age, religious affiliation, and sexual orientation, although specific numbers in these areas are, for privacy reasons, somewhat difficult to obtain. One area in which we would like to see, in fact *need* to see, some improvement is ethnic diversity. As the chart in appendix F5 shows, we have few non-white faculty, although we should point out that all the non-white faculty have been added in the last 10 years, which indicates our intention and effort in this area.

One problem we have with recruiting a more diverse faculty is that rhetoric is not an area that is highly favored by minority graduate students; therefore, the supply of available candidates is limited. Many of them who do study in this area take tenure-track positions at larger schools, an

option we cannot offer. For this reason, and others, we believe that the university should consider hiring more tenure-track faculty for our department.

Teaching

Ten years ago, almost all faculty (both full and part time) in the department (with the exception of the ESL program) had M.As in Literature or Creative Writing. Since then we have made a concerted effort to hire faculty with appropriate credentials in ESL, composition, rhetoric, or communication. There are a few exceptions among longer-term full-time composition faculty, but in those cases, the faculty had extensive training/experience in composition. We have drawn heavily on the Certificate in Teaching Composition, Teaching Reading, and ESL programs at San Francisco State University to hire part-time faculty, as well as hiring people who have completed their M.A.s in Speech Communication there.

Our faculty is generally well-qualified to teach the courses, and courses are assigned, for the most part, on the basis of those qualifications. Teaching assignments are made on the basis of seniority, as required by the full-time and part-time union contracts. In a few instances, the contract with the part-time faculty association (PTFA) requires placing long-term faculty (some with over 20 years seniority) in courses for which they may not have the most appropriate degree.

Based on the survey results included in appendix B, faculty say they generally enjoy teaching their courses, with a small number reporting they wish they could teach different classes or teach existing classes differently. Although there is a general level of satisfaction, some faculty did feel that they wanted more flexibility in pedagogy and course development.

The department monitors teaching effectiveness through program assessment strategies, classroom observations by area directors, and the use of the student evaluations (SUMMAs), which have their shortcomings. However, USF is currently looking at a replacement system of student evaluations, which may respond to some of the problems with the SUMMA. We are particularly proud of the fact that for two out of the past three years, Rhetoric and Language faculty members have won the Faculty Association's Distinguished Teaching Award.

Each new full-time faculty member is given a mentor to help them adjust during their first year. Informal mentoring takes place in many ways as well—classroom visits, talks around the copier (we don't have a water cooler), or in offices, social gatherings, and other casual settings. In addition, two faculty members conduct monthly conversations about pedagogy to which all are invited. We also have the resources of the Center for Teaching and Learning and the Center for Instructional Technology. We also maintain a small library of books on curriculum and pedagogy that is available to all faculty.

An area in which we need a great deal of improvement is professional development. We would like to provide regular workshops and other events that would enhance teaching effectiveness, introduce new and innovative ideas, and share teaching tips. The Public Speaking faculty has begun doing this through a G.I.F.T.S. (Great Ideas for Teaching Speech, an idea coined by the National Communication Association) presentation at each of their meetings, which are generally well attended. The composition faculty has not been as active, and there have been few in-service meetings. This is largely because many of the part-time faculty insist that they

should be paid for required meetings at the \$26.65/hour rate, and the cost of this would be exorbitant given the large number of faculty. We plan to institute some voluntary workshops, but attendance at these has, in the past, been extremely disappointing.

Advising

Full-time faculty members, along with two paid part-time ESL faculty, are assigned as academic advisors. Since we do not yet have a major, we advise undeclared liberal arts students as well as the ESL students. All full-time faculty devote considerable time to advising students, especially during pre-registration and semester start periods. The high number of multilingual international students in the Department adds to the advising load. Students new to the United States and to the academy need considerable one-on-one assistance. The ratio of advisees to advisors varies considerably among departments. It is a challenge to negotiate a lower advisee to advisor ratio, which we believe is necessary for student retention and for academic success.

Many of our faculty are also involved with mentoring students through the First-Year Seminar program, and many part-time faculty work with students in the Writing Center.

Research

In spite of the fact that the majority of our faculty is term faculty, for whom research is not a required component of their contract, the faculty as a whole has, since the last program review, done a great deal of research, some for conference presentations, some for publication. In particular, Stephanie Vandrick produced a book on narrative and research and had several articles published in edited collections as well as a number of journal articles; Johnnie Johnson Hafernik, with a non-USF co-author, wrote a case-study scenario for multilingual classrooms; she and Fredel Wiant have a book on tips for teaching multilingual students; and Wiant and David Ryan have a textbook for the combined written and oral communication classes. Mark Meritt and Michael Rozendal have each had articles published in major journals. A number of full-time faculty and several part-time faculty have had papers accepted and presented at major conferences such as CCCC, TESOL, NCA, AALS, and NCTE. (A list of sample publications and presentations is included in appendix F3.)

Service

Members of the faculty have served as sponsors of student organization and projects (Asian American Student Organization, Black Student Association, *Writing for a Real World*); they have served on departmental committees for by-laws event planning, curriculum revision, assessment, and elections. Members have served the College and University on the Policy Board, the First-Year Seminar Committee, the Dean's Medal committee, several WASC preparation committees, the Core A committee, the Core Advisory Council, department and college-level search committees, and various ad hoc committees to address specific issues.

