ASSESSMENT, PLACEMENT, AND PERFORMANCE OF ENGLISH 020 STUDENTS AT LETHBRIDGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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INTRODUCTION

At Lethbridge Community College, all students applying for admission to the College and University Preparatory (Upgrading) program, as well as many post-secondary programs, must undergo admissions testing. Applicants write academic placement tests administered by the College's Assessment Centre. Test results are interpreted to the applicants, who are then advised and placed in appropriate courses for their levels of skill in reading, writing, spelling, and mathematics.

Academic placement in Upgrading subjects is based on skills testing at LCC, rather than on subject levels completed in the secondary school system. Why? The answer lies in our clientele. Our students are older than those in secondary schools, ranging in age from 18 to a few over 60. Diversity is evident in nearly everything about these students -- their apparent levels of motivation, interests, learning styles, learning needs, cognitive abilities, study habits, persistence, and attitudes towards both their course work and their instructors. They come from a wide range of educational backgrounds, and for many there has been a gap of years in their formal education.

Compared to younger and more "school-wise" students, many adult learners reentering secondary and postsecondary programs are deficient in the reading and writing skills necessary for success in their courses (Apps, 1981; Harrison & Kaminsky, 1986; Kirschenbaum &

Perri, 1982). They also tend to lack confidence in their ability to learn, read, write, and organize their time effectively (Beder & Darkenwald, 1982; Pomerenke & Mink, 1987).

In learner-centered instruction, a concept to which the College is committed, the abilities and learning needs of each student are a major starting point for curriculum. Students learn most effectively when they can build on knowledge and skills they already have (Apps, 1981; Burns, 1973; Knowles, 1986; Lenz, 1982). Determining the current skills levels of each student in order to place that student at an appropriate level for effective learning is the purpose of admissions testing done at LCC. We consider entrance testing and placement based on skills levels to be important steps in promoting success in learning.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

We make several assumptions when we administer such tests and when we make placement decisions based on the test results. First, we assume that the tests used are valid and reliable, and that they are appropriate instruments to use for placement decisions. The validity and reliability of the tests are discussed below.

Next we assume that placement recommendations made on the basis of those results are appropriate, placing students at course levels where they can learn most successfully. Placement recommendations suggest that a student placed at a particular level in English, English 020 for example, has the ability to perform at least at a C level (defined in English 020 as a final grade of 65). But there is a gulf between having

the ability to perform and actually performing, as we all know too well. Assessment and placement decisions may be valid indicators of the ability to succeed, but can we assume they also predict learning performance?

The purpose of this study is to address this question, to determine whether assessment and advisement procedures placed the 46 students enrolled in my two English 020 classes in the Fall semester of 1993 at a level of English where they were able to perform successfully. I wanted to learn whether there was a relationship between students' placement test scores in reading comprehension and writing and their English 020 grades.

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Upgrading-Level English Courses at Lethbridge Community College

The Upgrading program at LCC offers English courses numbered 009, 013, 020, 023, 030, and 033. These are high school equivalency courses for which students do not receive Alberta high school credits. The College issues its own grades, which are generally accepted as equivalent by universities and colleges in Canada and the United States.

LCC provides two diverging streams of English courses. English 009 and English 013 feed into both streams. The English 020-030 stream is strongly literature-oriented, correlating the study of literature with the development of language arts skills. This stream is designed primarily for the college- or university-bound student. The English 023-

033 stream focuses almost exclusively on composition, emphasizing the development of expository writing skills.

Enrollment in a particular English stream or course depends on assessment and placement, or on achievement in the prerequisite level of English at the College. For example, students who achieve 70% or better in English 013 may choose whether to enter English 020 or 023; those achieving below 70% must enter English 023. All students newly admitted to the College must undergo academic assessment, and their placement in English 020 or any other English course will be based on their test scores as interpreted by the Assessment Centre.

Assessment and Placement at Lethbridge Community College

The Assessment Centre advises students' placement in appropriate levels of English and Reading classes at the College on the basis of their results on two measures. The Centre administers the Canadian Achievement Test, Form A, for Reading Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension scores. In addition, students' writing skills are assessed on the basis of a timed writing sample on a preset topic. Details about these two measures follow.

The Canadian Achievement Tests, Form A

The Canadian Achievement Tests (CAT) are considered a particularly useful form of evaluation since they use both norm-referenced and criterion-referenced assessment (Whyte, 1985). The CAT has been fully standardized. Norms are based on data obtained through

stratified random sampling of schools and school districts and through high participation. Content validity has been ensured by the development of category objectives designed to measure the basic skills required in any curriculum. Details concerning standardization, norming of the various levels of the CAT, validity, and reliability estimates are available in the Technical Bulletin for Form A (CAT,1983).

Locator Tests are first administered to determine the appropriate level of testing for individual students. Students then write tests at the appropriate level in the major content areas of Reading and Spelling. Upgrading students in English 020 or 023 have been placed on the basis, in part, of their Reading test scores at Level 19 (for grades 9.6 to 12.9).

The CAT Reading test is timed as follows: 12 minutes for the Reading Vocabulary test, consisting of 30 items, and 35 minutes for Reading Comprehension, consisting of 40 items. The Reading Comprehension section is of particular interest here, as it tests pure reading skills. Reading skills, naturally, are a critical prerequisite for successful learning in an English literature course such as English 020, the focus of this study.

