

Cuadernos de Investigación

de la Oficina de Puerto Rico y de Actividades Latinoamericanas

A Study of the First Year Curricula
at 14 Universities in Puerto Rico
and Their Relationship to the
College Board Advanced Level
Program in English

Dagmar Buhring, Ph. D.



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Manuel Maldonado Rivera
Director Ejecutivo

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The College Board
Puerto Rico and Latin American Activities Office

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The College Board's Advanced Level Program in English has been offered to high school seniors in Puerto Rico for over twenty years and has served a great number of students in their preparation for college studies. At the same time, it has fostered the cooperation among professionals from universities, high schools, and the College Board with a view to serving those students who are interested in high standards of achievement.

During these years, the student population has been constantly evolving in line with comprehensive changes in our society. Today, the Advanced Level Program in English appeals to a wide range of students and needs to respond to different student populations and abilities without losing sight of its overall goal to serve as an attractive alternative for talented and well-prepared learners.

Over the years, basic general education curricula at public as well as private universities in Puerto Rico have responded to societal changes and developments. The overall student population has grown in number, and many universities have shifted their emphasis from mainly liberal arts colleges to institutions of higher learning offering more degrees in technical and science careers and professions than before.

As a result of this development as well as new insights into the second language acquisition process, universities have been and are revising their core curricula in English. Specific language skills needed on the job after graduation have also contributed to curricular revisions and changes of overall objectives at the universities.

It seems obvious, then, that a far reaching program, such as the College Board's Advanced Level Program in English, should be periodically analyzed to ensure its continued contribution and relevance to higher education in its endeavor to serve the changing needs of today's students. With this purpose in mind, the College Board initiated the present study on the first-year curricula in English at the fourteen universities/campuses in Puerto Rico that receive ten (10) or more students from the Advanced Placement Program.

Objectives of the present study

Since “The Advanced Level Program in English is equivalent to an intermediate level first-year university course with emphasis on literature and composition” (College Board Course Description and Teacher’s Guide, 1995, p. 1), it is important that there be an adequate congruence between the two. If the universities grant credits for a program that the Advanced Placement students have successfully completed during their last year of high school, there must be common ground for its validation at the university level.

Chapter 2 of this investigation is an analysis of the basic first-year curricula in English at the fourteen (14) universities included in the present study. In Chapter 3, the findings will be compared among the universities to identify common elements. A comparative analysis between these findings and the curriculum of the Advanced Placement Level in English will follow in Chapter 4 after a description of the College Board’s Program. Finally, Chapter 5 will highlight the conclusions of the study.

To conduct this study, the College Board entrusted me with the task of analyzing the pertinent curricula. In particular, I was contracted during the fall semester of 1996-97.

- To carry out an investigation of the curricula of the basic courses in English which are offered at universities in Puerto Rico receiving 10 or more students from the Advanced Level Program.
- To examine objectives, content, text and assigned readings, as well as teaching methods in these courses in order to identify common elements across the universities and compare these with the College Board Advanced Level Program in English. (Contractual letter, 10/16/1996)

The College Board requested the syllabi of the basic English courses that the majority of the students take at each of the fourteen participating universities. These documents were submitted to this researcher as they were received by the College Board. Later during the study, however, the institu-

tions sent their documents directly to this researcher to save time in transmitting the missing information.

A preliminary analysis of the syllabi that had been received by December 3, 1996, revealed that some universities had only submitted – as they had been requested to do – the syllabi of those English courses that **the majority of their students** take, normally **the basic level of English**. However, credit for the College Board Advanced Level Program in English is usually granted for the university’s advanced level courses.

It became obvious then that the entire first-year curriculum in English at all levels at the participating universities/campuses had to be analyzed. Since most universities offer from two to four different levels in English with two courses on each level during the first year, the task included the detailed analysis of a total of sixty-eight (68) courses.

Below is a list of the syllabi that form the basis of this study and an overview of courses with their respective numbers and placement criteria (Levels) at each participating institution (Table # 1). (See also Appendix A) The order of presentation is primarily the order in which the material was received while maintaining institutional and administrative unity:

1. UPR - Río Piedras (under revision)
2. UPR - Mayagüez
3. UPR - Arecibo
4. UPR - Humacao
5. UPR - Bayamón
6. UPR - Ponce
7. UPR - Carolina
8. UPR - Cayey
9. UPR - Aguadilla (documents not received as of 3/7/97)
10. Inter – American University of P.R. - Metropolitan Campus
11. Inter – American University of P.R. - San Germán
12. University of the Sacred Heart
13. Pontifical Catholic University of P.R. (UPC-Ponce) - Ponce
14. Polytechnic University of P.R.

TABLE #1 FIRST-YEAR CURRICULA IN ENGLISH

UNIVERSITY	SEM I	SEM II	CEEB SCORE
UPR-Rio Piedras	ENGL 3003 ENGL 3101* ENGL 3103 ENGL 3011-3012	ENGL 3004 ENGL 3102 * ENGL 3104 (Honors)	480 or less 481 - 580 581 - 680 681 +
UPR-Mayagüez	Pre-basic: ENGL 3101* ENGL 3103 ENGL 3011-3012	ENGL 0066 ENGL 3102* ENGL 3104 (Honors)	469 or less 470 - 569 570 + (Prereq.: 4 or 5 on (CEEB Advanced Placement English Test)
UPR-Arecibo	ENGL 3101 * ENGL 3103	ENGL 3102 * ENGL 3104	579 or less 580 +
UPR-Humacao	Pre-basic: ENGL 3101 ENGL 3103	ENGL 0060 ENGL 3102 ENGL 3104	450 or less 451 - 580 581 +
UPR-Bayamón	ENGL 3101 ENGL 3103	ENGL 3102 ENGL 3104	451 - 580 581 +
UPR-Ponce	ENGL 3101	ENGL 3102	Not indicated
UPR-Carolina	ENGL 3101*	ENGL 3102*	Not indicated
UPR-Cayey	ENGL 3101 ENGL 310*	ENGL 3102 ENGL 3104*	450 - 599 600 +
UPR-Aguadilla	ENGL 3101 ENGL 3103	ENGL 3102 ENGL 3104	200 - 580 581 +
IAU-Metro	Pre-basic: ECSG 1101 ECSG 1201 ECSG 2311*	ENGL 0010 ECSG 1102 ECSG 1202 ECSG 2312*	399 or less 400 - 499 500 - 599 600 +
IAU-San Germán	Pre-basic: ECS 1111 ECS 1113 ECS 2227*	ENGL 0020 ECS 1112 ECS 2214 ECS 2228 *	449 or less 450 - 549 550 - 649 650 +
U.of the Sacred Heart	ENGL 031 ENGL 107 ENGL 113 ENGL 121	ENGL 108 ENGL 114 ENGL 122	474 or less 475 - 574 575 - 644 6450 +

UNIVERSITY	SEM I	SEM II	CEEB SCORE
UPC-Ponce	ENGL 001 ENGL 110 ENGL 114 ENGL 114* - 115* ENGL 213 ENGL 214	(ENGL 114) ENGL 115 Honors/Continental Satisfactory completion of English 114 or direct placement by directors; Satisfactory completion of English 114 or advanced placement;	200 - 399 400 - 499 500 - 699 or administrative placement or satisfactory completion of ENGL 110 Advanced Placement and admission to Honors Program
Polytechnic U.**	ENGL 100 ENGL 110 ENGL 111 ENGL 251	(equiv. to sec. year) 750 - 800	300 - 599 600 - 749 (Pre-req. Engl. 110)

* Students from the Advanced Level Program in English receive 6 credits for these courses (where this information was provided).

** Polytechnic University's courses are based on a trimester schedule.

Procedure

Institutional approaches towards a basic English curriculum, as documented in the respective syllabi, reflected a variety of different formats and scope and emphasis in the curriculum. In some cases, institutions had sent syllabi for second-year courses as well. These were not analyzed here because this study focuses on the first-year curriculum in English. However, all syllabi that were received for this purpose are submitted in Appendix E.

