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A qualitative analysis and evaluation of Iowa State's ESL writing program: the English 101 series

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A qualitative analysis and evaluation of Iowa State's ESL writing program:
The English 101 series

by

Rachel Marie Wolford

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa State’s ESL coordinator and the English 101 series</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale for the research method of interviewing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. LITERATURE REVIEW</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL Programs at Other Universities</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa State’s ESL Program</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The English Placement Test</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theoretical views</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case studies of ESL program evaluations</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynch’s Context-Adaptive Model</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. MATERIALS AND METHODS</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The questions</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials and methods</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 1</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 2</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 3</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Enough Sections</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Cohesion in the Curriculum</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding the 101 Courses</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 4</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 5</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 6</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 7</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 8</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations of This Study and Suggestions for Future Research</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllabi for 101C, 101D, 101B, 101E-1 and 101E-2</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B:
Flow Chart of ESL Students' Options in the 101 Program 76

APPENDIX C:
Placement Exam Scoring Guide 77

APPENDIX D:
Human Subjects Review Form 78
I. INTRODUCTION

**Iowa State's ESL coordinator and the English 101 series**

Probably not many children dream of growing up to be an ESL coordinator. It is an enormous task, after all, to manage and direct goals, tests, curricula, teachers and students, who together formulate an ESL program. Additionally, the responsible administrator must teach his or her own classes and conduct other research. I have learned, after hours of interviews with Iowa State's past and present ESL coordinators, that their job is a taxing one, and so this work is dedicated to them. Additionally, one of the primary audiences for my research, in addition to members of the TESL faculty who are involved in the 101 courses, is a hypothetical, newly appointed ESL coordinator who is interested in learning all about the program from inside sources. The research in this thesis addresses good and bad points of the program as it is currently run, and through the thoughts and opinions of Iowa State faculty, teaching assistants and students, and in light of theoretical background in ESL program evaluation, recommendations will be made to an incoming ESL administrator to strengthen the program.

The purpose of this study is to analyze and evaluate Iowa State's English 101 series of classes through qualitative research consisting primarily of interviews with TESL faculty pedagogically and administratively
involved with the program, teaching assistants who carry out the program's instructional goals and students who are recipients of the instruction. The research will analyze strengths and weaknesses of the program, and suggest how the program may be improved.

Iowa State's English 101 series of courses primarily exists to strengthen the writing and grammar of international students who have been admitted into the university by means of scoring a 500 or above on the TOEFL, but remain weak in their writing skills. Once new ESL students arrive on campus, they are subjected to Iowa State's English Placement Test, which primarily tests their writing skills through writing a composition in 30 minutes; but also includes a listening, reading and vocabulary section. Undergraduates who do not pass the test are usually siphoned into a semester of English 101C, which prepares them to face English 104 and 105, the regular freshman composition classes. Graduate students who need extra writing help are placed into 101D, where they practice research writing to assist them in their various academic fields. Sometimes raters of the placement test find that international students need more grammar instruction before they reach 101C or 101D, and these students, both graduate and undergraduate, are placed into English 101B, which emphasizes grammar. If students also fail the listening section of the placement test, in addition to 101C and sometimes 101B, they must take
English 101E as well, which is an independent study course in the language lab at the library. Section 101E-1 focuses on listening and 101E-2 emphasizes reading, and students' progress is measured by pre- and post-tests.

This past academic year 413 international students took the English Placement Test in the fall, 153 in the spring and approximately 40 at the beginning of the summer. According to records in the TESL office, out of 566 students tested in the fall and spring, 216 passed directly into either freshman composition or their graduate course work; 79 placed into 101B; 124 placed into 101C; 137 placed into 101D; 131 placed into 101E-1; and 93 placed into 101E-2. Many students were placed into more than one section; in fact, undergraduates who do quite poorly on the placement test are usually placed in every section except 101D, and spend two to three semesters catching up on their English. Each of the 101 courses is worth three credits, with the exception of the 101E courses, which are each worth one credit. The students' final grade for each class is averaged into their grade point average (GPA), but the credits do not count toward the number necessary for graduation, which is a negative factor in most students' eyes.

**Rationale for the research method of interviewing**

After reading descriptions of research into other program evaluation methods and the theories behind them, I have concluded that because the
scope of my research is necessarily small, mainly because I am conducting it alone, the interview method would provide the most direct way to arrive at recommendations to improve the ESL program. Statistics of how many students pass and fail the English 101 classes each semester are recorded in this paper, but the people working and studying in the program everyday are the ones with the most answers. For this study, quantitative data are secondary.

To form a concise structure on which to build my research, I asked subjects several general questions which were developed in part from Lynch's (1990) model of program evaluation. In his “context-adaptive” model, Lynch defines a context inventory, which is a “conceptualization of the essential phenomena or features of the educational program” (p. 26). In other words, the researcher must sort out the most important elements of the program that will be specifically explored. For qualitative research in an interview format, developing a context inventory means to devise a list of pertinent questions to ask each subject. These questions served as a basis for the interviews and the recurring themes in each section of this paper. Eight questions were developed to probe into specific areas of Iowa State's ESL program, and they are cited in the third chapter; however, these four general questions below mainly directed the research:

1. What are the “aims” or “goals” of Iowa State's ESL program and how are they achieved?
2. What are the strengths of the program and how can they be better developed?

3. What are the weaknesses of the program and how can they be strengthened?

4. What are your innovative ideas for making improvements to English 101B, 101C, 101D and 101E?

These questions follow the pattern necessary to determine the program’s goals, whether or not the goals are being met and what can be done to improve the program. It is also important to take into account whether the goals themselves are worthy. This point is discussed more fully in the next chapter.
II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Similar to many other facets of life, an ESL program needs to be evaluated periodically by analyzing its direction, goals and means to those ends. In this chapter, ESL programs at Ohio State and the University of Michigan will be surveyed and compared to Iowa State’s program. Additionally, the literature review will focus on other researchers who have developed theoretical bases for program evaluation, and case studies of ESL program evaluations at other universities and schools.

ESL programs at other universities

Whereas Iowa State has one ESL writing program composed of three courses (101B, 101C and 101D), the University of Michigan (UM) in Ann Arbor offers an entire English Language Institute (ELI), including at least five different programs with a total of 33 separate courses. International students at UM take ESL courses concurrently with their regular academic program. The five programs include courses in English for Academic Purposes, the Writing Laboratory and Speaking Clinic, Summer English for Academic Purposes, Summer English for Business and Management Studies, and international teaching assistant workshops. There are also special programs for pre-enrolled students, which is similar to Iowa State’s Intensive English and Orientation Program (IEOP).
The purpose of the ELI, according to the catalog, is "to help non-native speakers to become effective and fully participating members of the academic community," and for ELI administrators, this means offering ESL courses not only in writing, but also speaking, reading, grammar, as well as an integration of these skills in courses which specifically focus on academics. Examples of writing courses in the English for Academic Purposes program are listed below:

For undergraduate students:

- 110, 112 Integrated Academic Skills I and II
- 120 Academic Writing for Undergraduates
- 122 Term Paper Writing
- 100/300 Writing and Grammar
- 312 Spoken and Written Grammar in Academic Contexts
- 320, 321 Academic Writing I and II

For graduate students:

- 520 Research Writing
- 600 Prospectus Dissertation and Thesis Writing

Examples of courses in the other skills areas, which are heavily emphasized in the ELI and are for the most part missing as separate components in Iowa State's ESL program, include the following:

- 310 Reading and Vocabulary Development
- 332 Lecture Comprehension
- 333 Interactive Listening and Communication
- 334 Academic Speaking
- 336, 337 Pronunciation I and II
- 338 Voice and Articulation
Iowa State does offer separate reading and listening courses, but they self-guided and only worth one credit. The ELI also offers five international teaching assistant courses, compared to Iowa State's one; additionally, there is a writing laboratory and a speaking clinic where students can go for extra assistance. Obviously, the ESL program at UM is more comprehensive than Iowa State's and probably most other universities in the country. The purpose of this comparison is not to shame Iowa State, but to illustrate what other programs are doing, and to generate ideas for improving our own series of ESL classes.

Ohio State's ESL program is much smaller than UM's, and more similar to Iowa State's because of its heavy emphasis on writing. According to the catalog, Ohio State offers five different courses, three of which are specifically for undergraduate students. English 106 and 107 are the general and advanced undergraduate courses, and appear to compare to Iowa State's 101B grammar course and 101C writing course, respectively. Similar to 101B, English 106 also includes graduate students, and focuses on basic rhetorical structures, grammar and syntax, all in the context of paragraphs and short essays. English 107 delves deeper into the writing process by teaching students organize their prose coherently and develop better style. English 108.01 at Ohio State is a persuasive writing course focusing on summary and response and argumentation. Iowa State has no
such course for ESL students, yet Ohio State's ESL program does not include any listening, reading or speaking courses. The two courses specifically for ESL graduate students at Ohio State are English 107G, which is similar to 101D, and English 108.02, which focuses on research writing in students' specific areas of study. Again, Iowa State lacks this kind of advanced research course for graduate students.

Ohio State's ESL program contains more variety in its writing courses than Iowa State, and at the same time, no choices for the other skills areas. Michigan and Ohio State are just two of several different ESL programs offered at universities throughout the United States. In future research, the ESL program at Iowa State can and should be compared to many others in order to determine where it stands in its number of courses offered and the quality of instruction.

Iowa State's ESL Program

Since a full 10 percent of Iowa State's 25,000-plus student body is composed of international students, the ESL program has become a strong necessity to ensure that students are proficient enough in English to successfully complete their regular courses. In this section, each of the 101 course requirements will be detailed, and the English Placement Test will be discussed to give a clearer picture as to how students are placed in each ESL course.
English 101C is the original writing course that formed the beginnings of Iowa State’s ESL program in the 1960s. According to a former ESL coordinator’s sample syllabus and a TA’s similar syllabus (copies of all the 101 course syllabi are included in the appendix), in 101C, students write in-class and out-of-class compositions and keep weekly free-writing journals, and also a grammar/composition log which details each week’s lessons.

English 101D is the only ESL writing course Iowa State offers for graduate students. Its purpose is to write "clear academic papers," according to the syllabus in the appendix. In this class graduate students learn different academic writing styles which are most appropriate in their field, and they can write papers related to their course of study. Although speaking skills are not generally focused on in the 101 courses, this particular instructor for 101D chose to work on students’ oral English ability with various class activities and oral presentations.

English 101B is a grammar course designed for both undergraduate and graduate students. Course requirements typically include keeping a journal and writing papers on various topics, including students’ specific areas of academic interest, and these are evaluated for their grammar usage and organization. The purpose of the course is to teach students to correct their written English problems through their own writing, but grammar assignments and quizzes are also given.
English 101E-1 and 101E-2 are independent study courses focusing on listening and reading, respectively. For both courses, students take a pre-test which tests their listening and reading skills to determine if they were placed in the correct course. If so, they attend one hour of class for six weeks, and work through six lessons on their own. Students in the listening course, 101E-1, work under the direction of headphones and a tape recorder in the media center of the Parks Library to complete workbook assignments. Students in the reading class complete assignments on their own, and turn them in each week to the course supervisor. There are periodic due dates for assignments, and at the end of the six lessons students are given a post-test to determine if they have met the minimum listening or reading requirement to avoid repeating the course.

**The English Placement Test**

Now that the content of the 101 courses has been explained, the next step is to determine how students are filtered into these different ESL classes. Each semester when international students first arrive on campus, they are required to take Iowa State's own English Placement Test, which is a four-part exam designed to divide students into broad categories of English language ability. Within the first three sections is a total of 100 multiple choice questions, and they include 35 listening comprehension questions, 35 reading comprehension questions and 30 vocabulary
questions. According to the ESL testing coordinator, students must score 60 percent or better on the three sections to pass. In other words, to avoid placement into 101E-1, students must achieve 60 percent or higher on the listening comprehension section of the Placement Test, and likewise, students must score higher than 60 percent on the reading comprehension section, or be placed in 101E-2. Failing the vocabulary section of the Placement Test does not automatically funnel students into a certain 101-E course, but faculty and teaching assistants who grade the tests compare the vocabulary score with the reading score, and usually both are usually either high or low, according to the current ESL testing coordinator. Or, if a student is right on the edge of 60 percent in the listening and/or reading section, the vocabulary score is used to determine whether that student takes a 101E course or not.

No one at Iowa State is quite certain how long the English Placement Test has been used, but the time period is at least 16 years. At any rate, the test is quite old and should be revised to maintain test security, and because some of the questions are outdated, as is shown in the example below of the "typical husband" from the listening section. In this section, students are instructed to choose the sentence meaning closest to what they hear on a tape recorder. The problem with the following example is that in today's multi-cultural world, there is no such thing as a "typical husband:"
A. A typical husband usually cooks and cleans.
B. A typical husband seldom cooks and cleans.
C. A typical husband often likes to help around the house.
D. A typical husband often cooks dinner but never cleans the house.

Example test items from the reading and vocabulary section are also included below. In the reading section, students are instructed to read an incomplete sentence and choose a word or phrase that best finishes it. In the vocabulary section, students are either to read a sentence with a blank and fill in the missing word, or give a synonym to an underlined word in the sentence. Below is another out-dated example which violates today’s feminist standards by using the pronoun “he”, although in my opinion, such a pronoun is quite acceptable and even preferable:

Reading example:
It is imperative that a speaker’s style be appropriate to his subject. His choice of words and gestures should seem so natural that the attention of his audience will not be distracted by them but will be devoted wholly to

A. studying the speaker’s style.
B. following the speaker’s course of the thought.
C. noting the speaker’s eloquence.
D. considering the choice of words.