Reading tests are scored manually. Raw scores are converted to derived scores, using norms tables provided with the tests (see Appendix A for norms tables). Scale scores are produced from a single, equal-interval scale of scores across all grades for use with all levels of the tests. The scale score is expressed in three-digit numbers, ranging from 000 to 999. The scale score is a standardized score which provides more detailed information about a student's achievement on the test than would a raw score (CAT Norms Tables, 1982).

CAT Reading Comprehension Scores and Placement in English

At LCC, a student's scale score in Reading Comprehension is then located on a predetermined scale with ranges of cutoffs suggesting placement in different course levels of English, and sometimes Reading. For clear placement in English 020, students should score at least 620 on Reading Comprehension, where the maximum scale score is 861 and the minimum 317. This comparatively low score on Reading Comprehension must be accompanied by an acceptable score on the second measure used, the writing sample.

For clear placement in English 023, students must score at least 631 on Reading Comprehension, and this comparatively high score must coincide with an acceptable score on the writing sample. Between these two cut-offs, obviously there is a grey area. Students with Reading Comprehension scale scores between the two "clear placement" levels are placed, depending on their performance on the writing sample, in English 020 or 023, possibly combined with Reading 010 or 020, at the discretion of the Assessment Centre. See Appendix B for the cut-off ranges on both measures and corresponding placement recommendations.

Writing Sample Test

The second assessment measure administered to incoming students, and used to determine placement in English courses, is a timed writing sample produced under test conditions. Students are given 30 minutes to plan and write a short essay on an assigned topic.

They are advised to take the opportunity to show how well they can write, rather than how much, and to express their thoughts on the topic clearly and effectively. The topic given to each student in this sample asks the writer to identify the two or three most important factors that he or she would consider in taking a job and to explain why. (See Appendix C for the test instructions and topic.)

The limitations of single-sample writing tests are well known. Of course it would be preferable, for a more valid test of writing skill, to examine multiple writing samples written on different occasions and in various rhetorical modes. However, given student numbers, time lines and costs, it is generally conceded that using single writing samples, marked by more than one marker, is acceptable for purposes of placement and diagnosis (Brossell, 1986; Carlson, 1988; Greenberg, 1982; Odell, 1981).

Since expository writing is the type students are asked to produce in research papers, essay tests, and so on, it is an appropriate type to use for assessment purposes. As DeShields points out, "Expository writing, to a greater extent than other types of writing, has a simple, logical structure which embodies the fundamental principles of good writing most clearly and is thus most readily assessed in an objective fashion. In addition ... expository writing involves skills that are basic to other forms of written expression" (1984, 103).

Every effort has been made to meet the requirements of validity and reliability in the assessment of writing samples. According to Greenberg (1982), any test of writing skills should have three kinds of validity. It must seem reasonable to writing teachers and researchers ("face validity"). It should measure the skills which comprise writing

ability and rank students according to objective criteria ("content validity"). And it should predict students' performance on other measures of writing ability, such as academic grades and essay scores("criterion-referenced validity").

To meet these requirements, a writing test must include at least one writing sample produced in response to a carefully constructed task. The sample must be judged by more than one trained reader, since different readers may weight the criteria differently; this will increase reliability. Readers must use a common set of criteria based on definitions of writing competence. In addition, it must be demonstrated that the test can be used to rank students according to the test's criteria and to discriminate among students' differing levels of writing competence (Greenberg, 1982, 371).

These requirements have been addressed in the assessment procedures used at LCC for grading students' writing samples. Writing samples are marked twice by trained English instructors, using a detailed marking key that has been developed at LCC and validated in terms of writing skill levels appropriate for the different course levels in English. The marking key produces a score of up to 50 points. Scores are calculated for 7 out of 12 categories: content; opening and closure; development or body; type and length of sentences; sentence structure; word use; grammar, spelling and punctuation. The remaining 5 categories are scored for diagnostic feedback to the writers, but not calculated in the test score. (See Appendix D for writing sample marking key.)

Generally markers find they have scored within one or two points of each other. However, when there is a difference of even one point in

the total score, the sample goes to a third marker, the head of the Assessment Centre, who determines the final score.

Writing Sample Scores and Placement in English

Cut-off scores have also been established for the writing samples, as indicated in Appendix B. For clear placement in English 020, a student must score at least 29 out of 50; for English 023, at least 23. Both cut-off points must be achieved in conjunction with appropriate scale scores in Reading Comprehension, as described above. Students scoring in the grey area between 23 and 29 on the writing sample are placed, depending on their scores in Reading Comprehension, in English 023 or 020 on the recommendation of the Assessment Centre.

Recommended Placement in English

Students are strongly advised, though not compelled, to enroll in the level of English recommended by the Assessment Centre. If the recommendation is for English 023 and the student prefers the higher-level 020, the student may choose, aware of a degree of risk in light of assessed levels of reading or writing skills. However, if the recommendation is for a lower grade level, such as English 009 or 013, students must normally enroll at that level. Often, too, students placed at English 033 or 030, our highest Upgrading English levels, choose instead to enrol in English 020 or 023 to polish the skills they know they will need for the higher levels.

Consequently, English 020 classes consist of a combination of students: those recently tested and placed in English 020, those placed in 023 but choosing to try 020, those placed in higher levels but choosing 020, and those moving up, having completed LCC's English 013 with a final grade of 70 or higher.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading Tests and the Prediction of Academic Performance

A number of studies have investigated relationships between reading comprehension scores and academic performance, as measured by grades in particular courses or by GPA. The theory is that performance in learning can be predicted from reading comprehension performance, since the same cognitive processes are involved in both comprehension and learning (Royer, 1987).