Moreover, not all universities had indicated which courses the students who had passed the College Board Advanced Level Program in English with an acceptable score would receive credit for. After a preliminary analysis of the documents received and subsequent conversations with the respective English department chairpersons, additional information was obtained verbally and included in this analysis.

The procedure used in this investigation is divided into four parts: first, **Analysis** of syllabi at each participating institution; second, **Synthesis** through identification of common elements; third,

Comparative Analysis with the College Board's Advanced Placement Program in English; and finally, outcomes and **Conclusions**.

ANALYSIS OF SYLLABI: Chapter 2 is based on the documents submitted to the College Board for this purpose. It analyzes separately each of the first-year syllabi of the universities/campuses participating in this study. The parameter of this study is determined by the common categories that form part of all or most syllabi. These are:

1. Course Description
2. Achievement Levels
3. Goals and Objectives
4. Content
5. Methodological Observations
6. Textbook(s)

An overview of the terms used and their definitions is given in Table # 2 - Glossary of Terms on p. 8 at the end of the Introduction to the study.

SYNTHESIS: Chapter 3 of this study compares the fourteen first-year curricula in English to identify common ground, i. e., the criteria that characterize the majority of them. Again, the above mentioned (Part I: Analysis) categories were used in this phase of the study.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS WITH THE COLLEGE BOARD ADVANCED LEVEL PROGRAM: Chapter 4 of this study analyzes the curriculum of the College Board's Advanced Level Program in English and compares it to the overall characteristics of the basic curricula common to the majority of the fourteen universities included in this study.

CONCLUSIONS: Chapter 5 provides an overview of the findings of this study and highlights its conclusions. It is hoped that this in-depth investiga-

tion will not only serve as a basis but as a catalyst in the ongoing discussion and efforts on the part of the representatives from the College Board, the universities, and high schools to make the learning experience for today's students as meaningful and enriching as possible.

Furthermore, during or after the planned meeting with the English department chairpersons and deans representing the institutions included in this study, practical problems or other general and/or specific issues related to the Advanced Level Program in English and the universities' basic curricula in English may be raised and discussed. This "intellectual brainstorming" may, in fact, help educators in their endeavor to offer an English curriculum that is both traditional and innovative in its approach, content, and impact on our students and that responds to their specific needs, our society's expectations, and, last but not least, to the latest findings in second language acquisition research in the best possible way.

TABLE # 2 - GLOSSARY OF TERMS

TERM/CONCEPT	EXPLANATION
1) Description	Includes official course title, course number, number of credits, pre- and co-requisites if applicable.
2) Achievement Levels	This term refers to student placement according to their achievement levels in English, evidenced by their scores on the English portion of the College Entrance Examination Board (ESLAT) exam (CEEB scores) and/or other criteria.
3) Goals and Objectives	Due to the variety in format and scope of syllabi among the universities, this category includes the following areas for the purpose of this study: Knowledge Student's knowledge about the language (including grammar, vocabulary, the writing and reading process, literature, literary analysis, etc.) Skills Specific linguistic skills in oral and written communication as well as study skills, library skills, etc. Affective Domain This category includes students' attitude and motivation to increase their (a) knowledge of the English language, (b) ability to analyze human values, their own self worth, and/or (c) understanding of "otherness" through reading and discussing literature and/or other texts.
4) Content	Refers to material covered in the course in general terms.
5) Methodological observations	This category includes all procedures, techniques, suggested activities, guidelines, references to research in the area, etc., that the faculty follows to reach the objectives and to teach the content of the course.
6) Textbook (s)	This term refers to texts used in class and materials that form part of the course.

Chapter 2

Analysis of University Syllabi

1. UPR - Rio Piedras

INTRODUCTION

It is important to note that all courses of the basic curriculum in English at the English Department of the General Studies Faculty are being revised at this point in time as part of a revision process at the bachelor's degree level.

The basic curriculum consists of four one-year course sequences to which the students are assigned on the basis of their score on the English part of the College Board Entrance Examination (ESLAT).

As mentioned earlier, the course sequences are:

CHART # 1

Course(s)	CEEB (ESLAT) Scores
Engl. 3003-3004	480 or less
Engl. 3101-3102	481 - 580
Engl. 3103-3104	581 - 680
Engl. 3011-3012 (Honors' English)	681 +

There is no indication of the number of students in each of these courses per year or which course sequence is taken by the majority of students. Students who obtain a score of 3, 4, or 5 on the **College Board Advanced Level Program Exam** get 6 credits for first-year English courses and take Engl.3011-3012, Honors' English. All courses have a value of three (3) credits each.

In the following, each course sequence is described separately within the parameters established earlier (p. 6) using the categories and terms defined in Table #2 (p. 8). If a category is not addressed in this analysis, it was not indicated in the documents that form the basis for this study.

ENGLISH 3003-3004

DESCRIPTION

No description is provided in the syllabus.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

Students who scored 480 or below on the College Board Entrance Examination in English (ESLAT) take this course sequence.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Both courses include the development of listening/speaking, writing, and reading skills as well as students' knowledge of English grammar. Critical reading skills are developed during the whole year. These goals and objectives are inferred since available documents deal exclusively with the content of the courses.

CONTENT

Both courses develop the same listening/speaking skills as the descriptions for both are identical in this part. They stress vocabulary skills, identifying and summarizing main ideas of spoken messages, making inferences and performing practical tasks.

Writing skills are developed on the sentence level at first: simple and compound sentences during the first semester and compound to complex sentences during the second. From that level, the students progress to writing longer units: logical and well-structured paragraphs during the first semester and different kinds of paragraphs during the second.

Reading skills are developed with short reading selections during the first semester and with short stories during the second semester. Students are guided to analyze the reading material at the literal, interpretive as well as critical levels. The elements of the short story are added during the second semester.

Grammar seems to be primarily developed within the context of writing since it is listed in that category. Grammatical items practiced throughout the 3003-3004 sequence include basic English grammar such as the use of verb tenses (simple present, past, and future, present progressive [both semesters], past progressive and the perfect tenses) in affirmative and negative statements as well as questions; transitional devices; modifiers; nouns and adjectives. There is no indication as to how grammar is incorporated and practiced in the overall course.

TEXTBOOK(S)

Textbooks are not mentioned in the syllabi for either course. Therefore, the courses cannot be analyzed in that respect.

ENGLISH 3101-3102

DESCRIPTION

According to the six-paragraph description of the course sequence English 3101-3102, basic analytical reading skills are developed through the study of the content and form of the essay during the first semester and the short story during the second semester. Writing skills, vocabulary as well as grammar are developed during the whole year. Outside readings such as non-fiction during the first semester and novels in the second semester are encouraged. In order to improve their communication ability in reading, writing, and conversational English, the syllabus recommends that students participate in additional non-credit workshops.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

This course is designed for students who scored between 481 and 580 on the College Board Entrance Examination in English (ESLAT). (See also Chart # 1 in the Introduction to UPR-Rio Piedras)

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The list of general and specific objectives covers both courses, differing only in the type of readings selected for the first semester and the second semester (the essay and the short story, respectively). Overall, reading and writing skills are developed and vocabulary and grammatical knowledge expanded during the two-semester sequence. Moreover, students develop "critical competence" (Syllabus) through the interpretation and analysis of a variety of reading selections.

CONTENT

It is interesting to note that the sequence in which the content of the courses is presented mentions the area of Grammar first, followed by Writing, Vocabulary, and Reading. Only in Reading is the content stated separately for each semester. However, this sequence does not necessarily reflect a chronological order or an emphasis of one area over the other.

The Grammar component includes elements such as subject and predicate as parts of the sentence; verb tenses (simple present, past and future; present and past progressive; present and past perfect) in affirmative and negative statements as well as in questions; subjective, objective, and adverbial complements; prepositional phrases; and parts of speech (nouns, pronouns, modifiers). The syllabus does not indicate which elements are covered in the first semester and which are dealt with in the second semester.

In addition to writing sentences and different kinds of paragraphs, the students also develop short essays using the narrative, descriptive, expository, and argumentative types of writing. Although not expressly stated, it is assumed that essay writing is developed during the second semester.

