



To: Michael Westen, Director, Program in Technical Communication

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Subject: Recommendations for pre-enrollment writing assessment for CoE students

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Foreword

While most students in Engineering 100 are sufficiently prepared for the communication expectations of the course, some would benefit from additional language support in the first year of university study. You have developed a supplemental 2-credit course, and you requested our help in developing a method to identify students who should be advised into the course. Specifically, you asked us to recommend an assessment that could be administered during orientation or electronically over the summer, and you asked us to estimate the number of students who would enroll in your developmental program. This report contains those recommendations.

Summary

We recommend students enrolling in the College of Engineering submit an online writing sample and follow-up questionnaire modeled on the assessment of LSA students conducted by Sweetland Writing Center. The 2015 LSA prompt and questionnaire are available in Figure 1 on page 7. To adapt this assessment for engineering students, the sample prompt could be based on the current Common Reading Experience text and pertain to issues at the intersection of engineering and society. We recommend assessing the submitted essays and questionnaires as is done in LSA, which means that the recommendation students receive is based only on their writing self-efficacy as assessed by the post-writing questions. We anticipate about 40 students would enroll in your developmental course, which assumes similar patterns of performance between incoming LSA and engineering students.