Carney and Geis (1981) found that reading scores can be used to predict both academic performance and retention in first-year university students. Their results support the use of reading comprehension scores to identify students in need of remediation and support. A later study (Nisbet et al., 1982) confirmed these results for high-risk university students. Royer (1987, 1990) found course-relevant reading comprehension performance to be a significant predictor of performance in specific courses, but not of overall college performance.

Blustein and others (1986) identified cognitive ability, particularly reading comprehension ability, as a predictor of grade point average in

community college students. Consequently, the college in question developed a required assessment procedure and course modules designed to improve reading comprehension, among other skills, for students identified as at risk.

Two studies found an interesting effect: reading comprehension scores correlated with grades in moderate- and advanced-level English courses, but not with grades in lower (preparatory) level courses. Hodges (1990) noticed this lack of correlation for preparatory level writing classes at Lane Community College. A study by Cochise College (1990) found a positive relationship between scores on a reading comprehension test and academic success in all classes except developmental-level ones. At lower grade levels (below grade 6) reading scores were not a good predictor.

Writing Sample Tests and the Prediction of Academic Performance

This relationship appears not to have been studied, although some material does exist using indirect (multiple-choice test) rather than direct measures of writing skills. Greenberg (1982) notes that multiple-choice writing tests, which do not require the writer to produce original prose, do seem to correlate with instructors' evaluations of students' essays and grades in English. Hodges (1990), using a 35-item writing placement test, found that the higher the writing test scores, the greater were students' chances of achieving grades of C or above in a college writing course.

Student Placement and the Prediction of Academic Performance

Placing students in appropriate levels of English courses is important both to students and to instructors. If minimum levels of reading or writing proficiency (cutoffs) are set too high, this results in increased demand for remedial courses and support services. Borderline students may be held back unnecessarily, doing more remedial work than perhaps they need in order to succeed in their courses. If cutoffs are set too low, on the other hand, course standards slip. Instructors have to spend time bringing students to a level of skill that may be lower than they will need for upper-level courses that demand greater proficiency in reading and writing skills (Greenberg, 1982).

Does academic placement predict performance? Hudson (1989) looked at the grades of university freshmen in English and other courses, in light of their placement test scores. In English, Reading and Mathematics courses, when students were allowed the opportunity to perform despite borderline placement scores, their academic performance did not conform to placement test scores. In English courses, differences in the placement test scores accounted for only a small amount of the variation in performance. Hudson concluded that many factors other than reading and writing skills can influence academic performance, factors such as student motivation, student attitudes, student-institutional "fit", teachers' attitudes and methods, and so on. Attendance, for example, has been found to have a direct relationship with final grades in City Colleges of Chicago (Easton, 1984).

Loucks (1985) investigated the relationship between diagnostic testing (reading test and writing sample) and final grades in English 101 at Shoreline Community College. A direct correlation was found between many of the students' scores and performance in English, but the predictive function of the diagnostic tests was inconsistent: many students did well in the course despite low diagnostic scores, and many did poorly despite high diagnostic scores. Loucks concluded that diagnostic testing is useful as an indicator of student abilities, but less useful as a predictor of achievement in a course. Again, the point is made that many factors beyond the instructor's (and often the student's) control influence academic performance. Entry-level skills do not appear to prevent or guarantee achievement.

The literature review suggests the following results for this study:

1. There may be little or no correlation between reading comprehension scores and final grades in English, at this comparatively low or "developmental" level of English.
2. Writing sample test scores may correlate with essay scores and final grades in English 020, although this relationship has been previously tested only using multiple-choice writing tests, not writing samples.
3. Placement in English 020 or 023, resulting from a combination of reading comprehension scores and writing sample scores, may correlate generally with students' grades in English 020; however, some students placed low (EN023 or below) may perform well, and some students placed high (EN020 or above) may perform poorly.

METHOD

Data Collection: Assessment Centre

At the beginning of the 1993 Fall semester, I asked the Assessment Centre to collate CAT Reading Comprehension test scores, writing sample test scores, and placement recommendations for the 46 students in my two English 020 classes. Students whose assessment scores had been obtained more than two months earlier were retested by the Assessment Centre. This produced current scores for all my students, including those who had completed English 013 and entered English 020 not on the basis of placement testing but by completing English 013 with a final grade of 70% or above. I asked the Centre to keep the scores from me until the end of the semester when my English 020 grades had been finalized.

My students' Reading Comprehension test scores ranged from 498 to 731, with a mean of 615.9, standard deviation 54.8.

Their writing sample test scores ranged from 19 to 36, with a mean of 28.3, standard deviation 3.1.

English placement recommendations based on the above sets of test scores would have placed 19 of my students in English 023 or lower (English 013 would have been the placement for three students), and 27 students in English 020 or higher (English 033 would have been suggested for four students, and English 030 for two).

Data Collection: English 020

At mid-semester I administered a timed essay test to my English 020 classes, giving them one hour to plan and write a 400-word essay in response to a topic based on a novel unit we had just completed. I graded the test essays using criteria related to structure, paragraph development, sentence control, punctuation, spelling, diction, and so on. As the essays were written in controlled test conditions, and graded according to similar criteria, I felt the results would be useful to compare with the Assessment Centre's writing sample test scores. On this test students' performance ranged between 30 and 97.5%, with a mean of 74.1, median of 75, and standard deviation of 16.8.