The area of reading seems to be the major emphasis in both courses of this one-year sequence. During the first semester students read, discuss, and analyze essays through identifying main idea(s), facts and details, distinguishing between fact and opinion and recognizing the author's purpose. They also discuss specific functions of paragraphs within an essay (introductory, developmental, transitional, summary, and concluding), various types of paragraph organization (chronological, spatial, logical, and climactic) and developmental patterns (examples, illustration, definition, cause and effect, reasons, facts and details, repetition and restatement, comparison and contrast). Moreover, students are guided to recognize and distinguish among ways to relate ideas (pronouns, transitions, punctuation, subordination and coordination) and to learn about literary devices, such as sensory imagery, figurative language, tone, irony, and paradox.

Subsequently, during the second semester, these reading skills are expanded through the critical analysis of the elements of the short story (structure, plot, setting, conflicts, characters, point of view, mood, theme) as well as of the author's use of literary devices and style.

TEXTBOOK(S)

Specific textbooks are not mentioned, but from the content and objectives it is clear that a collection of essays is probably used during the first semester, followed by a collection of short stories during the second half of the year. However, the level of difficulty cannot be established without more concrete indication of the textbooks used in this sequence. Outside reading is encouraged during both semesters.

ENGLISH 3103-3104 (INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH)

DESCRIPTION

This intermediate English course sequence is based primarily on the analysis of three literary genres: the essay (study of content and form) during the first semester and the short story and poetry (teaching of drama is encouraged but optional) during the second. Although composition is only mentioned in the description of the first semester course, the objectives list Writing Objectives for the one-year sequence. Supplementary reading in the genres taught in each course is required throughout the year.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

Students who scored between 581 and 680 on the College Board Entrance Examination in English (ESLAT) take this course sequence.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Objectives for this one-year course sequence include the teaching of Writing, The Essay, The Short Story, and Poetry. An analysis of the detailed objectives outlined in the syllabus indicate that the students' ability in English as a second language is developed through a literary and critical analysis of essays, short stories, and poetry and an emphasis on writing paragraphs and compositions (250-400 words).

Writing is seen as a tool for communication in general and as a useful means for learning and professional as well as personal expression in particular. Therefore, students are guided

To acquire proficiency in the written use of English as a second language [and]

To organize and express ideas in written form with increasing degrees of clarity, precision, coherence, and logic.
(Syllabus, p. 3)

Thus, on the basis of personal experience, factual evidence and/or literature, the students write different types of paragraphs (exposition, description, narration, argumentation) that are well-structured (limiting the subject, including topic sentences, providing supporting evidence, following sequential order, drawing conclusions) and compositions (250 - 400 words). Effective strategies of outlining and formulating thesis statements that direct the essay are practiced. The teaching of basic grammatical elements is included.

Students discuss and analyze essays in order to (a) comprehend the writer's message and the central theme of the essay, (b) appreciate the essay as literature (writer's pattern, writer's style, writer's tone and imagery), and (c) evaluate it in terms of content and style.

The discussion of the short story during the second semester is primarily guided by a critical introduction to and analysis of this particular genre and includes the analysis of the elements of the short story (setting, plot, point of view, characters) as well as the organizational techniques, tone, poetic devices, and unity as used by the author. The students are also guided in their evaluation of the quality or success of the story in terms of the author's purpose, and the final effect of the story on the reader.

In addition to the short story, poetry is read during the second semester. The content of a poem is analyzed through the discussion of the central idea or feeling and poetic diction in relation to content, suggestiveness, and economy by focusing on the use of vocabulary (denotation, connotation), sensory imagery, figurative language, symbolism and allegory as well as musical devices (alliteration, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia, euphony, cacophony), rhyme and meter and their contribution to the overall development of the poem.

The affective domain is mentioned in connection with the discussion of poetry when the syllabus states as one of the general objectives of the second semester course "To enjoy poetry by relating it to personal experience" (Syllabus, p. 12). Critical abilities are developed during both semesters.

TEXTBOOK(S)

The list of possible textbooks includes a variety of traditional grammar handbooks and composition books as well as prose readers during the first semester. During the second semester, the emphasis is on literature (including writing about literature) with a literary anthology included in the list. In both courses outside reading is recommended which goes beyond the genres discussed in class and includes novels and autobiographies.

ENGLISH 3011-3012 (HONORS)

DESCRIPTION

Literary genres form the basis of this course sequence. The short story, the novelette, and the novel are discussed during the first semester and poetry and drama during the second.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

Students who score 681 or higher on the College Board Entrance Examination in English (ESLAT) take this course sequence. More specifically, it is directed toward students who meet two general requirements: (1) high standards of proficiency in most academic subjects and (2) mastery, or near mastery, of spoken and written English. The emphasis is on the excellent student, literally the student who loves reading and learning, rather than on the mere native speaker of English. (Syllabus, p. 1)

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Overall, the courses foster in-depth reading of the text and aim "to help the students become mature readers, individuals who understand and love good literature." (Syllabus, p. 1)

Students are introduced to the study, analysis, and evaluation of British and American literature and the language of literary criticism and discussion. During both courses, the students refine their oral and written communication skills and develop the

capacity for independent critical thinking and judgment.

In the affective domain, the course sequence foster[s] the enjoyment of literature in the students . . . [and] promote[s] cross-cultural awareness and international understanding . . . [and] help[s] the students to develop their own value system through heightened awareness of the moral comments presented in literary texts . . . [and] an interest in and appreciation of the aesthetic values in literary works. (Syllabus, p. 1)

It is obvious that this is the most ambitious course sequence of all, both in terms of the cognitive as well as the affective domain.

CONTENT

The syllabus clarifies the content of the sequence by stating what this course is NOT:

It is not a survey course of British or American literature. It is not a period course (i.e., Medieval, Elizabethan, Victorian, or Modern). It is not a course which focuses on one particular genre only. (Syllabus, p. 2)

The syllabus also outlines the grading system.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Faculty members teaching these courses use the analytic - contextual approach advocated by the New School of Criticism which sees the text as the focus of analysis and fosters critical thinking and close reading of the texts.

TEXTBOOK(S)

An anthology of representative British and American authors is used. Texts have been changed at least every three years to allow “us to enrich our curriculum by adding and/or changing works in our list of readings”. (Syllabus, p. 3)

2. UPR - Mayagüez

INTRODUCTION

The basic curriculum at UPR-Mayaguez consists of four levels. Pre-basic English (Engl. 0066) is a one-semester course, whereas all other levels consist of two-semester sequences.

Students are assigned to the different level courses on the basis of their scores on the College Board Advanced Placement Test scores as well as the results of the College Board Entrance Examination in English (ESLAT) if the student had not taken the Advanced Placement Exam. Students with a score of 4 or 5 on the Advanced Placement Test are granted six credits for Basic English I and II (ENGL. 3101 and 3102) and take the Honors course sequence.

As mentioned earlier, the course sequences are:

CHART # 2

Course(s)	Adv.Placement	CEEB (ESLAT)
English 0066 (Pre-basic)	0, 1, or 2 and	0-469
English 3101-3102	0, 1, or 2 and	470-569
English 3103-3104	0, 1, or 2 and	570 +
English 3011-3012	3	NA
English 3011-3012 (Honors)	4, 5	NA

All courses have a three-credit value.

ENGLISH 0066 (PRE-BASIC ENGLISH)

DESCRIPTION

According to the general description provided in the syllabus, Pre-basic English prepares the students to use English outside the classroom in everyday life situations and in subsequent English courses. The syllabus states

The course works on listening, speaking, reading, writing, vocabulary, and grammar; special emphasis is on developing students' confidence and flexibility in speaking and reading and on increasing their vocabulary for production and recognition. (Syllabus, p. 1)

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See explanations and Chart #2 in the Introduction to the curriculum of UPR-Mayaguez.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Through this course the students develop basic listening skills (phonemic distinctions, minimal pairs with and without context, simple oral instructions, general idea of and specific details in simple dialogues, descriptions, explanations, and narratives without text) and speaking skills (participation in class and small group discussions, greetings, introductions, etc.). Reading skills are enhanced through reading short selections on general topics and acquiring specific reading strategies, such as skimming and guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words in context. Writing skills stress the complete sentence and simple descriptive and narrative paragraphs (5-8 sentences) related to the conversations or reading selections. Moreover, the students increase their vocabulary to 800 basic words (500 for production) and about 300 more specialized words (150 for production) from their conversations and readings.