Three members of the faculty have received the Frank Beach award for outstanding service to the College of Arts and Sciences, and one member received the award for outstanding service by a part-time faculty member.

It should also be noted that both the Rhetoric and Composition faculty and the ESL faculty have been awarded the Dean's Award for Collective Achievement because of their ability to work

together as a team to make significant contributions to the College, and the *Writing for a Real World* editorial committee received the university's Team Merit award.

Relationships with other Departments and Programs

We are quite open to interdisciplinary cooperation. We often provide financial help to other departments for special programs such as the Human Rights film festival or special speakers. In some cases, we are happy to “loan” faculty to teach in other departments, just as other departments occasionally loan faculty to us, particularly in Public Speaking. Several of our faculty teach an occasional English course, one often teaches in the Asian-American Studies program, one teaches a composition course for the St. Ignatius Institute, and a number of both full-time and part-time faculty teach a course as part of the First-Year Seminar Program. Our department chair is the director of that program, and one other faculty member is the director of the Dual-Degree in Teaching program. We also cooperate with other departments in design the Writing in the Disciplines courses with course proposals developed jointly with the appropriate departments.

One particularly interesting example of interdepartmental, or interschool, cooperation is that several faculty members have coordinated faculty writing retreats and presented workshops in professional writing for graduate students and faculty members in the School of Nursing and Health Professionals.

In addition, the College provides a variety of opportunities to interact with other departments, primarily through Arts Council and College Council.

Recruitment and Development

As we noted earlier, there is a significant need for additional full-time faculty in all three program areas. We specifically need people with doctorates in ESL/Linguistics, Rhetoric and Composition, and Public Address, possibly combined with composition. There will be one retirement at the end of this year, and we anticipate two more retirements within the next 5 years.

In addition to replacing these people, we need to reduce the number of classes taught by part-time faculty. In order to reach our goal of 50%, based on the current enrollment, we would need a minimum of 29 full-time faculty teaching 3 sections each, nearly double our current numbers.

In addition, if we continue to develop WID courses, we need to hire more faculty with expertise in areas such as science, social science, and technical writing.

VIII. Departmental Governance

The department is organized into three areas: ESL, Composition, and Public Speaking. Each area is coordinated by an area director appointed by the Department Chair, who then coordinates the work of the three areas. The department chair is elected by a majority secret ballot of the full-time faculty and serves a three-year term. Nominations are to be solicited by the chair, who may appoint a committee to assist in soliciting nominations and running the election. The chair may be re-elected for additional terms by the same method. The chair is responsible for scheduling and staffing all sections, in consultation with the area coordinators. Under the USFFA contract,

the Department Chair is not a supervisor; she only acts under direction from the Associate Dean. The Chair makes staffing recommendations to the Associate Dean, who approves them. All curriculum decisions, however, are made by the faculty, as provided in the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The full-time faculty of the department meets once a month as a whole. Decisions affecting curriculum and governance are made at this meeting or, occasionally, by email ballot. The USFFA contract indicates the decisions affecting the curriculum are to be made by the full-time faculty. Individual areas hold meetings as well, to which part-time faculty are invited, but not required, to attend, pursuant to the PTFA contract. Changes affecting curriculum and governance may be suggested, but the area meetings cannot determine these; they must be referred to the whole department for decision. The results of the Faculty survey, appendix B, indicate a high level of support for the department governance. 87.5% either agree or strongly agree that the morale in the department is high, and 89.6% agree or strongly agree that the department is well-governed.

The work of the department is distributed relatively fairly, with the understanding that the chair and area directors do most of the administrative work. However, beyond that, we have several committees that assist in department programs—*Writing for a Real World*, Speakers' Showcase, International Week events, and other special programs and promotions. An effort is made to help newer faculty get the service credit they need for promotion by asking them to serve on search committees, special projects, and other committees. In addition, we make an effort to inform new faculty about opportunities for service outside our department in the college and the university.

The full-time faculty, in general, is involved in decision-making. However, many of our part-time faculty, particularly those who have been here for a number of years, feel they should be more involved in the decision-making. This is a problem, since the USFFA contract specifically gives this role to full-time faculty, and since the PTFA contract says we cannot require them to attend meetings. However, we do solicit input whenever possible, and make an attempt to include them. We invite part-time faculty to department meetings twice a year, and we post the minutes of all department meetings in a public place so that the information is available to all.

IX. Students

The Department is a service department that offers required Core speaking, writing, and reading classes that students at all proficiency levels must take. In our classes, students develop their writing, speaking, and critical thinking skills. Through rigorous and focused assignments, students are given the necessary training and experience they need to read texts closely and to craft skillful oral and written arguments. In turn, our classes help students succeed at academic tasks in other courses and prepare them for their future professions.

