![Carroll Community College logo]

Course-Level Assessment Project
Final Report

Share a copy of the document with your supervisor and the Associate Vice President of Curriculum and Assessment.

Faculty Name(s): **Mira Foote**
Division/Department: **Communications and Humanities: English and Transitional Studies**
Course Assessed: ALP for English 101

Step 1. Definition

> 1. a**. Rationale for Assessing ALP (Accelerated Learning Program) for English 101**

The decision to assess the **Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) for English 101** through this Course Level Assessment study stems from the FY 2019 Strategic plan, 1-2 ASA, which specifies that "ENG-ALP faculty will be trained on the *course-level assessment project* to ensure consistent data collection and rubric use. It states that "faculty will analyz[e] and us[e] the results to make recommendations to improve student success rates in these courses" (FY 2019 Strategic Plan). The ultimate goal is "to determine what effect, if any, the curriculum changes [and the ALP course] have on student retention, completion, and success in English 101" (**FY2018 Strategic Initiatives** 1-2-ASA-c and 1-2-ASA-d**).**
As ALP for English 101 had never before been assessed, a course level assessment study was planned concurrent with the program's launch.

The college's mission to provide "access, affordability and student support" is clearly addressed through this ALP initiative. Moreover, published data suggests that this model results in increased levels of student success in English 101 as compared to students who take transitional classes in the traditional time frame.

In fall of 2018, the ALP program launched; for three semesters data has been compiled on the success rates of students enrolled in these classes. In the course of this time frame, further initiatives have charged the college with an examination of student outcomes in order to "revise pedagogy as needed" (Strategic Initiative I-3 for 2019-2020).

> **1. b and c Course Objective Assessed/Program Goal Alignment**

ALP course objectives three and six, listed below, were selected for assessment, as they are foundational for evidence-based writing and critical thinking; many, if not most, of ALP writing assignments are geared toward building these skills to support student success in English 101 and beyond.

ALP Course Objective 3: Identify, compare, and contrast ideas from multiple sources of information. (Transitional Studies Program Goal 3)

ALP Course Objective 6: Recognize expert and inexpert sources of information. (Transitional Studies Program Goals 3,4,6)

Note: See attached ALP Course Objective Alignment table at the end of this report.

Step 2. Design

Instructors in English and Transitional Studies created an assignment to be done in concert with the central English 101 research paper of the semester in order to build ALP student skills in the targeted course goals, to provide ALP students with timely help in locating and assessing academic sources for this paper, and to allow ALP students to work ahead with embedded assistance as they plan and execute the 101 assignment.

The assignment is a one-page research proposal that requires students to perform the steps of an evaluative research process (CRAAP test) in order to select at least four sources for an argument they are building for English 101. The proposal must discuss why sources are credible and identify the specific evidence that comes from the source. A rubric measures student success according to **benchmarks provided therein** (see ALP Research Proposal Assignment and Assessment Rubric attached at the end of this report).

All sections of ALP used the same assignment and were assessed using this rubric, which was created by both English and Transitional Studies instructors. The creation of the assessment rubric and its redesign in spring 2019 was reviewed by Michelle Kloss from the first semester of assessment (fall 2018) to the final semester of assessment (fall 2019).

Step 3. Implementation

All ALP instructors were oriented to ALP, its curriculum, and its assessment tools through paid in-service meetings, and they were asked to incorporate this assignment into their classes. A sample of work from each section was curated by Michelle Kloss and was scored by a committee comprised of English ALP instructors, two from English and one from Transitional Studies.

The English 101 central research paper is to be completed between weeks 6 – 10 of the semester; therefore, this research proposal, which leads up to the signature assignment, should have been collected by ALP instructors in weeks five through nine via Turnitin. Common generic activities that promote such skills as CRAAP testing sources and identifying specific and relevant evidence were to be be used to build student skills toward successful completion of both the ALP and 101 assignments.

Step 4. Analysis

Explain the data that was collected and how the data was analyzed.
To what degree did students meet the established benchmarks?
Consider intention of learning activity and assessment as compared to results.

The achievement of Accelerated Learning Program students was assessed for three consecutive semesters (fall 2018 – fall 2019) by evaluating student achievement on the Research Proposal Assignment using the rubric(s) described above to assess student artifacts.