During the semester I recorded students' absences from class. Attendance was one of several factors mentioned in the literature as possibly having a relationship with academic performance. Absences ranged from 0 to 24, with a mean of 6.3, standard deviation of 4.9.

Final grades in English 020 were calculated based on the evaluation breakdown available on the course outline (see Appendix E). My 46 students wrote a total of six essays for the course, numerous other writing assignments and tests, and a final exam. Final course grades ranged from 40 to 90%, with a mean of 70.0%, standard deviation 10.9.

Analysis of Data

Regression analysis was performed using the Assessment Centre data and English 020 grades, both final grades and test essay scores. Correlations were sought between the following variables:

(a) Reading Comprehension scores and final grades in English
(b) writing sample test scores and final grades in English
(c) writing sample test scores and English 020 test essay scores
(d) combination of Reading Comprehension and writing sample scores, and final grades in English
(e) placement levels and final grades in English
(f) number of class absences and final grades in English

I then separated my students into two groups: those whose assessment scores would have placed them in English 020 or higher (27 students) and those whose scores would have placed them in English 023 or lower (19 students).

I repeated the regression analyses listed above, this time separately for each placement group, to determine whether there were significant differences between the two groups of students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Reading Comprehension Scores and Final Grades

For all 46 students, reading comprehension scores were only very weakly related to final grades, with a correlation coefficient of only +0.24. For those testing at English 023 and below, the coefficient was somewhat higher at +0.42. However, for the stronger group testing at 020 and above, the relationship was negative, with a coefficient of -0.18. Clearly the relationship between reading scores and final grade is very weak, except with the lower placed group, and the relationship there is only modest.

These results seem to confirm the prediction based on the literature review above, that with students working at "developmental" levels of English there may be little or no relationship between reading comprehension scores and final grades.

Writing Sample Scores and Final Grades

For the combined group, the relationship between writing sample scores and final grades was also very weak, although slightly less so than with reading scores. The correlation coefficient for the combined group was +0.31; for the English 023 and below group, +0.24; for the English 020 and above group, +0.06. As with reading scores, the relationship is again weakest for the more highly skilled students.

Writing sample test scores do not appear to correlate with final grades for these students. I was unable to find previous studies relating

writing samples and performance in English. However, studies using multiple-choice tests have suggested a positive relationship with English grades, both final grades and essay scores.

Writing Sample Scores and English 020 Test Essay Scores

Here there appears to be a somewhat stronger positive relationship than with reading comprehension or writing sample scores and final grades. For the overall group, the relationship between writing sample scores and English 020 test essay scores was +0.42; for the English 023 and below group, +0.32; and for the English 020 and above group, +0.22.

Writing sample test scores appear to bear a stronger relationship with test essay scores than they do with final grades in English.

Combination of Reading and Writing Scores and Final Grades

Multiple correlation analysis indicated a weak relationship among these factors for the combined group, with a correlation coefficient of +0.35. For the English 023 and below group, the relationship was somewhat stronger at +0.48. Again the English 020 and above group showed the weakest relationship at +0.21.

Placement Level and Final Grades

There was a modest positive relationship between higher (English 020 and above) or lower placement (English 023 and below) and final grades in English. This is indicated by a correlation coefficient of +0.32.

The difference in performance levels is indicated more clearly by comparing the means on final grades of the two groups. The lower testing group, English 023 and below, achieved an average grade of 66.8%, with a range of 84 to 40, standard deviation 12.5. The higher testing group, English 020 and above, achieved an average grade of 73.8%, with a range of 90 to 56, standard deviation 8.8. Figure 1 compares the final grade distributions for the two groups.

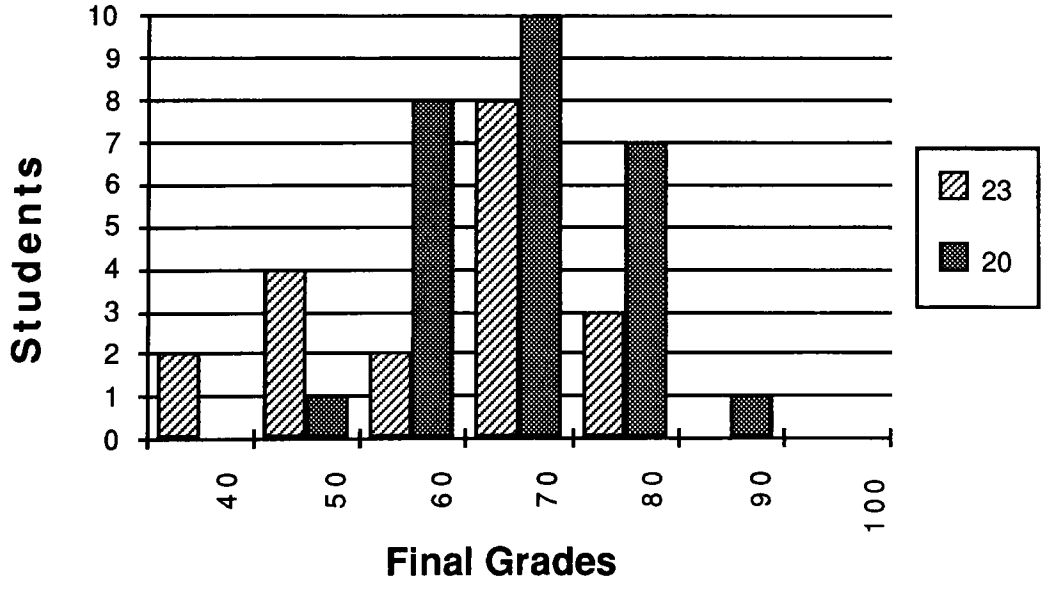

Figure 1: Final Grade by Placement Group

A two-tailed t test confirms this differentiation in performance between the more skilled and less skilled groups of students. The two groups are distinguishable at the 95% level of confidence (see Figure 2).