The vocabulary section does not contain glaringly outdated concepts or terms, unless one wanted to debate the economic policies of European nations in the following example:

Capitalism is the prevalent economic system in most European countries.

A. precipitant
B. predominant
C. precadent
D. precautionary

The fourth section of the English Placement Test is the writing sample, and this is the important part that determines whether students pass out of ESL writing classes, or are placed into 101C, 101D and 101B. To complete the writing sample, students are given a non-academic topic to write about, such as, "the best teacher I ever had," and the essays are scored holistically by TESL graduate student raters. Criteria which raters look for in their evaluation of each paper include organization and development of material, expression and appropriate vocabulary, and correctness in grammar and mechanics. A passing paper shows strong evidence of all the criteria. A composition placing students into 101C or 101D lacks some cohesion in organization, shows errors in word choice and has minor grammar problems. However, the meaning of the paper is not obscured, even with these errors. This is the difference between student placement in 101C or 101D and in 101B. Compositions in the 101B pile are filled with errors that do hinder the meaning of the student's writing, such as lacking paragraph structure, undeveloped ideas, completely incorrect word choices and simple sentences, as well as frequent grammar errors. Students placed into 101B automatically must also take 101C or 101D before they are finished with ESL classes at Iowa State. A placement
exam scoring guide is included in the appendix, and a flow chart outlining international students' progress is also included.

**Theoretical views**

Now that Iowa State's ESL program has been reviewed, the area of program evaluation will be explored through looking at other researchers' theoretical bases for evaluating ESL programs, some case studies and also an excellent model from which I adapted my evaluation of Iowa State's 101 courses. To begin with the fundamentals, Brown (1989) defines evaluation below:

> Evaluation is the systematic collection and analysis of all relevant information necessary to promote the improvement of a curriculum, and assess its effectiveness and efficiency, as well as the participants' attitudes within the context of the particular institutions involved (223).

An evaluation is profitable in determining the strong and weak elements of the program, and can serve to change the program's direction, goals and/or means to those ends in order to improve it.

Throughout the 1980s and 90s, program evaluation has been given a more prominent, sophisticated role by ESL investigators than in earlier years, and out of their research have developed several theoretical and practical approaches to conducting evaluations of different academic programs. Brown (1989) discusses the history of program evaluation dating back to the 1940s, illuminating the researchers who coined the names of
various methods used to size up ESL programs. These methods have been continually referred to and further developed in the research throughout the past 15 years; therefore, they are worth a look. Product oriented approaches, promoted by Tyler (1942), Metfessel and Michael (1967) and Hammond (1973), focus on determining whether the goals and objectives of a program have been achieved. For example, Hammond employs five detailed steps in his method, of which the fourth step specifically refers to assessment of the "product": i) identifying precisely what is to be evaluated; ii) defining the descriptive variables; iii) stating objectives in behavioral terms; iv) assessing the behavior described in the objectives; and v) analyzing the results and determining the effectiveness of the program (1973: 168).

Product oriented methods have been used often in program evaluation (examples of some case studies are outlined below); however, Long (1984) argues for a process oriented evaluation method because validity in the product method can easily be threatened, and not enough questions are addressed. "Product evaluations cannot distinguish among the many possible explanations for the results they obtain because they focus on the product of a program while ignoring the process by which that product came about" (413).
Process oriented approaches developed with education researchers Scriven (1967) and Stake (1976), who took evaluation beyond the focus of meeting program objectives to acting as the impetus of curriculum change and improvement. Scriven emphasized program goals, but argued that an evaluation should ask if the goals themselves were worthy. He was also a proponent of goal free evaluation, which states, "The evaluators should not only limit themselves to studying the expected goals of the program but also consider the possibility that there were unexpected outcomes which should be recognized and studied" (in Brown, 226). In other words, if evaluators come across some unexpected findings in their research that do not relate to the program’s goals, or even contradict them, these findings should be included in the research and explored further. The goals of the program could be changed in the process, and sometimes that is necessary to continually improve the program’s quality.

My research and evaluation of Iowa State’s ESL program leans toward the process oriented approach. Subjects interviewed for this project were asked what they view as goals of the program and how those goals are being achieved; however, the nature of other questions, regarding the program's strengths and weaknesses, delve into its process and search for overlooked problems and outcomes which the program creates.
Other methodologies in program evaluation, besides product and process approaches, include decision facilitation and static characteristic approaches. In decision facilitation approaches, which constitute another foundational factor to my research, evaluators "gather information for the benefit of those in a program who must ultimately make the judgments and decisions" (227). According to Stufflebeam et al. (1971), who designed CIPP, an acronym for Context, Input, Process and Product, evaluation should be implemented through a systematic, ongoing program, and should include the three steps of delineating, obtaining and providing as the basis for a methodology of evaluation (227). Static characteristic approaches, as described by Worthen and Sanders (1973), are evaluations conducted by outside experts usually to determine institutional accreditation.

An important distinction in program evaluation is the difference between formative and summative evaluation, first termed by Scriven (1967). Formative evaluation, most closely associated with the process oriented approach, takes place during a program's development in order to iron out the rough edges and make small changes for improvement. More focused on product, summative evaluation takes place at a program's completion to rate its success and at times to determine whether the program should be continued. Brown (1989) advocates using a combination of the two approaches for complete evaluation effectiveness:

Perhaps a formative evaluation can (and should) be going
on constantly with the purpose of producing information and analyses that will be useful for changing and upgrading the program. It might also be useful to pause occasionally to assess the success, efficiency and effectiveness of the program (230).

Brown also mentions the distinction between quantitative and qualitative data collection. Quantitative collection focuses on data such as test scores and student ranking, which can be placed neatly onto charts and tables. Qualitative data collection consists of interviews, diary entries, classroom observations and even, according to Brown, "recollections of conversations over coffee" (232). The emphasis of my investigation is based on qualitative data through interviews because I am conducting it alone. For further research of Iowa State's ESL program, a quantitative and qualitative study should be done.

**Case studies of ESL program evaluations**

The best kind of program evaluation, according to Lynch (1990), whose model is outlined later in the chapter, is one which includes many of the above factors, but such a large task is not always undertaken because of the nature of the program, cost and time considerations of the evaluation or the number of staff available to carry out the research. The program evaluation studies below develop different assessment methods to serve their own institutions' needs, much like the methods that were chosen for a small scale evaluation of Iowa State's ESL program.
The Bangalore Project (1985) is one of the most cited quantitative, product oriented studies throughout the research studies of the 1980s and 90s. Using two tests, Beretta and Davies studied the effectiveness of the Bangalore/Madras Communicational Teaching Project (CTP) in four elementary schools, comparing it to the structural method that had been taught previously. CTP is a communicative curriculum upon which meaning in language, not linguists' idea of language structure and grammar, is emphasized. The purpose of the tests was to determine whether there was a difference between language attainment in students who had been taught on the CTP and their peers who had received regular instruction at different schools (p. 122-123). In fairness to the students, two different tests were designed to suit both curricula, and evaluation was based on achievement as well as proficiency, which included contextualized grammar, dictation and listening/reading comprehension.

The authors' conclusions showed that students do perform significantly better on the achievement test suited to their curriculum, and that "the two methods do assess different kinds of learning" (125). Also, the CTP experimental group performed better in listening/reading comprehension, and one of the CTP schools tested significantly higher on the dictation and contextualized grammar section than one of the structural based schools. However, the study's validity was compromised because one
group had formed a more stable atmosphere because they had been together longer than the three classes at the other schools; in addition, three of the four CTP experimental classes had better qualified teachers and were observed more often. Despite these threats to the validity of the tests, Beretta and Davies maintain their tentative conclusion that "grammar construction can take place through a focus on meaning alone" (126) because students from the CTP schools scored higher on the listening/reading comprehension, dictation and contextualized grammar sections of their test than the control groups scored on their test.

In another case study at the University of Southern California, Eskey, Lacy and Kraft (1991) discuss a clever, relatively simple way to evaluate ESL programs quantitatively without using language tests. In designing their "novel approach" for appraising the American Language Institute (ALI) at USC, the authors attempted to avoid the subjectivity of student interviews and the sterile, relative objectivity of TOEFL scores or localized placement tests. "A given TOEFL score is meaningless unless the level of language skill achieved is sufficient for performing the communicative tasks that the user will in fact be required to perform when he or she has completed the program" (38).

The authors' solution to avoiding the pitfalls of appraising an ESL program was twofold. First, they strongly emphasized broadening the circle
of people who are associated with the program in order to gain a more objective view of its influences. (Qualitative methods utilizing a broad audience are explored later in this chapter.) Second, they created rather uncomplicated statistical analyses which compared international students' progress while they were taking ESL classes, and also after they had moved on to their various fields within the larger university.

The study focused on released international students who completed ALI and those who failed the program, yet still continued their academic programs at USC. The first step was to track 274 ALI finishers through the Freshman Writing Program (FWP) to see if those with higher stanine points (on a nine point scale) in ALI would correlate significantly to higher grades in FWP and a higher grade point average overall. The results showed that this was indeed the case for students who had achieved above minimum requirements to pass ALI. In the second part of the study, the researchers found that out of 55 students who had been dropped from ALI between 1981 and 1985, only 16 of them were still attending USC, and out of the 14 undergraduates, 11 had not even completed their basic freshman writing requirement. This helped to further validate the necessity and benefit of ALI for those who successfully complete it, and the authors believe this "convincing" method can easily be applied to other institutions:

By combining the reliability and face validity of the numerical measure of student GPA with the equally obvious validity of equating program effectiveness with academic
performance at the user institution, anyone can evaluate a program of instruction in second-language skills in a way that is both objective and meaningful in relation to the real purposes of second-language programs (49).

For those who evaluate Iowa State's ESL program in the future, and have the time, access and staff, I would recommend using parts of this method to quantitatively measure our program's success by that of our international students as they go on in their studies. It must be kept in mind, however, that evaluating students purely on their grade point average is overly-simplistic, and to determine administrative or curricular changes that need to be made inside the program itself, the use of other quantitative data and qualitative methods is crucial.

According to Pennington and Brown (1991) in an introduction to Building Better English Programs, a top priority in developing an evaluation system for an ESL program should be to provide "opportunities for change and evolution of the program as a whole, as well as for the individuals who make up the organization" (14). Pennington and Brown emphasize that all members associated with the ESL program should be considered and consulted as part of the research in a "bottom up" approach. Within a common program, administrators, faculty and students become separated into different interest groups, each with its own particular needs and priorities. Keeping this in mind, it is crucial to examine each group's point
of view, through qualitative methods, in order to form the most reliable
evaluation which best suits all who are involved in the program.

Evaluation based on "local" factors will be more responsive
to the perceived problems and needs of a particular
organization to evolve in a positive direction. As the
evaluation is based on more input from a larger number of
individuals, personal standards will begin to evolve toward
organizational standards, and organizational standards will
evolve toward the personal standards of those who make
up the organization (16).

In essence, Pennington and Brown state that the combined
perspectives of administrators, teachers and students will bring about
effective changes through "mutual adaptation" (16) to strengthen the ESL
program in question.

Also included in Pennington and Brown's introduction is an
assortment of the most effective methods for evaluating an ESL program.
Looking at students' test scores and other existing records are included on
the list as indispensable information sources; however, unlike Beretta and
Davies' method of evaluating an ESL program by quantitative data alone, for
Pennington and Brown, these quantitative information resources are only a
small part of the bigger picture. Qualitative methods, such as observations,
interviews, meetings and questionnaires form the majority of Pennington
and Brown's evaluation system. The authors especially praise the method
of individual interviews, which "allow for gathering personal responses and
views privately. This confidentiality can, in turn, lead to insights into the true opinions of the participants involved" (9).

Eskey, Lacy and Kraft (1991) expand on this qualitative approach as they discussed the beginnings of their research into the ALI program at USC. The authors stated that the spectrum of people connected with the ALI program must be enlarged to encompass the university at large; counselors of international students; administrators and office staff who work with international students; specific academic departments that have heavy enrollments of international students, such as engineering and business; and other departments, such as the Freshman Writing Program that have special curricular and pedagogical responsibilities for educating international students (38). Eskey, Lacy and Kraft infer that these groups should be contacted using qualitative means when conducting a program evaluation to achieve more objective research.

**Lynch's Context-Adaptive Model**

Lynch (1990) includes many of Pennington and Brown's program evaluation methods in his research, but he adds another dimension to the process by providing a step-by-step framework for carrying out the evaluation in his Context-Adaptive Model:

The strongest approach to evaluation is one that combines as many methods, qualitative and quantitative, as are appropriate to the particular evaluation context. The context-adaptive model provides a framework that encourages this multiple-strategy approach (39).
Lynch’s model is valuable because it is so flexible, and can be fitted to practically any language program. The model proved quite helpful for organizing my own research, and became the basis for my investigation. Lynch’s seven broad steps for language program evaluation are listed below:

1. **Define audience and goals** of the program evaluation to determine a purpose and reasons for conducting the evaluation. The goal of my research is to find methods to improve Iowa State's ESL program by discovering, through interviews with those subjects most qualified to judge, which parts of the program are working well, which areas need to be changed and what exactly those changes would entail. Although this thesis is directed toward Iowa State's TESL faculty, the information is also meant for a new ESL coordinator who may not know the inside details and politics of the administration of the English 101 courses.

2. **Develop a context inventory**, which is a “conceptualization of the essential phenomena or features of the educational program” (p. 26). This means sorting out the most important elements of the program which will be specifically explored. In the case of this project, the context inventory includes preliminary, specific topics which center around the ESL program, such as the English Placement Test, 101 course content and credit transfer procedures from other universities.
3. **Develop a preliminary thematic framework**, which are general themes arising from the context inventory to shape the direction and specific content of the evaluation. becomes a list of questions developed to explore different important elements of the ESL program with subjects in an interview format.

