The Communicator

Welcome back!

I hope the summer break was all that you needed it to be, and you are ready for another school year. In our last publication, I introduced you to our associate faculty members who teach Levels 1 - 4. The rest are highlighted in this issue, and we are once more reminded of and thankful for the dedication and professionalism that our associate faculty possesses. Also in this issue, Kristi Reyes highlights the importance of considering students' learning styles when teaching ESL. Eli Clarke contributes the second part of her icebreaker activities for creating a welcoming environment. Ideas from Lynn Morgan and Mariana Silva are included. Melissa Lloyd-Jones from MCC's credit ESL program features an interesting presentation that was put on by The Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges. The presentation was at MCC's first Student Success Summit last spring. Jon Fuzell shares how the Tutoring and Academic Support Center (TASC) can support students. Richard Ma, Glorian Sipman, and Alex Doyle-Bauer from the library reminds us of the possibility of classroom visits and introduces a new librarian to the CLC (welcome Judy!) and a new addition to the phenomenal PlayAway collection. In our final feature article, Denise Stephenson from the Writing Center reminds us of productive ways to use writing consultants in the classroom. Special thanks to all our columnists!

Last but not least, in our previous issue, Kristi's article introduced us to the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards. Keeping in mind the important endeavor of incorporating these standards into our curriculum, we were fortunate enough to have Sylvia Ramirez present a workshop to us at our department meeting this year on how to apply the CCR Standards to our reading and writing classes. We would like to say a big "Thank you" to Sylvia for sharing her expertise with us.

Enjoy the rest of the newsletter and we wish you a spectacular semester!

— *Ruth Gay, noncredit ESL department chair*

Fall 2014
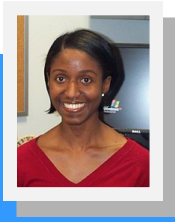
CHAIR NEWS

By Ruth Gay, noncredit ESL department chair

2013-14 Annual Report

End of Year Persistence and Promotion Data

Term 1	Promotion %	Persistence %
Morning ESL Classes	22%	88%
Evening ESL Classes	23%	85%
Term 2	**Promotion %**	**Persistence %**
Morning ESL Classes	52%	84%
Evening ESL Classes	37%	84%
Term 3	**Promotion %**	**Persistence %**
Morning ESL Classes	39%	85%
Evening ESL Classes	33%	81%
Term 4	**Promotion %**	**Persistence %**
Morning ESL Classes	32%	80%
Evening ESL Classes	34%	82%

Our overall persistence rate for 2013-2014 was 84% and the promotion rate was 34%. This marks our 11th year to attain persistence rates at or very close to 80%, but this year there was a slight dip in our promotion rate. As always, students in the beginning levels are promoted more frequently than students in the higher levels.

Open-entry classes once more averaged an 80% and above percentage persistence rate. Additionally, we honored 43 new citizens at our 9th annual citizenship celebration. These students successfully completed our rigorous citizenship program and became United States citizens. Special thanks to our citizenship instructors Del Zimmerman, Shannon Ilas, and Eli Clarke for expertly preparing our students!

MORE EOY DATA

FTES/CASAS Assessment Benchmark Data over Eight Years

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009 -10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
506	492	469	482	437	371	337	322
1616	1888	1723	1711	1566	1328	1115	1476

We once more experienced a decrease in reported hours of attendance compared to previous years. As the chart indicates, this is our lowest FTES in eight years, and we continue to experience lower attendance hours since our highest year in 2006 – 2007. We have, however, experienced a rise in benchmarks. Our demographics report shows that for the first time, the main reason students drop or stop out of our program is listed as personal reasons, with many students citing health and childcare issues.

California 2012 – 2013 Performance Goals Compared to MiraCosta Noncredit ESL Performance Goals

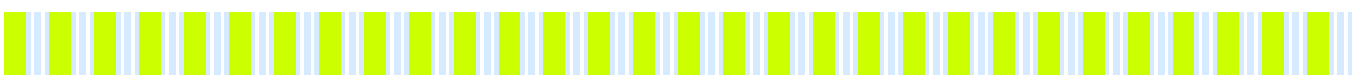| Levels	California 2013 – 2014 Performance Goals	MiraCosta Noncredit ESL (all enrollees)	MiraCosta Noncredit ESL (against enrollees with pre & post results)
Beginning Literacy (Level 1)	65%	60%	**100%**
ESL Beginning Low (Level 2)	66%	60%	**92%**
ESL Beginning High (Level 3)	62%	60%	**78%**
ESL Intermediate Low (Level 4)	55%	46%	**63%**
ESL Intermediate High (Level 5)	51%	54%	**69%**
ESL Advanced Low (Levels 6 and 7)	24%	33%	**45%**

Drop out/Stop Out Percentages and Reasons

Thanks to our instructional aides, we are able to document the reasons our students leave the program.