In fall of 2018 ALP student Research Proposal Assignment artifacts were scored in five categories using the rubric below:

- Clearly presents a topic, issues, and working thesis.
- Compares and Contrasts Sources of information
- Recognizes expert and inexpert sources of information
- Identifies multiple sources of information
- Expression

Student Name: Score:

Class: ENGL-101: ALP

Assignment Objectives	Mastery (3)	Milestone (2)	Proficient (1)	Emerging Proficiency (0)
Clearly presents a topic, issues, and working thesis.	Demonstrates critical analysis of opposing sides and presents an original working thesis.	Analyzes opposing sides of the issue and offers an effective working thesis.	Presents the opposing sides and presents a working thesis.	Demonstrates little or no understanding of opposing sides and/or has not yet articulated a working thesis statement.
Compare, and contrast sources of information.	Discusses the differences between main ideas and/or arguments among sources.	Consistently identifies main ideas and/or arguments within sources.	Identifies main ideas and/or arguments within most of the sources.	Demonstrates little or no attempt to identify main ideas and/or arguments within sources.
Recognize expert and inexpert sources of information.	Skillfully uses sources that are credible and appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.	Consistently uses sources that are credible and appropriate for an academic essay.	Uses sources that are credible and appropriate for an academic essay throughout most of the writing.	Demonstrates little or no attempt to use sources appropriate for an academic essay.
Identify multiple sources of information.	Identifies four or more sources of information.	Identifies four sources of information.	Identifies the minimum number of sources.	Does not identify minimum number of sources (3).

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Expression	Grammar, diction, punctuation, and mechanics are correct and prose is elegant, evincing elements of stylistic sophistication (sentence variety and the like).	No fragments, comma spliced sentences, errors in point of view, or confusing shifts are present. Some expressive errors mar the prose (primarily in diction), but clarity is at least marginally above the Maryland "C Paper" standard.	Few fragments, comma spliced sentences, errors in points of view, or confusing shifts are present, and these do not often impact the overall clarity of the writing. A Maryland "C Paper" standard is maintained.	Demonstrates little or no ability to avoid fragments, run-ons, shifts, and inappropriate points of view; demonstrates a lack of college level writing competence. Errors are egregious enough to affect clarity.

Note that a score of one indicates proficiency, which amounts to a weak, *yet college level writing* or performance achievement. Zero represents writing or performance that could not meet the standards of English 101. Milestone and Mastery categories indicate achievement beyond the levels described above.

The table below summarizes the outcomes of this first round of ALP student artifact scoring.

Fall 2018 Artifact Scoring Results

Rubric Category	Benchmark Mean Score	% Proficient or Better Achievement	# of Students Achieving Proficiency
Topic Presentation	0	40%	16/40
Comparing Source Information	1.2	90%	36/40
Recognition of Expert/Non-Expert Information	0.4	70%	28/40
Identification Multiple Sources	1	97%	39/40
Expression	1.075	87%	35/40

DISCUSSION

Only 16 of **40 students (40%) whose artifacts were scored** met at least the proficient level of achievement for the first benchmark category (Presentation of the Topic and Thesis) for a mean score of zero. **36 *students (90%) achieved proficiency or better (19 proficient, 17 milestone) for the second benchmark category* **(Comparison/Contrast of Information Sources) for a mean score of 1.2. **28** students **(70%)** achieved proficiency or better (10 proficient and 18 milestone) for the third benchmark category (Expert Source Recognition) for a mean score of 0.4. **39** students **(97%)** achieved proficiency or better (25 proficient, 8 milestone, and 6 mastery) for the fourth benchmark category (Multiple Information Sources) for a mean score of 1. Finally, **35** students **(87%)** achieved proficiency or better

(25 proficient and 8 milestone) for the fifth benchmark category (Expression) for a mean score of 1.075.

These results translate into an overall very good level of achievement, as at least **87%** of students whose artifacts were assessed in this first round of ALP artifact scoring achieved proficiency or better in *three of five categories*, including that of Expression, a crucial English 101 marker of success. **70%** still achieved proficiency or better for benchmark three, while in only one benchmark category (Topic Presentation) did 60% of students fail to achieve proficiency, due, at least in part, to the failure of the rubric to award students appropriate credit for achievement of separate aspects of benchmark one.