4. **Design a system for data collection**, which is an important step explaining the methods involved in gathering data to answer the questions outlined in the context inventory. The primary data source for this thesis is recorded interviews with administrators, ESL instructors, teaching assistants and international students who have taken 101 courses.

5. **Data collection** is the actual research, which in this case is conducting the interviews.

6. **Data analysis** is the results of the research, which are recorded and analyzed in Chapter IV of this thesis.

7. **An evaluation report** includes recommendations an evaluator makes, based on the research and context inventory. The recommendations for improving Iowa State’s ESL program are found in Chapter V.

More details on the research method for this project, based on Lynch’s model, are found in the next chapter.
III. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS, MATERIALS AND METHODS

These research questions below, used to interview faculty, teaching assistants and students, were approved by the Human Subjects Review Committee (a copy of the form is included as an appendix).

The questions

1. Faculty: How are you connected with the program administratively?
   TAs: What courses have you taught, and for how many semesters?
   Students: What courses have you taken, and how long have you been here?

2. What are the aims or goals of Iowa State's ESL program, and how are they achieved?

3. What are the strengths of the program, and how can they be better developed?

4. What are the weaknesses of the program, and how can they be strengthened?

5. For English 101B, 101C, 101D and 101E, how well are students expected to master the material before they can move on? Do you have any innovative ideas to improve each of these classes?

6. Do many non-native speakers who do not pass the ISU English Placement Test take freshman composition at Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC), instead of completing 101C first at Iowa State? Is this a major problem? How can it be solved?

7. Is the English Placement Test an accurate determiner of which class level students should be placed if they do not pass directly into English 104 or their graduate work? Is there a better way to find students' level of English proficiency?

8. Is there a difference in the quality of students' English proficiency between those who pass directly into English 104 and those who must go through 101C first?
These interview questions used to collect information about the English 101 series were developed from both a process oriented approach to program evaluation and Lynch's context-adaptive model. In addition, as an outsider to the ESL program, never having taught any of the courses, I designed the questions to familiarize myself and a new ESL coordinator with the administrative and curricular procedures.

The first question listed was used as an ice breaker and for my personal notes. The rest of the questions were usually asked in the order which they are listed here, but occasionally a question was answered by a subject's response to another topic. The final question was asked to discover faculty and TAs' opinion of how worthwhile Iowa State's ESL program really is. The problem is, the question was too general, and subjects were confused by it; therefore, their answers did not pertain to the question's purpose, but they are included in the next chapter. Students were not asked questions 5 and 8 because they are both theoretical questions more geared toward the administrators and teachers.

**Subjects**

To gain a better understanding and broad perspective of the English 101 courses, I interviewed faculty members, teaching assistants and students involved in the program. Subjects who agreed to be interviewed for this project include four members of the English department faculty and two
adjunct instructors, which include two former ESL administrators, two current ESL administrators, one faculty member who is coordinating the 101E program, and the Freshman English Coordinator. In addition, three teaching assistants were interviewed, who have each taught in the 101 series for two to three years, and collectively have instructed in 101B, 101C, 101D and 101E. The final part of the research focused on eight international students, three in the graduate program and five in the undergraduate. These students have been on campus for an average of one year, and they all have taken at least the 101B/101C or 101B/101D combination. Two students were currently taking English 104 and 105 at DMACC.

**Materials and methods**

The interview research format was a simple one. During each session, which usually lasted an hour and was conducted in a private room, I would record one-on-one discussions with a mini-cassette recorder as well as a pen and notebook just in case the cassette ever malfunctioned, which did happen once. The only group interview sessions were held with the students. I talked with four students at a time in order to make them feel comfortable and obtain a natural conversation with honest opinions. It was my guess that the students would express their views of the 101 program by drawing off of each other’s comments, and that was the case. Many more
paraphrases than direct quotes from the students are included because their sentences were broken and unclear at times, and they used many choppy sentences to convey their responses to the questions.

Finding ways to actively involve the faculty and teaching assistants was not a problem. They were full of opinions and ideas for improving the 101 courses. Although I asked the same questions in each session, every interview was different. Faculty especially explored many tangents, which many times led to valuable, new information. The interview format was not terse and formal, but usually turned into natural conversations, and I firmly believe that is the best way to gather this kind of qualitative information because it is the most direct way to extract honesty from subjects.
IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A variety of individual responses were given to each question, but a pattern of similar types of answers did emerge according to each group. In many cases, TESL faculty cited similar problems because of their unique administrative perspective as well as teaching experience, while the teaching assistants explained in greater detail the curricula and outcomes of 101 courses they have taught. The students evaluated the program as to how it assisted them. Within each group of faculty, TAs and students, however, many varied answers and insights were given into what exactly is right and wrong about Iowa State's English 101 courses.

1. What are the aims and goals of Iowa State's ESL program, and how are they achieved?

According to the majority of the subjects interviewed, the main agenda of Iowa State's English 101 series is to prepare international undergraduate and graduate students for academic work at the university, primarily by strengthening their writing skills in 101C and 101D, and their grammar skills in 101B. "It's to try to help people understand English and writing skills. Most important is listening and writing," said a student about 101B and 101C. Cultural adjustment to American academic life was also included as part of the goal in the 101 series by two subjects. "In theory they're ready," said a TA about her 101 students, "But in practice there are still a lot of gaps, and it would kind of be throwing them to the wolves just
to put them right out into 104 and 105. Our job is as a go-between or a liaison to get them from point A to point B."

A discrepancy in the program's goals at the undergraduate level is whether 101C's purpose is to prepare students for academic studies in general, or if it is geared more specifically toward freshman composition. It was agreed upon by the teaching assistants and the majority of the faculty that preparation for 104 and 105 is the most direct, practical goal of 101C; however, teaching assistants point out that they are not informed enough about 104's curriculum and problems students run into. A teaching assistant who has taught 101B and 101C several times said she felt cheated that she never took the 104 Seminar, which is a training course for new 104 TAs, because she wanted to be more firmly grounded in the definition of a good composition and the most effective teaching methods, according to the empirical research taught to 104 teaching assistants in that course.

If ESL instructors were more aware of the practices in 104, they could better coordinate their own 101C courses in light of what kinds of assignments and papers the students would need to write at the more advanced level. "It seems logical to me that there ought to be more give and take between people teaching the 101 courses and the 104, and there ought to be more cross-fertilization of ideas," said a faculty member who favors the proposal that TESL graduate students teach 104 before they teach 101C. "If
they have never taught 104 or 105, they don’t have the context to teach the skills they need to in 101C."

There has been discussion about strengthening the TESL TAs' English 501 mentoring course to provide more theory and practical ideas to use in the classroom. If there is funding available to expand the mentoring program, the entire ESL program would benefit. If the goal of 101C is to ready students for 104, then the 101C instructors should be prepared for the next level as well. Some faculty are strongly in favor of integrating advanced listening and reading skills into the 101B and 101C curricula, which would strengthen students' overall command of English, and help them tackle freshman composition as well as their further academic work. A faculty member stated that reading should definitely be emphasized more in 101C. "101C is a good place for more emphasis on critical reading, interpreting text, summarizing and shifting from student’s point of view to that drawn from the text. Those kinds of skills are quite sophisticated and ESL students continue to have trouble with them in 104 and 105."

Students also expressed that reading and speaking are two skills that are not focused on enough. As a faculty member suggested, the specific goals of Iowa State's ESL program need to be thoroughly examined before any changes can be successfully made.
2. What are the strengths of the program and how can they be better developed?

Every subject's first response to this question was to praise the instructors who teach the 101 courses. "I'm always overwhelmed by the talented TAs who teach it, and the dedication that the TAs and the other instructors give. Everyone is very concerned about the quality of instruction and making sure the students get a lot of feedback," said a faculty member. Students also praised the instructors because they said the TAs understand the problems international students have while adjusting to American culture.

Other faculty and TAs mentioned that just the existence of the program itself is a strength, and students who take the 101 classes do improve between the beginning of the semester and the end. Small class sizes, 17:1, are also a definite plus, and a TA commended the Writing Center, which employs English majors to help students in their writing courses, as a "one-on-one, sheltered atmosphere" where the international students can go for help with their work. However, the amount of assistance students can receive from the Writing Center and still call it their own is sometimes questionable, remarked a faculty member. Another TA highly praised the curriculum in 101D, the graduate student course: "It's very practical. I would have like to have had a class like that because it
teaches you how to write a thesis. At the beginning everyone writes on the same topics, but after that they write on their own subjects and research."

A graduate student in electrical engineering who took 101D in the spring of 1994 added, "I was very impressed with 101D class. I am going to prepare to write my thesis, so the 101D course was very helpful for the future." In fact, this student would like to take an advanced 101D course, he liked it so much.

According to the subjects, the strongest aspect of the ESL program is the teaching assistants and their care and concern for their students. This is an essential part of maintaining a successful teaching program, and one faculty member credited Iowa State's strong TESL graduate program for training its teachers so well. Curriculum in the 101 courses was given mixed reviews, however, and is referred to specifically in the answers to Question III.

3. What are the weaknesses of the program and how can they be strengthened?

According to the research, the ESL program's weaknesses far outweigh its strengths, unfortunately. While Questions VI and VII center directly on the problems of international students' English transfer credits and the English Placement Test, this question concerns other issues. In general, subjects stated three main problems in the 101 series: i) Not enough 101C and 101D sections are offered to accommodate new students
each semester; ii) 101B, 101C and 101E lack cohesion and a clear agenda for what students are to learn; iii) Some undergraduate students take the 101 courses out of sequence or evade them altogether.

Not Enough Sections

The majority of the faculty and TAs complained about the lack of funding necessary to offer more sections of the 101 courses which the hundreds of incoming students are placed into each semester. Because the 101 classes do not count toward their graduation credits, many international undergraduate students often view them as obstacles to getting on with their course work, especially because none of the subjects I spoke with knew they had to take the English Placement Test until they arrived on campus.

Although none of the students I interviewed had difficulty getting into 101 sections, the faculty and TAs said full classes are a problem. If students cannot take 101C when they need to because the sections always fill up, they either take some of their core courses if their department allows them to, or they often take freshman composition at DMACC to at least be rid of one English requirement. “There are not enough sections. It’s really frustrating for students who are forced to take this course, and they don’t always come into it with the best attitude, and then if they can’t get in, it’s worse,” commented a TA. She added that generally her students’ attitudes
are positive while they take her course, and often at the end of the semester they appreciate the English skills they have learned. The problem is, many students believe that since they have passed the TOEFL to gain admission to Iowa State, they do not want to be held up taking more non-credit English classes want to get on with their studies. Yet if they do quite poorly on the English Placement Test, undergraduates can be “sentenced” to two semesters of extra classes--a semester of 101E-1, 101E-2 and 101B if all the sections are open, and a semester of 101C. This delay can seriously affect students’ programs of study, especially in the Engineering College, where international students cannot start core classes until their English requirement is met. Also, the first three weeks of every semester are a “huge mess” until students shuffle around and end up in the right class, according to a TA. Plus, some students cannot get into 101B, 101C or 101D at all, especially if they are new arrivals to campus. “If they can’t get in the course the first semester they’re here, then why have it? The idea is to help them in their other courses, and you end up with students who have been here for three semesters and they’re taking 101B,” a TA pointed out.

The TA above described an extreme example of problems due to closed sections, and none of the subjects interviewed was certain how often this problem occurs, which is a problem in itself. Nonetheless, many of the faculty, TAs and students would like to see more sections offered, but the
money isn't available to pay for them. "That's because the university won't give it to this department," said another TA. "That's because we're not Science & Technology, we're just humanities, and if you want humanities you go to Iowa City. There's plenty of people to teach the extra sections, but the funding isn't there; therefore, the international students' programs get backed up." For this issue to be seriously addressed to the English department and larger university, precise records need to be kept detailing the insufficient number of ESL classes compared to the large number of students who need to take them.

**Lack of Cohesion in the Curriculum**

The subjects commonly noted another weakness, related to the ESL program's goals, in the inconsistent curriculum in 101B and 101C, and the almost complete lack of direction in 101E. Beginning with 101B and 101C, at least one TA has trouble deciphering the difference between the two courses. She is relieved that she never had to teach the same students two semesters in 101B and 101C because she is afraid she would teach the same content twice, especially if the class were above average. "There is not enough communication about what the goals of these courses are and what we're trying to do. We focus a lot more on the grammar in B and the composition skills in C, but it's not always clear what the difference is. Now that I've taught B for awhile, there are certain grammar problems that
almost inevitably show up, but those same things show up in 101C too. I end up having to talk about a lot of the same grammar points."

Many students would like to see 101B done away with altogether, or change it into a speaking/reading course because in those skills are what the students believe they need the most work. "I waste my time in 101B. It's basic grammar, and textbook is easy. If you pass TOEFL, you know a lot about grammar. We had to take it because we didn't pass the placement test," said one student. Most of the other students agreed with him, and in judging their speaking ability in these interviews, many of them could use a speaking course, and they know it.

Although the students have a point, faculty make administrative decisions, and there is general agreement among them that 101B and 101C need to be overhauled, but not eliminated. And although everyone agrees that a speaking course is a wonderful idea, there are no plans for one at this time because of the typically drawn conclusion of having no room in the budget. However, many faculty believe a change in the 101 program is in order. "I quite honestly think we need to do a curriculum review, and make some decisions how we can come up with a more coherent program," said a faculty member. Her advice is to teach listening, grammar, reading and writing in the same course. "I really object to this tendency to analyze and compartmentalize skills and say at this level they need grammar and at this
 level they need writing, and then we can just stuff all the other things in the language lab. I'm very much in favor of a more whole language, integrated skills approach to language teaching. We should try to streamline the program and try to use a more integrated skills approach, and have students do more reading assignments than [papers on] on personal experience."