As a service department, we seek to serve all students and offer courses at all levels. First, we offer ESL courses that help students—primarily international and multilingual students—to improve their reading comprehension and speaking and writing fluency in English. We also offer one graduate speaking and writing seminar for international graduate students across

disciplines. Second, we have a wide array of courses in composition and public speaking—along with a combined speaking/writing course—that all students take in order to complete their Core A requirement. Third, we offer the Martin-Baro Scholars Program for those interested in participating in service learning and a living-learning community. Finally, we offer accelerated writing seminars for high-level first year students and upper division writing courses for transfer students and writing in the disciplines courses for those at the later stages of their education.

A recent rise in the enrollment of international students, mainly from China, has created the need for more ESL courses and more faculty to teach them. In terms of enrollment in ESL for Fall 2012, there were 212 new students enrolled - 161 conditional admits and 51 continuing students. This is a 36.3% increase from Fall 2011 and 56.6% increase from Fall 2009. Among the challenges that faculty currently face in teaching such courses are working in classes where all students come from the same language background (i.e., Mandarin Chinese) as opposed a more traditional ESL setting with a more diverse international student population and ensuring that these students are armed with the academic skills and readiness that will translate into academic success outside of ESL settings. Despite the spike in enrollment of ESL students, only seven (21.2%) of the ESL department's 33 sections of ESL are taught by full-time faculty. Similarly, only 31 (21.5%) of the Rhetoric department's 144 sections are taught by full-time faculty.

In the ESL division, we determine a student's level of writing, reading, and speaking "quality" and, in turn, class placement based on a variety of factors, including IBT and TOEFL test scores taken prior to matriculation into the university and an English Proficiency Test (EPT), given once the students arrive in the U.S., whose battery includes in-person interviews and a writing sample from incoming students. The EPT is scored in-house with multiple trained raters. In terms of RHET, we use SAT and ACT scores as the main basis for placement into the proper writing and/or speaking course.

Once students enter our courses, a variety of assessment measures we used to determine to what extent students have met the learning outcomes and final grades serve as an exit requirement. That is, the departmental passing policy for various RHET courses is a "C-." If a student receives a lower grade, he or she must retake the appropriate course. Since we do not offer a major and our courses are required, we have no basis for comparison between majors and non-majors. Of course, in ESL courses, the demographic—composed mainly of multilingual international students—is different than for the other standard RHET speaking and writing classes, which are usually quite diverse in terms of race and gender and reflect the overall demographic of the university.

Although we do not yet have a major, we did develop a Writing Intensive Certificate Program. This has been unsuccessful, partly because of lack of promotion, and partly because of lack of buy-in by other faculty across the disciplines. They prefer to leave the writing instruction/emphasis to us. We are currently shaping a proposal for a RHET minor and have future aspirations to create a major that will attract students who are looking to pursue our discipline in graduate school and/or as a career.

Based on a short survey randomly distributed to students across all levels of instruction in our department, we provide some short excerpts of their comments about our department as they

relate to their professors creating an intellectual and social climate. Rhetoric and Composition students expressed that their professors “created a positive intellectual experience” that “challenged each individual not just intellectual-wise, but in the idea of tolerance and respect.” Nearly all students expressed the feeling that their courses helped them to “think critically about the general use of language, the language around me, and the language I use” through development of their writing and speaking skills and ability to structure effective essays. They also praised professors for helping them to pursue their “passions and interests” and allowing them to “reflect and contemplate on different social/political ideas.” The professors were thought of as “very intelligent,” “very positive” and “welcoming.” Similarly, ESL students expressed that their English skills were “developed in academic ways” as to help “prepare for college level courses.”

One long-standing project that honors student development and accomplishments is our department journal, *Writing for a Real World (WRW)*. Since 2002, this yearly journal has published the best USF student writing across the disciplines, including academic/critical essays, capstone thesis projects, business proposals, and scientific reports. Annually, approximately 90-150 students submit, and a small percentage of these pieces are chosen for publication. The Awards ceremony, at which Deans and other University officials participate, showcases the winning writers along with students named as honorable mention to the entire university community. *WRW*, available both in hard copy and digitally, is also used as a class text by various instructors in order to demonstrate excellent models of student writing. Moreover, the production process of *WRW* has just recently been made into an actual class, in which students work together with the editor, David Holler, to edit and design the manuscript and prepare it for publication.

Not only does our department honor student writing, we profile our best student speakers. The annual Speaker’s Showcase highlights the best speeches by students during the academic year. At this event, selected student speakers present their speeches to a large audience of faculty and peers. Our Conversation Partners Program promotes cultural and linguistic exchange at USF. The program pairs up English-speaking students who wish to develop their skills in a foreign language with bilingual and multilingual students who wish to continue strengthening their English skills.

Another more recent development is the formation of a Debate Team, which is just in the development stages. Last year, the team start with 5 students, and this year the coach hopes to go to a few local competitions as well as find opportunities for presentations on campus. There has been a strong debate team on campus in the past, but for the past 15 years it had been largely ignored and finally died out. Once the RHET department took over the public speaking course, we were determined to start it up again, especially because Admission felt it would be a value-added activity for potential students.

Loyola Maryland and some other schools are forming a national honor society for student writers. We are not eligible since we do not have a major or minor in writing, but we stay informed and hope to affiliate someday.