A detailed list of basic grammar including word order, noun phrases, parts of speech, verb tenses, relative clauses forms part of the syllabus and is divided into production and comprehension of certain grammatical elements.

Concerning the affective domain, the syllabus states that "Students will develop a positive attitude toward English, seeing it as an opportunity as well

as a challenge." (Syllabus, p. 4) Since mistakes are regarded as natural and helpful, the students will take risks and, therefore, get more practice outside the classroom.

CONTENT

This course emphasizes fluency in oral communication over grammatical accuracy. Student-initiated oral interaction is encouraged.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Oral communication and fluency are emphasized. A thematic approach allows the student to connect the new material to his/her background knowledge, thus fostering learning (according to the cognitive approach in schema theory). Vocabulary is used orally at first and reinforced through reading. Although grammatical structures are presented in class and practiced orally as well as through reading, only minimal class time is spent on grammar according to the syllabus.

TEXTBOOK(S)

The required textbooks reflect the strong emphasis of the development of oral communication and reading skills. These textbooks are:

1. Patricia A. Dunkel & Christine G. Gorder. (1987). *Start with Listening*, published by Heinle & Heinle;
2. Jann Huizenga & Maria Thomas-Ruzic. (1992). *All Talk*, published by Heinle and Heinle;
3. Elaine Kim & Pamela Hartmann. (1990). *Interactions I: A Reading Skills Book*, published by Heinle & Heinle.

A grammar book is recommended, primarily for independent student use.

ENGLISH 3101-3102 (BASIC ENGLISH)

DESCRIPTION

According to the catalog description, this course sequence addresses the students' "immediate needs" (Syllabus, p. 1) in English. It is designed to develop all four language skills to provide the stu-

dent with a “command of the fundamental structure of the English language.” (ibid.) The three hours of classroom instruction are supplemented by work in the language laboratory and additional help is available for students with an insufficient background in English.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See explanation and Chart # 2 in the Introduction to the curriculum at UPR-Mayagüez.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Stated goals for both courses are related to language skills as well as study skills and students’ motivation. The language skills aim to increase not only the students’ proficiency in English in all four areas (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) but also their “awareness of and sensitivity to social and cultural information conveyed in the texts” (Syllabus, p. 2).

Specific objectives are listed separately for each semester, but they vary only minimally. With almost identical wording, it is obvious that the 3101-3102 sequence is intricately connected. The objectives of both semesters are based on the notional-functional curriculum theory and the communicative approach. Grammatical structures are practiced within communicative functions.

Whereas during both semesters, grammatical structures include basic English grammar elements (tenses in affirmative and negative statements as well as questions, modal auxiliaries, adjective comparison, relative clauses, etc.), more advanced grammatical patterns are added during the second semester (e. g., real and unreal conditions).

Through fiction and non-fiction, the students’ reading ability is developed during this one-year course sequence to a level that will allow them not only to succeed in college but also to “read English comfortably for practical non-academic purposes and for pleasure.” (p. 4) Specific reading skills (such as skimming, scanning, guessing meaning through context) as well as reading strategies (e. g. using background information, prediction, inference) are practiced in both semesters.

The development of writing is included in the form of journal writing (more topic-oriented during the

second semester) and paragraph writing in both semesters.

With regard to the affective domain, the syllabus mentions students’ motivation within its Goal statement and aims in particular “to overcome students’ affective barriers to successful language learning . . . [and] to increase students’ motivation to acquire English and take more responsibility for their own success.” (p. 2)

CONTENT

This course sequence addresses a variety of students’ needs in terms of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the English language within the context of communicative language learning. It is designed to enable the student to function in an academic environment in which the English language is important for success in his or her studies.

The time distribution clearly reflects the oral language skill oriented character of this course sequence and the emphasis on reading comprehension. Work on oral language skills takes up 39 out of 45 hours plus one hour of oral evaluation and includes the discussion of readings.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

The theoretical framework of this course syllabus is mainly the Second Language Acquisition Theory that draws a clear distinction between acquisition and learning of a second language. (Stephen Krashen’s Creative Construction Theory in Lightbown & Spada 1993, pp.26-29)

To promote an environment where second language acquisition can take place, students are exposed to and use the second language in the ESL classroom. This language environment is further enhanced through the communicative approach to second language instruction and the oral discussion approach to develop reading comprehension. The notional-functional syllabus guides the development of listening and speaking skills, and grammar elements are taught through language functions and reading texts.

The twelve-page syllabus of the course sequence provides the teacher with detailed information about the content and the emphasis of the course sequence as well as with guidelines concerning the methodology to be used.

ENGLISH 3103-3104 (INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH)

DESCRIPTION

The Catalog description of the ENGL 3103-04 course sequence reads as follows:

Analysis of selected readings, such as essays, fiction, poetry, or drama, and practice in writing compositions with attention given as needed to grammar and idiomatic expression (Syllabus, p.1).

Although the description seems to indicate a literature course rather than a language course, the course objectives clearly describe a language skills course that aims to develop the students' writing skills as well.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See explanations and Chart # 2 in the Introduction to the curriculum at UPR-Mayagüez.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall goal for both courses is the development of students' writing ability. Writing is taught as a process (with its emphasis on prewriting, drafting, and multiple revisions, including peer revision) and evaluated holistically.

Reading is seen as a mirror reflection of writing "involving the same rhetorical situation" (Syllabus, p. 3), and is, therefore, treated as instrumental to help students improve their own writing.

Developing writing and reading skills is given priority over listening and speaking. Grammar is taught through students' writing. Although the specific objectives are listed separately for each of the two courses, they are mostly identical. The major difference between them is that the second course is more oriented towards literature. Vocabulary skills are developed in context in both semesters.

During the second semester, the readings include primarily although not exclusively fiction, drama, and poetry. Students' essays are mainly "reactions to and an analysis of works of literature" (Syllabus, p. 4).

CONTENT

This language – oriented course sequence emphasizes the development of the students' writing skills through the process approach and reading. The language element is combined with the analysis of literary works (fiction, drama, and poetry) and the writing of essays about literature during the second semester. Some reading skills, such as scanning, identification of main ideas, inferences, etc., are introduced during the first semester. Whereas students concentrate on the literal level of comprehension during the first semester, they move on to the inferential level of comprehension during the second.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

There are two outstanding features of this syllabus with regard to methodological observations that should be mentioned at this point: the emphasis on (a) teaching writing as a process and (b) small group work for peer revision of students' own writing and discussion of readings. Moreover, the syllabus states that grammar should be taught "incidentally" (when the need arises) through writing. Journal writing is encouraged as it seems to help improve students' writing through generating and clarifying ideas. The holistic evaluation procedure is recommended over the traditional which is primarily based on grammar and mechanics.

TEXTBOOK(S)

In both courses, an anthology of readings is used, but the syllabus does not specify the titles; outside reading of a book-length work is optional. Moreover, a grammar handbook, a dictionary and Roget's Thesaurus are recommended.

ENGLISH 3011-3012 (HONORS)

DESCRIPTION

ENGL 3011 and ENGL 3012 (Honors English) is a sequence of two three-credit courses which is open only to students who have scored 4 or 5 on the College Board Advanced Placement Examination (see Chart # 2 in the Introduction to UPR-Mayagüez). Since these students have, in fact, received six credits for first-year English through the Advanced Placement Examination, this course actually represents a second-year course.