Scheduling Problems	7%
Unknown	18%
Got a job/better job	28%
Personal	34% (main comment: health and child care issues)

Demographics

Female	62%
Male	38%
Spanish-speaking	77%

SLO DATA: 2009 – 2013 (FOUR-YEAR SUMMARY REPORT)

Student Learning Outcomes	Assessments	2010-11 % passed	2011-12 % passed	2012-13 % passed	2013–14 % passed
LEVEL 1 **Listening/Speaking** • Identify a limited range of words and phrases drawn from familiar material. • Demonstrate the ability to engage in very limited social conversations using familiar English words and supported by gestures to express basic survival needs.	Interview	100%	83%	100%	57%
Reading • Interpret simple sentences from previously learned vocabulary by recognizing and demonstrating understanding of basic vocabulary.	CASAS Level A	N/A	N/A	N/A*	N/A
Writing • Produce simple sentences using a limited number of basic words and phrases and complete very simple forms.	Chart Application Dictation Goal Paragraph	95%	88%	100%	98%
LEVEL 2 **Listening/Speaking** • Recognize frequently used words, phrases and questions in familiar contexts. • Demonstrate the ability to engage in limited social conversations to communicate basic survival needs.	Interview	100%	87%	97%	95%
Reading • Construct meaning from simplified print materials on familiar topics.	CASAS Level B	59%	95%	91%	91%
Writing • Produce simple sentences in paragraph format and complete simple forms.	Chart Application Dictation Goal Paragraph Note	95%	97%	96%	99%
LEVEL 3 **Listening/Speaking** • Demonstrate comprehension of simplified spoken English and simple conversations. • Describe basic needs and relate common activities using clarification strategies when appropriate.	Interview	92%	78%	83%	94%

Reading • Construct meaning from simplified print materials on familiar topics.	CASAS Level B	59%	73%	73%	73%
Writing • Produce sentences to form a paragraph and complete forms requiring some detail.	Dictation Goal Paragraph Note	87%	83%	86%	97%
LEVEL 4 **Listening/Speaking** • Recognize spoken English containing some unfamiliar words about mostly familiar topics. • Demonstrate the ability to engage in conversations beyond survival needs and demonstrate clarification strategies.	Interview	79%	79%	80%	77%
Reading • Construct meaning from print materials on familiar and unfamiliar topics.	CASAS Level B	53%	68%	60%	86%
Writing • Produce messages, notes and related sentences in a paragraph format on personal topics and complete increasingly difficult authentic forms.	Chart Application Dictation Paragraph Letter	85%	90%	86%	93%
LEVEL 5 **Listening/Speaking** • Interpret essential points of discussions or speeches on selected topics. • Demonstrate the ability to engage in conversations on a variety of familiar topics.	Interview	89%	85%	96%	98%
Reading • Use contextual clues to interpret meaning and draw conclusions from authentic materials on everyday subjects.	CASAS Level C	54%	65%	61%	74%
Writing • Convey meaning by writing a descriptive and/or narrative paragraph, or formal or informal letters and messages and complete a variety of forms with limited assistance.	Chart Application Dictation Paragraph Letter	89%	91%	91%	90%

LEVEL 6 **Listening/Speaking** • Interpret a majority of speech from a variety of sources. • Discuss a variety of topics with increasing fluency and control of more complex grammatical patterns.	Interview	77%	85%	73%	89%
Reading • Infer meaning from various types of authentic materials including fiction narrations and factual matter.	CASAS Level C	27%	45%	39%	84%
Writing • Compose a descriptive, narrative, and/or expository paragraphs, formal and informal letters, and complete authentic forms.	Chart Application Dictation Portfolio Letter	86%	91%	89%	95%
LEVEL 7 **Listening/Speaking** • Identify key information in a variety of formal and informal media presentations. • Demonstrate the ability to communicate fluently in informal and formal conversations and presentations.	Interview	90%	87%	100%	87%
Reading • Interpret meaning from a variety of authentic readings in identified areas of interest.	CASAS Level D	27%	45%	30%	84%
Writing • Compose well organized, coherent paragraph (s) with appropriate detail and sentence variety.	Application Dictation Portfolio	72%	89%	88%	87%

CLC Welcomes Nikki Schaper as Interim Dean of Community Education

Dr. Nikki Schaper is the Interim Dean of Behavioral Sciences, History and Community Education, as well as the site administrator for the Community Learning Center. She started working at MiraCosta College as the Associate Dean of Student Services at the San Elijo Campus in 2009. Nikki has over 20 years of experience in higher education, both in student affairs and instruction. She enjoys the diversity of our students and is passionate about supporting students in their endeavors. Nikki says, "My favorite part of working in education is seeing the impact it makes not only to students, but also for those in their family. A whole generation can change with just one person taking a class." Nikki has served on the Encuentros Leadership Board and received from them the "Si Se Puede Award" in 2011.

Interim Dean Dr. Nikki Schaper

Introducing Noncredit ESL Associate Faculty, Part II

In our last issue, I introduced our associate faculty members who teach in levels 1 – 4. In this issue, I will be introducing the rest of our instructors.