	020 group	023 group
Mean	73.81	66.84
Variance	77.92	156.25
Observations	27	19
Pooled Variance	3.5	
degrees of freedom	30.27	
t	2.09	
P (T<=t) two-tail	0.045	
t Critical two-tail	2.04	

Figure 2: Two-Sample t-Test Assuming Unequal Variances

Once again, these results confirm findings noted in the literature review. First, final grades in English were expected to correlate generally with placement patterns. The seven-point difference in average final grades for the two groups clearly illustrates this relationship.

Second, the predictive validity of placement decisions seems imperfect: lower placed students often perform above, and higher placed students often below expectations. This unpredictability is certainly evident in my 46 students. LCC's placement recommendations suggest that a student placed at a particular level has the ability to perform at least at a C level, or 65% in English 020 or 023.

Figures 3 and 4 below indicate the range of final grades for the lower (023) and higher (020) placed students around the 65% or C point in English 020. In each case the grades below 65 are blackened.

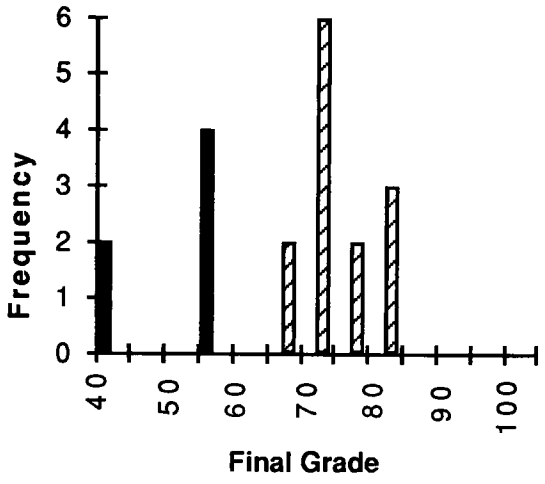

Figure 3: Frequency of Final Grades for 023

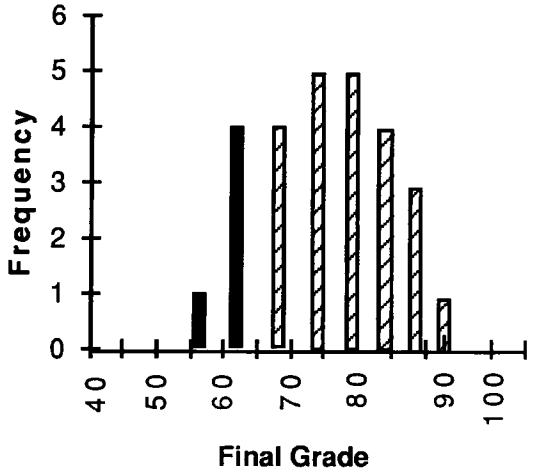

Figure 4: Frequency of Final Grades for 020

Of the 19 students testing at English 023 and below, 6 students (31.6%) achieved final grades below 65%. Of the 27 students testing at English 020 and above, 5 (18.5%) scored below 65%. These results are less surprising for the less skilled group, since they would have been placed in English 023, a less demanding course than English 020. In fact, the surprise in this group's performance is less those who underperformed than those who performed very well despite skills levels. Five (26.3%) of the lower-placed students achieved final grades at a B level (75%) or above. Even in the stronger group, a significant

number of students performed below expectations despite adequate levels of reading and writing skills.

Clearly additional factors are intervening to influence the performance of students in both groups.

Absences and Final Grades

One readily measured factor among the many suggested in the literature is attendance of classes. The relationship between number of English classes missed through absence and students' final grades in English 020 was the most significant found in this study. For the combined group of 46 students, there was a moderate negative relationship between absences and final grades, with a correlation coefficient of -0.53. That is, the greater the number of classes missed, the lower the final grade in English. There was little difference in coefficients for the English 020 (-0.55) and English 023 (-0.45) groups.

Figure 5 shows the clear relationship between number of absences from class and final grades in English 020.