To this extent, then, for the first semester of ALP, it can be argued that the students in the ALP course had a fair or good level of success in meeting the course objectives targeted for this assessment study. Moreover, in the first semester of ALP, _63% of ALP students passed their ALP class_, while 65% (114 of the 174 who were enrolled in ALP) passed English 101 with an A, B, or C, accelerating from transitional to credit status. Remember, also, that in this initial ALP semester, students did not all appreciate the necessity of passing the ALP class itself as long as they passed English 101.

In spring of 2019 ALP student Research Proposal Assignment were scored in *nine categories listed here* using the revised rubric, which is attached in the appendix:

- 1-Clearly presents a topic and articulates both sides of the issue
- 2-Poses at least three research questions that require specific evidence from sources
- 3-Meets the minimum number of academic sources
- 4-Analyzes/discuss why each source is credible
- 5-Presents the main points or arguments of each source
- 6-Discusses how each source could be used in an argument for a specific position
- 7-Points within sources to information that responds to research queries and explains how this information informs a position
- 8-Presents an effective working thesis
- 9-Expression

    Note that in this revised rubric, scores of both 7 and 8 reflect two levels of proficiency, a score of 9 reflects milestone achievement, and a score of ten indicates mastery of the benchmark. Scores of either 5 or 6 reflect a level of performance that would *not* earn credit in English 101.

    Note also that a decline in enrollment for spring 2019 (78 students as compared with 174) motivated the assessment team to score only 20 artifacts in this round as compared with 40 artifacts in the first round.

The table below summarizes outcomes of this second round of ALP student artifact scoring.

Spring 2019 Scoring Results

Rubric Category	Benchmark Mean Score (0 -10 scale)	% Proficient or Better Achievement	# of Students Achieving Proficiency of Better
Topic Presentation	6.75	50%	10/20
3 Research Questions	7.35	65%	13/20
Identification Multiple Sources	8.25	100%	20/20
Discusses Source Credibility	7.4	60%	12/20
Presents arguments' main points	7.65	70%	14/20
Discusses How Each Source Can Be Used to inform a Position	7.1	65%	13/20
Points to Information Answering Research Queries	6.45	40%	8/20
Presents an Effective Working Thesis	6.5	55%	11/20
Expression	7.5	70%	14/20

DISCUSSION

In ***six of the nine benchmark categories (including the targeted course objective of accurately assessing the credibility of sources, presenting the main points of argument in a source article, and expression), student artifacts earned a mean score of 7.1 out of 10 points, achieving proficiency or better***. By contrast, in three categories (including the presentation of an *effective working thesis*) student artifacts earned only 6.45 to 6.75 points, which reflects a level of performance inconsistent with what is required to pass English 101. The mean score for *presentation of an effective working thesis* was 6.5, which is a significant negative result. In the breakdown of scores, however, it can be seen that 11 of the 20 students (55%) whose work was assessed achieved scores of between 7 and 10 in this category, with only 9 students achieving 5 points. While this is not ideal, it shows that most of the students did achieve this important goal, some very nicely. Moreover, while this overall result in the category of presenting an effective working thesis does suggests that several ALP students past the middle of this particular semester had still not learned this crucial skill, many had at least achieved a level of expression that meets college level standards, which is encouraging. 15 of the 20 artifacts scored (75%) demonstrated proficiency level achievement or better in expression. Furthermore, the mean score for presenting the main point of argument for each source was 7.65 (70% of student artifacts scored), which is an encouraging result. The mean score for discussing how a source could be used to argue a specific argumentative position was 7.1 (65%), and the mean score for analysis of source credibility is 7.4 (60% of student artifacts scored), a bit less encouraging. These three categories directly reflect ALP course objectives that were chosen for assessment because of their ranking in the Course Level Assessment Project Report 04 2018

hierarchy of skills that college students need to develop, particularly critical thinking. **Thus, the overall level of achievement demonstrated by this round of scoring must also be viewed as indicative of some genuine success for ALP students while it reflects a hopeful, if not inspiring, measure of efficacy for the course itself.**

41 of 78 (52.56%) of ALP students passed both their ALP and English 101 classes during this second semester of the course assessment project.