First, Avra Bateson started working at MiraCosta College (MCC) in 2000 but has been teaching since 1988. She got into the field of teaching ESL during Amnesty in the 1980s. She enjoys meeting the interesting people who take her classes.
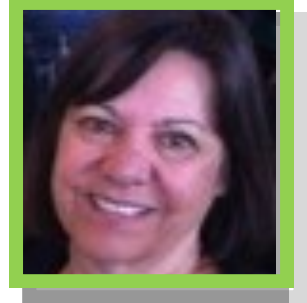
Avra Bateson

Next, Dawn Bell is one of our newest additions to our MCC noncredit ESL family. She started working with us during the fall of 2013. Teaching ESL is the perfect career for her because she enjoys working with people from different countries and teaching and learning about language. Like Avra, Dawn also enjoys meeting her new students each term.

Dawn Bell

Zakia Farouq has 15 years of teaching experience and has been with MCC since 2005. Zakia can relate to her students because English was not her first language. She says, "I can attest to the students' struggles in learning the English language." Her favorite aspect of her job is experiencing her students' light bulb moments "when they really comprehend a concept that was unclear to them before." Zakia also works with MCC's English Language Institute program where she helps students prepare for the TOEFL.

Zakia Farouq
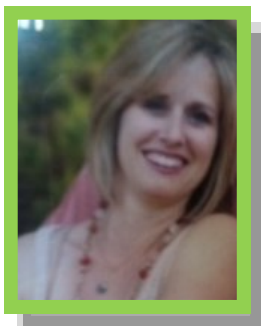
Shannon Ilas is the next instructor I would like you to meet. She has been working at MCC since 2002 and has 20 years of teaching experience. Shannon chose the field of ESL after volunteering in Guatemala for two years. She fell in love with the people and culture and found that ESL was the perfect way to follow her newly-discovered passion of working with students from other cultures. She enjoys it when her students have an "aha" moment, and when her citizenship students return to inform her that they've passed their citizenship interview. Shannon works primarily in the lab, and she enjoys researching online programs to improve our lab classes and to increase her own multimedia knowledge.

Shannon Ilas

Andy Oropesa

Our next stellar instructor is Andy Oropesa. Andy is one of those rare individuals that actually started working with us in 1990 as an instructional aide. He transitioned over to the teaching in 2007. Andy gets great satisfaction from seeing his students do well and transition on to other programs like the Adult High School Diploma Program to complete their formal education.

Christian Ramirez

Christian Ramirez is one of our newer instructors. He has over ten years teaching experience but started working at MCC in 2010. He enjoys traveling and got into ESL when he realized he could be paid to teach and travel. He then discovered how much he really loves teaching. He is thrilled to help students, and loves it when they start to believe in themselves and realize their potential. Christian is the quintessential freeway flier. He starts his days in Irvine and works his way back to San Diego.


Del Zimmerman

Lastly, Delphine (Del) Zimmerman has been working at MCC for 25 years. She is in charge of our Citizenship classes. She has about thi30 years of teaching experience. Del's path to ESL was a unique one. Because of a federal program that was set in place by President Johnson, she was sent to tutor migrant students in English. She discovered that migrant workers moved frequently to follow the harvest of seasonal crops and because of this fact, their children's education was extremely deficient. This realization put her life on a different trajectory, and she has been involved with ESL since then. She enjoys helping her students achieve their dreams and work towards a brighter future. She feels fortunate to have seen several of her students become part of the mainstream in this country. As stated before, Del teaches our Citizenship courses. She works hard to stay current with the latest information by attending United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) meetings in San Diego and sharing events in North County. Del has an excellent rapport with various agencies that serve as resources for our students in their endeavor to become US citizens, and she is a tireless recruiter for the Citizenship Program.

It was said before, and I'll say it again. The noncredit ESL program at MCC would not be what it is without its hard-working associate faculty.

2014 Noncredit ESL Transitioning Students Awarded Scholarships

Every spring semester, MiraCosta College's Community Learning Center awards scholarships to well-deserving students who will be transiting to credit classes the following fall. This past spring, we gave out six scholarships, and three of those students were from the noncredit ESL program. It is once again my pleasure to introduce you to these stellar students.
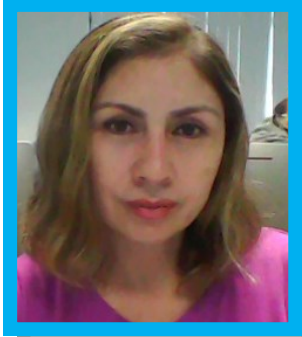
Martha Millan, CLC Transition Scholarship awardee

First, Martha Millan was awarded one of the CLC Transition scholarships. It is her goal to become a certified public accountant. Martha says that her family is her motivation for all that she does. She volunteers at her son's school, helps her daughters practice soccer, and helps her community by participating in the Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE) program. This program provides classes to parents at schools helping them understand how the school system works, the tests their children take, and how to help their children go to college.

Mirna Romera, Brooke E. Brummitt scholarship winner

Next, Mirna Romero received the Brooke E. Brummitt scholarship. Mirna was an elementary school teacher in Mexico, and her goal is to become an elementary school teacher here because she loves teaching and working with children. She is keenly aware of the fact that children are the future of our great nation, and she wants to be part of shaping their world. She volunteers at her son's school when she is not in school herself, and she spends her free time enjoying her family.