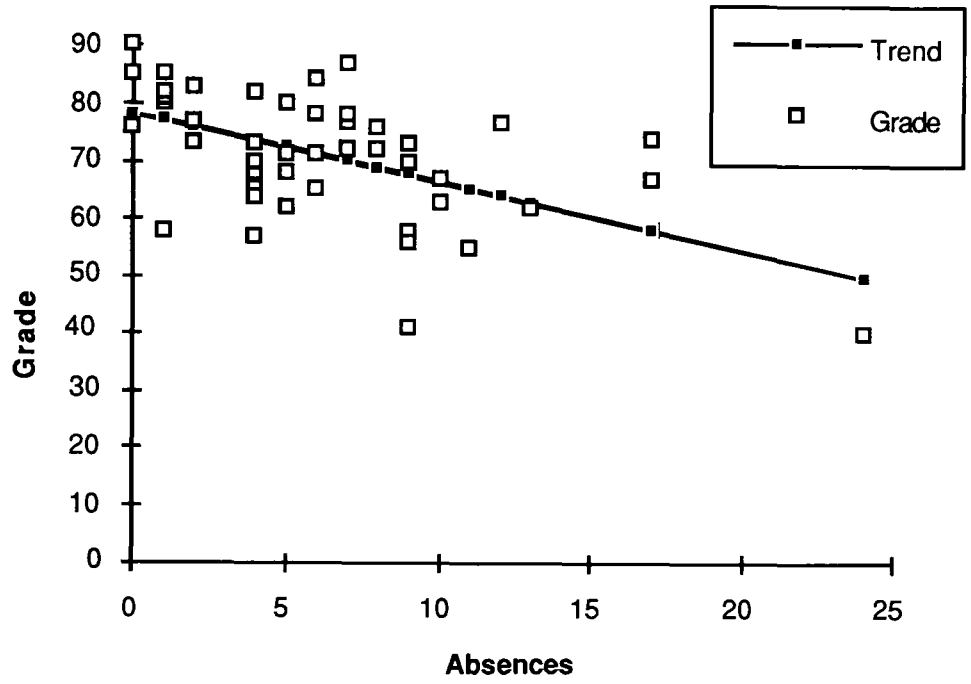

Figure 5: Final Grade vs. Absences

CONCLUSIONS

1. For students in English 020, Reading Comprehension test scores and writing sample test scores do not appear to predict performance in English as indicated by final grades.
2. Writing sample test scores may to some extent predict students' performance on writing activities such as test essays.
3. Assessment and placement decisions based on reading and writing tests do appear to place students at a level of English

where they are able to perform successfully, as indicated by final grades.

4. Performance in English is not fully predictable by entry-level skills in reading and writing. Students often perform well above or below expectations based on these skills.

5. Factors beyond the scope of this study appear to affect student performance in English despite levels of reading and writing skills. For example, class attendance appears here to correlate directly with final grades.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The predictive relationship of writing sample tests with students' performance on other writing activities deserves further study. Could we expand the use of such tests to include diagnosis of students' writing skills, with an eye to planning individualized instruction? If the College moves toward modularized English courses, diagnostic information about students' skills might suggest particular modules of instruction needed by individual students, and the possibility of challenging and bypassing other modules.

2. Beyond reading and writing skills, many factors influence students' performance during a semester, some within and others beyond the instructors' (and often the students') control. We could survey students to determine what they feel helps or

hinders their learning. Experienced instructors are also a rich source of insight into what helps students to learn, and into what circumstances and behaviours interfere with learning. Once we have identified the bridges and barriers to learning, we need to communicate that information to students and faculty, as well as to address such factors as we are able to influence, to encourage students' persistence and success in learning.

3. Attendance is only one sign of involvement in academic effort; however it appears to be a significant factor in performance. Moreover, it is one which is within students' control. They need to be made aware of the relationship between attendance and performance, and encouraged to use it to their advantage.

4. Placement on the basis of skills alone may place potentially high-achieving students needlessly low. Clearly the predictive power of test results needs to be interpreted with caution: once students register for a course, other factors come into play, some supportive of learning, others not. No assessment procedure claims to predict performance, nor is that its purpose. LCC's Assessment Centre advises students' placement at course levels appropriate for their skills. This study suggests that the Centre's flexibility in advising students is appropriate and should be continued. Many students do perform above expectations when given the opportunity. We ought not to hold back students who wish to work at a higher level than their skills seem to warrant,

provided they are making informed decisions in light of their assessed skills.

5. Finally, we must consider assessment scores a very limited indicator of students' learning abilities. Skills testing provides us with useful measurements of our students' skills at a single point in time. Obviously those skills will change and grow as learning occurs. Students learn at different rates according to their abilities, but also according to their levels of motivation, effort, and persistence. We must not overestimate the limiting effects of students' skills levels at a particular point in time; nor must we underestimate the influence of students' motivation, determination, and effort. Assessment measures give us useful information about students' reading and writing skills, but cannot accurately indicate their potential for effective learning and academic performance.

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Appendix A: CAT Norms Tables

