



INSIGHT

Volume 5

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ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

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MEASURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DEVELOPMENTAL WRITING COURSES by *Anne Hay Southard and Jennifer Clay*

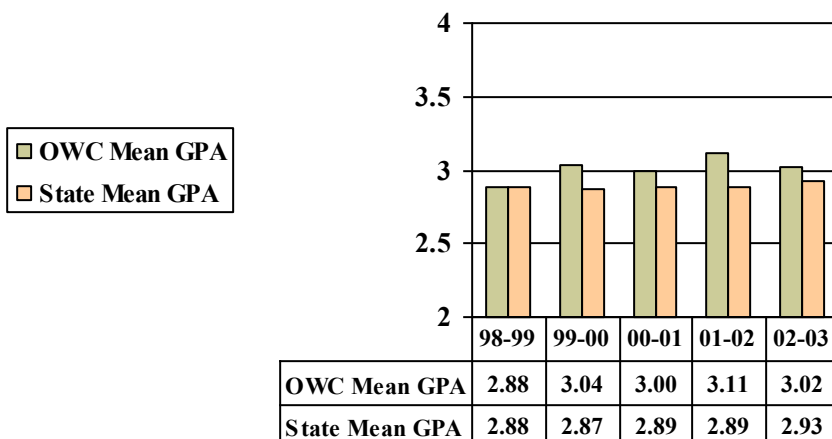
In this study, we wanted to evaluate OWC's effectiveness in preparing developmental writing students to succeed in Composition I, and we were interested in whether the FCPT's assignment of students in developmental courses was accurate.

Our study indicates that College Prep English B at OWC prepares students to succeed in Composition I and thus confirms previous research. There was no significant difference in the mean Composition I grades of developmental and non-developmental students. In addition, the developmental students passed Composition I at a higher rate, withdrew at a lower rate, and required fewer attempts to pass than did their non-developmental counterparts.

The study also produced a disturbing finding: the lack of a significant correlation between FCPT scores and grades in writing-intensive courses. When coupled with the FCPT's low content validity for both College Prep English B and Composition I, this lack of a correlation raises concerns about the test's placement accuracy.

We believe that faculty in every developmental writing program should periodically assess their curriculum's effectiveness; knowing that these programs can prepare students to succeed in college-level writing is not the same as knowing that one's own program does so. We were reassured to find that OWC's developmental writing course prepares its students for future academic success, and we remain challenged to identify a more accurate placement method.

Chart 1.0
ASSOCIATE IN ARTS DEGREE



A.A. STUDENTS MEASURE UP!

Once again the state accountability measures verify the quality and preparation of OWC associate in arts students. For the fourth year in a row, OW students who transfer to the Florida SUS earn GPA's at or above a 3.00 in their upper division coursework. In addition, OW transfer students out perform both the Florida Community College System transfers and the SUS native students! Congratulations to the students and to the faculty!

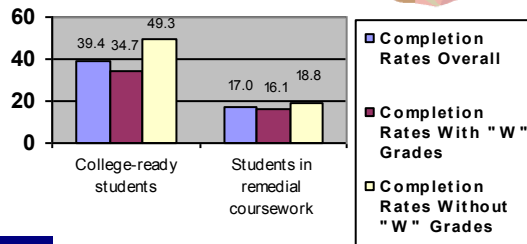
FLASHBACK THEN & NOW

More 40th Anniversary Statistics

- In May 1966, OWJC awarded 146 AA degrees and 6 AS/AAS degrees.
- As of May 2004, OWC has awarded a total of 21,757 degrees.
- On September 11, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed public law 89-180 which established a permanent site for OWJC on former U.S. government land.

RESEARCH FACTOID

Graduation Rates for Students with Withdrawal Grades



FAST FAQs

What percentage of U.S. undergrads in public higher education attend community colleges?



Answer: 44%

WEB SIGHTINGS



> Dealing with Dangerous

Discussions Online and On Campus:

<http://www.tltgroup.org/Events/Interviews/DeirdreCobb-Roberts2-17-2004/>

> The Power of Practical Magic: Perspectives from Teaching Excellence Award Recipients

<http://www.nisod.org/publications/celebrations.html>

> Fast Facts—short, one page synopsis of a subject or recent research related to the Florida Community College System.

<http://www.flboe.org/CC/OSAS/FastFacts/FastFacts.asp>

Production Staff

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"I THINK I CAN, I THINK I CAN": SELF-EFFICACY AS A PREDICTOR OF WRITING PERFORMANCE

by
Jennifer Clay

Albert Bandura, Stanford University professor of psychology, theorizes that we all have varying levels of self-efficacy, or belief in our abilities to accomplish specific tasks. Those efficacy levels are developed by comparisons of our performance with others' and through instructor feedback. High levels of self-efficacy, Bandura believes, are tied to high levels of persistence and effort, especially when confronting a difficult academic task. Curiosity to see if this theory applies to students' writing performance led me to choose this topic for my dissertation.

I conducted this study with students enrolled in ENC1101 at UWF and at OWC, along with a group of students enrolled in Advanced Placement English at Crestview High School. To gather data, I revised and administered the "Writing and Self-Regulatory Scale" devised by Bandura and his colleague Barry Zimmerman. After obtaining a writing sample from each student, I ran a Pearson Correlation between the survey score and the holistically scored writing sample. In addition, I interviewed select students with varying efficacy levels to determine how they developed their sense of efficacy.

The results of the study showed that a positive correlation exists between efficacy and writing performance. However, one difficulty arises when the students' levels of self-efficacy do not match their actual writing products. Students come to us at the college with writing self-efficacy levels established by their previous writing experiences. Students sometimes think they are accomplished writers; however, in reality, they are not. We as college writing instructors can modify students' efficacy levels through teaching of specific skills and through providing honest, specific feedback to students. When instructors attend to the issue of self-efficacy, the students benefit because students with high levels of self-efficacy in writing are more likely to revise, to accept and to use criticism of their writing, and to persevere in completing the writing process.

GRADUATE NUMBERS ON THE RISE

The number of 2003-04 OWC graduates increased by nearly 10% over the previous year. Although AA degree recipients grew by 7%, the most dramatic increase came in the certificate category, where, thanks to a myriad of new certificate options, numbers rose 41%. The Associate in Arts, Registered Nursing and Industrial Management degree programs led the list of most popular two-year programs, while Early Childhood and Business Management were the college credit certificate favorites. Law Enforcement Basic continues as the most productive vocational credit certificate.

Chart 2.0
TOTAL NUMBER OF GRADUATES FOR THE YEAR



BRIGHT IDEAS

If you have a newsletter suggestion or a research idea, please contact us at: <IR@owc.net> or 729-5363