First and foremost, instructors communicate expectations through their course syllabi, which include the department learning outcomes along with class policies regarding attendance and expected student behavior. Throughout the semester, expectations on individual assignments are demonstrated through class discussions as well as handouts and rubric that include evaluation criteria. Conferences give instructors an additional venue to discuss expectations with students and the extent to which they are being met.

Written comments and grades on reading responses, drafts, essays, and speeches give extensive feedback to students regarding their level of progress. Discussions of class assignments, in which the instructor relates assignment requirements to fulfillment of learning outcomes, offer further assessment regarding progress. Conferences with students allow direct interaction regarding progress as well.

In responding to our survey, students frequently mentioned that their professors adhered to their class syllabi, communicated with them via Blackboard and email, as well as verbally in class and in individual group meetings and through written comments on their assignments and major essays.

X. Staff

The Department is supported by two Program Assistants (one supporting the ESL program, and one supporting the Department as a whole, the Public Speaking, and Composition programs), as well as three student assistants. In addition, we house the Intensive English Program Coordinator, who is considered exempt staff and who is also assigned a student assistant.

A survey reveals that the staff unanimously report feeling well supported by the Department, the University (for example, by CIT training opportunities), and their respective supervisors in carrying out their duties. Morale is reported as “good”; staff members feel “appreciated and welcome” and the work environment is “supportive,” “pleasant,” and “respectful.”

Staff members who participate in designing new procedures or programs show a higher likelihood of foreseeing future growth and satisfaction in their role. The challenges facing the Department in the near future, along with the changes that are likely to take place, will provide ample growth opportunities for staff members.

XI. Diversity and Internationalization

Over the years, world political and economic events have brought changes in where students come from, the type of funding students have, the demographics of students, and in which programs students enroll. For example, before the Shah of Iran was overthrown in 1979, USF, like other U.S. universities, had many Iranian students. During this time also many students from the Middle East (e.g., Saudi Arabia and Algeria) as well as students from Venezuela had government or oil company scholarships to study in the U.S. In contrast, in recent years the vast majority of students have come from the People’s Republic of China (PRC). (See the enrollment figures in the appendix C1.) Also, in the 1970s and 1980s, the majority of international students coming to the U.S. were male, whereas today there is a more equal number of international men and women studying at USF and in the U.S. This brief history of English instruction for

international students at the University of San Francisco does not focus on these global trends so much as on the governance, size of the program, faculty issues, and curricular and other academic aspects of the programs. Nonetheless, these global trends have impacted enrollment and other aspects of the programs.

There are more than 10,000 students enrolled at the university and more than 1,100 of them are international students, with a 15% increase in Fall 2012 international admits over a year ago. Students from more than 66 different countries are represented from Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East, as well as from North, Central, and South America. (For a complete demographic breakdown of “underrepresented groups” by cohort, please see appendix C1.) Inasmuch as the Department includes a current population of ESL students numbering more than 250, and as many requisite courses for graduation make up the other two areas, into which all ESL students flow each semester, the Department of Rhetoric and Language registers the most highly diverse student population on campus.

In addition to one-on-one student advising by ESL faculty for internationals, the department oversees a Conversation Partner Program to ensure all interested students find connections with native speakers each semester. Each year, our faculty and students participate in “International Education Week” and “Culturescape” events designed to help foster understanding and values across demographic groups. Our programs work closely with International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS), which promotes global perspectives through educational and programmatic outreach while fostering the holistic development of international students. An International Network Program helps build community by providing social activities and opportunities for engagement among new and returning students. Our College of Arts and Sciences Dean has created a new Internationalization Task Force, on which an ESL faculty member serves, to better learn how to facilitate understanding among our increasingly diverse student population. Students may also participate in the new Global Residential Community or the USF Buddy program, which connects mentoring students with new internationals.

Our students, faculty and staff are encouraged to engage with the Culturally-Focused Clubs Council and campus organizations such as the Black Student Union and Sister Connection, Latinas Unidas, Japanese Culture Club, Korean and Muslim and Indonesian and Indian and Latin American Student Associations, Asian Pacific-Islander American Coalition, Queer Alliance and LGBTQ Faculty/Staff Caucus and Gender and Sexuality Center, among others. University Ministry embraces students and faculty of all faith traditions including Christian, Islamic, Judaic, and Buddhist. Approximately 250 USF students each semester travel to other countries in the Study Abroad Program. Department faculty regularly circulates journal and newspaper articles on issues pertaining to international student testing, pedagogy, and diversity issues.

USF’s International Admissions office is the sole agent for recruitment of international undergraduate students. While our department has been thriving as the student numbers have grown, we have voiced concern about the Admissions office almost sole focus on the Chinese population to the extent that this semester close to 100% of our ESL population is Chinese, which creates serious pedagogical challenges from the monolingual result felt within our own department and across the university. An ongoing dialog continues to persuade for more diverse recruitment; and workshops by our department faculty have become regular features each semester to inform university professors how to better incorporate international student needs into their curriculum and classroom behaviors.

Intensive English Program

The Intensive English Program (IEP), for internationals interested in English-only education, welcomes students each summer from an array of countries, some of whom choose to enroll as undergraduates. Partnerships with international institutions such as Toin University in Yokohama, Japan, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan, Italy, and Javeriana University in Cali, Columbia have been fruitful connections for the ESL and IEP Programs in recent years, with one of our own ESL faculty returning to Javeriana to teach in recent summer sessions.