Level 19 — Table 4 — RAW SCORE TO SCALE SCORE — Form A

Raw Score	SCALE SCORE												Raw Score
	Reading				Language			Mathematics					
	Vocab	Read Comp	TOTAL READ	Spell	Mech	Lang Expr	TOTAL LANG	Comput	Concept & Applc	TOTAL MATH	TOTAL BATTERY	Refer Skills	
0	320	317	247	320	319	254	301	274	266	267	249	283	0
1	331	326	257	331	334	269	309	295	284	282	250	313	1
2	340	336	266	352	355	293	317	315	301	288	252	332	2
3	352	343	276	371	371	305	323	335	316	293	253	345	3
4	365	354	287	398	386	317	328	348	328	298	255	361	4
5	374	366	295	422	404	344	333	360	340	303	257	380	5
6	389	375	306	446	422	355	339	376	353	308	258	401	6
7	401	385	315	470	440	365	344	389	363	313	260	418	7
8	414	396	324	492	455	378	350	401	373	318	261	438	8
9	431	407	334	515	470	384	357	414	386	334	262	458	9
10	447	417	343	538	485	397	359	428	396	324	263	476	10
11	465	428	352	560	502	410	364	441	409	329	265	494	11
12	483	439	360	582	518	423	369	453	421	335	267	512	12
13	498	450	369	603	535	436	379	463	432	342	269	530	13
14	514	463	374	625	553	449	387	472	445	351	270	549	14
15	530	475	380	647	570	464	391	482	456	358	272	568	15
16	546	487	386	671	588	479	398	491	466	368	273	588	16
17	562	498	393	698	607	495	404	501	477	376	274	606	17
18	578	508	398	729	627	511	411	510	489	382	276	627	18
19	594	519	406	765	648	526	417	518	501	389	278	649	19
20	610	529	412	819	670	542	423	527	511	396	281	674	20
21	626	541	420		696	556	431	536	522	403	282	701	21
22	644	551	426		726	571	439	545	532	411	284	729	22
23	661	562	433		760	587	447	554	543	417	285	764	23
24	677	572	442		799	603	456	562	553	424	288	806	24
25	696	583	450		850	619	464	571	563	430	289	860	25
26	715	593	458			634	472	580	573	438	291		26
27	736	605	466			650	480	589	584	444	293		27
28	761	616	474			667	489	597	594	450	295		28
29	794	628	481			685	497	606	605	456	297		29
30	839	640	489			703	506	616	617	460	298		30
31		652	496			722	515	626	627	466	300		31
32		664	503			743	523	637	638	471	301		32
33		678	510			763	532	649	650	477	305		33
34		693	518			786	542	663	661	482	307		34
35		711	524			814	551	678	673	488	309		35
36		731	532			850	560	695	686	494	310		36
37		753	539			880	570	714	698	499	312		37
38		779	546			889	579	736	711	505	314		38
39		813	553				588	766	726	510	315		39
40		861	560				596	816	741	515	317		40
41			568				606		758	520	319		41
42			574				616		779	525	320		42
43			581				625		804	531	323		43
44			588				635		832	536	324		44
45			596				645		869	541	326		45
46			602				655			546	327		46
47			609				666			551	328		47
48			616				678			556	329		48
49			622				689			561	331		49
50			630				700			566	330		50

Appendix B: Cutoffs for Writing and Reading Scale Scores

Writing Sample	Scale Score	
40-50	>=630	No classes recommended
40-50	< 630	Reading 030
35-39	>=630	English 030 could be beneficial
35-39	590-629	English 033 and Reading 030
35-39	570-589	English 033 and Reading 020
35-39	< 570	Large discrepancy - see counsellor
32-34	> 650	English 030 could be beneficial
29-31	> 650	English 033 could be beneficial
29-34	620-650	English 020
29-34	591-619	English 020 and suggest Reading 020
29-34	560-590	English 023 and advise Reading 010
29-34	< 560	Large discrepancy - see counsellor
23-28	> 631	English 023
25-28	590-630	English 023 and Reading 020
23-24	590-630	English 013 and Reading 020
23-26	570-589	English 013 and Reading 010
23-28	540-569	English 013 and Reading 009
23-28	< 540	Large discrepancy - see counsellor
18-22	> 590	Large discrepancy - see counsellor
18-22	561-590	English 009 and Reading 010
18-22	530-560	English 009 and Reading 009
18-22	< 530	English 009 and Reading 008
11-17	541-560	Writing 008 and Reading 009
11-17	> 560	Large discrepancy - see counsellor
11-17	450-540	Writing 008 and Reading 008
11-17	< 449	Large discrepancy - see counsellor
1-10	540-590	Suggest Reading 009 and Writing 008
1-10	> 590	Large discrepancy - see counsellor

Appendix C: Essay Question

Time - 30 minutes

You have thirty minutes to plan and write an essay on the topic assigned. DO NOT WRITE ON ANOTHER TOPIC. AN ESSAY ON ANOTHER TOPIC IS NOT ACCEPTABLE.

The essay is assigned to give you an opportunity to show how well you can write. You should, therefore, take care to express your thoughts on the topic clearly and effectively. How well you write is much more important than how much you write, but to cover the topic adequately you may want to write more than one paragraph. Be specific.

READ THIS TOPIC CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU BEGIN WRITING.

What qualities in a job are valuable to you? For example, you may want a job with plenty of vacation time. Good pay may be the most important factor for you. Or you might want a job that offers a chance for promotion. Perhaps you would like a job that offers you a chance to work for a particular company or in a particular place.

In an essay list two or three of the most important factors that you would consider in taking a job and explain why they are important to you.