Abdul Haq Sultani, CLC Transition scholarship winner

Finally, Abdul Haq Sultani received the other CLC Transition Scholarship. He is from Afghanistan and wishes to study office management at MCC and then transition to a four-year institution to get a degree in business administration and eventually become a project manager. Abdul strives for excellence in every area of his life and is very grateful for the opportunities MCC provides for students to pursue their education.

Summer Projects

Level 2 Summer 2014 Success Story

Submitted by Ellen Fatseas

I would like to begin this review of my summer 2014 success activity by thanking my volunteer aide, Ana Pitarresi, for her dedication in helping my Level 2 class every Wednesday in the evening session.

I prepared the following activity for each Wednesday's session with the goal that my students would begin to recognize nouns, verbs, and adjectives. Ana helped me a lot by monitoring their responses.
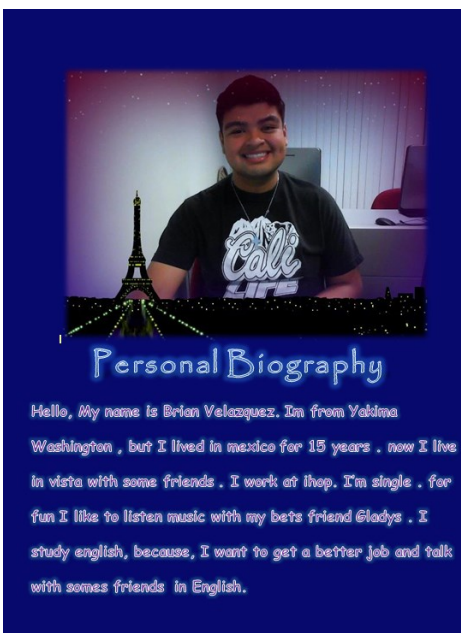
1. Each student was given a copy of the *Longman Study Dictionary of American English.*

2. I posted a list of 15 vocabulary words on the whiteboard. Some were nouns, some were verbs and some were adjectives. I concentrated on only these 3 parts of speech.

3. The students had to look in their dictionaries for the definitions and identify if the word was a noun, a verb, or an adjective.   The dictionaries are very student-oriented and perfect for them to explore definitions.

4. I would then have them write a short sentence for **only** the nouns, or verbs, or adjectives. Longman has excellent examples. They had an average of five sentences to write.

5. Finally, after checking their finished sentences, I set up the portable keyboard and mouse in front of the room and volunteers would post their work on the overhead for all the class to read and discuss the meanings.

By week 5, the students were really into the challenge. They were so engrossed in the activity that I had to remind them to take a break! The final outcome produced students who made good use of an English dictionary. They also referred to their *Side by Side* texts for sentences and ideas. Additionally, I want to commend instructional aide Charlie Medina for his support with technology in the classroom. We all worked as a team. It was a great experience.

Sample of student-created poster from Julia Cantu's Level 3 summer class

Summer Lab Project using Web Cameras and Microsoft Word in Level 3

Submitted by Julia Cantu

During the summer term, I conducted a very successful two-part lesson in the evening Level 3 class. Having a mixed group of computer vs. non-computer literate students balanced the lessons outcome. The primary focus of part 1 was to introduce the Web camera and all its props. The students manipulate their pictures with various backgrounds, poses and props, which allowed them to explore the program with confidence. Part 2 of the lesson consisted of a personal biography. After editing on paper, the students were then ready to type the sentences into a Word document. After the paragraph was typed, I demonstrated on the screen *some* of Microsoft Word's abilities, such as the basics of double spacing, font size, and style. Lastly was the fun stuff of color choices and combinations. Once the students were satisfied with color, size and style, the Web cam picture was inserted into their documents. Everyone enjoyed this project and had some unique creations! See samples at Summer Projects 2014.

Evening ESL students and instructors commemorate the successful results of the Summer 2014 Term Project One Can Food drive, led by ESL instructor Debbie Hanley.

## Carla Stoner Completes OTAN's Technology Mentor Academy

Nominator Ruth Gay, TIMAC participant Carla Stoner, mentee Ellen Fatseas

Congratulations to Carla Stoner, who last Spring completed TIMAC, offered through the Outreach for Technical Assistance Network for Adult Educators. Initiated in the fall of 2004, the Technology Integration Mentor Academy (TIMAC) is a peer-mentoring-based professional development initiative with the goal of supporting individuals at adult education agencies to become a technology mentor in their program and thereby increase the effective use of technology in adult education classrooms. Carla received training and additional support throughout the year last year, which included mentoring theory and practice, technology integration philosophy, and technology skills.

As part of her participation in the academy, Carla mentored colleagues in technology-integration projects. For one project, she worked with Ellen Fatseas to introduce Neo portable keyboard word-processors in Ellen's Level 1 class. She also worked with Julia Cantu to introduce PowerPoint presentations in Julia's Level 3 class.