Martin-Baro Scholars Program

The Martín-Baró Scholars Program (MBS), a living-learning community, provides a two-semester (16-unit) integrated approach to meeting several core requirements (written communication, oral communication, literature, cultural diversity, and service learning). Throughout the course students read a wide variety of non-fiction and fiction texts, all relating in some way to poverty. Students present policy arguments, analyze literary texts, develop a Community Development Proposal, and ultimately act alongside community partners to bring about small but tangible change by serving diverse populations in San Francisco. Students engaged in service learning projects have worked directly with St. Vincent de Paul's homeless shelter and Wellness Center, the Raphael House (tutoring children in its family shelter), doing outreach for Women's Community Clinic, and working with students at Mission High School (to name a few).

XII. Technology and Informational Resources

Technology

The demand for teaching students to write and speak using 21st century technologies is on the rise. Ten years ago, only the most cutting-edge departments (in writing, speaking, and ESL) were using technology-based tools to compose and deliver rhetoric; now, these technologies are a standard part of the field. In college, in the workplace, and as citizens, students need to use digital writing spaces critically and intellectually, as well as creatively and compellingly.

The following paragraphs summarize data based on a survey of the faculty members of the Department of Rhetoric and Language (see appendix I). When faculty members in the department do use technology for their teaching, they tend to use Blackboard to deliver course information (syllabus, assignments, lesson plans, etc.). Additionally, almost everyone uses the smart classroom projectors/screens. One faculty member, David Holler, serves on the university committee looking at new courseware packages. A few faculty members teach in computer labs; others book individual dates in teaching labs. Library electronic classroom sessions are another valuable tool for curriculum delivery, although not all faculty take advantage of the library's instructional services. The department does not offer any online or distance education courses.

The department is undergoing a significant change in leadership in 2012-2013, which may lead to a re-visioning of what role technology will play in the teaching of writing, speaking, and ESL. For example, the department does not have any learning outcomes that focus on technology and

digital rhetoric specifically. Of course, all of the learning goals that are based on critical thinking imply this focus, given our 21st century context.

As of now, most of the faculty surveyed is satisfied with the technical support the university provides to the department and with the technical support the department provides to faculty. However, the survey revealed that many faculty members are not aware of what technology is available to them to aid in the teaching of writing, thinking, and speaking. The survey respondents also noted that while CIT provides a wide slate of training classes, the department does not offer any training for new or returning faculty in terms of writing and communicating with technology.

Facilities

Facilities for some faculty in the Department of Rhetoric and Language are good to excellent while for others they are problematic. Offices and classrooms are generally well-equipped and adequate meeting rooms are usually available. One problem is that the tables-and-chairs furnishings in some classrooms (including all in Lone Mountain) cannot be easily reconfigured for small group discussions or peer review. We would like to have chairs with desk tables and wheels, similar to those in KA 172. We understand that facilities may be thinking about furniture replacement options, and hope they will consider this request.

The major problem we face with classroom facilities is the lack of them. There are simply not enough classrooms to accommodate USF's growing enrollment. The College of Arts and Sciences has developed an excellent plan for ensuring fair distribution of classroom time and space; unfortunately the other schools do not follow this plan. The result is that every semester we have a number of "unroomed" classes that require major schedule reshuffling, a task made more difficult because of having to work around the schedules of our many part-time faculty. One cause of the problem is that we have too many large classrooms for 40 or more students, and not enough for our classes of 20 or fewer. We have, in the past, suggested that new construction take into account this problem and create more, but smaller, rooms. However, this has not been done.

Since the opening of Kalmanovitz Hall (KA) in the fall of 2008, office space for full-time faculty, for the Rhetoric and Composition office (KA 203), and for the ESL Program and Intensive English Program office (KA 204) has been quite satisfactory. It has been convenient that the Department's Chair's office is located in KA 206 and the Director of the ESL Program's office is located in KA 205 in a suite with the program assistants.

The Department is also quite fortunate to have up-to-date photocopying, faxing and scanning capabilities in its office complex. Some other departments in Kalmanovitz Hall have to share copying, faxing and scanning machines located in the hallways. Our arrangement allows for congenial interaction among staff and all faculty (full-time and adjunct) who access the department office complex to check their mailboxes or to copy, fax or scan documents.

Office space for part-time (adjunct) faculty, who represent the overwhelming majority of our faculty, is problematic. Currently they share a common space with adjuncts from several other departments and programs on the fourth floor of the Gleeson Library. There, access to computers is limited. The space can be loud at times, but there are six private conference rooms available

for meeting with students. One of the biggest problems with this space is access. The central door is kept locked so that students must knock and hope that someone hears them if they are there to meet their professor.