Appendix D: Writing Sample Marking Key

Sept/93 WRITING SAMPLE MARKING KEY

1. Content:
   - 15 - Interesting/useful ideas/information; support relevant and specific
   - 14 - Interesting/useful ideas/information; support adequate
   - 13 - Appropriate information/ideas; support relevant and specific
   - 12 - Useful/interesting ideas/information; support general
   - 11 - Appropriate information/ideas; support relevant but general
   - 10 - Appropriate information/ideas; support lacking
   - 9 - Information not deliberately selected; support general and consistent
   - 8 - Information not deliberately selected; support lacking or focus lost
   - 7 - Lacks substance; insufficient ideas generated
   - 6 - Information selected is off topic
   - 5 - Ideas/information confusing and/or contradictory
   - 4 - Difficult to comprehend for E.S.L. reasons
   - 3 - Insufficient to adequately assess writing skills
   - 2 - Incomprehensible for E.S.L. reasons
   - 1 - Incomprehensible

2. Opening, Closure:
   - 6 - Purposeful opening and closure
   - 5 - Purposeful opening, closure evident
   - 4 - Functional opening, closure evident
   - 3 - Functional opening, closure lacking or unrelated; or vice versa
   - 2 - Opening - lacks purpose/inappropriate, closure evident
   - 1 - Opening - lacks purpose/inappropriate, closure lacking or unrelated
   - 0 - Neither

3. Development or Body:
   - 8 - Focus sustained throughout; purposeful, effective organization and paragraphing
   - 7 - Focus generally maintained; ideas arranged in purposeful order and appropriately paragraphed
   - 6 - Focus generally maintained; ideas arranged in purposeful order but paragraphing falters
   - 5 - Focus generally maintained; ideas developed ineffectively within any one paragraph
   - 4 - Ideas generated are on the same general topic but they are not effectively developed
   - 3 - Focus inconsistently maintained; coherence falters
   - 2 - Fails to maintain a focus; haphazardly organized
   - 1 - No focus established; coherence lacking

4. Type and Length of Sentences:
   - 4 - Effective and varied; stylish
   - 3 - Varying lengths and types
   - 2 - Sometimes varied; simple and compound
   - 1 - No deliberate variation

5. Sentence Structure:
   - 6 - Controlled, free of errors; stylish
   - 5 - Essentially free of errors
   - 4 - Essentially free of errors but no few complex structures attempted
   - 3 - Errors occasionally impede meaning
   - 2 - Errors often impede meaning
   - 1 - Errors severely impede meaning

6. Sentence Errors:
   1 - Run-on
   2 - Fragment
   3 - Misplaced or dangling modifier
   4 - Faulty parallelism
   5 - Run-on and Fragment
   6 - Run-on and Modifiers
   7 - Run-on and Parallelism
   8 - Fragment and Modifiers
   9 - Fragments and Parallelism
  10 - Modifiers and Parallelism
  11 - Run-on, Fragment, Modifier
  12 - Run-on, Fragment, Parallelism
  13 - Fragment, Modifier, Parallelism
  14 - Run-on, parallelism, modifier
  15 - All four types of errors

7. Use of Words/Expressions:
   6 - Specific words/expressions show evidence of careful selection and some awareness of connotative effect
   5 - Specific words/expressions are used
   4 - Use of words/expressions are usually effective; there may be occasional inappropriate use
   3 - General words that convey only vague meaning are used
   2 - Words or expressions are sometimes misused
   1 - Unacceptable words/expressions are sometimes used

8. Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation:
   5 - Essentially free of errors
   4 - Occasional errors but they seldom affect clarity
   3 - Errors that occasionally distract from meaning intended
   2 - Errors that often distract from meaning intended
   1 - Frequent errors that severely reduce clarity

9. Types of Errors:
   1 - Grammar Errors
   2 - Spelling Errors
   3 - Punctuation Errors
   4 - Grammar and Spelling
   5 - Grammar and Punctuation
   6 - Spelling and Punctuation
   7 - Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation

10. Main type of Grammar Error
   1 - Faulty idioms
   2 - Faulty syntax
   3 - Wrong tense/verb form
   4 - Pronoun reference/shift/form
   5 - Faulty subject/verb agreement
   6 - Faulty usage (include plurals, articles)
   7 - Several types of grammar errors
   8 - Redundancy in the use of words
   9 - Careless

11. Main Type of Spelling Error:
   1 - Commonly confused pairs
   2 - Common or careless
   3 - Spells phonetically
   4 - Application of spelling rules
   5 - Several types of spelling errors
   6 - Serious spelling deficiencies

12. Main Type of Punctuation Error:
   1 - Commas
   2 - Apostrophes
   3 - Semi-colons
   4 - Colons
   5 - Capitalization
   6 - Faulty end punctuation
   7 - Quotation marks
   8 - No punctuation needed
   9 - Several types of punctuation errors

Appendix E: English 020 Course Outline

LETHBRIDGE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
DIVISION OF BUSINESS & APPLIED ARTS

EN020 - ENGLISH
Course Outline Sept. 1993

FREQUENCY: 5 hours/week - 16 weeks

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

English 020 has a heavy literary emphasis and includes study of the following literary forms: poetry, short stories, essays, drama, and the novel. Students are required to write several essays of literary analysis on assigned topics, including a critique of a novel chosen from a list of suggested readings.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. write unified, coherent, well-developed, mechanically sound compositions on literary topics;
2. define key literary terms and use these terms in analyzing various literary works;
3. explain the relationships among language, structure, and thematic elements of a given literary text;
4. demonstrate increased awareness of and appreciation for poetry, short fiction, novel, and drama;
5. demonstrate proficiency in English spelling, punctuation, grammar and sentence structure in exercises, tests and writing assignments.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND MATERIALS:

1. McMahan, E., Day, S., and Funk, R. Literature and the Writing Process.
2. Mitchell, W. Who Has Seen the Wind?

EVALUATION:	Critique essay	10%
	Poetry Unit	15%
	Short Story Unit	15%
	Novel Unit	15%
	Drama Unit	15%
	Review of punctuation, grammar	20%
	Final Exam	10%