Mastering the Plan: Transfer Students

ESL Directions
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Many names …

• English as a second language (ESL) students
• English learners
• English language learners
• Recent arrivals
• Long-term residents
• Generation 1.5 students
• Multilingual, second language writers
• Non-native English speakers
• Vernacular dialect speakers of English
• Linguistic minority students
Academic English Transfer Students

- UC transfer students who arrive to school speaking other languages than English and who require academic English language support instruction to develop sufficient writing proficiency to benefit from a UC education

**Caution:** Many transfer students who have learned academic English as a second or third language are highly proficient in this variety of English and require **no** English language assistance once they have arrived to UCI.
Agenda

- Who are the transfer students who require English language support when they come to UCI?
- What are their strengths and weaknesses?
- What challenges do they encounter while at UCI?
- What do we expect of them in an upper-division writing course at UCI?
Question #1

Who are our AE transfer students?
What do we know about AE transfer students?

- International Students
- California Residents

Also, critical to note: Working Students
Characteristics

- Graduation rates
- Grade point averages
- Other information
Roughly 20% have the same English proficiency (or lower) of UCI’s entering first-year students who are required to take 3-4 English language support courses prior to enrolling in WR 39AP, a course designed for incoming first-year students.
The remainder requires language instruction in these areas:

- Discourse
- Grammar
- Vocabulary
- Spelling and punctuation
- Digital literacy

Not to mention language instruction related to informational literacy.
Question #2

What are the students’ strengths and weaknesses as writers?
Strengths

- Maturity
- Study Skills
- Diligence
- Motivation
- Passion for learning
- The ability to set goals and accomplish them

Caution: These generalizations do not characterize all AE transfer students!
To escape from poverty a person needs a decent paying job, and there aren’t enough of them in America. According to Herbert J Gans, professor of sociology at Columbia University, “Decent jobs that are open to the poor, especially to blacks, were the first to disappear when our deindustrialization began” (508). Gans believes that the poor are not to be thought of as lazy just because they don’t have jobs. There simply are not enough decent jobs available keeping the available labor force employed. The U.S. Department of Labor reports that in December 2007, the unemployment rate for a civilian without a high school diploma is 7.6 while that of a college graduate or higher is 2.2 (Bureau of Labor Statistics).
The post-1970s slowdown in the United States’ economy was another factor that disturbed the traditional gender roles in the American family. This economic shift mainly influenced the role of women in society. During the 1970s, being a housewife was considered a luxury and most of the women had to work side-by-side their husbands to be able to fight with the financial problems.
Weaknesses: Expository Writing

✓ Discourse

-- Produce writing in which the language, organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

-- Use multiple ways of establishing cohesion in academic writing (including the use of synonyms, repetition, pronouns, transition words, word families, and demonstrative pronouns)
Weaknesses: Expository Writing

-- Use precise language to develop ideas clearly and to reinforce style

-- Use quotations and reported speech to support claims, incorporating them appropriately

-- Develop contextual support to their writing
Weaknesses: Language

✓ Vocabulary
  -- academic words
  -- discipline-specific words
  -- collocations

✓ Grammar
  -- sentence structure
  -- the verb system
  -- the noun system
  -- articles and determiners
Consumption has become not only satisfy the actual needs, but for seeking the satisfaction of now products and the desire of being stimulation. On the other hand, what people consummate is not the value of goods and service, but its symbolic meaning.
Question #3

What challenges do AE transfer students encounter at UCI?
### Challenges: Academic Vocabulary

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Challenge: On-Demand Writing Assessments

On-Demand Writing Assessment

Instructor Evaluation

Performance

Consultation

Language Appraisal

Meets benchmark goals on in-class writing assessments?
Challenge: Analytical Writing

Out of class analytical writing, including a research report

Instructor Evaluation

Performance on Out-of-Class Writing Assignments

Consultation

Academic Writing

Discipline-Specific Writing

Instructor Appraisal
Students must have a high level of accuracy required in academic writing, the listening skills necessary to understand lectures, the speaking skills for giving effective oral presentations and the communicative competence for participating in an academic environment; in addition, they must have knowledge of and proficiency in digital literacy and visual representation.
UCI Reading Demands