In fall of 2019, ALP student Research Proposal Assignment were scored in the same nine categories reported above using the same scale to rate achievement*. **Only 23 artifacts were scored although enrollment had come back up to 134 students.***

The dearth of artifacts resulted from weak instructor response to the request that student artifacts be submitted to turnitin; also, a Blackboard glitch rendered a complete set of artifacts inaccessible. An artifact pool coming from only eight of 14 ALP sections was available for this round of scoring.

The table below summarizes outcomes of this third and final round of ALP student artifact scoring.

Fall 2019 Scoring Results

Rubric Category	Benchmark Mean Score (0 -10 scale)	% Proficient or Better Achievement	# of Students Achieving Proficiency of Better
Topic Presentation	7.08	86%	20/23
3 Research Questions	7.13	69%	16/23
Identification Multiple Sources	7.95	86%	20/23
Discusses Source Credibility	6.83	60%	14/23
Presents arguments' main points	7.39	91%	21/23
Discusses How Each Source Can Be Used to inform a Position	6.82	47%	11/23
Points to Information Answering Research Queries	6.21	26%	6/23
Presents an Effective Working Thesis	7.17	78%	18/23
Expression	6.95	65%	15/23

DISCUSSION

In this final round of scoring, ALP students **achieved proficient scores for their performance in *five of the nine benchmark categories assessed***, one of which included the presentation of an effective working thesis (18 of 23 students, 71%) and the discussion of a source's main points of argument (21 of 23 students, 91%), both of which are seminal skills. Expression proficiency was achieved in this

round of scoring by only 15 of 23 students (65%); however, the mean score for this category is 6.95, which is nearly 7.

An initial comparison of mean scores from spring 2019 to fall 2019 *shows a decreased measure of performance in seven of nine categories assessed*. ***One important category where student artifacts scored higher, however, was in the statement of an effective working thesis, where the mean score was 7.1 in the fall as opposed to 6.5 in the spring.*** Overall, however, this round of scoring yielded disappointing results, possibly, at least in part, because of the dearth of data available.

In this fall 2019 semester, the last semester to be evaluated by this project, 84 of 134 (63%) ALP students passed their ALP class, and 76 of 134 (58%) passed English 101 and accelerated into credit classes. This is a significant improvement from the spring 2019 ALP outcome.

What did ALP students learn?

To review, here are the course objectives whose successful integration into ALP student skillsets this study seeks to validate:

ALP Course Objective 3: Identify, compare, and contrast ideas from multiple sources of information. (Transitional Studies Program Goal 3).

ALP Course Objective 6: Recognize expert and inexpert sources of information. (Transitional Studies Program Goals 3,4,6).

The table below briefly summarizes artifact scoring outcomes for the fall of 2018. For each abbreviated rubric item, note both the percentage of student artifacts that demonstrated acceptable or better achievement in the benchmark category as well as the mean score for the same benchmark.

Fall 2018 Scoring Outcomes	Topic Presentation	Comparison of Sources	Analyzing Credibility	Identify Multiple Sources	Expression
% of Artifacts Demonstrating Success/ Mean Score (0-3 scale)	40% 0	90% 1.2	70% .4	97% 1	87% 1.075

This table shows that *ALP course objectives for the initial ALP courses offered at Carroll Community College were largely met*. Thus, in its first semester and with its most robust enrollment, the program taught students most of the core skills that they need in order to be successful in credit coursework and beyond. Again, had the first rubric item separated from the presentation of topic the articulation of an effective working thesis, I suspect that student artifacts might have demonstrated this ability. Their pass rate for English 101 was the highest for the three semesters of the study: **65%. The learning demonstrated by this group may seem more limited than was hoped, but it still represents a**

significant improvement over what students were able to do with earlier transitional programming at Carroll Community College, as will be discussed at the end of this data summary section.

The table below compares artifact scoring outcomes in the spring and fall of 2019. For each abbreviated rubric item, note both the percentage of student artifacts that demonstrated acceptable or better achievement in the benchmark category as well as the mean score for the same benchmark.