All full-time faculty and adjunct faculty have individual mailboxes in the KA 202 office complex. Adjunct faculty have to travel from their cubicles in Gleeson Library or classrooms to access their mailboxes, photocopy materials and obtain supplies

All USF faculty are quite fortunate to have in all classrooms Internet access via installed or personal Mac and PC computers with projectors and large pull down screens. Overhead projectors are also available in all classrooms. Staff of the Information Technology Services (ITS) office are very helpful in orienting faculty to the use of the classroom equipment, however, response time during class time to any problems with access to or use of the equipment

Classrooms in Kalmanovitz Hall, Cowell Hall (CO), Malloy Hall, and Lone Mountain Main and conference rooms in University Center, McLaren Hall (Rooms 250, 251 and 252) and Lone Mountain Main are available for meetings of large numbers of faculty or large numbers of faculty and students. Conference rooms Kalmanovitz Hall are available for meetings of small numbers of faculty or small numbers of faculty with students.

Repairs and maintenance are reported online and usually repaired on a regular and timely basis by the Facilities Management staff

XII. Plans for the Future

At the request of the Provost and the Office of International Admissions, we have been asked to redesign our curricular offerings beginning in Fall 2013. There is a concern that many students, particularly international students, are being required to take too many composition classes, therefore impeding their progress in their majors. We have designed a “stretch” curriculum, currently awaiting final approval, that would redefine our pre-Core courses as follows:

RHET 106 Introduction to Composition—4 units

RHET 106 Intensive---Introduction to Composition “stretch”—6 units including 2 units of writing lab

RHET 110 Written Communication I—4 units

RHET 110 Intensive—Written Communication I “stretch”—6 units including 2 units of writing lab

This would eliminate RHET 108. Students should then be able to complete their work in one less semester. Placement cutoffs for 106 and 110 would be raised, as would the cutoffs for RHET 130/31, which would then become the course for the most able students. By the time our reviewers arrive on campus, we should be able to discuss this change in more detail, assuming it is approved by the Dean and the Provost.

Beyond this change, in the next five years, the department hopes to accomplish goals in several particular areas:

ESL: The ESL program plans to devise and implement an assessment plan that will measure student progress toward the goal of academic literacy. The program wants to consider what new courses might help students reach these goals more effectively. In addition, the program will continue its efforts to educate other faculty about the challenges and opportunities presented by increasing enrollments of international students.

Composition: The Composition program wants to re-examine and clarify the goals and direction of the program. By seriously considering the results of our 5-year assessment program, we hope to simplify our somewhat octopus-like sequence of courses, taking into account the new directions in the field and the needs of our students. In particular, the program is thinking about the role of WID courses and the structure and role of “developmental” classes in the curriculum.

Public Speaking: The Public Speaking program is investigating ways to expand and develop the curriculum. We are identifying ways that group presentations and conflict management skills can be woven into the public speaking class, and we will be using assessment and faculty review to find ways to develop the analytical aspects of the learning outcomes (using rhetoric to assess the ethics and effectiveness of communication).

To assist in these areas, we have developed a new three-year Student Learning Assurance Plan, Appendix A.

Members of the department are quite interested in developing a major in Rhetoric and Literacy and minors in Rhetoric and Linguistics. This would require developing Advanced Composition courses such as Technical and Professional Writing; Advanced Writing with a Service Learning focus (Non-Profits, Rhetorical Citizenship), Writing for Digital Environments, and a Capstone course in Rhetoric. Advanced speech courses such as Speechwriting, Conflict Resolution, Oral Advocacy, Strategic Communication, Communicating Expertise Rhetorical Analysis, Public Address, Public Relations, and Advertising could be included, building upon our current offerings in Communication for the Health Professions and Presentational Speaking.

We are also interested in developing a Linguistics minor, which would be beneficial for students who are preparing for teaching, students who are planning to work or travel overseas, and perhaps to majors such as Business and International Studies, which could benefit from a linguistics grounding and who could be interested in at least an introductory linguistics course and perhaps a series. In order to do this, possibilities might include reframing “How English Works” as Introduction to Linguistics while maintaining buy-in from the English majors and Dual Degree in Teacher Preparation students who have regularly filled this course, developing a series of 300 level courses such as Advanced Grammar, Language Theory, Socio-Linguistics, Discourse Analysis, Computational Linguistics.

How will the department position itself, given the changes likely to take place within the discipline over the next 5 to 10 years?

English as a Second Language/English for Academic Purposes. The field of ESL has been particularly active and dynamic in the past decade. We see interrelated, compelling shifts in the field with a move from prescriptive “best practices” to an emphasis on dynamic, research-based

pedagogy. This has productively shifted attention from creating “native speakers” to participating in their development for their purposes. Our students are learners in particular contexts, learning toward particular ends. We need to develop a critical pedagogy based on principles rather than hope. This entails a more rhetorical vision that embraces socializing/aculturating, seeking to expand their repertoire of competencies, fostering understanding of contexts and the possibilities for addressing them. This is an engaged practice for students, not just lecturing that there is a particular, immutable standard that they just need to learn. Ideally, this can give respect to and build from the abilities that our students bring to our courses.

A second goal of the ESL program is shifting from ESL to EAP (or a similar framework) in order to move away from marginality, focusing on the work that our department actually does, recognizing the extensive English competencies that students already bring to the department. This will require integrating research more deeply within the department by encouraging partnering with adjunct faculty to do research projects, engaging faculty meaningfully for presenting, developing and supporting common research with other departments and schools, and fostering the community and communication between the different programs within Rhetoric and Language as one way to break down the compartmentalization of ESL students. In many ways, our department has unusual benefits here because of its structure.