- Require students to read a range of complex, academic texts independently, proficiently, and fluently, sustaining concentration and monitoring comprehension
- Require students to delineate and evaluate the reasoning and rhetoric within a text
UCI Reading Demands

- Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section or chapter) relate to each other and the whole
UCI Reading Demands

- Call on students to interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings; they call on students to understand how specific word choices and phrases shape meaning or tone.
Challenges at UCI and Elsewhere

We tend to acquire the language of those with whom we associate.
“Practice does not make perfect. Only perfect practice makes perfect.”

Vince Lombardi
Question #4

What do we expect of AE students in our upper-division writing course?
Upon completion of the AE upper-division writing course:

- They should be able to demonstrate rhetorically effective, discipline-specific writing and communication for appropriate academic, professional, and public audiences.
Upon completion of the AE upper-division writing course:

They should be able to demonstrate, at an advanced level of competence, the use of discipline-specific research methods, genres, modes of development, and formal conventions.
Upon completion of the AE upper-division writing course:

- They should also be able to demonstrate advanced information literacy skills locating, evaluating and integrating information gathered from multiple sources into discipline-specific writing

(http://www.writing.uci.edu/WritingRequirements.html).
Upon *entry* into the AE upper-division writing course:

*They should be able to*…

- Produce academic writing in which the language, organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- Use straightforward language to create an objective style appropriate for a reader seeking information.

- Use appropriate linguistic devices, including sentence structures, to create cohesion and clarify ideas.
Upon *entry* into the AE upper-division writing course:

They should …

- Have adequate mastery of sentence structure, the noun system and the verb system, e.g., using a variety of techniques to shift appropriately from one time frame to another -- to indicate relationships among events, experiences, and parts of text.

- Choose words and phrases to develop ideas precisely and effectively in academic writing.
Upon *entry* into the AE upper-division writing course:

*They should* …

- Be able to **evaluate** their language use in relation to audience, task, purpose, and discipline.
- Appreciate nuances, such as how the composition of an audience affects tone when speaking and how the connotations of words affect meaning.
Upon *entry* into the AE upper-division writing course:

*They should* …

- Know that different disciplines call for different types of evidence (e.g., documentary evidence in history, experimental evidence in the sciences).
Upon *entry* into the AE upper-division writing course:

*They should …*

- Be able to use a wide range of resources and strategies to develop competence in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and to monitor their own comprehension and communication.
Upon *entry* into the AE upper-division writing course:

*They should* …

- Be able to recognize variations from standard conventional English in their own and others' writing and speaking and identify strategies to improve their own use of standard conventional English.

- Be able to assess the degree to which their speaking and writing differs from standard conventional academic English.
Caution

- Students *can*, without significant scaffolding or support, comprehend and evaluate the gist of complex texts across a range of types and disciplines, and they can construct arguments and convey intricate or multifaceted information *without much linguistic accuracy*.

- However, doing so will not enable them to succeed in upper-division writing courses at UCI.
Caution

- We believe it is crucial for instructors to recognize that it is possible to achieve strong proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, without manifesting complete native-like control of conventions and vocabulary.

- Additionally, we believe that English grammar and usage should be taught in the service of communication and comprehension.
What can you do to help us out and how can we help you?

UCI’s Program in Academic English
https://eee.uci.edu/programs/esl/

A tentative proposal with Santa Monica City College
When our AE transfer students are not meeting our expectations, what do we do?

Assessment and monitoring

In-Class Support

Extended Learning Opportunities

Tutorials

Other Interventions
Key Questions

Are AE/ESL students being given adequate and timely language instruction?

Is documentation regarding their assessment in place?

What is the system in place for monitoring student language development in writing courses?
Resources

Academic Literacy: A Statement of Competencies - Academic Senate.  
www.universityofcalifornia.edu/senate/reports/academicliteracy.pdf

Dana R. Ferris (2009). Teaching College Writing to Diverse Student Populations. Ann Arbor: U Michigan ELT.