	Presenting 2 Sides of Argument	3 questions	# sources	Analyzing credibility	Main Points of Arguments in a Source	Using a Source	Research Questions	Thesis	Expression
Spring 2019 % success/ mean score (0-10 scale)	50% 6.75	65% 7.13	100% 8.25	60% 7.4	70% 7.65	65% 7.1	40% 6.45	55% 6.5	70% 7.5
Fall 2019 % success/mean score (0-10 scale)	82% 7.08	69% 7.13	86% 7.95	60% 6.82	91% 7.39	47% 6.82	15% 6.21	78% 7.17	65% 6.95

This table shows that ALP course objectives for the two subsequent semesters in which ALP classes were offered at Carroll were either *not* met at an ideal level (CO #6, analyzing credibility) or, for CO #3, were met to a only a minimal degree in spring of 2019 (these students did, however, demonstrate proficiency in expression). ALP course objectives were met, overall, to a far greater extent in fall of 2019. These most recent ALP artifacts assessed, in spite of their limited numbers, demonstrate a clear improvement in presenting two sides of an argument, identifying the main arguments in a source, and articulating a working thesis as compared to the results in the same benchmark categories from the previous semester. I believe that if scorers had had access to all of the artifacts that results would have been even stronger.

In all, the data suggests that only 60% of ALP students are learning to distinguish between expert and inexpert sources of information, which is not ideal, but it does represent well more than half of the population and suggests that, with curriculum changes that provide more hands-on practice, for example, this goal can be achieved more meaningfully.

However, ALP students are, generally, gaining crucial writing, critical thinking, and language skills. The ability to present a topic and both sides of an argument as well as articulate an effective working thesis are all skills demonstrated by the data for the final semester of this project. ALP CO number three encompasses the recognition of disparate ideas from source material and the ability to analyze an argument's component parts for comparison. This involves the ability to find main ideas and draw conclusions, skills that ALP students are clearly developing and ones crucial to their toolbox for higher levels of study. They are passing English 101 and accelerating into credit coursework.

<u>Conclusions</u>

Retention information from Natalie Crespo shows that the ALP students whose work was scored for this study passed English 101 at a significantly higher rate in all three semesters as compared to their counterparts in the traditional transitional pathway that came before ALP, English 097. ENG-097 students pass English 101 only after completing this transitional studies class in a prior semester and then, after this delay, move along into credit coursework to pass English 101 at a rate of only 47.5%. ALP students in a single, supported semester shore up their transitional skills, complete and pass English 101 at a rate of between 52% and 65%. They then go on the take English 102 and pass it in their first attempt at a rate of 72% as compared with students from the ENG-097 pathway, whose pass rate for their first attempt at English 102 is only 40%. This is significant because it tells us that, not only are students lifted out of non-credit work and brought into degree programs through the ALP program, but also that they succeed in better numbers as compared with their counterparts who did not have the option to move beyond non-credit coursework in this way, delaying their progress and experiencing a lower success rate beyond their transitional course experience, and, perhaps, reducing or halting their momentum to complete degree programs.

Step 5. Modify/Maintain

In the first semester of the program, several students did not complete the research proposal assignment, so instructors ***increased its worth, making it 25% of the ALP grade***, and ***provided example papers*** designed and graciously shared by David Fell. The examples of a successful and an unsuccessful research proposal help students to concretize exactly what they are being asked to do. This resource also underscores the main concepts being promoted by the assignment: how to distinguish between sound and unsound academic sources and provides clear examples of what discussing ideas from a source should look like in an academic paper. Model assignments specify that articles from the college databases are peer reviewed, explaining what this process is and underscoring the way that it weeds out inaccurate or faulty information sources.

Students in semesters two and three of the launch did complete this assignment in greater numbers; however, the spring 2019 cohort was a small one and the fall 2019 cohort's artifacts were not all available for scoring.

Ironically, student artifacts from the first semester of the launch showed greater success than was demonstrated in scoring by the subsequent two semesters in terms of the very skill of recognizing expert and inexpert sources, which suggests that a revision of the example papers with an eye toward clearer communication of this skill is warranted. **I will work with David Fell to elaborate further in both the positive and negative example papers so as to emphasize more concretely what about the peer review process makes source information more reliable.** Students still need to understand that

anyone can publish information and flaunt credentials while not proving the worth of their work through the peer review process.