Carla wrote, "I can't thank you enough for recommending me for this TIMAC project! It has been exciting and changed the way I look at my curriculum. I've really become a better teacher because of this experience. I'm super excited to try new things and so are my students. What an opportunity!" Carla's enthusiasm for integrating technology in ESL lessons is contagious!
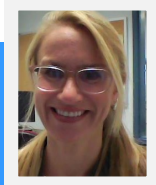
ELT BEST PRACTICES

By Kristi Reyes, noncredit ESL instructor

Reaching a Diversity of Styles in the ESL Classroom

Our students come from a wide range of educational and cultural backgrounds, and thus bring with them into our ESL classes expectations about teaching and learning that may or may not match our teaching techniques and styles. For example, certain students may feel that the classroom is too "noisy," while others may be hesitant to ask questions because this would be considered disrespectful in their native countries. Still other students may not want to work in pairs or small groups because they may not see the value in practicing with students whose English abilities are at or below their own level. Not only do our students have differing assumptions about how a class is to be conducted, they have individual learning style preferences. With so many variables possible within one class, what can a teacher possibly do in order to not just reach but also engage the largest number of students and create a comfortable, cooperative atmosphere conducive to language learning?

See Learning Styles for links to many resources, including cooperative learning activities, learning and teaching style inventories, examples of active listening and note-taking activities, and comparison/contrast writing prompt.

One of our roles besides teaching the English language is to help students understand the American education system and their places in it, including what is considered appropriate student behavior versus inappropriate behavior (e.g., "helping" a classmate vs. cheating). Here are some ideas about activities that can be conducted early in a term to explain what students can expect and what is expected of them in American classrooms:

- Ask students to describe the education systems and classroom etiquette and procedures in their native countries (such as how students and teachers address one another, how students participate, attitudes about punctuality, the seating, the teaching and learning activities).

- As a follow-up activity, intermediate and advanced students can read about American education or do a listening and note-taking activity. Then, making a list of some key similarities and differences between the educational systems in their native countries and the United States, help students write a comparison/contrast paragraph.

- Last, students can be given the task of formulating (or at least providing suggestions for) class policies, which often leads to greater accountability on their part.

      To help students see worth in classroom activities they may not be accustomed to, we should be explicit in providing the reasons for particular activities. For example, if some students resist working with others in a group, we can explain that being a team player is an important trait in American workplaces and educational settings, stressing that we are providing them with a skill-building experience. After the activity is complete, students can be asked to paraphrase for you what they gained from working with others and how it will benefit them in the future.

It is a is well-known truth that teachers teach in ways that they themselves learned best, so a good starting point for designing activities to meet a wide range of learning styles is to learn more about our own preferred learning and teaching style(s). To do so, try the task below. Your results may confirm what you already assumed, but if you are like me, your results may be a revelation. No wonder I have trouble sitting and listening for more than 15 minutes...I found out that I am a kinesthetic teacher and learner, when all along I thought I was visual learner!

Learning and Teaching Style Discovery and Reflection Task

1. Have you ever taken a learning styles inventory before? What were the results? If you have never taken a learning styles inventory before, what do you predict to be your preferred learning modality?

2. How you would characterize your teaching style? Do your classroom actions, methods, and techniques fit with your description? Take the SAILS Project Teaching Styles Assessment, a free 10-question teaching style questionnaire.

3. Complete the VARK Learning Styles Inventory and/or take one of the other online learning style inventories listed at Learning Styles.

4. How do you think your preferred learning style affects your instruction? How will your results inform your teaching? Plan at least one idea, activity, or technique to use in class that can meet a variety of preferred learning styles. Incorporate the activity in your lesson and reflect on the outcome.

Once we learn more about our own preferences and style(s), can then help students discover their own preferred learning style(s), not only to enhance their learning strategies by using their strengths but also to work on weaknesses, Of the many online learning style inventories, one that I have used with students with success is the free VARK questionnaire. It is written at a level that is easy enough for intermediate and above level ESL students to use, and through its 16 questions, it can be used quickly to measure learning style preferences in these areas: Visual (V), Aural/Auditory (A), Reading/Writing (R), and Kinesthetic (K) – see descriptions at VARK Modalities. There is also a version for younger students, which could be adapted and use with lower-level ESL students. Additionally, there are versions that are printable and translated into many languages on the Using VARK page). Its focus is on study habits and skills more than personality traits, and what I like most about this inventory is that there are "Helpsheets" that explain to students how to develop their less-preferred learning modalities. I developed and have used a Learning Styles Project assignment, which can be downloaded and modified for use with intermediate and advanced students. Students take the VARK assessment, summarize their preferred learning style(s), read the advice provided on developing their less frequently-used learning modalities and study habits, and set a learning goal. Students can revisit the goal periodically throughout the term to check or report on their progress.

The point of considering learning styles is <u>not</u> to change our own unique teaching styles but to strive to present information and engage students in a wide variety of ways to tap into the preferred learning modality of each student during at least some point in the lesson. (See Learning Styles for more specific classroom activities). In doing so, we expose students to some of the numerous types of teaching and learning activities they will experience during their time as students in the U.S. If you are willing to share your own successful techniques for reaching a diversity of learning styles in the classroom, email them to me for posting on the wiki. Happy lesson planning and best wishes for a great Fall!
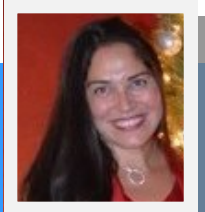
CLASSIC CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

By Eli Clarke, noncredit ESL instructor

Ice Breakers in the ESL Classroom (Part II)

As mentioned in the previous article, ice breakers (or icebreakers) are the perfect way to establish a sense of community in your classroom. Icebreakers and similar activities also help us to get to know our students better and to promote retention in our classrooms.