Another faculty member also criticized the tendency toward personal essays and self-expression in the current curriculum. "Most students are placed in 101C because they have trouble with vocabulary, grammar and sentence structure. But of course, all the writing pedagogy and research in the field is to ignore grammar and those features, and focus on students being able to express themselves. I think we should be focusing on some of those issues in C because it's probably the reason students got placed there."

Faculty are in favor of either integrating reading into 101B and 101C, or creating an entirely new reading course. "I think we should offer a real reading course, I think it's very rare for someone to test into B and not have trouble with reading and listening," said a faculty member. Her idea is to integrate reading into 101B, which would meet five days a week instead of three. Then, depending on how well the students perform at the end of that class would determine the next class they take. If some students improved
vast amounts in a strengthened 101B course, and demonstrated that improvement on another placement/diagnostic test, they could then pass out of 101C or 101D and into their course work.

"We should examine the possibility of integrating reading/listening into 101 B, C and D," suggested another faculty member. "I think reading and writing go together very much. The more you read and the more you analyze what you read, the more you know how to write. Maybe we should also build in some advanced listening skills." The administrator added that the best way to improve the program is to conduct research similar to this project, only on a much larger scale. "I would try to get feedback from students and teachers, and write to other universities who have similar programs and find out what they're doing," she said.

There was resounding agreement among the faculty, TAs and students that the independent study courses in listening and reading, 101E-1 and 101E-2, need serious review. Many students think the courses waste their time, although one graduate student said the listening course helped him a great deal. For the most part, however, instructors can become frustrated trying to help students learn in 101E. "Students don't look at it like we're doing them a favor," said a TA. "They just think it's a big pain and they're not interested in the actual learning."
One faculty member stated that 101E should be optional at the most, and another agreed that independent study is not the most effective way for students to improve their weak English skills. "I would definitely re-evaluate English 101E, I'm not really sure we need that. I think I would rather make it optional than required," remarked a faculty member, adding that international students admitted to the university already passed the TOEFL, which tests their listening ability, and she does not agree with "slapping" them with these additional English requirements in 101E.

Another faculty member, agreeing that "E needs serious help," said the independent study isn't working, and 101E needs to be a regular class with a constant instructor. Then the language lab where students currently take 101E could be optional. The problem is, if 101E were changed into a three-day-a-week course, instead of students completing it on their own time, then the class becomes a heavier burden. As in all the 101 classes, 101E grades do not count toward graduation, but they do add into students' GPA. "It just adds more credit hours for them to take," the faculty member sighed. "We're trying to get away from that by raising TOEFL score."

Every subject I spoke with, including the students, is in favor of raising the TOEFL requirement for admission to Iowa State. Currently, the score is 500, and many want to see it raised to 520 or even 550. The Engineering Department has already raised the TOEFL requirement to 525.
The students want to see a higher TOEFL score implemented so they and those who follow them wouldn't have to take so many extra English classes.

Faculty and TAs are in favor of a higher TOEFL score so that some of the headaches of 101 administration be resolved. Raising the TOEFL score would not relieve the 101 program of all its burdens, though, according to one faculty member. "It's not a universally airtight solution. As everyone in this field should know, one person who scores 500 on the TOEFL could be vastly different linguistically from another person who scores 500 on the TOEFL on the same day. It doesn't test how they can speak or write." One method administrators are considering to test students' ability to write is to require prospective international students to take the Test of Written English (TWE) in their own countries before they come over here. The TWE is designed by Educational Testing Service (ETS) as a supplement to the TOEFL to test English writing skills. Two faculty members said the English Department is seriously considering this requirement. From an administrative perspective, requiring the TWE would help to ensure that international students who are accepted at Iowa State really are proficient enough to be here. The English Placement Test could still be given to place students in 101 courses if they need a little more work, but the courses should then become more advanced and skills-integrated, perhaps focusing more on reading and even speaking.
Avoiding the 101 Courses

The final major weakness of the 101 courses, according to faculty and TAs, is that students sometimes take 101C or 101D during or at the end of their course work, or occasionally undergraduates do not fulfill their English requirement at all. At the graduate level the Graduate College is the central policy enforcing office that requires international students to take 101D if it is so mandated by the English Department. If graduate students bypass 101D, then they do not graduate. In contrast, there is no central office keeping track of undergraduates; therefore, making certain students fulfill the English requirement stipulated by the Placement Test results is up to each department and advisor. “For the most part they do support it,” said a faculty member about other departments in the university, “But it is a little looser there.” She added that sometimes students get by without taking the 101 courses, or they take them late in their course work. Avoiding 101C is accomplished by students taking English 104 and 105 at DMACC, and then transferring those credits to Iowa State. Two semesters of freshman composition fulfills the basic six English credits needed toward graduation, and if students can successfully complete those two classes somewhere else, then they would argue that they do not need the remedial 101 courses. This subject is more fully discussed in the answer to Question 5.
Even though graduate students must take 101D before they graduate, when they take it is sometimes a problem, according to a TA who has taught several semesters of 101D. Although a few students who pass out of 101D take the class anyway just for extra practice, some students required to take 101D do not until after they’ve written their dissertation. “They don’t take the placement exam right away. It’s required, but there’s no policeman chasing them, and there’s no follow-up system because after D there are no other English requirements,” said the TA. He added that when students come to him and say they have missed the date for the English Placement Test, he tells them to wait a semester or two and then take the test. Does this logic defeat the purpose of 101D, which is to help prepare students for their course work? “It defeats the purpose of the rule that you must take the test immediately,” the TA answered. “But in terms of meeting that standard of English it doesn’t. They get some practice in other classes and might test out. It’s not the best way, but I know if I were them I would like to know that. Who needs another course you’re not even going to get credit for?”

A solution to assist students in sequencing 101D toward the beginning of their program of study is for the Graduate College to track them down sooner, perhaps in their second semester of classes. According to the TA, graduate students are only made aware of gaps in their list of
requirements just before they are supposed to graduate. "It wouldn't stop students who can't take the course because of their schedule, but it could stop those who don't take the test right away when they get here," said the TA.

No one knows how many students put off the 101 courses until the middle or end of their graduate work--which is an unintentional action if they accidentally miss the English Placement Test date--or those undergraduates who do not take 101C at all. It is most likely a small number, but nonetheless, it brings up the need for better record keeping, and an important question that probably is not asked often enough: If some international students can make their way successfully through their program of study without taking the 101 courses required of them by the results of the placement test, then what does that say about the 101 courses? How useful are they? Students weak in their English skills seem to benefit from the extra instruction because many of the do graduate eventually, but could more advanced students manage to get through on their own?

Most TAs stated that their students' attitudes toward the 101 classes were positive, and the ones who did not want to be in the class at the beginning of the semester were glad for what they learned at the end. Yet from talking to students and administrators about enforcement of the
English requirement, I found that a negative attitude does exist with some students. "We have many homework to do in our other courses, so sometimes we quickly finish our homework [for 101C]. We turn in a paper, but really, in fact, we can't learn very much," said a student. She explained that 101B and 101C were too easy for her, and she did not spend much time working on the assignments.

Faculty and TAs face the attitude problem from a different perspective. "We're the policemen of the campus. They take this test and then they're required to take these classes," said a faculty member, adding that many graduate students in 101B and 101D take the class pass/fail if their major professors allow them to, and some of the students really put in a minimum amount of work. This kind of laziness understandably frustrates instructors. "If somebody's really not trying, then they're wasting my time. The attitude is the trouble. I would rather their major professors were the policemen and say, yes, you people do need English," said the faculty member.

According to the research, Iowa State's ESL program needs improvements in three general areas: i) The program should offer a larger number and better variety of courses to meet the needs of its more proficient international students; ii) administrators and instructors should streamline the goals and curriculum in each course to ensure that the
courses have continuity without straying to the repetitive side, while integrating the four language skills more fully; iii) and discover a method that prods students into taking the 101 courses in the correct sequence, which is before or toward the beginning of their course work, not at the end.

4. For English 101B, 101C, 101D and 101E, how well are students expected to master the material before they can move on? Do you have any innovative ideas to improve each of these classes?

The purpose of this question was to find out, generally, the criteria for passing students on to the next level of language study or into their regular course work. However, during the interviews I discovered that “mastery” may not have been the correct word choice. “Language learning isn’t mastered in a semester,” said a TA. “‘Mastering’ isn’t the correct word; it’s more like making students more and more aware of how to do it right.” Instead of a discussion about the different levels of work in each 101 class, what I found was an interesting dilemma of “improvement versus effort” as one faculty member put it, and a number of different opinions on the subject. Most faculty and teaching assistants hold the view that if students come to class every day and try their best in a 101 course, then they should pass, even if they make little improvement throughout the semester. This seems logical since, after all, the 101 classes do not factor into students’ programs of study; yet, a few faculty and TAs believe strongly that students must meet the goals of the course in order to receive a satisfactory grade.
and go on. When this does not happen, there is a problem. There is no question that writing skills are difficult to grade in the first place. “Math is much more objective and discreet,” said a faculty member. “Writing is obviously much more messy. The skills are more complicated and harder to assess precisely and accurately.”

Even though writing is “messy,” students must meet some kind of standard that instructors find acceptable. Some subjects who support grades based on effort put strong stock in the ESL program’s role as a nurturing environment that prepares students for the big, cold world of the university. One faculty member said ESL pedagogy research encourages teachers to build up students’ confidence, which does not include harsh grading. “It [the 101 series] tends to be nurturing, supportive and not critical. Our goal is to help students learn language better, and don’t jump on someone’s back if they make a mistake. Similarly, when grading papers, it’s not only discouraging but useless to correct everything,” said the faculty member. She does not think the 101 classes should become “gate-keeping” courses where students fail for not writing at the expected level, which is what happens in English 104 and 105. “It is possible for students to get through those 101 courses and really not have completely mastered they need for the next level up,” the faculty member added.
Another faculty member feels the same way. The 101 classes are a preparatory shelter for students before they go out to face 104 and 105, and the grading system should reflect that view. "It's very hard to fail an ESL class, which I think is good. We're supposed to be encouraging them. If you try you're going to pass," she said.

But what about those students who are not really fit to go to the next level, or be released into the university? "Some kids do all the homework, all the writing, but their writing is still poor and they fossilize in their grammar. Then what do we do with them?" asked a former administrator. The answer is, usually those students are passed along anyway. This finds us at the heart of the dilemma: Is it a problem, or better yet, a disservice to students that their grades in the 101 courses are not based entirely on their writing skills? According to at least one faculty member, the answer is an emphatic yes. "Students are being graded for effort, and that is wrong," she remarked strongly. "We have to watch the grade inflation and not grade for effort."

The way this kind of evaluation occurs is through grade inflation, according to this faculty member. "Somewhere along the line TAs started assigning journals and other kinds of assignments that don't require a lot of skills. In order to get the students motivated, they would give them credit for doing it, and that credit inflated their grades." At the beginning of the
semester, TAs would give students a detailed description of what criteria their grade would be based on. At end of the semester, if students did all the journals but didn’t do so well on the papers they would still receive a B or an A when everything was averaged together. “I think we really need to watch that because in 101C we grade much higher than they do in 104,” added the faculty member. “I think it’s a disservice for us to build up their hopes that they’re going to get good grades in their other course and their writing is better in fact than it is. Our grades should really reflect their ability.”

A problem instructors have with giving grades to reflect students’ ability is that each semester the abilities and the material covered are different. “The problem is, every semester the class is different, and we focus on different things according to their needs,” said a faculty member who believes in grading at least partially for effort. “Last spring we spent lots of time on vocabulary, register, connotations of words, and this semester I haven’t done a thing with it because students aren’t having a problem with it.” This past spring the instructor has focused more on sentence combining. She said the inconsistency could be the teacher’s fault, if she reads research on teaching vocabulary, for example, she might tend to emphasize vocabulary more in class. But this is not to say that each class is the same, generally. Of course, that is not true; every student
is at a different level of proficiency. And this debate over improvement versus effort should not de-emphasize that, according to this research, most students do make progress during the semester in the 101 classes. 

Planning courses step-by-step cannot always be done ahead of time, though. "The syllabus and curriculum are important in writing, but what you actually work on in the class depends on what you see the students doing, their performance. Between the beginning and the end of semester they improve a lot," said a faculty member.

Although many students do become more proficient in English through the 101 courses, a TA cited the lack of improvement as one of the problems, especially in 101B. She would teach students to avoid preposition errors or dangling modifiers, for example, and then have them produce a short paper. "When I got them back, all over the place would be the same errors we'd just talked about. I don't know if I'm too soft or too harsh," the instructor said this kind of situation is common in 101B, but occurs less frequently in 101C. As shown in Question III, some students believe that 101C and 101B are too easy for their ability.

With attitudes like the one above and teachers grading for effort, rather than students' progress, the 101 courses seem to lack discipline, leaving the curriculum less effective than it could be if students knew they had to improve or they would not pass. "We have to get students
accustomed to that notion that they are going to be judged on their writing. As cruel as it seems for speakers of other languages, those are the facts,” said one of the above-mentioned faculty members.

5. How well do the graduate and undergraduate students work together in English 101B? Do changes need to be made to split them up?

Even though some ESL students dislike 101B, until a decision is made to alter or eliminate it, the course should be looked at carefully as is, and the intent of this question was to do just that. I thought it would be an important question because graduate students tend to concentrate heavily on academic writing for their programs of study, while undergraduate students, especially freshmen, are studying more general subjects. In spite of the differences between the two groups, most of the teaching assistants and faculty stated that in their opinion graduate and undergraduate students who are placed in 101B together because they need more grammar help work just fine together. “There is no problem, except maybe pride,” a TA said of the graduate students. “They’re at the same grammar level.”