Clearly, students need more practice CRAAP testing information sources. This is a program change that is relatively easy to make. ALP instructors will be provided by Jen Gertz, who will be coordinating the ALP program from here, and other ALP experts with more materials and more assignments that hone this skill.

The decision to provide all ALP classes with classrooms that have computer stations has helped ALP students complete their writing assignments more effectively. This suggestion was made by ALP instructors through questionnaires they completed at the end of each launch semester.

The only other modifications made to the program delivery since the first semester of its implementation at Carroll Community College have been *individual, voluntary instructor modifications* based on observations and suggestions shared by the cohort of ALP teachers that continues to grow and meet at training sessions each semester and by transitional studies experts Susan Sies and Jen Gertz, both of whom have shared a wealth of material as well as their talents throughout the launch of the ALP program. In shared periodic newsletters written by me that curate instructor experiences in first two ALP semesters, I have communicated to ALP instructors some best practice suggestions that ALP experts also tout. These include small group discussion and writing sessions that maximize the advantages offered for bonding and mutual support in ALP classes.

Other suggestions shared by ALP teachers include creative applications of the embedded expression workshop activities that are mandatory for ALP students. Some ALP instructors, for example, work on these assignments in class with their students as a group rather than asking students to compete them at home. Better results have been reported by instructors when ALP students have more in-class support in learning these expression topics.

Further suggestions from ALP cohort instructors include making best use of small group time for regular conferencing with individual students to provide timely feedback on component 101 essay assignments so that ALP students remain at all times ahead of 101 due dates and able to edit and revise well in advance of 101 essay deadlines. Finally, ALP instructors have agreed that daily short writing assignments must be a component of everyday work in class for these students as they practice correct sentence structure and the apt identification, articulation, and organization of concepts from their reading assignments in written formats that will become the building blocks of their formal writing for English 101.

Finally, a wealth of ALP resources that Jen Gertz, Susan Sies, and I curated from a variety of academic sources and from ALP national and regional conventions and published on Blackboard can be used in the future to bolster ALP student success. It will be necessary to work closely with and train all ALP instructors so that all understand the ways to use the ALP model to its best advantage.

<u>Final Results and Recommendations</u>

Completion rates for the spring of 2019 were a particular point of frustration for several ALP instructors, and this lack of retention impacted the course assessment study as well ,since this resulted in fewer artifacts to score than was ideal.

Continuing to use college resources that offer students a range of support is clearly indicated. Continued communication to ALP instructors about theses resources is essential to the success of our students moving forward.

I want to close by thanking Dr. Mince, Michelle Kloss, Siobhan Wright, and many other generous, supportive, and wise people without whose help I could never have undertaken or completed this course level assessment study.

Supervisor Signature _____ Date _____

Please forward a copy of the signed report to the Associate Vice President of Curriculum and Assessment.

Works Cited

Compass 2020 College Priorities through FY2020 Status Reports on FY2017 Strategic Plan Initiatives Planning Advisory Council May 1, 2 Compass 2020 College Priorities 017
FY 2018 Strategic Initiatives: Complete transitional course review and improvement to increase completion and transition to credit courses. Transitional Studies redesign

FY 2019 Strategic Plan: I-2— Offer and assess the impact on student success of the new Integrated Reading/Writing, ALP/ENGL 101, and MAT 095 courses. Review placement tools and recommend best options. Continue to monitor success of students placed via multiple measures/alternatives to standardized testing. 1-2 ASA a. ENG-ALP faculty will be trained on the *course-level assessment project* to ensure consistent data collection and rubric use. Faculty will be analyzing and using the results to make recommendations to improve student success rates in these courses.