While searching the Web, I found many ideas that I would like to try, so here are five ice breakers I plan to use in my classroom this coming year!

1. "The Best Team" -- This activity is a great one for classrooms where team work is important and This will help students see what qualities are important while working as a team.

- Have each student in the classroom write two or three adjectives describing the best team they have ever been part of.
- Ask each student to share the adjectives with the class and post the characteristics on a flip chart on the board.
- Identify the top five characteristics that make a team "The Best Team."

2. "The Magic Wand" -- Activity to be done any time during the semester:

- Tell the students you have a magic wand and they can make three changes in their lives. How would you change yourself? Your family? Job? School?
- In small groups, have students discuss why it is important to make the changes and find ways to help them achieve this transformation.

3. "Syllabus Icebreaker" -- First Day Activity:

- Form groups of 4-6 students and ask them to briefly introduce themselves.
- Ask students to create a list of 4-6 questions they have about the class.
- Hand out the syllabus and see if they can find the answers to their questions on it.
- As a class, have the students ask all the questions to which they couldn't find the answers on their syllabi.

4. "Stranded on an Island" -- Learn about values, help students with problem solving, and promote teamwork.

- Form groups of 4-6 students and ask them to pick 10 items they would travel with if they know there was a chance they could get stranded on an island.
- Ask the students to pick only 5 as a group and share with the rest of the classroom why they chose those items.

5. "Guess Who?" -- This is a great activity to use during the first couple weeks of the semester:

- Give each student a 3x5 index card and ask them to write five to seven sentences about themselves, for example:

  □ Favorite food, movie, song, TV show, book, hobby.

  □ Last movie they saw or last song they listened to.

  □ Dream vacation or favorite place on earth.

  □ Personal information: marital status, children, etc.

- Collect the cards and read the clues to the classroom so everyone (except the author) can guess who is the person being described. You can read 2 or 3 cards each class.

I want to express special thanks to Lynn Morgan and Mariana Silva for taking the time to share some of their wonderful ideas! I will surely try them out too!!

Lynn Morgan's students' favorite two activities/ice breakers:

1. "Let's Talk" -- Group Sharing, Listening/Speaking: *Students enjoy sharing about themselves and also like to hear from other students.*

- Put students in groups of four.
- Assign each student in the group a color – Red, Green, Yellow, Blue
- Students discuss topics assigned to their color:

Red   describes his/her hometown (weather & geographic features such as rivers, lakes, mountains, etc.)

Green   tells about a favorite food from his/her country

Yellow   talks about his/her favorite place in his/her country

Blue   describes a special family member

(Each student can talk two minutes about his/her topic.   Teacher needs to keep track of time so everyone has an opportunity to talk.)

- One or two students from each group shares something they found especially interesting.

2. "True or False?" -- Group Activity: What's the truth? *This is a fun activity that tends to easily engage students*

- Teacher writes three true sentences and one false sentence about herself/himself on the board.
- Keep the sentences simple. The purpose of the activity is for students to get acquainted. I actually used these sentences this summer in the Level 6 class:

  1. I play the piano. (This was the false sentence)
  2. I have a calico cat.
  3. I lift weights. (Almost everyone thought this was the false sentence)
  4. I drive over 50 miles a day. (A few thought this one was false)

- Students get into groups of three or four, and make their own sentences (3 T and 1 F).
- Students read their sentences to the members of their group and they try to guess which sentence is false.

Students share with the class something they learned about their classmates.

Other first day activities/icebreakers:

#3 "Memory Game" -- Students memorize the names of classmates:

First student who can say the name of each student gets a bag of Hershey's kisses. (There are Hershey's Kisses for the rest of the class too.)

#4 "Getting to Know Each Other" -- Pair/Share activity - Interviews:

1. Partners interview each other. (Questions are about name, country, free time activities, something interesting or unusual about student)
2. Partners take turns introducing each other to the class.

#5 "Getting to Know Each Other In-depth" -- Pair/Share Activity – Interviews:

Students especially like this activity because they can complete a paragraph by the end of the first class.

1. Partners interview each other using a list of questions prepared by teacher.
2. Answers to questions are made into sentences.
3. Sentences are put together to form a paragraph.
4. Transitions are inserted as appropriate.

A list of questions and model paragraph is provided by teacher.

Mariana's Ice Breaker Activities

1) "Find Someone Who"

Give students small pieces of paper starting with "Find Someone Who..." and a variety of endings to this sentence. Students have to walk around and try to fill out their sheet as soon as possible. Then, as a group, we share what students found out. *Variation:* Instead of giving students a pre-made list requesting to "Find someone who…," you ask them to write on an index card "I want to find someone in the class who…" and then complete the sentence. The students then mill around the room asking their personalized question to their classmates. This allows the student to determine what they want to find out about their peers. Teacher walks around and ensures questions are appropriate.