One faculty member enjoys teaching 101B because of the mixture of the two groups. She praised the contagious motivation of the graduate students in her classes because it rubbed off on the younger students. “The grad students are always so motivated, they bring the undergraduate students along, and they’re pushed forward. I use general materials, and I
think grad students probably enjoy using materials not in their field," she said.

Another faculty member commented on foreign undergraduate students' higher level of maturity compared to American students, which helps the international undergraduates mesh better with graduate students in 101B. "The ESL students here are probably more mature than our American undergrads, and in many cases they're better motivated. They're here to study, not to have a good time. So they don't have any trouble adjusting."

A couple of faculty members hold different opinions, though, for the main reason that 101B tends to cater toward undergraduates. One faculty member in particular strongly believes graduate and undergraduate students should be split up because teachers find it difficult to meet the needs of both groups of students. "It would be nice if there were a way to split them up because the course tends to go toward freshman English. That sort of thing is so completely different than anything a grad student in chemistry or even in social science needs to write. It's too easy," she said.

A TA's recommendation for improving 101B is to offer graduate students more specific fields of study courses; for example, chemistry students would take a writing class totally devoted to academic writing in the field of chemistry. According to the majority of the subjects, however, it
is really not feasible to place graduate students in a separate 101B class from undergraduates because from a financial standpoint there are not enough graduate students who end up in 101B each semester to warrant spending extra departmental money on exclusive graduate sections. Perhaps the exact cost of additional sections should be investigated to find out how burdensome they would be. However, the TA quoted first in this section has a point. Both groups of students are placed in 101B because they need more grammar training. They are usually weak in basic, sentence-level errors, and the faculty member’s solution for handling both groups at once is to teach them to self-monitor their writing and be able to recognize and correct mistakes on their own. This is a very helpful, applicable tool for students’ academic writing down the road, no matter what their goals.

Another solution to the problem of 101B leaning toward undergraduates and freshman composition is for teachers to give a variety of assignments, and allow graduate students to write in their professional fields for more grammar practice, like in 101D.

6. Do many non-native students who do not pass the ISU Placement Test take freshman composition at DMACC instead of completing 101C first at Iowa State? Is this a major problem? How can it be solved?

Although no one in the English Department seems to have current figures of the number of international students who have taken English 104
and 105 at DMACC this past school year, according to freshman English records from the fall of 1992, at least one-third of Iowa State’s 300 ESL students during that time took 104 and/or 105 at the community college. This problem is primarily one for the director of freshman composition to solve, but it also affects the English 101 series. This rather large trend of students migrating over to DMACC to meet their English requirement is an issue for ESL administrators because sometimes undergraduate students who place in 101 courses take 104 at DMACC at the same time as they are taking 101C at Iowa State, and then they transfer in that freshman English credit. This utterly defeats the purpose that 101C exits to prepare students for 104 and 105, but transfer credits from other community colleges and universities are a valid way to meet the freshman English requirement.

Why do ESL students go through the trouble to spend extra tuition money and transportation time going to DMACC to take 104 and 105? One reason is, according to two faculty members, the time pressure to enter their program of study is tense, especially for engineering students. They must fulfill their English requirement before they can take any of their major courses. Students who must complete 101B and 101C before 104 and 105 could be set back four semesters before they begin any of their engineering classes, and understandably, the subjects I interviewed don’t like it.
Closed 104 and 105 sections at Iowa State might play a factor in students taking those classes elsewhere, but overall, the subjects think fear of freshman composition plays a larger role. Several faculty members believe that international students take 104 and 105 at DMACC because they are afraid of flunking those courses at Iowa State. "Word gets around that it doesn't count toward your GPA," said the faculty member. "Transfer credit that comes in does not count toward GPA. Therefore, the students feel they're immune from GPA disasters." This perception is not always accurate because when some departments, engineering included, look at prospective students for their program, students' grades from transfer credits are factored in anyway. So, if international students take freshman composition at another college and receive a poor grade, their departments could hold that against their admission status to the department.

"Students also have the perception that it's easier at DMACC, but we haven't found that to be true. It's ironic that some of our own faculty teach there," said the faculty member.

The English department has developed an if-you-can't-beat-'em-join-'em method of combating the problem of international students taking 104 at DMACC the same semester they take 101C at Iowa State. This past spring, higher level ESL students were offered the option of taking 101C and 104 simultaneously at Iowa State, which alters the course's original
purpose. These “experimental” students were all placed in the same 101C class, but then they were split up and scattered across the 104 sections. According to the faculty member involved, in 101C the students wrote paragraphs all semester, while she covered writing fundamentals. “The theory is that they will then be able to apply those things, and it will help them in the 104 class that they’re taking,” said the faculty member. “They would have been weaker at the beginning of the semester, and then they would sort of catch up because they’re doing two classes.”

Taking the two courses together proved successful, according to the faculty member, and getting two English courses out of the way in one semester without having to go to DMACC definitely saved students more time to spend in their core courses. “We should end up giving students choices as to how they do it--meet the requirement,” said the instructor involved with the experimental program.

Simultaneous sections of 101C and 104 indeed offer students another option for meeting the English requirement. If the English department continues to offer these special sections, the whole purpose of 101C should be rethought, and 101C/104 together should be expanded to accommodate all the international students to keep them at Iowa State.

The English department’s other problem with students taking 104 at DMACC, besides taking 101C and 104 at the same time, is that
occasionally, students take 104 at DMACC and entirely bypass the 101 courses they have been placed in at Iowa State. Since 101C is considered a less difficult course than 104, and is not worth graduation credits anyway, if students can successfully complete freshman composition at DMACC and transfer it over to Iowa State, why should they need the remedial English course that is supposed to precede 104? “The sequencing is so strange, it’s incredible. Students take 104 and 105 first, and then C because someone tells them they have to take it. It’s mindless,” said the Freshman English Coordinator.

Legally, Iowa State must accept the transfer credits, or possibly face discrimination charges from international students who could claim that their transfer credits are just as valid as any other student’s. Because of this legal angle, technically, the English Department cannot require students to take 101B or 101C. “There really is no real effective enforcement mechanism, so kids do get through,” said another faculty member. “It used to be that if a kid had a [English] transfer credit from someplace else, but placed into 101C, he wouldn’t get the transfer credit until 101C was taken.” Iowa State erased that requirement, however, because junior colleges saw it as a negative comment on their instruction, and Iowa State did not want to sacrifice any political ties. Therefore, the English Department lost its power to enforce the courses, and can only
strongly recommend that students who have completed freshman composition somewhere else take 101C if they haven’t already because, according to the English Placement Test, they are placed there. “The main pressure to take the course comes from their own department, not from English,” said the faculty member. “The catalog says the kid has to do this, but there’s no mechanism to enforce it. It’s amazing that as many kids take 101C as they do, I always thought.”

Students can opt not to take 101C if they meet their English requirement elsewhere, but naturally, this is not a publicized fact. Although records seem to be unavailable to list the numbers of students who do not take 101C, according to a former ESL coordinator, it does not happen that often because most international students do not realize they have the power to wrangle around the requirement. The English department never lists it as an option for meeting the English requirement faster. Keeping the secret, though, is a weak solution for a weak policy, and the policy should be changed. Since the English department cannot enforce the 101 sections for students who have already taken 104, but placed into 101C, it is important to encourage students to stay at Iowa State to meet the English requirement. This is why offering simultaneous sections of 101C and 104 is a smart way to keep students at “home”, and help them strengthen their English skills through the preparatory course specially designed for them.
The simultaneous sections should be expanded for every international student in this predicament.

Another way to keep students at Iowa State and in the 101 courses is to coordinate the 101 program with the freshman English program better, by streamlining both programs into one for the international students, and thereby making Iowa State’s 104 and 105 more user-friendly and attractive. “The main thing is to get their eyes off these alternatives,” said an administrator about the DMACC option. “If we can hold our own with the students at the freshman English level, then the 101 problems will take care of themselves because they’ll [the students] see that this is a coherent program that will try to help them from 101B and C all the way through 105.” This statement is over-simplified because 101B and 101C also need to be better integrated, but the idea to streamline all the ESL and freshman English courses is a good one.

7. Is the ISU Placement Test an accurate determiner of which class level students should be placed in if they do not pass directly into English 104? Is there a better way to find students’ level of English proficiency?

Iowa State’s English Placement Test for incoming international students has four general sections. The first three sections are a multiple choice focusing on listening comprehension, reading comprehension and vocabulary, and in the fourth section students must write a 30 minute composition on a topic chosen by the ESL administrator. All the subjects
agreed that the writing section of Iowa State's English Placement Test is, for the most part, an accurate determiner of whether international students should pass directly into their course of study, or be placed in one or more of the 101 courses. “Holistically rated writing samples are a standard way of placing students into writing courses, both for ESL students and native speakers,” said a faculty member. “Having taught B, C and D for a lot of years, I can say from experience that most of the students who are placed into those courses are in the right place.” She added that perhaps a handful of students each semester fall into a gray area between 101B and 101C or 101D, or passing, but there is no test that is flawless.

As for the first section of the placement test, everyone agreed that it should be rewritten, for the primary reason that it has been in use for at least 16 years. Some of the questions in the first section are outdated, and its antiquity leaves test security to be desired. “I’m sure there are copies floating around everywhere. I’m always amazed that everyone doesn’t receive perfect scores,” said a faculty member.

The listening/reading part of the placement test is used to funnel students into 101E. Students who pass these sections can still take 101E-1 or 101E-2 if they think they need it. As a check measure for the placement test, at the beginning of the semester in each 101 section, teachers give a pre-test to make certain students are at the proficiency level they should be
for that class. This saves students occasionally from having to take 101E. “Given that the first section needs to be rewritten, the consequences of not doing well on it are not dramatically bad for that part of the test,” according to another faculty member. “I think we should revise it, look more carefully at what skills 101E focuses on, and test for those skills.” The subject of students performing better on the Placement Test than their English skills should warrant was never addressed by the subjects. Perhaps the consequences of doing too well on the test for students who really need more reading or listening instruction are less time spent in ESL classes and more struggling later on in their regular coursework.

Students in 101E can take other 101 courses simultaneously, since 101E is an independent study. English 101B and 101C are chronologically ordered, though, so pre-tests don’t work as smoothly in these classes as they do in 101E, according to a TA. If a student is placed in the wrong course (for example, a student is placed in 101B, but should be in 101C), after the semester begins the courses are filled up, and students cannot find an open section of 101C. They must wait until the following semester to take it. “In theory it’s great--you can move people around. In practice moving people around is really complicated,” the TA said.

One problem with the placement test that has nothing to do with its content is that students know nothing about it until they arrive at Iowa
State. Although the English Placement Test is addressed in information sent out to international students soon after they are admitted, many students apparently miss the notice and arrive on campus thinking they are ready to start their regular classes. This is unfortunate, but it is students' responsibility to carefully read the orientation material sent by Iowa State.

A useful supplement or even alternative to Iowa State's English Placement Test is the Test of Written English (TWE), which is a separate component for the TOEFL, created by Educational Testing Service (ETS). The TWE is a holistically graded composition test given in students' native countries, and rated by professionals from ETS. If Iowa State required that international students take the TWE before they arrive in the United States, similarly to the TOEFL, ESL faculty could gain a much clearer idea of students' writing ability before they are even admitted to the university, and accept only the higher level students. An updated, more diagnostic version of the English Placement Test could also be given to students when they arrive to determine if they need more work in listening, reading or even speaking. Every international student I spoke with would like to take a speaking course. Admitting fewer students would reduce the burden ESL faculty have to accommodate large numbers and all different levels of students. The 101 courses, especially 101B, could be altered to include
more complex, integrated materials that would challenge more advanced students.

8. *Is there a difference in the quality of students’ English proficiency between those who pass directly into English 104 and those who must go through 101C first?*

This was a poorly written question; therefore, the responses to it for the most part do not make the kind of conclusion I had hoped for. What I meant to find out with this last question was how the subjects honestly view the “worthwhileness” of the 101 program. Asking them to make a comparison between students who pass the English Placement Test and go directly into 104, and those who must take 101 courses first was an attempt at subtly asking subjects whether 101 courses really help international students that much. It seems the subtlety was too vague, and thus, the answers given below state generally whether international students testing directly into 104 or graduate work are eventually better English writers than their peers in the 101 courses.

A faculty member who works closely with the Placement Test said that students who pass directly into 104 or their graduate coursework will generally always be better English speakers and writers in their regular classes than students who take 101 courses first. "There aren’t many students who have to take 101B and 101C who are ever going to be perceived by their 104 teachers as being one of the best students in the
class because they don't make up the difference, I guess," she said. The majority of the faculty and teaching assistants agreed that this was the case, and pointed out reasons that international students who forego 101 courses are better students because English and Western culture are common in their native countries, such as European and Indian students. This gives ESL students a natural advantage over other international students from the Pacific Rim, for example, where English is less common and the English language is so enormously different from Chinese or Japanese.