By positioning our practices, we are working to prepare our students for communication in a wide range of endeavors, but particularly in academic settings. This shift opens up many avenues for conversation within the department between the different programs. We will continue to educate faculty outside of the program that working meaningfully with international students requires a different framework than a simple list of “Tips for Teaching Chinese Students.” Our outreach as a department and programs for faculty can reinforce the importance of context and the relevance of research to reinforce the shift away from the department as a sort of “skill delivery” black box and reposition it as a beginning point in a conversation, in a process with our students that continues in all of the university’s classrooms.

We also need to develop and foster an awareness of World Englishes. For the last 15-20 years, the field has actively moved beyond privileging a single “native-speaker” style, which privileges some usage as a current-day “Queen’s English.” This anti-hierarchical, embrace of diversity in a globalized moment recognizes the already deeply engrained English usages of our students, for whom English could have been their language of school, government, etc.

Composition. One of the dramatic recent developments in the field is Writing Studies, or Writing About Writing. The theme and focus of these courses is writing itself, with accessible introductions to the foundational texts in composition studies. There are many benefits: introducing students to debates in the field, appealing to those who may be interested in pursuing a minor or major in the field, and avoiding the topical confusion that can come from writing classes focused on a range of disciplinary knowledge outside the purview of the course or department.

A second major development in the field, multi-modal writing, is taking seriously rhetorical sense of the situated writing rather than developing abstracted principles or assuming that

academic writing is the model for success across domains. While this can be as simple as taking seriously the questions, skills, and concerns of writing for the web, developing posters, crafting figures or diagrams, etc. In our department, we could embrace this as an element of rhetoric writ large. We could expand the range of rhetoric in theory and practice to consider the visual, material, and performative trends in the field. In many places, speaking is exploding as a concern. Given our strengths in this area, we could push this further, creating a unique and productive synthesis.

A third area in which we are trying to make progress is moving toward a Writing in the Disciplines (WID) focus for the second-semester composition class, to replace RHET 120, Written Communication II. We currently have classes in several disciplines, developed jointly with the other departments but taught by our faculty: Sociology, Psychology, Sciences, Business, Advertising, Politics, International Studies, and Business.

Another area in which we want to move forward is assessing transfer of skills. The assessment projects within our department have been developing a strong baseline for measuring the development of knowledge over our sequence of writing courses. The next step will probably be assessing the transfer of these skills to students' other classes.

Public Speaking. As a department in a thriving Jesuit educational institution, we could move beyond the traditional canon to explore how public speaking intersects with issues in and of social justice or ethics in ways that might intersect with USF core areas of service learning and cultural diversity. Alternatively, the public speaking core could turn more toward public argumentation and debate and the different places in which these take place (blogs, TV, etc.).

Changes in technology have always impacted the teaching of oral communication and public speaking, as these changes have produced new notions of the very ideas of "publics" and presentation. Our courses are consistently assigned to smart classrooms, including some in state-of-the-art rooms with built-in video equipment, for example. One of our challenges is to make sure that our courses are responsive to new media and technology possibilities--like blogs, wikis, recording equipment, Power Point and other presentational software--even as we maintain the practices associated with a 2,500 year-old tradition.

This could include creating a Communication Center (as opposed to a bifurcated Writing/Speaking Center). Building from a sense of media as a rhetorical choice, this center could contain resources for speaking and writing across a wide range of platforms, perhaps tapping into some of the dynamics of digital humanities and data visualization.

What opportunities exist to extend and build on present strengths and what are the major obstacles that impede the department's progress?

Looking across the three areas of the department, each area faces its own changes, challenges, and needs. Still, if the department is to respond dynamically to the changes in the field it will need:

- More full-time faculty. At the current moment, less than a quarter of the courses in the department are taught by full-time faculty who have the institutional support to engage

with developments in the field and the possibility to institute changes. We need to deepen and expand our full-time faculty contingent to have a vibrant department that can recognize, communicate, and respond to changing fields.

- Commitment to part-time faculty development and integration into departmental life. We have many excellent and engaged part-time faculty who are actively engaged in their pedagogy as well as writing for many. Any successful response to changes in the field will come from working with part-time faculty. Space is critical here. Where part-time and full-time faculty used to share the same floor, talking over coffee and printing, now part-time faculty are in a separate building, floating far from our shared space and the casual conversations that can spark community and exchange.
- Professional development is also critical—not just in funding faculty development, but also in creating opportunities for exchange about pedagogy, theory, and developments. A model that could partially address this would be making two hours of professional development expected each semester with each course (including part-time faculty). This would give the time for at least a single workshop per semester, or perhaps room for people to do classroom visits to two other classes, fueling exchange of practices and setting regular engagement with developments as a baseline in the department going forward.
- Lack of space is a significant and growing problem; as enrollment increases, space appears to decrease. Offerings are limited by the number of classrooms available. Although most classrooms are equipped with technology, the quality varies. In addition, several of our new faculty have been struck by the limitations of our classroom furniture. The heavy desks and chairs require continuous negotiations when moving from individual to small group to large group settings. Some classrooms on campus have more dynamic seating for students (moveable chair/desks, etc.) but this remains rare.
- Curriculum simplification is essential, but there is considerable debate among the faculty about how that should be done. The elimination of RHET 108 is a first step. Faculty in composition raised concerns about the move to WAC/WID courses (e.g., Writing in Psychology) in the department and reservations about shifting more courses in that direction. Some noted that it is difficult to find solid models for WAC programs that are not built around hiring a host of graduate students to teach the courses.