The next step: instead of introducing myself, I bring a small basket (or hat) containing some personal items (a family picture, a book, some postcards, a bracelet, etc.). Students have to pick them up and form questions to find out information about me. It's fun:)

2) "Skittles" -- Bring skittles candies in a jar/bowl and have students get as many as they want without giving them any instructions. Then, ask them to count how many skittles they got and say as many things about themselves as the number of skittles.

3) "Who am I?" This can be used later for fun; I don't use it during the first day of class, as I want to get to know my students and focus on community building.

Give each student a post-it note. Have them write the name of a famous person on the paper. Then collect the names, and give them out to different students. The students stick their post-it-notes on their foreheads or backs without looking at them. They have to ask the other students questions to find out who their famous person is. You can plan in pairs, or let them walk around the classroom and ask anyone.

These activities can be adapted to any level of language proficiency.

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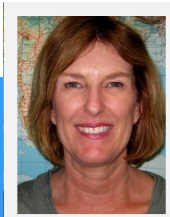
CREDIT CORNER

By Melissa Lloyd-Jones, credit ESL instructor

Emphasizing Student Success in ESL and Beyond

As we move into a new school year, community colleges all across the nation are placing more and more emphasis on student success. In a sense, this "new" emphasis on student success seems puzzling to me. Don't most instructors care deeply that their students are learning the material covered during the class? Aren't most college staff members invested in helping students succeed? Yet defining student success and fostering it are complex matters. During this past spring semester, I was fortunate to attend MiraCosta's first Student Success Summit, sponsored by the Student Success Committee, where I heard an excellent presentation by representatives from The Research & Planning Group for California Community Colleges. The RP Group conducted research to identify six important factors in student success.

> *Directed:* Students have a goal and know how to achieve it
>
> *Focused:* Students stay on track—keeping their eyes on the prize
>
> *Nurtured:* Students feel somebody wants and helps them to succeed
>
> *Engaged:* Students actively participate in class and extracurricular activities
>
> *Connected:* Students feel like they are part of the college community
>
> *Valued:* Students' skills, talents, abilities and experiences are recognized; they have opportunities to contribute on campus and feel their contributions are appreciated

The presentation also included strategies faculty can use to help to develop these success factors in students. For example, we were reminded that providing regular and meaningful feedback to students helps them feel focused and engaged and keeps them on track. In addition, instructors can show that they value their students' perspectives and contributions by creating assignments that allow students to share their personal and family history and culture. One more of the many suggestions for encouraging student success was to foster connections between students so that they might support one another. In truth, this information is not new to those of us working in ESL programs. Perhaps because the needs of our students may be more evident, it may be that we feel a more urgent desire to help meet those needs. Nevertheless, the information from the RP Group was a nice validation of the practices we find so effective and rewarding in our work. For more information and resources on the work of the RP Group, visit the RP Group Student Support page.

In the credit ESL program, we have healthy enrollment this semester, and therefore, many new students from all around the world who are here, looking to become successful MiraCosta students. One new way we are going to help them achieve success is by connecting our students with students enrolled in a credit communication class, Intercultural Communication (Comm 215). As a result of collaboration between the Institute of International Perspectives, communications instructor Anthony Ongyod, and the credit ESL program, students enrolled in any credit ESL class will have the opportunity to help Professor Ongyod's students complete a research project. The communications students will be doing research on a culture that interests them, and as part of that research, they will interview students from our credit ESL classes who come from that culture. The pairs or groups will then present the research together during the International Fair that will take place on our quad. This project is a prime example of how the success factors listed above can be put into action. Clearly, faculty and staff in the non-credit ESL program are masters at exciting collaborative projects like this one. I wish everyone a great semester as we work toward the shared goal of supporting students and helping them to be successful in our courses and beyond.
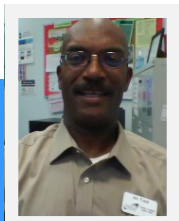
ACADEMIC SUPPORT CENTER

By Jon Fuzell, Community Learning Center Tutoring Coordinator

CLC Tutoring News

Fall 2014 is here and it is time to begin another term in the educational journey of the students at the CLC. In light of this, I just wanted to give out some information pertaining to the free tutoring and academic support offered by the Tutoring and Academic Support Center (TASC) at the CLC.

The schedule of the Academic Support Room (ASR) located in the main lobby across from the main desk is as follows:

Monday-Thursday:

Mornings-9:00am-1:00pm and Evenings-4:00pm-8:30pm

Morning tutoring is done on an all walk-in / sign-in basis, and you will soon be offered assistance. In the evening walk-ins are welcomed, but we also make appointments which receive the priority. However, we like to ask the students with appointments to be flexible because if a walk-in student has a question, they are allowed to ask it at any time as long as it does not disrupt a scheduled appointment.

