A Bridge to Credit ESL - A Look at the LACC Noncredit ESL Transition Academy

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Our college

• Total students
  • 16,854 Credit Students
  • 3,645 Noncredit Students

• Noncredit Students are mostly
  • Latino
  • Korean
  • Armenian
  • Russian
Our Program:

- ESL & EL Civics
- Citizenship
- HSE prep.
- Vocational Ed.
- Basic Skills
Transitioning to credit ESL can be difficult

- This course helps prepare students for entry into credit ESL by providing a managed enrolled course that resembles the structure of a credit course.
- Our hope is that students who participate are better able to navigate and take part in a collegiate environment, and understand what is required of them behaviorally and academically.
The course

• For students who self-identify as able to withstand more academically rigorous classes and have a desire to move into Credit ESL.

• To take part in the Noncredit ESL Transition Academy, students must:
  • Have level 2 CASAS scores
  • Enroll in cohort; ESL 002 (3 hrs) & ESL Civics 032 (6 hrs)
  • Meet with a counselor to register

• The goal of the program is to assist students in transferring to Credit ESL Level 2 or higher.
Course agreement

- Attendance policy
- Class requirements
- Counseling requirements

Not open entry/exit
Students in the course receive support services throughout the semester

- Academic Counseling
- Student Success Workshops
- Free Textbooks
- Preparation for credit ESL assessment
- Referrals to support learning (on and off campus)
  - Worksource Centers
  - OSS, CalWorks, etc.
  - Resource Binder
- School materials
- Bus pass
Students learn about...

- Differences between NC and credit
- Cost of classes
- Financial aid application, requirements
- Non-resident tuition fee waiver
- Residency reclassification
- Knowledge of support programs (gen. counseling, CalWorks, EOPS, Foster/Kinship care, OSS..)
- Course registration information & important deadlines
- Gaining priority reg. (SSSP)
  - Credit orientation
  - General counseling
- ESL placement
Transition Cohort: Beginnings

- **Spring 2015 = First Transition Cohort**
  - Main instructor worked for both Credit and Non-Credit Depts
  - Met with vice-chair of Credit English/ESL Dept to establish the main vision and goals
    - **Need + Goal** = Have students ready for Credit Level 2
  - Transition Classes were to mirror the Credit Classes (2A + 2B)
  - Academic Commitment + Student Agreement
  - Used Ventures 2 (Non-Credit Textbook) for Grammar and Writing
  - Used New Password 2 (Credit Textbook sequence) for Reading and Vocabulary
Transition Cohort: Further Planning

- **End of Spring 2016 = Larger Meeting with Credit Department**
  - **Purpose:** Clarify and align the exit skills in the Transition Cohort with the entry skills required for Credit Classes
    - **Concrete step:** Focus on Sentence Structure (Credit Level 2)
    - Not duplicating Credit Level 2

- **MAIN QUESTION:** Can we bypass the College’s Placement exam and have students from the Transition Cohort place directly into Credit Classes?
  - Placement Exam = Multiple-choice, no writing assessment
  - **Idea:** Adopt the Credit 2A & 2B SLO Assessments as the Final Exams for the Transition Cohort and then grade them together
Transition Cohort: Trial &... Trial again?

• BOTH SIDES AGREED WITH THE IDEA, HOWEVER...
  • Level 2 Course Captain and Main Instructor met and graded papers written in-class previously (not the SLO Assessment)
    • VALIDITY of the assessment = TBD

• SINCE THEN...
  • We haven’t had any more collaborative grading
  • Defaulted to using the College’s Placement Exam because of the Common Assessment implementation → Incorrect Results (Fall 2016)
  • Fall 2017, Spring 2017, Fall 2018: AM & PM Cohort
    • Spring 2018: AM Cohort only
  • Expanded NC Level 3 (first offered Spring 2017) to 4 classes
Transition Cohort: A Closer Look (Spring 2018)

- Tuesdays & Thursdays = Grammar & Writing
- Wednesdays = Reading & Vocabulary
  - About 32 students (3 approved repeats)
  - We allowed 5 students to attend Tuesday & Thursday only
    - Worked to keep out “social learners”
  - Pilot Partnership with Credit ESL Tutoring Services

1) **NC Students can lack technology skills → Use CANVAS**
   - Strongly encourage students to login to CANVAS (class demo)
   - Post class notes after every class
   - Post homework answers
   - Access to the Textbook Student Website
Welcome to ESL Civics 032 Online!!

Happy Spring Semester!!

Welcome to CANVAS! I'm so happy you're here!

We will use CANVAS to help support our Non-Credit Transition Classes. CANVAS is used by many colleges and institutions. So, while you're here, feel free to explore, learn as much as you can, and ask questions!

Click on Modules or Files to find our notes for ESL Civ 032 and ESL 002. I will update them after each class.

Use Discussions to get to know your classmates and ask any questions. I will also post questions throughout the semester, so that you can practice answering in English!

Grammar in Context 1 has a STUDENT WEBSITE where you can find the AUDIO FILES from class. Practice listening, pausing, and repeating/imitating the speakers.
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Transition Cohort: A Closer Look (Spring 2018)

2) **NC Students can lack soft skills → Create a Community of Learners**
   - Students from different cultures, generations, socio-economic strata
   - Past Problems: Argument over front row seats + Sexual Harassment
   - Ice-breakers/Communicative Exercises + Move around
   - Set ground rules + Teach soft skills (e.g., turn-taking)

3) **NC Transition Students have to take a lot of exams! → Offer Incentives**
   - CASAS Testing (2)
   - EL Civics Assessment (2)
   - NC SLO Assessment (2)
   - Credit Placement Exam (1)
ESL Placement results from the past 3 cohorts (Fall 2016- Fall 2017)

- More than half reach target goal
- 40% score higher than target goal
Students transition to credit 2-3 semesters after
Barriers to transition to credit ESL

College related
- Non-resident tuition (students with no legal status or permanent residency less than 1 year)
- Not financial aid eligible
- Cannot commit to credit course schedule and policies
- Need noncredit flexibility
- Gap in accessing credit support services

Personal
- Poverty
- Homelessness
- Familial issues, childcare
- Mental health
- Job seekers and new employment opportunities
- Work schedules
- Immigration status
Where do they go after the transition course?

• Repeat transition course with instructor permission
• NC ESL 3
• NC High School Equivalency prep. courses
• Other NC courses (ex. computer literacy)
What does this data tells us? And Next Steps

- Students need more support and follow-up after course
- Need to build larger support outside of noncredit dept.
  - Assess curriculum and adapt to meet goals
  - Continue providing student services (pre, during, post)
  - Foster partnerships w/ campus community
Thank you!
Questions?

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