Another reason which a faculty member and former ESL coordinator pointed out is that if students feel forced to take 101 courses and maintain a poor attitude, that attitude can hinder students from learning to their full potential. "If you don't capture their motivation, if they don't see the reason behind it, and they don't see the connection between what we do there and what happens to them later, I really wonder whether if there is a vast improvement. On other hand there are those who benefit greatly," said the faculty member. Throughout all these interviews, faculty members, teaching assistants and students have stated that the 101 courses do help some students become better English writers, and that in itself makes the 101 program a worthwhile cause, even though it has deficiencies. From the answers subjects gave in response to this and other questions, if I had
asked Question 8 properly, I would predict that the majority of the subjects 
would say that Iowa State's ESL program is a worthwhile cause because 
although it may not help every student, it helps a lot of them become better 
English writers.
V. RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Sifting through all the interview data which was gathered to learn the perceptions and opinions of Iowa State faculty, teaching assistants and international students, has been an investigative adventure. The conclusion I have reached is that many of the problems with the 101 classes involve a lack of cohesion, and any new ESL coordinator would face a challenge in restructuring the program possibly by making dramatic changes in the curriculum. However, this thesis is meant to be of some assistance in making changes. The subjects I interviewed have made realistic recommendations for advantageous changes to the program, and these suggested improvements are listed below:

- Train 101 TAs similarly to 104 TAs, perhaps by offering the same 104 Seminar, if the goal of 101C is indeed to prepare students for 104.

- Integrate more reading into 101C and 101D because many students struggle with academic texts later in their courses of study.

- Integrate reading and listening skills into the 101 courses. This would help students enormously in reading academic texts later on in their course work.

- Institute an ESL speaking course, which many instructors and students highly favor. The students I spoke with said they would take the class voluntarily to improve their oral proficiency.
• Grade students in 101 courses on their improved writing skills, not on effort. ESL instructors can and should make students feel comfortable in class, but just because students try their best doesn’t mean their best is always enough. If students fail a 101 class because they don’t possess the ability to write proficiently, then they should be at a university in their home country anyway, not at Iowa State.

• Offer simultaneous sections of 101C and 104 to discourage students from taking 104 and 105 at DMACC, and to save students time in fulfilling their English requirement.

• Better coordinate and streamline the 101 courses and freshman composition program to form one program that keeps track of students all the way through.

• Revise the first section of the English Placement to re-establish test security, change some of the outdated questions and help better define the goals of the courses into which the students would be placed. Requiring the TWE in addition to the TOEFL would be a helpful supplement to admitting more advanced students and placing them in the appropriate English courses, if necessary.

• If raising the TOEFL score and requiring that students take the TWE is not a workable idea to raise the standard of proficiency for incoming ESL students, which would cut back on the number of students who enroll
each semester, then more sections of 101B and 101C should definitely be offered to accommodate all the students who need to take those courses.

- 101D should be the first course to be expanded if more sections of 101 courses ever become available. Faculty, TAs and students had nothing but praise for 101D, and stated the only problem with 101D is that not enough sections are offered.

Limitations of This Study and Suggestions for Future Research

Although this thesis has brought out helpful information and suggestions to improve Iowa State’s ESL program for the future, more research is necessary to give a complete picture of what improvements should be made and what options an ESL coordinator would have to make changes. First of all, in another study of the 101 courses, a researcher should make a more inclusive comparison of ESL programs in other universities to our program at Iowa State to discover how our program compares.

Second, more quantitative data should be obtained through a longitudinal study, such as giving a test to students before and after they complete the 101 program to judge their improvement. A researcher should also discover exactly how many students bypass the 101 courses, or put them off until the end of their coursework, and find out how well those
students are progressing in their regular courses without taking the 101 classes into which the results of the English Placement Test ushered them.

Third, more subjects should be interviewed, including faculty members and staff from other colleges and departments who work closely with international students, and those who teach freshman composition at DMACC. Several more teaching assistants should also be interviewed, and many more students should be interviewed and tested. Their progress should be examined as they finish the 101 courses and go through their regular courses to determine their strengths and continued weaknesses in English which the 101 courses did not help to cure.

**Conclusion**

After many hours of interviewing, organizing verbal data and learning a good deal about the 101 courses, I have recommended that several fundamental changes be made to the ESL program. Whether any of these changes are implemented is up to an ESL coordinator, who has a substantial task on her hands in keeping track of instructors and students, as well as defining and following the goals of the program. For the new ESL coordinator who will take over for the 1994-95 academic year, the final message from an amateur ESL program evaluator is this: The first step is to re-define the goals of the 101 courses and then steer the program accordingly.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A:

OBJECTIVES OF COURSE

1) To help students become aware of what is involved in the writing process, including the strategies employed by "good" writers.
2) To prepare students to meet basic standards of correctness in writing. Students should be able to write well-organized, coherent papers acceptable in clarity, style, grammar, and mechanics.
3) To provide students with experience in writing for various purposes and for various audiences.
4) To help students rely on their own ability to recognize and improve problem areas in their use of written English.
5) To help students to gain confidence in their writing so they can begin to enjoy communicating through written English.

TEXTBOOK
Academic Writing: Techniques and Tasks by Ilona Leki
(St. Martin's Press, 1989)

JOURNAL/LOG

In this course you will be asked to do two types of writing each week: one entry for a free writing journal and one entry for a grammar/composition log.

For these writings, you need to purchase a looseleaf notebook and a folder (see example). The folder is used to turn in current journal/log entries; the looseleaf notebook is to hold past entries. The folder with the current journal entries only will be turned in to me approximately every two weeks.

The journal/log entries will not be graded (no grammar errors will be corrected) but credit will be given for doing them. Entries cannot be turned in late (i.e., if not turned in on time, no credit will be given).

These entries may be handwritten.

Following are the due dates (don't forget them—you will not always receive a reminder):
   Sept. 11th/Sept. 25th/Oct. 9th/Oct. 23rd/Nov. 6th/Nov. 27th
(a) FREE WRITING JOURNAL

The purpose of the journal is to provide an opportunity to do "free" writing (i.e., no constraints on content or form), which is an effective way of improving writing skills.

I would especially like to receive entries in which you give your reaction to classroom activities and assignments (what has been helpful/what has not been helpful) or make observations about your strengths and weaknesses as a writer. Additional suggestions for topics for the "free" writing journal entries are found throughout the textbook (e.g., pages 10-11).

Each week write three entries but turn in only one--your choice. Each entry submitted should be at least one page long (if double-spaced, two pages). Label ("Free Writing") and date each entry.

See text, pages 7-8, for guidelines. Sample entries appear on pages 8-10.

(b) GRAMMAR/COMPOSITION LOG

In addition to the "free" writing journal, you are also asked to keep a grammar/composition log, the purpose of which is to help you keep track of information you have learned in the course.

There should be one entry of at least one page (two pages, if double-spaced) per week. Label ("G/C Log") and date each entry.

In these entries, you should concentrate on grammar/composition information you have encountered in the course. Each entry should describe what you have learned during the week (highlight what you consider to have been the most important points). In addition, you might also want to indicate further questions you still have about a grammar or writing point and successes or problems you have had in using what you have learned.

COMPOSITION FORMAT GUIDELINES

Please write all in-class compositions with a dark-lead (#2) pencil. On all compositions be sure to skip every other line and to leave approximately one-inch margins on both sides of the paper and at the bottom. Number all pages and be sure your name is on each.

All out-of-class compositions must be typed (absolutely no exceptions!). They should be double-spaced and have one-inch margins on both sides of the page and at the bottom. As with the in-class compositions, number the pages and be sure that your name is on each.

In this course, you will usually make several drafts of one paper. Keep all drafts of a paper: turn in previous drafts along with newest draft. No previous drafts, no grade.
INSTRUCTOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS COURSE

1) Provide an open, friendly environment.

Hopefully, our class will be one in which you feel free to express yourself verbally and in writing.

2) Explain material carefully and make all assignments clear.

Don't be too shy to let me know when I have "incomplete success" in this.

3) Suggest strategies that seem to improve "writing" performance.

As we look at these strategies, please remember that not all of them will work for everyone. Try them all, then decide which ones work for you. Only you can improve your writing skills. Although I am here to help you in this endeavor and will do my best to provide guidance, the final responsibility is yours and yours alone. You need to be an active participant in the learning process and this entails not only doing the writing assignments but also analyzing what you have learned from doing it. In other words, try to discover writing principles on your own.

4) Design activities that provide feedback on writing.

In this class, several drafts of a paper will usually be written, especially at the beginning of the semester. You will receive feedback on early drafts. Do not expect all of the feedback to come from me, however. Some of it will be from me, but most of it will be from your classmates. Their comments are just as important as mine. We must all help each other.

5) Assign grades.

The final course grade will be based on the following:

- Compositions: 50% of Grade
- Homework, Journals, Pop Quizzes: 25% of Grade
- Midterm Examination: 10% of Grade
- Final Examination: 15% of Grade

The percentages presented above are guidelines only and are not meant to be absolute; they are only a general indication of the grading policy. Factors including attendance, participation, effort, and improvement will also be considered in determining a final grade in "borderline" cases. If warranted, revisions in the grading policy may be made and grades curved. In this course, as in others at Iowa State, the instructor's judgment is the final deciding factor.

Plus-minus grades will be given.

Please keep in mind throughout the course that compositions are evaluated on their quality (using the standard set by the English Department), unfortunately not by the amount of time, effort, or
improvement involved (although these may be considered in determining the final course grade). Try not to be discouraged, however. Focus on what you learned from the assignment, not the score. Never take a low score personally! Also remember that you may not see a steady increase in composition scores. Each paper has its own unique problems that need to be dealt with.

6) Respond to students' needs as they are expressed as much as possible.

Keep in mind that I can try to respond to needs only if they are expressed. Please be sure to express them.

STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS COURSE

1) Attend class regularly and arrive on time.

If you miss a class because of an emergency, you are responsible for finding out what you missed and completing all assignments. "But I wasn't here last class meeting" is not an adequate excuse for not turning in an assignment or for not being prepared for an in-class writing task.

Frequent absences will lower the final course grade.

2) Hand in all compositions, homework assignments, and writing journals on time.

Out-of-class compositions and homework assignments which are handed in late will be lowered in grade. No composition will be accepted if it is more than one class meeting late. No homework assignment will be accepted if it has already been discussed in class, regardless of whether or not you were present for the discussion.

In-class compositions may be made up only if there is an adequate excuse (my decision). Even if made up, the grade will be lowered regardless of the reason. (I consider each in-class writing session to be a test--don't miss them.)

3) Participate in class discussions, in-class exercises, etc.

Activities in class are designed to improve writing skills. They are often based on what research tells us about what "good" writers do. They will be helpful only if you participate and try to incorporate the principles into your approach to writing.

4) Talk with me about your progress and problems.

5) Have fun in class and enjoy writing.

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I look forward to working with you, learning with you, and enjoying your company throughout the semester!
English 101C Fall '92 Syllabus

Instructor: 
Office: 01 Landscape Architecture Building
Phone: 294-9820
Mailbox: 206 Ross Hall
Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday 10-11am and by appointment
Please come in to see me if you want to discuss any of the coursework. Individual conferences are encouraged.

Text: Academic Writing Techniques and Tasks by Ilona Leki
(St. Martin's Press, 1989)

Course Objectives:
1. To help you become aware of what is involved in the writing process, including the strategies employed by "good" writers.
2. To prepare you to meet the basic standards of correctness in writing. You should be able to write well-organized, coherent papers which are acceptable in clarity, style, grammar, and mechanics.
3. To provide you with experience in writing for various purposes and for various audiences.
4. To help you rely on your own ability to recognize and improve problem areas in your use of written English.
5. To help you gain confidence in your writing so you can begin to enjoy communicating through written English.

Course Requirements:
1. Freewriting Journal/Grammar Composition Log
2. Compositions (both in and out of class)
3. Attendance and participation
(In depth explanations of course requirements will follow)

Grading:
Compositions 50%
Homework, journals, logs, quizzes 25%
Midterm Examination 10%
Final Examination 15%

Course Requirement Descriptions:
1. Freewriting Journal/Grammar Composition Log
   You will be asked to do two types of writing each week, one entry for a freewriting journal and one entry for a grammar composition log.
   For these writings you will need to purchase a looseleaf notebook and a folder. The folder is to be used to turn in current journal and log entries and the looseleaf notebook is to hold past entries. The folder with the current journal and log entries will be turned in approximately every two weeks. Please write your name visibly on the outside of the folder. These entries may be handwritten.
   The journal and log entries will not be graded (no grammar errors will be corrected) but credit will be given for doing them. Entries cannot be turned in late (if not turned in on time, no credit will be given).

   Following are the due dates (don't forget them -- you will not always receive a reminder):
   *Sept. 11, Sept. 25, Oct. 9, Oct. 23, Nov. 6, Nov. 27*
a) Freewriting Journal

The purpose of the journal is to provide an opportunity to do "free" writing (no constraints on content or form), which is an effective way of improving writing skills. I would especially like to receive entries in which you give your reaction to classroom activities and assignments or make observations about your strengths and weaknesses as a writer. Additional suggestions for topics for the freewriting journal entries are found throughout the textbook.

Each week write three entries but turn in only one of your choice. Each entry submitted should be at least one page long (if double-spaced, two pages). Label "Freewriting" and date each entry.

See text, pages 7 - 8 for guidelines. Sample entries appear on pages 8 - 10.

b) Grammar Composition Log

In addition to the freewriting journal, you are also asked to keep a grammar composition log, the purpose of which is to help you keep track of information you have learned in the course. There should be one entry of at least one page (two pages if double-spaced) per week. Label "GC Log" and date each entry. In these entries you should concentrate on grammar and composition information you have encountered in the course. Each entry should describe what you have learned during the week. In addition, you might also want to indicate further questions you still have about a grammar or writing point and successes or problems you have had in using what you have learned.

2. Composition Format Guidelines

Please write all in-class compositions with a dark-lead (#2) pencil. On all compositions be sure to skip every other line and to leave approximately one-inch margins on both sides of the paper and at the bottom. Number all pages and be sure your name is on each.

All out of class compositions must be typed (absolutely no exceptions). They should be double-spaced and have one-inch margins on both sides of the page and at the bottom. As with the in-class compositions, number the pages and be sure your name is on each.

In this course, you will usually make several drafts of one paper. Keep all drafts of the paper: turn in previous drafts along with the newest draft. No previous drafts, no grade.

