Central Washington University
Assessment of Student Learning
Department and Program Report

Academic Year of Report: 2009-10
College: Arts and Humanities
Department: English
Program: M.A. TESOL

I. What student learning outcomes were addressed?

TESOL Outcome 2. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of pedagogical strategies and methods appropriate for second-language speakers. 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.” 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.

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 2 because it provides an overall assessment of student mastery of theory and practice. We chose Outcome 15 because it is our primary attitudinal outcome.

II. How were they assessed?

TESOL Outcome 2. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of pedagogical strategies and methods appropriate for second-language speakers.

Direct Assessment: During the practicum, students observe, coach, and teach ESL classes in the UESL program, at Yakima Valley Community College, or in other appropriate placements. Students are evaluated in their placements using a rubric that assesses 14 measures of teaching effectiveness, application of pedagogical theory, and dispositions. The criterion for achievement is that all students will receive a minimum average of 3 on a 5-point scale.

Students also compile a practicum portfolio that includes lesson plans, course materials, and reflections on teaching. Results of the portfolio evaluations were not available at the time this assessment report was written.
Indirect Assessment: Students are given a graduate survey at the end of their program. They are asked to rank, on a scale of 1 to 5, whether or not they had sufficient opportunity to meet the outcome. Our criterion of achievement was a minimum score of 4.0 for each criterion.

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 2009/2010 were assessed in Fall, Winter, and Spring. Our criterion for achievement is that a minimum of 15% of active students will present, publish, or receive awards.

III. What was learned?

TESOL Outcome 2. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of pedagogical strategies and methods appropriate for second-language speakers.

Practicum Rubric: Five students were assessed in this year’s practicum. At the time of writing, three of five rubrics had been returned; two were not completed by the site supervisors. For the three returned, students scored above three for each of the criteria.

Exit Survey: Only one student responded (from Summer 2009). This student would like to see more emphasis on pedagogy in the TESOL program, and more opportunities to practice teaching.

Conclusion: Criterion appears to be met, but the data are incomplete for both assessments. A response from one student is not conclusive, but the comments were consistent with past evaluations and with our Alumni Survey. We do need more teaching opportunities for our TESOL students.

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

Out of fourteen active students, five presented papers during this academic year, and one published an article. The practicum rubrics also provide some data on professionalism; both students scored above 3 for a respectful and enthusiastic attitude and for meeting the class regularly and on time.

Conclusion: Criterion met. Our criterion for achievement is that 15% will present or publish, and 36% did.

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

This assessment report will be distributed to department faculty and discussed at the first department meeting for Fall 2010.

We have made substantial changes to our TESOL program that will go into effect for 2010/11. One change will allow students to take some electives in English, Foreign Languages, Education, and Anthropology rather than completing a fixed curriculum. This includes courses focusing on pedagogy, which addresses student desire for more pedagogy.

We continue to seek suitable practicum opportunities for our students. We have been hampered somewhat by budgets. In the past, we have been able to fund a TESOL teaching assistant in the UESL center, and in return, UESL has provided teaching opportunities for our practicum students. As a teaching assistant is no longer possible, UESL has been reluctant to allow our
students to teach in the program. We have been able to obtain placements at adult language learning centers in Ellensburg and Yakima.

We will continue to encourage students to present and publish.

V. How did the department or program make use of the feedback from last year’s assessment?

We have added an attitudinal outcome to our assessment report.