The syllabus (Spring, 1994) offers two course descriptions: one taken from the UPR-Mayagüez Campus Undergraduate Bulletin of Information 1993-94 (p. 91) and a recommended description which is more specific and reflects the course objectives more precisely. Since the recommended description is more informative, it is quoted here:

Honors English is taken in place of INGL. 3201-3202 by students who show advanced ability in English. It consists of analysis of selected readings in the various literary genres and the composition of essays to foster critical thinking; to improve critical, cultural, and functional literacy; and to nourish intellectual, personal, social, and moral growth and development. (Syllabus, p. 1)

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See explanations and Chart # 2 in the Introduction to the curriculum of UPR-Mayagüez Campus.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The heart of this course sequence is clearly literature, and it is through literary works that students' critical thinking and metacognitive abilities, their cultural awareness as well as language skills, primarily writing and reading, are developed.

Within the conceptual framework and the teaching model first outlined at the Dartmouth Conference of 1966 and supported by the professional organizations in English education, the general goals are to

1. Foster critical thinking
2. Improve literacy
3. Nurture human growth and development

The "long term goal [of this course sequence] is to cultivate an appreciation for the reading of literature to encourage a life-long habit of reading." (Syllabus, p. 6). As can be observed, it is not the students' immediate attitude towards English, nor is it the instrumental use of the language that is at the core of this course sequence, but an enrichment and development of the student as a whole person.

CONTENT

Honors English primarily aims at involving the students actively in reading literature, responding to the written text (Reader response theory), and communicating their ideas and reactions through discussing literary works and writing about them. The writing process approach is used to develop writing skills.

Both courses are identical in their goals and objectives, and the second semester course is clearly a continuation of the first one and an integral part of it. The actual content of each of the courses varies only in the selection of the literary works and the essay topics students write about.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

The syllabus provides a detailed overview of the theoretical framework and methodological approach used in this sequence to reach its goals and objectives. English is taught as a means of enriching the students' lives and develop their critical thinking skills (through literature) within the parameters outlined by the Puerto Rico Department of Education. Active classroom participation on the part of the students is encouraged through different kinds of student presentations, group discussions, etc. Obviously, the lecture method has no place in this type of approach.

A bibliography on the theory and methodology that form the basis for Honors English 3011-3012 is part of the syllabus.

TEXTBOOKS

The anthology *Literature: An Introduction to Reading and Writing*, edited by Edgar V. Roberts and Henry E. Jacobs (Prentice Hall, 1992) underscores the literature-based character of the course sequence. A list of short stories, poems, plays, and a novel is provided for each semester, and writing assignments are specified per semester as well. Again, the difference between the two courses is in the complexity of the texts discussed and the development of more advanced skills and abilities at a more advanced level during the second semester.

3. UPR - Arecibo

INTRODUCTION

The syllabi received from the UPR-Arecibo Campus for the first-year English curricula are precise and clear. Each one is two pages long and provides an overview of the course. They are also among the most updated that we received: Basic English 3101 and Intermediate English 3103 (both first semester courses) are 1996/97 versions; Basic English 3102 (second semester) is a 1995/96 version.

Students are assigned to Basic or Intermediate English according to their scores on the English portion of the College Board Entrance Examination (ESLAT). The following chart summarizes placement criteria for this UPR campus:

CHART # 3

Course(s)	CEEB (ESLAT) Scores
ENGL 3101-02 Basic English	579 or less
ENGL 3103-04 Intermediate English	580 +

All courses have a three-credit value.

ENGLISH 3101-3102 (BASIC ENGLISH)

DESCRIPTION

The descriptions of these two courses clearly indicate that they form a one-year sequence. The first semester reads as follows:

This course is designed to reinforce the basic skills and structures of the English language. The grammatical content is reinforced through reading and writing activities. (Syllabus, 1996/97, p. 1)

The second semester syllabus specifies that it is “the second part of a two-part course dealing with the grammar, writing and reading of standard English.” (ibid.)

Both courses require one additional hour of work per week in the language laboratory where primarily listening and speaking skills are practiced.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See explanations and Chart # 3 in the Introduction to the curriculum of the UPR-Arecibo Campus.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Both syllabi clearly indicate the language skills oriented character of this course sequence where all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) are developed during both semesters. There is no indication in either syllabus whether there is any emphasis on the development of one skill over another although reading activities are mentioned before writing activities in the course description of Engl. 3101, and the reverse is true for the second semester. Yet, this “surface technicality” is not sufficient to assume that the development of reading skills is emphasized during the first semester, and the development of writing skills during the second.

The two courses are sequential in character. The specific objectives are almost identical and are probably taken to a more advanced and complex level during the second semester. They include the development of oral skills (listening-speaking), reading and writing abilities (using the process approach to writing) as well as the development of the students’ command of structure and basic grammar elements, such as basic word order in affirmative and negative statements as well as questions, parts of speech, basic verb tenses, etc.

The overall purpose of this course sequence is the development of the students’ general ability to use the English language correctly in academic and real life situations in the future. The affective domain is not mentioned.

CONTENT

It can be observed that this course sequence is geared towards developing students’ communicative skills orally and in writing. The discussion or analysis of literary works is not mentioned in the syllabi, nor do the textbooks include different literary genres. The textbooks in both courses (see below)

show the integrated teaching of reading and writing skills and reflect a variety of multicultural topics.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Although not mentioned expressly in the syllabi, the approach to developing communicative skills is probably through cooperative learning and involving students in oral activities and class discussion. Writing is developed through readings and the process approach. The writing process guides students from using different techniques to generate ideas to writing their first draft; this phase is followed by multiple revisions and, finally, editing the composition.

The use of portfolios to evaluate students' progress in writing is optional.

TEXTBOOK(S)

In both courses the series *Weaving it Together* by Milada Broukal, 1996, (Heinle & Heinle) is used: Book 4 in the first semester and Book 3 in the second. No explanation is given for the reversal of assigning Book 4 to a first semester course and Book 3 to the second part of the course sequence. However, the first semester syllabus (1996/97) may indicate a recent change which is not yet reflected in the "older" second semester syllabus (1995/96).

Additional textbooks are adopted for the development of writing: *From Paragraph to Essay* by Milada Broukal, 1996 (Prentice Hall) for the first semester and *You're in Charge* by Gro Frydenberg and Cynthia Boardman, 1990 (Addison-Wesley). Both publications use the process and peer revision approach to writing.

Again, the type of dictionary indicated in each syllabus shows a reversal of the general practice: a monolingual (English-English) dictionary in Engl. 3101 and a bilingual one (Spanish/English) in the second semester (Engl. 3102).

ENGLISH 3103-3104 (INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH)

Two separate syllabi are provided for this course sequence with the first semester course more recent than the second one, 1996/97 and 1995/95 respectively. Again, they clearly indicate their sequential character. The syllabi are quite similar to the previ-

ously analyzed Engl. 3101-3102 sequence (Basic English), as they develop oral and written communication skills through reading and speaking. Grammar is part of the second semester course description and mentioned in the objectives of the first semester. The emphasis at this level is on writing through the process approach as well as critical reading and thinking skills.

DESCRIPTION

Both courses are three-credit courses and neither one requires additional work in the language laboratory.

According to the description of **Engl. 3103**, the course is designed for students with an average to good command of the English language. The main objective is to help students acquire effective oral and written communication skills. Special attention is given to the development of critical reading and thinking skills through the analysis of essays and the writing of compositions. (Syllabus, 1996/97, p. 1)

English 3103 is a three-credit semester course with no additional work in the language laboratory.

English 3104 is the continuation of Engl. 3103 and includes an "analysis of selected readings in fiction and nonfiction, and practice in writing with attention given to grammar and idiomatic expressions." (Syllabus, p. 1)

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See explanation and Chart # 3 in the Introduction to the curriculum at the UPR-Arecibo.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the English 3103-3104 course sequence, Intermediate English, is to improve the students' reading comprehension ability, their critical thinking skills and, most important, their writing skills and understanding of writing as a process.

Oral communication and critical reading skills, as well as the development of writing, form part of both courses. The difference between the two is the complexity of the tasks and the nature of the readings. During the second semester, the student is exposed to fiction and nonfiction (short stories and essays). Although grammar is only specified in the objec-

tives of the first semester (elements of a complete sentence, pronoun and subject-verb agreement), it must form part of the second semester, too, because no course that develops students' writing in English as a second language can ignore that area.