What improvements are possible through reallocating existing resources?

This is a difficult question, as our existing resources seem limited. Since the Department Chair does not propose or control the budget, our financial control is primarily limited to printing and office supplies. Our space resources, admittedly inadequate, are also controlled by the university, so we do not have the ability to reallocate either classroom or office space.

What improvements can only be addressed through additional resources?

It is critical to add more full time faculty (see chart with percentages of courses taught by FTF) Since the department is directly involved with the entire undergraduate population's first experiences at USF, there would be many benefits from having the majority of them taking classes with full time faculty. For example, student retention and success could improve since studies have shown correlations between new students taking a large number of their courses with part-time faculty and drop-out rates.

We would also like to have more collaborative facilities for adjunct faculty. Integrating adjuncts into our community is important for morale. Simply having shared room to talk would facilitate shared exchange about teaching.

There is a need for more investment in Public Speaking—actively addressing upcoming retirements but also more proactive investment in that area. While we are limping along with a modest Speaking Center, we were once promised shared space with the Writing Center, which would we hope will lead to a multi-modal communication/speaking-writing center. In order to do this, the Learning Center would be separated from the Writing Center and moved to a different location, then the Speaking Center could move into their space. We also need additional speech tutors/coaches for students. Right now two or three students are available to keep the Center open 10 hours a week. The Writing Center, on the other hand, is open many more hours and employs part-time faculty as tutors/preceptors. This affirms the impression held by many students and faculty that the Speaking Center is something of a second-class operation.

Challenges to be Met

The greatest challenge we face is that our faculty is strong, but spread too thin. Although the number of full-time faculty has steadily increased (to 18 for AY 2012-13) the number has not kept up with our increasing enrollment. The fact that faculty are sometimes invited by other departments to teach or do administrative work (e.g., English Department, Dual Degree in Teaching Preparation program, First-Year Seminar program, Asian American Studies) leaves even fewer full-time teaching hours for our classes. Yet we believe that full-time faculty should have the opportunity, where they are qualified and interested, to branch out from the service classes from time to time over their careers at USF. Such branching out is good for morale, for relationships with other departments and programs, and for enriching and energizing the faculty in all their classes. We need more full-time faculty in order to support the department classes and curriculum in a sustained way, and in order to assure that new students will be served by and connect with faculty with a commitment to the department and university. Many of our part-time faculty are also excellent at teaching their classes, but by the nature of the positions, cannot consistently devote time, energy and expertise to the good of the larger programs and department. We would appreciate input from our reviewers on possible solutions to this problem.

We would also appreciate comments from the reviewers on ideas for revamping the curriculum and for better integrating the three areas of our department.

And of course, we welcome any other help or comments the reviewers can offer. We are grateful for their time spent reading our report and interviewing our faculty. We also want to express appreciation to Shirley McGuire for shepherding us through this process.

Conclusion

The University of San Francisco's Department of Rhetoric and Language teaches writing and public speaking as intellectual and social practices essential to full academic inquiry, meaningful civic participation, and professional success. The department aims to aid students in developing writing, reading, speaking, and thinking skills necessary to higher education and to promote a focus on discourse as crucial to the formation and transmission of knowledge at higher levels of academic, civic, and professional exchange.

In particular, our priority is to work from our areas of faculty expertise in Composition, Public Speaking, English for Academic Purposes, and Linguistics. As the largest department at USF with an active faculty cohort deepened with recent hires, we feel it is important to develop these departmental strengths into greater and more diverse resources for the university.

In the past few years, attention has been paid to hiring full-time faculty with teaching specializations that will supplement our curriculum and complement current faculty expertise. We have recently added two applied linguistics faculty in ESL, one composition faculty member with technology expertise, and one with expertise in writing studies. In addition, we have a full-time faculty member on loan from the School of Management. This year the department chair will retire, so unless we have another search, we will be down to 17 full-time faculty for next year. Within our existing full-time faculty we have people with specialties in classical rhetoric, composition pedagogy, communication, political rhetoric, publications, Asian-American studies, modernist studies, and literature.

On the whole, the department can look with pride on the accomplishments of the past 5 years. We have integrated public speaking into the department; we have begun to develop an evidence-based assessment protocol; we have revised the curricula to be more rigorous and focused; we have begun to develop WID courses that reflect the needs of students and faculty. Above all, we have managed to create a culture of collegiality and support that has become a distinguishing feature of the department and is recognized by the college as exemplary.

We are proud of our progress, but we know we must constantly work to become better. The faculty and staff are dedicated to that goal, and together, with the continuing support of the College of Arts and Sciences, we will move forward.