ALP Course Objective Alignment Table

ALP Course Objective	Transitional Studies Program Goals	Classroom Assessment Method
I. Apply active reading	1,3,6	Active reading assessments

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	strategies to comprehend texts.		
II.	Craft topic sentences to provide paragraph focus and to build a foundation for the thesis statement and essays.	3, 6	Paragraph and essay assessments
III.	Identify, compare, and contrast ideas from multiple sources of information.	3.	Class discussions and quick summaries
IV.	Understand how audience and purpose affect writing.	3, 6	Class discussions and quick summaries
V.	Organize ideas and information at the paragraph and essay level.	3, 6	Class discussions and quick summaries
VI.	Recognize expert and inexpert sources of information.	3, 4, 6	Class discussion, quizzes, and quick summaries.
VII.	Identify and correct two to three persistent sentence level errors.	1, 3, 6	Writing assessment
VIII.	Select an essay to revise as signature portfolio artifact.	1-6	Portfolio assessment

Transitional Studies Program Goals

Students in transitional reading and writing courses are unprepared for college level reading and/or writing for a variety of reasons. Ultimately, the Transitional Studies program attempts to meet the intellectual and personal development needs and challenges of this student population by helping them:

1. Develop areas of skill deficits they have in reading and/or writing

2. Make connections between their schema and the skills they need for college success

3. Become active learners

4. Transition into college life by connecting to the college community and campus resources

5. Utilize metacognitive strategies to better understand and build self-esteem, self-perception, and self-reflection

6. Acquire skills to promote life-long learning

ALP Research Proposal Assignment and Rubric

ALP Research Proposal Assignment Sheet

A research proposal helps the student to focus their ideas about the project ahead, to center on the purpose of the research.

NUMBER OF SOURCES: At least three (beyond or in addition to those from *The Brief Bedford Reader*). You may use additional sources, if you wish.

LENGTH: This proposal should be *at least* 600 words, or about two full pages, double-spaced.

FORMATTING: Use College Manuscript Style formatting, including Times New Roman 12 point font.

DOCUMENTATION STYLE: Use MLA style documentation, citing sources both in the text of the proposal and on a works cited page at the end. The works cited page does not count toward the length of this assignment. (We will do this part together).

STRUCTURE: Structure your research proposal as answers to the following questions. Write your responses in well-structured paragraphs.

I. Paragraph One: Introduction:

- Present the topic.
- Present the issue.
- Present both sides of the argument.

II. Paragraph Two: Research Questions:

- Pose at least three research questions. Each question should demand specific information that would help prove a particular side of the argument outlined above.

III. Paragraph Three/Source Number One:

- Identify the source.
- Why is it credible?
- What is the main point made by this source?
- How could you use this source to support one side of the argument?

IV. Paragraph Four/ Source Number Two:

- Identify source
- Why is it credible? Where could you turn to verify this information?
- What is the main point made by this source?
- How could you use this source to support one side of the argument?

V. Paragraph Five/Source Number Three:

- Identify source
- Why is it credible? Where could you turn to verify this information?
- What is the main point made by this source?
- How could you use this source to support one side of the argument?

VI. Paragraph Seven/Conclusions:

- On balance, which side of the argument does the information in these sources support?
- Present a working thesis.
- What are areas for further exploration? Describe the next steps in your research process.
- How can your instructor help you move forward with your research?

Note: Feel free to discuss more than three sources.

Revised Rubric for Research Proposals

Name: _____ %: _____

Assignment Objectives	Mastery (10)	Milestone (9)	Proficient (7-8)	Emerging Proficiency (5-6)	Score
Clearly presents a topic and articulates both sides of	Demonstrates critical analysis of opposing sides.	Analyzes opposing sides of the issue.	Presents the opposing sides of the issue.	Demonstrates little or no understanding of the opposing sides of the issue.	

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the issue.					
Poses at least three research questions that require specific evidence from sources.	Poses more than three research questions that demand academic evidence.	Poses three research questions that demand academic evidence.	Poses three research questions that require specific evidence from sources.	Demonstrates little or no understanding of how research questions should be used as the initial process piece for research. Either does not pose enough or does not pose any research questions.	
Meets minimum number of academic sources.	Identifies four or more academic sources of information.	Identifies four sources of information.	Identifies the minimum number of sources.	Does not identify the minimum number of sources (3).	
Analyzes-discusses why each source is credible.	Presents skillful critical analysis explaining why each source is credible and appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.	Consistently analyzes sources that are credible and appropriate for an academic essay.	Analyzes the credibility of most sources and explains why they are appropriate for an academic essay throughout most of the writing.	Demonstrates little or no understanding of what makes a source appropriate for research. Presents little, weak, or no analysis of the sources.	
Presents the main point or argument of each source.	Presents skillful critical analysis of the main point or argument of each academic source.	Presents analysis of the main point or argument of each source.	Presents the main point or argument of each source.	Demonstrates little or no understanding of the main point or argument of each source.	
Assignment Objectives	**Mastery (10)**	**Milestone (9)**	**Proficient (7-8)**	**Emerging Proficiency (5-6)**	**Score**
Discusses how each source could be used in an argument for a specific position.	Offers analytical discussion of argumentative strategies for a particular position (and perhaps for a specific audience) using source information.	Consistently discusses how sources could be used in an argument for a specific position.	Discusses how sources could be used in an argument for a specific position throughout most of the writing.	Demonstrates little or no understanding of how each source could be used in an argument for a specific position.	
Points within sources to	Offers deft identification of	Consistently points within	Points within sources to	Demonstrates little or no	