In Engl. 3103, the two goals in the affective domain aim to "motivate students to appreciate [a] the essay as a literary genre [and] [b] the importance of writing in their chosen careers and in life in general." (Engl. 3103 Syllabus, p. 1) Engl. 3104 aims to "Increase students' appreciation of literature" (Syllabus 3104, p. 1) through the analysis of various pieces of literature (essays and short stories).

CONTENT

The emphasis of English 3103-3104 is on the development of language skills, primarily on writing, through the development of oral communication and critical reading skills as well as the process approach to writing. Critical thinking skills are developed throughout the two-semester sequence.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Concerning the methodology used in this course, only the teaching of writing as a process and the emphasis on oral communication skills, probably through communicative learning practices, are mentioned.

For the goal of developing critical reading ability and thinking skills during the two semesters, the syllabi do not indicate as to how this will be accomplished and which conceptual framework will form the basis for this component of the course sequence.

TEXTBOOKS

According to the Engl. 3103 syllabus, the textbook of that course is *Strategies for Successful Writing* by Hart Reinking and Von Der Osten, no year or edition is indicated (Prentice Hall). A bilingual dictionary and a thesaurus are additional materials required in this course.

In English 3104 the textbook *Fiction: An Introduction to Reading and Writing* by Edgar V. Roberts and Henry E. Jacobs, (1992, Prentice Hall) indicates the move towards literature and its analysis.

4. UPR - Humacao

INTRODUCTION

The syllabi submitted for Pre-Basic English 0060, Basic English 3101-3102 and Intermediate English 3103-3104 clearly show the emphasis on the development of language skills rather than literary analysis and/or appreciation of literature at all levels.

Students are assigned to Pre-basic, Basic or Intermediate English according to their scores on the English section of the College Board Entrance Examination (ESLAT). The following Chart # 4 summarizes placement criteria for the UPR-Humacao Campus:

CHART # 4

Course(s)	CEEB (ESLAT) Scores
ENGL. 0060 (Pre-basic English for Students of the Supplementary Educational Services Program)	450 or less
ENGL. 3101-3102 (Basic English I+II)	451 - 580
ENGL. 3103-3104 (Intermed. Engl. I+II)	581 +

Each course has a value of three credits.

It is interesting to note that the UPR-Humacao Campus informed the College Board (November 7, 1996) that 83% of all entering students in August 1996/97 were registered in Basic English 3101 and had thus obtained scores between 451 and 580 on the CEEB section in English. It was the only campus that reported specifically on the level that the majority of their entering students were placed.

ENGLISH 0060 (PRE-BASIC)

DESCRIPTION

This pre-basic course is designed to meet the specific needs of students from The Supplementary Educational Services Program. Not only are the

students' English language skills addressed in this course but also their study skills and general attitudes towards learning. A monumental, albeit necessary undertaking indeed!

The description reads as follows:

This course has been designed to develop the students' listening, oral, reading and writing skills in the English language necessary to perform successfully in subsequent English courses. It also aims to modify the students' attitudes towards the learning process by giving them new strategies that will enable them to become independent and self-motivated learners. (Syllabus, p. 1)

This description clearly reflects that the course Engl. 0060 serves a specific student population lacking not only ESL skills, but the necessary habits and motivation to succeed in higher education.

The course is a three-credit course but meets four hours per week.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See explanations and Chart # 4 in the Introduction to the curriculum of the UPR-Humacao Campus.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals include the ability to communicate both orally (e.g., "express opinions, feelings, and experiences in a natural and spontaneous manner" [Syllabus, p. 1]) and in written form (essays) in English and to read "stories and newspaper articles for enjoyment and comprehension." (Syllabus, pp.1-2)

Specific objectives cover a list of situations and examples to develop listening and speaking as well as reading and writing and study skills. Grammar elements are included as part of the category of Writing. The specific activities that develop the various skills addressed in this course reveal the students' direct and active involvement in the classroom.

The **affective domain** plays a central part in the syllabus. At the end of the course, "the students will have increased their self-esteem, appreciate their culture as well as others, and respect the opinion of others." (Syllabus, p. 2)

CONTENT

The syllabus for English 0060 clearly reflects a comprehensive course that focuses on the students' development of English as a second language skills in oral and written communication as well as their study skills to become independent learners. Students are encouraged to "discover the learning techniques which correspond to their own learning style." (Syllabus, p. 2) It is interesting to note that these study skills are developed through using a language that they are learning at the same time.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Suggested activities for each of the objectives indicate the students' active involvement and participation in class. Students seem to be allowed a "silent period" (Stephen Krashen) before verbal responses are expected from them. Group work and interaction among peers are emphasized as classroom techniques. The SQ3R method for developing study skills is recommended.

TEXTBOOK(S)

The two textbooks used reflect the very basic but comprehensive character of this course: *Idea Exchange I* by Linda L. Blanton (Newbury House, 1988) and *Stories From Latin America* by Larry Myers (Prentice Hall, 1987).

ENGLISH 3101-3102 (BASIC ENGLISH I, II)

DESCRIPTION

First and second semester course descriptions indicate the sequential character of Basic English I and II which emphasize oral and written communication skills but also include the development of critical thinking skills through the discussion of reading material and writing. Moreover, these courses encourage and help "the students become independent learners, better thinkers and effective communicators." (Both syllabi, p. 1)

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Identical General Objectives underscore the integral character of both courses and include the development of language skills as well as "the students'

awareness of self-image, need to relate to others, and need to develop or clarify their values.” (Syllabi, p. 1) They also aim to “Increase students’ proficiency in critical thinking skills (making and defending value judgments) and in creative thinking (selecting and synthesizing to solve problems).” (Syllabi, p. 1)

Specific objectives developed and practiced during the first semester are reinforced and taken further during the second. Whereas the emphasis in writing during the first semester is primarily on short paragraphs, the second semester guides the students to write a short, well-organized essay.

The **affective domain** indicates that the two-semester sequence aims to help the student to “be a better and more feeling human being; recognize the values of his/her culture and of other cultures; have more respect for himself/herself and for others; ... have increased his/her self-esteem.” (Syllabi, p. 1).

CONTENT

This course sequence is primarily oriented towards developing the students’ oral and written communication skills while at the same time increasing their self image, value system, and critical reading and thinking skills.

TEXTBOOK(S)

Textbooks are not specified in either of the syllabi. Instead, both syllabi state that selections are chosen from “a current text supplemented by materials chosen by the teacher and students.” (English 3101 and 3102 syllabi, p. 6 and 5, respectively)

ENGLISH 3103-3104 (INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH I & II)

DESCRIPTION

There is only one syllabus for the two-semester English 3103-3104 sequence, and the difference between the two courses is not clear. The syllabus refers to “the course” for the English 3103-3104 sequence, and the same textbook is used in both without any indication as to the selection and sequencing of the reading material for each course. It is assumed that the students are taken to a higher

level of achievement within the same overall course description. The number of credits is not specified.

According to the course description “Oral and written communication is based on the reading and analysis of the essay.” (Syllabus, p. 1)

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See explanations and Chart # 4 in the Introduction to the curriculum of the UPR-Humacao Campus.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

According to the syllabus “intensive reading and analysis of the essay” (p. 1) will help the students “improve their skills ... [and] their ability to write well-developed paragraphs, ... further develop their oral proficiency ... [and] social awareness.” (ibid.). Moreover, the course sequence will “develop social awareness and the ability to express their reactions toward current world as well as local issues and problems.” (ibid.) Thus, the course aims to increase the students’ oral and written skills and widen their view of the world.

CONTENT

Oral and written communication skills are developed through reading and analyzing short stories and essays during this two-semester sequence.

TEXTBOOK(S)

The *McMillan Reader* is used as a textbook. No bibliographical details are provided.

