Accelerated & Integrated Reading and Writing Courses
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My Own Classroom Context

Chabot College

English 102:
Reading, Reasoning, and Writing (Accelerated)

A one-semester 4-unit developmental English course leading directly to English 1A

- An alternative to two-semester, 8-unit sequence
- No minimum placement score, students self-place in either the accelerated or two-semester path
- Developed with “backwards design” from college English: Students engage in the same kinds of reading, thinking, and writing of college English, with more scaffolding and support
- College has expanded accelerated offerings in last decade: in Fall ‘11, course constituted 75% of entry-level sections
Completion of College English Consistently Higher among Accelerated Students at Chabot

N = 1,605 accelerated students; 1,996 non-accelerated students. 2
Acceleration: Not Just for higher scoring students

Scores on both Accuplacer tests below 50 (reading, sentence skills)

N = 205 non-accelerated, 126 accelerated. Spring 06-Fall 09.
Quick CAT  
(Classroom Assessment Technique)

Reflecting upon this morning’s session, what questions or concerns do you have about accelerated reading-and-writing classes? What do you hope we can address today?

Write your response on a piece of paper. Folks participating by webinar, submit online.
Window into One Accelerated Classroom

- Video footage from Katie Hern’s “Reading, Reasoning, and Writing, Accelerated,” Fall 2009

- Students are working collaboratively to understand an excerpt from Paolo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

- It is week two, the fourth class session of the term. The discussion builds on earlier readings about education by Malcolm X, Krishnamurti, and Mike Rose, along with a study by Jean Anyon documenting serious differences between schools in different socio-economic communities.

- Video at [http://vimeo.com/16983253](http://vimeo.com/16983253)
- Also at: [http://cap.3csn.org/teaching/reading-writing-classes/](http://cap.3csn.org/teaching/reading-writing-classes/)

Video created as part of the Faculty Inquiry Network, 2009.
Camerawork by Alexey Dolotov. Editing by Katie Hern & Sean McFarland.
Window into One Accelerated Classroom

What did you notice as you watched the video:
• For example, what did you see students doing?
• What did you see the teacher doing?
• What questions come up for you?

Webinar folks, submit your responses online.
Look through the handout “Window into an Accelerated Classroom,” then talk in groups (or submit responses online):

– What stands out to you as you look through these course materials?
– What excites you?
– What questions & concerns come up for you?

Window into One Accelerated Classroom

Speed Dating
Take the next 10 minutes to read Diana Baumrind’s review of Stanley Milgram’s obedience experiments (pages 188-193 of your handout).

Then we’ll “speed date,” a post-reading activity in which students process the assigned reading in rapidly shifting pairs, clarify misunderstandings, and prepare for upcoming quiz and essay

http://cap.3csn.org/files/2012/02/Milgram-packet.pdf
http://cap.3csn.org/files/2012/02/Speed-Dating-Handout1.pdf
Intentional Support for Students’ Affective Needs

Student fears and fixed mindsets are two of the biggest challenges to overcome in high-challenge accelerated classes.

– *The College Fear Factor* by Rebecca Cox

  Many community college students fear that they’re not cut out for college and cope with this fear by withdrawing and/or “avoiding assessment” (e.g., not take tests, not turn in papers)

– “Brainology” by Carol Dweck

  Whether students have a “fixed” or “growth” mindset about their own intelligence strongly influences their academic performance, especially their response to challenging tasks
Thematic Courses

- Thoughts on choosing readings for an academic literacy course – see the CAP website, under Teaching Accelerated Courses – Reading and Writing
  
  http://cap.3csn.org/files/2012/01/ThoughtsOnChoosingReading.pdf
“In the non-accelerated classroom, I think I focused more on teaching students to eliminate the superficial errors, so students in that class ended up producing a ‘prettier’ assignment; however, their writing did not illustrate complexity of thought....This was partly due to the formulaic nature of the assignments I used to give (topic sentence should look like this and be placed here, supporting details should go here, etc.) and mostly due to the lack of opportunity for critical thinking in my previous assignments.”

Summer Serpas, Irvine Valley College
Insights from CAP faculty

“With the right support, students are capable of doing great academic work! They don’t need to start with a simple paragraph. They can write complex essays from the start.”

-Anonymous faculty reflection

“Teaching accelerated courses has changed my outlook on student capacity. I learned to trust in students’ ability to handle challenges and tackle meaningful academic work.

- Caroline Minkowski, City College SF
CAP Principles for Curricular Redesign

- Increasing completion of college-level English and Math requires shorter developmental pathways and broader access to college-level courses.
- We must reduce our reliance on high-stakes placement tests, which are poor predictors of student capacity.
- Streamlined developmental curricula should reflect five key principles:
  - Backward design from college-level courses
  - Relevant, thinking-oriented curriculum
  - Just-in-time remediation
  - Low-stakes, collaborative practice
  - Intentional support for students’ affective needs