3. Attendance and Participation

Attend class regularly and arrive on time. More than three absences will result in your grade being lowered by one whole letter grade. If you miss a class because of an emergency, you are responsible for finding out what you missed and completing all assignments.

Participate by handing in all compositions, journals, logs, and homework assignments on time. Compositions and homework assignments which are handed in late will be lowered in grade. No composition will be accepted if it is more than one class meeting late. No homework assignment will be accepted if it has already been discussed in class, regardless of whether or not you were present for the discussion. In class compositions may be made up only if there is an adequate excuse (my decision). Even if made up, the grade will be lowered, regardless of the reason. Each in-class writing session is considered a test -- don't miss them.
English 101D Spring 1994

Sections A1 (MWF 9am Ross 129)
B1 (MWF 2pm Ross 127)

Instructor:
Office: 311 Ross Hall
Telephone: office 294-5105; home 232-3547
Office hours: MWF 10-11 am; TTh 9:30-10 am; and by appointment

Required materials: Writing Up Research by Weissberg and Buker (green)
A "Makin' Copies Coupon" available from the copy centers at the Hub or the Memorial Union, cost $3.18. Please write your name on the back and give it to me soon.
1 or 2 folders with pockets for keeping writing assignments and class handouts
A computer disk to keep your work on (3½ ins for Macs)

Course Description and Objectives
This course will focus on the kinds of writing and speaking you need to do as a graduate student in your academic field. While the principal focus is on writing clear academic papers, we'll also spend some time working with oral skills, such as taking part in discussions, asking questions, and giving presentations. Many class activities will also give you opportunities to practice spoken English.

Objectives:
1. To give you experience writing various kinds of academic papers
2. To learn the styles of writing appropriate in your academic field
3. To help you meet standards of correctness in American English, and to identify and correct errors in your writing.
4. To develop your ability to evaluate and revise your writing so that it communicates your ideas more effectively
5. To practice spoken English both in class activities and in individual, short oral presentations

Grades
I use a point system with assignments worth between 5 and 150 points depending on how important they are. Homework and in-class exercises are usually worth 5 or 10 points, short papers 50 points, the short literature review 100 points, the term paper 150 points, the oral presentation 50 points. Your final grade for the course then comes from the percentage of your total points divided by the total points possible. This percentage is then given a letter grade as follows:

A 93-100%  A- 90-92%
B+ 87-89%  B 83-86  B- 80-82
C+ 77-79%  C 73-76  C- 70-72
D+ 67-69%  D 63-66  D- 60-62  F below 60%

Plus and minus grades are used. Usually, about half the class earn some kind of A grade, and half earn some kind of B grade, but of course it depends on the individuals and how hard they work. In order to pass the course, all assignments must be completed. It is also important to attend all the class sessions and actively participate. If you need to miss a class, it's your responsibility to find out what you missed and any homework assignment from a classmate or from me. Also, you cannot get points for in-class exercises that you missed.
Course policies
1. The papers you write for this course must be written on and printed by a computer. This may be your own computer, your department's, or a Mac in Durham or Ross Hall. The advantage of Durham is that it's open 24 hours a day. Ross has 2 Mac labs on the first floor and 2 in the basement, all with laser printers. When they are not being used for English classes, they are open to any students. Also, they have monitors who can answer your computer questions and help with problems. For those students who need or want to learn how to use the Macs and Microsoft Word, there will be an optional meeting with me in one of the Ross labs at a date and time to be announced.

2. Revisions Most of your short papers should be revised and improved after I have graded them for the first time. You have one week from the day I return the paper to you to submit a revised paper. Then I will grade the new paper and average the two grades, the new and the old. When you submit a revised paper, you must also submit the original paper with it. When I grade your work, I am considering two main areas: the content and organization of your ideas, and the effectiveness of your language. I will make comments on both these areas as well as point out language problems. Do please talk to me after class or in my office when you have questions about something. I like to get to know students by talking with them individually.

3. Using published articles from your academic field of study Since different academic fields have different writing styles and conventions, many times during the semester I'll ask you to bring to class or do homework using a photocopy of a published research article from your field. Also, in the middle of the semester you'll be writing a 2-3 page paper that cites information from 3 or 4 published articles that all concern one topic, and in the second half of the semester you'll write a term paper that may be either a research report, or a literature review, or a research proposal. You don't have to wait until the day I give the assignment to get organized. Instead, if you find an interesting article, photocopy and keep it in a safe place. When you become interested in a particular issue in your field, seek out other references to it or even do some background reading on the topic. In other words, be prepared. Everything we do in this course should be relevant to you and your studies here at ISU.

Homework exercise (10 pts) to be handed in on Monday January 24th
Write an informal composition introducing yourself to me. I would like to know something about your background and family; what brought you to ISU, what you will be doing here, and what your particular academic interests are; how long you've been here, where in Ames you're living, a phone number where you can be reached; any special interests or hobbies you have. Besides learning something about you, I will type up a class list with some information about everyone to be distributed to the whole class. In this way we can all get to know one another more easily. (handwriting is OK for this)
English 101B Summer 1992 Monday-Friday Ross 129 12:10pm

Instructor:
Office: 311 Ross, 294-5105 Home: 232-3547
Office Hours: Mon 11:15-12:00, Tues and Wed 1:15-2:15pm, or by appt.

Required Course Materials:
Textbook: How English Works by Ann Raimes
An English/English dictionary
Looseleaf paper for journals and assignments
2 pocket-folders to keep assignments and handouts in

Course Requirements:
Regular attendance at class and scheduled conferences
(Please call me or another student if it is necessary for you
to miss class so that you can have your assignment ready for the
next class period.)
Various written assignments. Most days I'll give you a topic to
write about for a journal entry. I'll evaluate this for your
effort and English language usage, and give you between 1 and 4
points.

Sometimes I'll give you a topic to
write a paper about. I'll evaluate this for your material and
organization, as well as English language usage. Early in the
semester, papers will be worth 20 points; later papers will be
worth 50 points.

Many times I'll ask you to revise
and improve journal entries and papers.

Grading:
Plus and minus grading is used.
Your semester grade is based on the percentage of points you have
compared to the total possible and will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93 - 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 - 92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 - 89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83 - 86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 - 82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 - 79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73 - 76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 - 72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67 - 69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63 - 66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60 - 62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conferences:
On Fridays we will not meet in the classroom. Instead I'll meet
students individually by appointment in my office for 20 minutes
each. I will meet with half the class one week and half the
next. In that way I'll meet each student at least 4 times. We
will look through your writing and discuss your individual
English problems. If you have any particular questions about
English, bring them with you.

Signature
English 101B Policy Sheet
Summer 1994

Instructor:
Office: Computer Lab in Ross 115
Office hours: MTWR 3:30 - 5:00
Home phone: 292-0192 (Please call only when necessary)
Mailbox: 206 Ross

Required materials:
• Building English Structures: A Communicative Course in English by Seibel and Hodge
• A spiral notebook to be used as a writing journal
Recommended text:
• A good dictionary, such as Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary

What is the purpose of this course?
The purpose of this class is to strengthen your ability to write in English by helping you make the transition from grammar rules and exercises to original writing.

Do I really have to speak only English in class?
Yes, from 12:10 pm to 1:10 pm MTWRF please speak only English. There is a large variety of cultures and language groups represented in this class. Speaking a language other than English in class could make your classmates (and your instructor!) feel uncomfortable.

What is a writing journal and why do I have to have one?
A writing journal is a spiral notebook in which you will do some daily writing. Sometimes I will give you a topic to write about and other times I will let you write about anything you want. I want your journal to be a safe place where you can write freely. For this reason I will not correct the grammar, but I will respond to what you write. Here are several reasons for keeping a writing journal:
• Practice makes perfect. By doing daily writing, your ideas will flow more easily and your written English will improve.
• By writing without fear of correction, writing in English may actually become fun!
• It will give you an opportunity to carry on a written dialogue with me, your writing coach. I know you all have busy schedules and it may be difficult to come to my office hours. The writing journal will be a way for you to converse with me.

Am I really allowed to miss just three classes during the summer?
You will find that, in general, I am a very flexible, easygoing person. However, in matters of attendance and punctuality, I am strict. Here are my policies:
• More than three absences will hurt your final grade in this class.
• If you arrive more than 5 minutes late (according to my watch) you will be assigned additional homework.
• If you arrive more than 10 minutes late, you will be counted absent.

Can I really come to Dewey for help with my writing?
The answer is yes! My job is to help you improve in your writing. I really love to teach and I enjoy getting to know my students. Please feel free to come to my office hours to talk about the course, about specific grammar points, or just to talk. I hope to become your friend as well as your writing coach.
Tentative Schedule: English 101B
Summer 1994
Instructor: [Name]
Office hours: 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm Monday - Thursday
Office location: Mac Lab in Ross 115

Tentative percentage breakdown of final grade:
25% Journal
25% Homework/Essay Exams/Grammar Reviews
25% First Draft of Essays
25% Revision(s) of Essays

Journal: Each entry in the journal must be at least 3/4 of a page handwritten or 100 words typed. Journals are due each Thursday and to receive full credit, each entry for the previous week must be completed. NOTE: When you turn in your Journal, please turn in all the previous entries as well. This is why it is a good idea to keep it in a spiral notebook or in a folder if you write your entries using a computer.

Homework/Essay Exams/Grammar Reviews: Throughout the summer I will assign homework, give you essay exams on a special lecture, and give you little Grammar Review test after each Unit.

First draft of essays: I will grade the first draft of the essays mostly for content.

Revisions of essays: I will grade the revisions of the essays for the grammar points we have discussed in class up to that point.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

NOTE: Hand in Journal for previous week with all entries completed.

Week of: Topics:
June 20 - June 24: BES: Part Two; Lecture on Paragraph
June 27 - July 1: BES: Part One; Lecture on Essay
July 4 - July 8: BES: Part Three; Lecture on Letters
July 11 - July 15: Catch up week; Grammar Lecture on points not covered in BES
July 18 - July 22: BES: Part Four; Lecture on Essay-type Exams
July 25 - July 29: BES: Part Five; Lecture to be decided
August 1 - August 5: BES: Part Six; Lecture to be decided

Topics:
- BES: Part Two; Lecture on Paragraph
- BES: Part One; Lecture on Essay
- BES: Part Three; Lecture on Letters
- Catch up week; Grammar Lecture on points not covered in BES
- BES: Part Four; Lecture on Essay-type Exams
- BES: Part Five; Lecture to be decided
- BES: Part Six; Lecture to be decided
English 101E (Section 1) Listening to Academic English Syllabus
Spring 1994
Instructor: [Name]
Office: Landscape Architecture
Office hours: TR 1-2 and by appointment

Materials Needed: Learn to Listen; Listen to Learn by Roni S. Lebauer
a folder with pockets and notebook paper

Course Requirements:
1. Attend 6 one-hour classes that are held once a week on one of the following days:
   EITHER Tuesdays 2:10 pm in Ross 28 beginning March 22
   OR Fridays 4:10 pm in Ross 28 beginning March 25.

2. Complete 6 listening assignments from Learn to Listen; Listen to Learn (LL) in the Media Center of the ISU library. The due dates for these assignments are as follows (but see each assignment sheet for the precise details and hints):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>Tuesday People</th>
<th>Friday People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1: LL lecture 7</td>
<td>Mon. March 28</td>
<td>Fri. April 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: LL lecture 10</td>
<td>Mon. April 4</td>
<td>Fri. April 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: LL lecture 12</td>
<td>Mon. April 11</td>
<td>Fri. April 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4: LL lecture 8</td>
<td>Mon. April 18</td>
<td>Fri. April 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: LL lecture 13</td>
<td>Mon. April 25</td>
<td>Fri. April 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6: LL Lecture 15</td>
<td>Mon. May 2</td>
<td>Fri. May 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your listening assignments must be completely finished and given in to room 070 in the library by 3 pm on these days. However, if possible, we prefer to receive assignments earlier in the week.

3. After completing the 6 assignments, take the listening posttest during one of these times:
   Tuesday people at 2:10 pm in Ross 28 on May 3
   Friday people at 4:10 pm in Ross 28 on May 6.

Where and How to do Your Listening Assignments
You work on all your assignments in the Media Center of the main ISU library. You obtain headphones and tapes by filling in a blue request form and giving it and some form of identification to the Media Center assistant at the desk. He or she will assign you a carrel to work at and gives you the tape you requested and headphones. Your identification is kept at the desk until you return the tape and headphones. You may do the assignments for this course at any time the Media Center is open.

Media Center Hours
Mon-Thurs 8:00 am - 10:00 pm
Fri 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Sat 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Sun 1:00 pm - 10:00 pm

Listening Office Hours (Library Room 070)
- Mon. 2:40 pm - 4:30 pm 1/ ~/
- Fri. 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Brook Denkinger, works in room 070 of the Parks Library during the times listed above. You must turn in your completed assignments to be checked in this office. Library room 070. When this office is closed, you may turn in your assignment by sliding your textbook under the door of room 070. DO NOT turn in your assignments to my office (Landscape Architecture, Room 6).

Procedure for Doing Academic English Assignments
1. Find the page number of the lecture you will be listening to in the textbook. Look through the vocabulary, introduction, and what you will have to do for the assignment. (There will be an assignment sheet telling you what pages and exercises to do for each lecture, but each assignment follows a similar pattern which is described here.)
• **Listening for the Larger Picture:** read this section in the text and then start the tape for this lecture. (Each tape has 2 or 3 different lectures on it, so you may need to find the correct lecture.) Listen without taking notes in order to understand the main ideas and topics of the lecture. Write your answers on the assignment sheet which tells you what to do for each lecture.