We are available to provide academic support for any class that is a part of the Adult High School Diploma Program (AHSDP), ESL, Citizenship, plus any self-paced lab and credit classes that are taught on the CLC campus. I wanted to talk about a few concepts that go a long way towards helping students use TASC to the best advantage. For example, the sooner a student seeks academic support, the sooner they can learn the concept they are having issues with and not fall behind. This also allows us tutors to help identify any study skill issues that we can help students improve. Something that we in TASC can do for the student is to take the time to go back, review and re-teach any concepts where it is needed. This is the assistance we can offer-one on one educational support as a supplement to the instructor's classroom curriculum. We not only help students with specific lessons and concepts, but we can also help them learn new approaches to retaining the knowledge that they have learned. Also, We want students to understand they can come to us and ask any question because we in TASC believe that there are no "dumb" questions, but it is "dumb" if you ask no questions. Our students are smart because they understand the value of coming to the CLC and furthering their education, so it is we tutors who are the ones with something to prove!

The Academic Support Room is open to all CLC students. It is a great place for them to come and do their homework or to use one of the two computers located there. During tutoring hours students are always welcome to ask for any help they might need. We like to tell the students that we will never tell them "NO" if they come to the tutors to seek assistance. We will assist our students over the phone if this is convenient for them. We have access to all of the books used on campus, so students can sit in the ASR and borrow a book to do their work. We even have morning and evening library hours for students to use those services. In the end, the aim of TASC at the CLC is to provide as much academic support to the students as possible in order to show them the positives of taking advantage of all the educational resources available at all of the MiraCosta College campuses.

Thank you for your time and have a great term!

Fall 2014

LIBRARY NEWS

By Richard Ma, Community Learning Center Librarian

CLC Library Schedule, New Librarian, Movie DVD PlayAways

Your CLC librarians (Alex, Glorian, Judy, and Richard) would like to welcome you to Term 1, Fall 2014! We encourage you to contact us if you would like to schedule a library orientation for your class. The orientation can be customized according to your desired outcomes. We can provide a general introduction to library resources and service, or target the presentation to just one database or physical resource. To maximize your chances of getting your preferred time/date, please contact Richard as early in the term as possible (rma@miracosta.edu).

Our Term 1 hours will be the following:

Mondays, 9 am-12:30 pm (Richard)
Tuesdays, 9 am-12 noon (Glorian)
Tuesdays, 5:30-8:30 pm (Alex)
Wednesdays, 9 am-12:30 pm (Richard)

Please keep in mind that these hours are flexible if you would like to schedule an orientation at a different time.

We have also added another librarian to our CLC ranks! Judy Opdahl has been a librarian with Mira-Costa since 2012; during that time she has worked at both the Oceanside and San Elijo campus libraries and will now assist at the CLC as needed. Judy holds a BA in Speech: Interpersonal & Organizational Communication from CSU, Long Beach and in 2011 she received her Master of Library and Information Science from San Jose State University. Judy is an Oceanside resident and is also member of the Oceanside business community. Naturally, Judy is fond of conducting research on business and communication topics. She also loves working with students--helping them build confidence and acquire information literacy skills that can then be applied toward their successful academic endeavors and beyond.

Finally, we are excited to announce a new addition to our PlayAway collection: Movies! Yes, students will now be able to complete their reading and listening experience with an accompanying DVD for several of our PlayAways. What better way to experience a book than to read it, hear it read professionally, and watch a movie adaptation? These are the titles we'll be rolling out in this first collection:

Argo	The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo
Beautiful Creatures	The Hunger Games
Bridge to Terabithia	Sarah, Plain and Tall
The Girl Who Kicked the Hornet's Nest	The Secret Garden
The Girl Who Played with Fire	The Tale of Despereaux
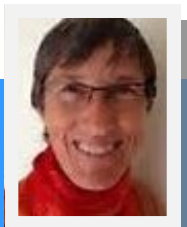
WRITING CENTER

By Denise Stephenson, MiraCosta College Writing Center Director

Using Your In-Class Writing Consultant 101

If you've never used Writing Consultants in your classroom, you may be unsure what to do with us. Our primary focus is language, whether it is spoken, read, or written. Writing Consultants understand that learning English is a difficult task and we hope to be able to create a place for safe and comfortable practice. Here are suggestions to integrate us seamlessly into your classroom environment:

1. **We Can Work One-To-One**

   This is where things click for your students. Whether you identify a list of students who need help or give us a particular thing to focus on when we check-in with students, we can to help students build confidence so they understand a concept and apply it in their writing.

Regardless of how often we meet with your students, our presence in the classroom benefits everyone involved.

2. **We Can Practice Conversation**

   We can work with small groups to practice conversing in English on any topic. We can work at whatever pace the students feel comfortable.

3. **We Can Help With Reading Strategies**

   Writing Consultants are good at asking questions to get students thinking critically about what they have read. We can offer reading and note-taking strategies to encourage your students to think beyond a summary.

Regardless of how often we meet with your students, our presence in the classroom benefits everyone involved. Your students know that we understand their assignments, and we know the key concepts you've emphasized in your lectures. We are able to keep your students on the right track and refer them to any lecture notes or slides presented in class. If your students are working on PowerPoint presentations, reading a short story in order to write an essay, or practicing everyday conversation, a Writing Consultant will be a beneficial to your students.