5. UPR - Bayamón

INTRODUCTION

The UPR-Bayamón Campus offers two levels of English for entering freshman students: Basic English I and II and Intermediate English I and II. Students are placed according to their scores on the English section of the College Board Entrance Examination (ESLAT) with a cut-off point at 580. Whereas the basic level is an intensive two-semester sequence in language skills which are reinforced in a laboratory, the intermediate

level combines the reading and analysis of literary works, such as essays, fiction, poetry, or drama with the development of language skills, particularly writing.

The following Chart # 5 summarizes placement criteria for the UPR-Bayamón Campus:

Chart # 5

Course(s)	CEEB (ESLAT) Scores
ENGL 3101-3102 (Basic English I+II)	451 - 580
ENGL 3103-3104 (Intermediate English I+II)	581 +

All courses have a three-credit value each.

ENGLISH 3101-3102 **(Basic English I, II)**

DESCRIPTION

The descriptions for both courses are succinct and clear. The first semester course description reads as follows:

An intensive course in grammar, sentence writing, reading comprehension, vocabulary building, conversation and pronunciation. Structures studied in class are reinforced in the language laboratory. (Syllabus, p. 1)

The second semester course description is a continuation of English 3101.

The general objectives are identical for each of the two courses and include oral communication skills (listening and speaking), knowledge of grammatical structures in context, and reading comprehension skills. The difference between the two courses lies in the material used and the complexity of the tasks the students have to perform.

The specific objectives listed for each course show the particular emphasis. During the first semester, basic grammar elements (such as the form and function of the verbs to be and to have, the use of present progressive and simple present tenses in affirmative

and negative statements as well as questions, modal auxiliaries, prepositions, frequency adverbs, nouns, determiners, possessive adjectives and pronouns) are emphasized and continued to be practiced during the second semester. The use of the future, past, and present perfect tenses as well as adjectives and the rest of modal auxiliaries and sentence patterns are included in the second semester syllabus.

Specific reading skills (identifying main ideas and supporting details and distinguishing between fact and opinion) are also introduced during the first semester. They are further developed during the second semester and complemented by specific reading strategies (skimming, scanning, SQ3R) and library skills.

Writing skills are listed during the first semester, but not expressly mentioned during the second. However, it can be argued that Outlining and Summarizing (included in the syllabus under Reading) practice writing as well, even if they are primarily included as reading strategies.

CONTENT

Basic English 3101-3102 is an intensive course sequence with a clear emphasis on grammar and designed to develop students' basic skills in English as their second language. According to the Time Distribution provided in the syllabus for each of the two courses, the teaching and practicing of grammar takes up more than half of the total class time each semester (26 out of 45 hours during the first and 24 out of 45 hours during the second semester). However, the syllabus also shows that grammar is definitely embedded in context and not taught in isolation. During the second semester, the development of reading skills and strategies take up the other half of total class time.

TEXTBOOK(S)

A Reader and a grammar book are the required texts for students in both semesters. There are recommended textbooks but apparently professors can also choose their own texts keeping in mind the objectives of the courses.

Both courses include a list of references: for teachers and students during the first semester and for teachers only during the second semester.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Except for Instructor References and the time distribution at the end of each syllabus, there are no indications of the methodological approach or the conceptual framework underlying this course sequence.

Among the references mentioned in the first semester syllabus, is Patsy Lightbown and Nina Spada's 1993 publication *How Languages Are Learned*. It is interesting to note that these second language acquisition researchers see a clear connection between first language and second language acquisition processes and draw conclusions for the second language classroom. However, it would go beyond the scope of this study to embark on a discussion of Second Language Acquisition Theory.

ENGLISH 3103-3104 (Intermediate English I, II)

DESCRIPTION

The descriptions for both courses are identical except that the second semester mentions the first semester course as a pre-requisite. This course sequence develops language through the analysis of literary works. The description reads as follows:

Analysis of selected readings, such as essays, fiction, poetry, or drama, and practice in writing with attention given as needed to grammar and idiomatic expressions. (Syllabus, p.1)

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See explanations and Chart # 5 in the Introduction to the curriculum of the UPR-Bayamón Campus.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The above description seems to indicate a two-semester sequence that is primarily focused on the discussion and analysis of literary genres both orally and in written form. However, the rest of the syllabus does not support this assumption.

Only the first-semester course syllabus lists objectives. Maybe we can assume that they are the same for the second semester since the latter is a continuation of the first, and both courses share the same description. General and specific objectives in the

first semester and the time distribution provided for the second semester show that the first half of this sequence stresses basic English grammar, whereas the second one is more geared towards reading comprehension. Both syllabi include reading, discussion, and analysis of essays and short stories.

CONTENT

The content of both courses is mainly characterized by an orientation towards language. Essays and short stories are read and analyzed to provide the context for the development of oral and written communication skills. Although mentioned in the course description, poetry and drama are neither included in the Objectives (first semester), nor the Time Distribution (second semester) provided in the syllabi.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Except for the time distribution, evaluation criteria, and references, no specific indication of a recommended method or approach is given in either syllabus.

TEXTBOOK(S)

Both courses apparently use the same composition textbook to develop the students' writing skills (*Steps in Composition* by Troyka & Nudelman, Prentice Hall, 1990) and an additional Reader. *The Short Story and You* by Simmons & Stern (National Textbook Co., 1992) is used in Engl. 3103, and *The Realm of Fiction* by James B. Hall and Elizabeth C. Hall (no bibliographical details provided) is used in Engl. 3104. There is no reference to a collection of essays read in either course. *The American Heritage Dictionary* is required in the first semester and probably also used during the second.

6. UPR - Ponce

INTRODUCTION

We received syllabi for the course sequence English 3101-3102 (Basic English) which, according to the accompanying letter from the chairperson (October 17, 1996), the majority of the entering

freshman students take. This documentation (the two syllabi) is used for the present study.

The first-year sequence English 3101-3102 at the UPR-Ponce Campus consists of two semesters geared towards strengthening the students' language and library skills through reading and analyzing short stories. It has a strong component on grammatical elements during both semesters.

ENGLISH 3101 - 3102 (BASIC ENGLISH)

DESCRIPTION

The course description specifies that students are grouped according to their ability in English and those students with a deficient preparation will be offered additional help. However, it is not explained how and according to which criteria the students are grouped and what kind of additional help students are given.

Both courses are three credits each and require an additional hour per week in the language laboratory. Separate syllabi were submitted for the lab courses (English 3113 and English 3114) which provide additional opportunities for students to practice and reinforce grammatical elements presented in the regular class and to improve their pronunciation. Since the supplementary lab work does not form part of the present study, the lab course syllabi are not analyzed in more detail.

The course description for each of the two courses is identical and reads as follows:

This course is designed to meet the student's immediate needs, and to give him or her a command of the fundamental structure of the English language. The oral approach is used. Skills in reading and writing are developed. (Syllabi, p. 1)

The course description, valid for both semesters, clearly reflects the language oriented classroom in which the students' oral communication skills in English as a second language are developed intensively.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The general objective is also identical in both courses and stresses "achieving fluency in the spoken and written language." (Syllabi, p. 1) The

specific objectives include a detailed list in oral and written communication skills as well as grammatical elements.

During the first semester, basic English grammar seems to be more emphasized and is listed in more detail than in the second semester syllabus. Reading and writing are mentioned together during the first semester, whereas they are separate in the second semester syllabus, possibly indicating a greater emphasis on writing during the second semester. During both semesters the teaching of grammar occurs in the context of oral and written communication.

Whereas students read essays during the first semester to develop their reading skills, the second semester syllabus mentions reading and analyzing the elements of short stories. Thus, during the second semester, a literary component is added to the course. Writing during the first semester seems to be primarily on the sentence level and short paragraphs. These writing skills are further developed during the second semester.

CONTENT

The development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills as well as the use of certain grammatical structures form the basis of both courses. Within these categories, the two syllabi offer an extensive list of grammatical elements which form part of most basic curricula in English as a second language.