• **Vocabulary Exercises:** Most lectures have 2 vocabulary exercises, which are read on the videotape immediately following the lecture. The first one asks you to identify or give a definition of some of the words you heard. The second asks you to choose words or sentences that paraphrase something you hear. If you need more time to answer a question, you can stop the tape, but please be gentle with the videotapes. Again, write your answers on the assignment sheets.

• **Note-taking Practice:** Rewind the tape to the beginning of the lecture; play it again while taking your own notes. Do this on your own notebook paper to turn in with your assignment, but look at this section in the textbook so you can use the organizational notes and format to help you.

• **Using Your Notes:** Now turn to this section in the textbook. Using your notes to help you, answer the questions on the assignment sheet.

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2 Hand in the whole assignment in a folder with your name on the outside to room 70 in the library by the due date on your syllabus. I'll return your folder and assignment to you at the next class. (If you're absent from that class, you will need to go to room 70 during office hours to get back your assignment for corrections.)

3 Don't write any answers in your textbook, or write very lightly in pencil and then erase it. We will look through your textbooks at the end of the course and if answers are written there, we will keep your textbooks. If there are no answers in the textbooks, you are free to keep them, sell them or whatever.

4 When you get back your checked assignment, look through it to see how well you did. Notice what you did well and what you had problems with. If you don't understand something, then ask the teacher after class or in office hours, or in room 70, during those office hours. We have the assignment sheets, textbook, tapes, and tape recorder.

5 You may be asked to redo parts of the assignment that weren't done correctly. You find this out by looking at the record sheet that is stapled into the inside cover of your folder. We write on this (1) if the assignment was given in on time (2) what exercises still need to be done or corrected (3) if the assignment has been completed (4) if the assignment has been filed.

6 Please write and label corrected exercises either directly below that same exercise, or at the end of that assignment so that we can find them easily. Finish your corrections before you do the next assignment and give in both your corrections and the next assignment together. You must correct one assignment before you go on to the next. We will not check the next assignment if you have not redone the exercises we asked you to do on the previous one.

7 Completed exercises will be filed in our file cabinet after you have looked through them. Leave your first assignment in your folder and hand it in again with the second one and then we'll file it, and so on. If one assignment is late that is OK, but if more than one assignment is late you'll have to do extra work at the end.

8 You may not take the posttest until all the assignments have been done, checked and corrected. The listening assistants will then sign your record sheet saying you are eligible to take the posttest.

9 Copying answers from another student is dishonest and will result in your being given a lot of extra work to do or in your failing the course.

10 Finally and most importantly, we want you to use this opportunity to improve your listening skills as much as possible. Come and ask us when you don't understand something or don't know what to do.
Materials Needed:
(Be sure to buy a copy that doesn't have answers written in it. It is possible to share a book with a friend if you sit together in class and don't both want to do your homework at the same time)

Course Requirements:
1. Attend a total of six classes on one of the following days:
   - Thursdays 2:10pm Ross 131 on Feb. 3; Feb. 10; Feb. 17; Mar. 4; Mar. 24; Apr. 7
   *(Notice these classes meet every week for the first three weeks, and then every other week)*

2. Spend about 4 hours in every two-week period between your classes completing 6 reading assignments and having these checked by the staff in the reading lab, 312 Ross. Assignments must be given in to and picked up from 312 Ross. Checked assignments must also be looked through and corrections done there. You may also ask questions and work on your reading assignments in 312 Ross. It is open Monday-Friday 3:10-5:00pm. When it's closed, you may give in your work by putting it in the brown envelope on the bulletin board outside 312 Ross. The assignment due dates are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Thursday Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #1</td>
<td>Mon Feb. 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #2</td>
<td>Mon Feb. 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #3</td>
<td>Mon Feb. 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #4</td>
<td>Mon Mar. 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #5</td>
<td>Mon Apr. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment #6</td>
<td>Mon Apr. 18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This means that each reading assignment must be completely finished and given by 3pm on these days. However, we prefer them earlier in the week. If one reading assignment is late, that is OK, but if more than one assignment is late, you will have extra reading work to do after assignment #6.

3. After completing all the assignments, take the reading posttest on:
   Thursday at 2:10 pm in 131 Ross Hall on April 21.

Procedure and Rules for Doing your Reading Assignments:
1. There are assignment sheets listing exactly what needs to be done for each assignment. Follow them carefully and write all your answers on these assignment sheets. Don’t write any answers in your textbook. At the end of the semester we will check to see there are no answers written in the textbooks and keep those that do have answers.
2. When you hand in a completed assignment, be sure you have your name on it and all the pages are stapled together. We will check your work and then put it in a folder with your name and a number on and keep it in a drawer in 312 Ross.

3. When checking your work, we put a checkmark (✓) by any answers that are incorrect and write in explanation or some of the right answers. Therefore please look over your checked work to get feedback on the work you did. Ask when you don't understand. (Active students are more successful learners.) If you get a lot of wrong answers, we'll ask you to redo that exercise. These corrections must be done before you go on to the next assignment. We won't check your next assignment if you haven't completed corrections from the previous one.

4. You find out how well you did on your assignment and whether you need to redo any exercises by visiting 312 Ross during open hours, going to the assistant at the desk, telling her or him the day you attend class and your last name. When the assistant gives you the folder containing your work, sit down at one of the tables and look at the record sheet stapled to the front of your folder. We write on this (1) if the assignment was given in on time or not, (2) what still needs to be done or redone, (3) if the assignment has been completed, (4) what grade that assignment has earned. Also look through the completed assignment to see what you did well and what you did badly and make any required corrections. (Remember to bring your textbook) Be sure to ask for help if you need it. When you have finished, return your folder and all its pages to the assistant. All your work remains in 312 Ross and you must do corrections there.

5. You don't have to complete your whole assignment in one day. Do it little by little, completing it by the due date. In the classes we will work on similar reading activities to the ones in that week's assignment. Also the textbook gives clear explanations, directions, and lots of examples. You may work on your assignments in 312 Ross when it's open. The lab assistants can usually answer any questions about the assignments and lend you dictionaries (but not for vocabulary from context exercises).

6. When all 6 assignments have been completed we will check your textbook to see it contains no answers, and assign extra work if you had more than one late assignment. When these are done, we'll sign the record sheet and give it to you to show you you are ready for the post test. Please bring this sheet to the post test.

7. You must complete your reading assignments by yourself. The university has a strong policy against academic dishonesty which is described in the ISU information handbook pp 42-43. Copying answers from another student or an answerbook is dishonest and will result in your being given a lot of extra work to do or your failing the course.

8. Finally, we want you to improve your reading skills as much as possible during this course, so ask us when you don't understand something, even when it's from another book or a newspaper etc. and we'll try and explain it.
APPENDIX B:

Flow Chart of ESL Students' Options in the 101 Program
Flow Chart of International Students' Options in the English 101 Program

Prospective ISU international students → Receive 500 or above on the TOEFL → Admitted to Iowa State

Take the English Placement Test

- Fail writing section
  - 101C or 101D
  - 101B and 101C or 101D

- Fail listening and writing sections
  - 101E-1, 101B and 101C or 101D

- Fail listening, vocabulary and writing sections
  - 101E-1, 101E-2, 101B and 101C or 101D

Pass

Graduate students

- Regular graduate work:
  - No more English

Undergraduates

- English 104-105
  - No more English

- No 101 courses

Undergraduates take 104-105 at DMACC; can technically bypass 101 courses.
APPENDIX C:

Placement Exam Scoring Guide
PLACEMENT EXAM SCORING GUIDE

PASS - No need for ESL instruction. Undergrads can go into freshman English with a chance to pass it. Graduates can write adequately without further instruction.

Organization and Material: Papers should show evidence of an organizational plan and be cohesive. The writer's purpose should be clearly stated and the ideas should be developed.

Expression: Vocabulary is usually appropriate. Writer should show some facility with complex and varied sentence structure.

Correctness: Writer should have a fairly good grasp of English grammar and mechanics. A passing paper does not need to be completely accurate grammatically: Occasional errors that do not obscure meaning or nonpersistent errors with issues like spelling, plural endings, or articles can be ignored.

101C (undergrad) / 101D (graduate) - Students can benefit from one semester of ESL.

Organization and Material: Paper may be loosely organized, but the main ideas stand out and there should be evidence of paragraph structure. Paper may not show complete development or may have minor problems in cohesion.

Expression: Paper may have errors with word choice but the writer's meaning is not obscured. The writer may have problems with complex sentence structure.

Correctness: Paper will have minor grammar problems. Paper may have several errors in areas like agreement, tense, or mechanics, but the writer's meaning is seldom obscured.

101B - Students need more than one semester of ESL.

Organization and Material: Paper is confusing or disconnected. Ideas are not developed sufficiently. Paper may be excessively short. Writer may not show evidence of an understanding of paragraph structure.

Expression: Paper has frequent errors with word choice that obscure meaning. Writer appears to be limited to using simple sentences.

Correctness: Writer shows consistent problems with English grammar and mechanics. Paper may have errors with run-ons, fragments, mechanics, verb form and tense that obscure meaning.

Ask yourself these questions: for undergraduates, "Does this person have the writing skill to compete with native speakers and pass 104?"; for graduates, "Does this person have adequate writing skill for graduate work in his or her field?"
APPENDIX D:

Human Subjects Review Form
Information for Review of Research Involving Human Subjects
Iowa State University
(Please type and use the attached instructions for completing this form)

1. Title of Project: Qualitative Analysis and Evaluation of ISU's ESL Program

2. I agree to provide the proper surveillance of this project to insure that the rights and welfare of the human subjects are protected. I will report any adverse reactions to the committee. Additions to or changes in research procedures after the project has been approved will be submitted to the committee for review. I agree to request renewal of approval for any project continuing more than one year.

   Rachel V. Wolford   4-10-94
   Typed Name of Principal Investigator   Signature of Principal Investigator

   English
   Department

3. Signatures of other investigators

4. Principal Investigator(s) (check all that apply)
   □ Faculty   □ Staff   □ Graduate Student   □ Undergraduate Student

5. Project (check all that apply)
   □ Research   □ Thesis or dissertation   □ Class project   □ Independent Study (490, 590, Honors project)

6. Number of subjects (complete all that apply)
   □ # Adults, non-students   □ # ISU student   □ # minors under 14   □ other (explain)

   □ # minors 14 - 17

7. Brief description of proposed research involving human subjects: (See instructions, Item 7. Use an additional page if needed.)

   A. This study will focus on analyzing and evaluating Iowa State's ESL program through qualitative research consisting of interviews with TESL faculty, including present and past administrators of the program, as well as graduate TAs who teach the English 101 classes, and international students for which the program was designed to serve. The purpose of the research is to analyze strengths and weaknesses of the program in order to recommend improvements for the future.

   B. Subjects were selected on the basis of their familiarity with the program and ability to give helpful insights for improving it. With differing perspectives, the faculty, TAs and students should provide the investigator with enough information to make well-rounded, objective recommendations for changes in the future.

   C. A list of interview questions are provided in an addendum.

   (Please do not send research, thesis, or dissertation proposals.)

8. Informed Consent: □ Signed informed consent will be obtained. (Attach a copy of your form.)
   □ Modified informed consent will be obtained. (See instructions, item 8.)
   □ Not applicable to this project.
9. Confidentiality of Data: Describe below the methods to be used to ensure the confidentiality of data obtained. (See instructions, item 9.)

No personal names will be used in reporting the research. Subjects will be referred to as "administrator", "TA" or "student". Using these titles is necessary to describe the perspective of each subject, his or her interest or part in the program and the relative weight of his or her opinions.

10. What risks or discomfort will be part of the study? Will subjects in the research be placed at risk or incur discomfort? Describe any risks to the subjects and precautions that will be taken to minimize them. (The concept of risk goes beyond physical risk and includes risks to subjects' dignity and self-respect as well as psychological or emotional risk. See instructions, item 10.)

Use of an audio tape to record the interview sessions could make subjects nervous, especially international students, but this is the only discomfort I foresee. The questions are straightforward and there is no political agenda behind them.

11. CHECK ALL of the following that apply to your research:

A. Medical clearance necessary before subjects can participate
B. Samples (Blood, tissue, etc.) from subjects
C. Administration of substances (foods, drugs, etc.) to subjects
D. Physical exercise or conditioning for subjects
E. Deception of subjects
F. Subjects under 14 years of age and/or Subjects 14 - 17 years of age
G. Subjects in institutions (nursing homes, prisons, etc.)
H. Research must be approved by another institution or agency (Attach letters of approval)

If you checked any of the items in 11, please complete the following in the space below (include any attachments):

Items A - D Describe the procedures and note the safety precautions being taken.

Item E Describe how subjects will be deceived; justify the deception; indicate the debriefing procedure, including the timing and information to be presented to subjects.

Item F For subjects under the age of 14, indicate how informed consent from parents or legally authorized representatives as well as from subjects will be obtained.

Items G & H Specify the agency or institution that must approve the project. If subjects in any outside agency or institution are involved, approval must be obtained prior to beginning the research, and the letter of approval should be filed.
12. If applicable: anticipated date that identifiers will be removed from completed survey instruments and/or visual tapes
   I September, 94

13. Anticipated dates for contact with subjects:
   19 April 94
   13 May 94

14. Consents Form (if applicable)

15. Letter of approval for research from coordinating organizations or institutions (if applicable)

16. Anticipated dates for contact with subjects:

17. If applicable: anticipated date that identifiers will be removed from completed survey instruments and/or visual tapes

18. Signature of Departmental Executive Officer Date

19. Decision of the University Human Subjects Review Committee:
   XProject Approved
   Project Not Approved
   No Action Required

20. Signature of Committee Chairperson Date

21. Last Name of Principal Investigator

22. Checklist for Attachments and Time Schedule