information that responds to research queries and explains how this information informs a position.	information from sources that responds to research queries and begins to craft a rhetorical strategy (perhaps including consideration of audience) for using this information to argue a specific position.	sources to information that responds to research queries and explains how this information informs a position.	information that responds to research queries and explains how this information informs a position throughout most of the writing.	understanding of the research process as an information seeking dynamic that begins with specific questions to inform a position.	
Presents an effective working thesis.	Presents an original working thesis.	Presents an effective working thesis.	Presents a working thesis.	Has not yet articulated a working thesis.	
Expression	Grammar, diction, punctuation, and mechanics are correct and prose is elegant, evincing elements of stylistic sophistication (sentence variety and the like).	No fragments, comma spliced sentences, errors in point of view, or confusing shifts are present. Some expressive errors mar the prose (primarily in diction), but clarity is at least marginally above average.	Few fragments, comma spliced sentences, errors in point of view, or confusing shifts are present, and these do not often impact the overall clarity of the writing. Maryland "C" standards are met.	Demonstrates little or no ability to avoid fragments, run-ons, shifts, and inappropriate points of view; demonstrates a lack of college level writing competence.	

ALP FAQs

1. What is English ALP?

    -   The Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) is offered to students while they are taking English 101. The ALP offers additional learning opportunities and support that helps students in their English 101 class. This allows students to complete transitional English and English 101 in the same semester. ALP is a 3 hour non-credit class.

2. What are the advantages of ALP?

    -   Taking the ALP class allows you to complete English 101 in the same semester. It also allows you to take classes which require you to be eligible for English 101 during the same semester.

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3. What if I cannot fit ALP and English 101 into my schedule?
    - You can take ENG 002, a 3 hour, non-credit class instead; however, you cannot take English 101 until the following semester. In addition, you will not be able to take any class which requires eligibility for English 101 while taking ENG 002.
4. How do I get placed into ALP?
    - If you are not eligible for English 101 based on your HS GPA or your SAT score, you will take a placement test. The results of this test indicate your placement.
5. Why should I take ALP?
    - ALP allows students to go right into their credit bearing class instead of waiting a full semester to do this.
    - ALP allows students to enjoy a learning environment in which only a small cohort of students (no more than 10) work together with the same teacher from the regular 101 section.
    - ALP work is designed to dovetail into 101 coursework; instead of having extra work, ALP coursework targets and practices needed skills while helping students complete 101 coursework.
    - ALP offers students personal attention from the instructor and extra time devoted to 101 assignments.
6. Does ALP require extra work above and beyond English 101?
    - Yes and no. ALP assignments are distinct from 101 assignments, and ALP is graded according to different criteria; however, major ALP assignments are pieces of larger 101 assignments that fit into the 101 requirements and that help students complete 101 coursework.
7. Are there extra books, materials, or fees for ALP?
    - No.
8. Do I have to be in the assigned ALP section, or can I take a different 101 section? Must I take these classes back-to-back?
    - You must take the same ALP section as 101 section to which you are assigned—and with the same instructor.
9. Can I pass 101 but fail ALP? Does it matter?
    - It is possible to fail the ALP section by not completing its work successfully or by choosing not to complete it. Failing any class, even a non-credit class, negatively impacts students. Scholarships, financial aid, and transcripts will all be negatively impacted by the failure.

A student could pass English 101 yet fail ALP. This is not a desirable outcome.