

Central Washington University
Assessment of Student Learning
Department and Program Report

Academic Year of Report: 2012

College: Arts and Humanities

Department: English

Program: M.A. TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)

I. What student learning outcomes were addressed?

TESOL Outcome 1. *Students will demonstrate their knowledge of subsentential, sentential, and suprasentential levels of language.* This goal is related to CWU Goal 1, which is to “maintain and strengthen an outstanding academic and student life on the Ellensburg campus.” It is related to two CAH goals: “Ensure that students develop disciplinary specific competencies for success in their field” and “Develop students' intellectual and practical skills for lifelong learning.” It is related to Department Goal 10: “Our graduate programs will provide opportunities for students to extend and enrich their exploration of the disciplines of literature and language, specifically to strengthen their preparation for doctoral study, for careers in teaching writing and literature, and for teaching English to speakers of other languages.” We chose Outcome 1 because we have instituted a new exam option and wanted to measure student success in passing the exam and to determine whether we should revise the exam process.

Department Outcome 15. *Students will demonstrate their commitment to professional development.* This goal is related to CWU Goal 1, which is to “maintain and strengthen an outstanding academic and student life on the Ellensburg campus.” It is related to two CAH goals: “Ensure that students develop disciplinary specific competencies for success in their field” and “Develop students' intellectual and practical skills for lifelong learning.” It is related to Department Goal 10: “Our graduate programs will provide opportunities for students to extend and enrich their exploration of the disciplines of literature and language, specifically to strengthen their preparation for doctoral study, for careers in teaching writing and literature, and for teaching English to speakers of other languages.” We chose Outcome 15 because it is our primary attitudinal outcome.

II. How were they assessed?

TESOL Outcome 1. *Students will demonstrate their knowledge of subsentential, sentential, and suprasentential levels of language.*

We assessed this outcome using a course-based project graded with a rubric. The assessment measured students' knowledge of subsentential, sentential, and suprasentential levels of language as well as their ability to develop classroom strategies for teaching speakers of other languages. In this assignment, students choose a grammar point that has been discussed in class. Using the three-dimensional framework described in their textbook, they set forth their knowledge of the grammar point under the categories of *form*, *meaning*, and *use*. In their discussions of form and meaning (morphosyntax and semantics), students focus on the subsentential and sentential levels of the English language. In their discussions of use (pragmatics or discourse), they focus on the

suprasentential level. After finishing their analysis, they define the learning challenge for a hypothetical class of students and design an activity to help these students meet the challenge.

Our criterion for achievement was that 90% of students would score 75% or above for the project. Students were assessed in ENG 537, Pedagogical Grammar I, in Fall 2012. Since students typically take this course during their first quarter, it assesses their knowledge early in the program.

Department Outcome 15. *Students will demonstrate their commitment to professional development.* We assessed this outcome by measuring student participation in professional development activities such as SOURCE, academic conferences, publications, and awards. Active graduate students for were assessed in Winter 2012, Spring 2012, and Fall 2012. Our criterion for achievement is that a minimum of 30% of active students will present, publish, or receive awards.

III. What was learned?

TESOL Outcome 1. *Students will demonstrate their knowledge of subsentential, sentential, and suprasentential levels of language.*

Students were scored on five criteria, and the results are below:

Criterion		% at or above 75%
A. The analysis is accurate and comprehensive (20 points).	9/10	90%
B. The challenge defined is specific (5 points).	6/10	60%
C. The activity designed has a clear purpose. The activity is appropriate for the hypothetical class (10 points).	6/10	60%
D. Your written analysis and handout are clear, complete, and coherent (10 points).	6/10	60%
E. Your presentation is well paced and organized (5 points).	10/10	100%
Total	9/10	90%

Conclusion: Criterion met. Data for the individual criteria indicate that students performed best at the analysis of a specific grammar point, demonstrating their knowledge of subsentential, sentential, and suprasentential levels of language. They were not as effective in some of the specifically pedagogical aspects of the project.

Department Outcome 15. *Students will demonstrate their commitment to professional development.*

Out of sixteen active students, three (19%) made presentations at SOURCE and/or at the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association meeting during 2012.

Conclusion: Criterion not met. Our (revised) criterion for achievement is that a minimum of 30% of our active students will make presentations, publish papers, or receive awards. A smaller number of student presented papers this year than last year even though we had a larger group of active students. Three factors may have contributed to the declining numbers. First, we dropped our TESOL Research Colloquium from the curriculum because few of our graduates go on to PhD programs or into positions that require research. In the past, projects from this colloquium have been presented at SOURCE and at regional conferences. Second, three students who submitted papers to SOURCE were not able to pass the Human Subjects Review in time. Third, our students have found it difficult to travel to regional conferences because of the limited travel funding available.

IV. What will the department or program do as a result of that information?

TESOL Outcome 1. *Students will demonstrate their knowledge of subsentential, sentential, and suprasentential levels of language.*

Although the assessment came from early in the program and the criterion was met, it suggests that students may need additional preparation in developing classroom activities. Next year's assessment should measure a similar project later in the program.

Department Outcome 15. *Students will demonstrate their commitment to professional development.*

Since our current TESOL curriculum has less emphasis on research, we may want to redefine professional development. For example, all of our TESOL graduates complete a practicum that gives them practical experience in teaching. It is also noteworthy that five of our six 2011-2012 graduates currently have jobs in the field, and the sixth is applying to PhD programs.

We will continue to encourage students to submit papers to SOURCE and to conferences, and we will advise students to begin the Human Subjects Review process earlier. We will also try to find more funding for graduate student travel.

V. What did the department or program do in response to last year's assessment information?

Since our program was changed substantially for 2011-2012, we have not yet made additional changes. Assessment from this year and from an end-of-program assessment next year may suggest additional changes.