The English 3101-3102 sequence includes (1) pronunciation (both semesters); (2) verb tenses in affirmative and negative statements as well as questions, parts of speech (determiners, nouns, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, yes/no and information questions (first semester), phrases, clauses, sentences, conjunctions (second semester); (3) reading a specific number of selections (five to eight selections during the first semester and six short stories plus one independent library reading during the second semester); writing sentences and short paragraphs (both semesters) and "other writing activities according to students' needs" (Syllabus, p. 6) during the second semester.

It is interesting to note that sentence – combining through coordination and subordination exercises form part of the second semester course content. This type of exercise, based on K. W. Hunt's re-

search in the 1960's and 1970's on students' so-called syntactic maturity aims to increase the students' syntactic ability. The basis for the student's syntactic maturity is K. W. Hunt's concept of T-Units rather than the "traditional" sentences.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

In both courses, an eclectic approach to teaching is recommended to serve the needs of the students and help them achieve fluency in the spoken and the written language. Moreover, both courses emphasize the oral approach and reading to facilitate the development of second language skills. Thus, the students' exposure to the target language can be increased which may have a positive effect on second language acquisition according to research in the area.

TEXTBOOK(S)

Betty Azar's *Fundamentals of English Grammar*, Prentice Hall Regents, 1994, a widely used grammar textbook and workbook, is used in both semesters. As a Reader, students use *Concepts for Today* by Lorraine C. Smith and Nancy N. Mare (Heinle & Heinle, 1994) during the first semester. This Reader develops reading strategies, builds vocabulary skills, and develops students' academic reading skills.

In English 3102 (second semester), the students use *The Short Story & You* by John S. Simmons and Malcom E. Stern (National Textbook Company, 1992) in addition to *Fundamentals of English Grammar* (bibliographical entry see previous paragraph).

7. UPR - Carolina

INTRODUCTION

The first-year basic English curriculum at the UPR-Carolina Campus (English 3101-3102) is an integrated sequence of two courses. Both emphasize oral and written communication skills and focus on the development of grammar in oral and written context. Moreover, they aim to improve students' listening and speaking as well as reading and writing skills. They are language oriented courses where reading is viewed primarily as a means to develop

language skills. Both syllabi are almost identical, not only in their course descriptions but also in their course objectives.

ENGLISH 3101 - 3102 (REGULAR BASIC ENGLISH)

DESCRIPTION

Both course descriptions are identical in their content, and vary only in the choice of words to describe each one and the note that English 3102 (second semester) is a continuation of English 3101 (first semester). The courses are designed to develop the students' command of the English language

by strengthening the basic grammatical concepts in the context of practical oral and written situations. Integrated reading selections are used to strengthen grammar and vocabulary. (Syllabi, p. 1)

Both are three-credit courses each, meet for 3 ½ hours per week in the classroom and require an additional period of 70 minutes per week of laboratory work.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

An analysis of the objectives of each course also evidences the integral nature of these two courses. Almost throughout the two syllabi, the wording is identical with few exceptions. Overall, categories mentioned are oral communication skills (listening and speaking), basic grammar elements, reading (main ideas, supporting details, summarizing, making inferences, and vocabulary building skills during both semesters), and paragraph writing.

CONTENT

The course descriptions and the objectives clearly indicate that this course sequence aims to develop the students' basic language skills through oral communication and reading practice. It is a skills oriented course sequence in basic English as a second language.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Although the syllabi do not mention any specific methodology, they nevertheless indicate the communicative approach to teaching grammar and lan-

guage skills because of the nature of the objectives emphasized and the types of textbooks used. In addition, it can be assumed that the student plays an active part in the classroom to get involved in the use of the second language.

TEXTBOOK(S)

The required textbook (and workbook) for the first semester is *Focus on Grammar: A Basic Course for Reference and Practice* by Irene Schoenberg (no further bibliographical entry provided). Second semester students use a grammar book based on the communicative approach: *Interactions I: A Communicative Grammar* by Elaine Kirn and Darcy Jack (McGraw-Hill, 1990). This book is supplemented by *Interactions I: A Listening/Speaking Skills Book* by Judith Tanka and Paul Most (McGraw-Hill, 1990).

8. UPR - Cayey

INTRODUCTION

The UPR-Cayey Campus offers three achievement levels (remedial, basic and intermediate) to their incoming freshman students. Placement is decided on the basis of the students' scores on the English section of the College Entrance Examination Board (ESLAT), with a cut-off point at 449 or less (remedial) and 600 or above (Basic Intermediate English). Students with a score below 450 must have passed Remedial English before entering the basic level. The syllabus for this remedial course was not submitted.

The following Chart # 6 illustrates placement criteria for the UPR-Cayey Campus:

Course(s)	CEEB (ESLAT) Scores
(Remedial English)	449 or less
English 3101-3102 (Basic English)	450 - 599
English 3103-3104 (Basic Intermediate English)	600 +

Both course sequences are language skills oriented and help students primarily to acquire the tools necessary for oral and written communication.

ENGLISH 3101 - 3102 (BASIC ENGLISH)

DESCRIPTION

The course descriptions are almost identical and reflect the integral character of the two-semester sequence. They both stress the development of reading skills for academic purposes. In addition, the second semester course states writing for academic purposes as one of its components.

The course description reads as follows:

This [English 3101] is a course to improve the students' ability in reading [and writing]* for academic purposes by developing their interactive text processing skills. The content will be based on issues relevant to the students' field and to today's society. (Syllabus Engl. 3101, p. 1)

* refers to Engl. 3102.

Both courses are three-credit courses each, and both are supplemented by additional work (one hour) in the laboratory and/or tutoring if so required by the department.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See explanations and Chart # 6 in the Introduction to the curriculum at UPR-Cayey.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Identical general and similar specific objectives of the two courses stress their sequential character. Among the general objectives concerning language skills, the syllabi mention strengthening of students' reading abilities and the development of their oral skills through textbooks in English.

Another general objective included in both courses actually surpasses the strictly linguistic skills area per se as it aims to

expand students' awareness of their roles and potential in today's society in order to eliminate limiting stereotypes which affect people

because of their gender and/or ethnic background. (Syllabi, p.1)

The objectives then specify that at the end of each semester the students should be able “to express ideas spontaneously and with confidence on any given subject, particularly in their own fields and on issues related to the role of women and/or minorities.” (Syllabi, p. 2).

Specific objectives are mainly the same in both courses: developing reading comprehension (including vocabulary building strategies) as well as oral communication skills. In addition to these skills and strategies, academic writing is developed as a process during the second semester. Whereas the syllabus of the first semester lists basic grammar elements, they are not mentioned in the second semester when grammar is probably dealt with “incidentally” in the context of writing.

The affective domain is addressed in both courses to help students to improve their attitude towards reading (and writing in Engl. 3102) and to work effectively in teams.

CONTENT

The purpose of both courses is to develop students’ language skills through reading material that is oriented towards the academic fields the students are interested in. Literature and literary analysis play no role in either of the two courses.

It is interesting to note that a Computer-Assisted Reading Lab provides students with access to Hypertext reading and exercise programs: Versatext Reading Skills Development Program during the first and second semester and Gapmaster Version 2 and Choice Master (grammar and vocabulary for reading/writing development) during the second semester. Moreover, e-mail addresses are provided for TESOL’s Discussion Lists for cross-cultural discussion and writing practice for college and university students worldwide.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

The English 3101-3102 syllabi do not include any reference as to the recommended methodology except that students will learn to work cooperatively. It is not clear whether or not the cooperative learning approach is advocated in general. In addition, the second semester syllabus mentions the teaching of

writing as a process and recommends that professors use an alternative approach to assessment (e.g. group and individual problem solving exams, group projects, self assessment, portfolios, written reflections).

TEXTBOOK(S)

The English 3101 syllabus suggests to use Fraida Dubin and Elite Olshtain’s *Reading on Purpose: Building Cognitive Skills for Intermediate Learners* (Addison Wesley, 1984). This book is a collection of essays that address a wide variety of issues in today’s society with exercises in reading comprehension which apply different reading strategies.

The English 3102 syllabus suggests Linda Blanton and Linda Lee’s *The Multicultural Workshop: A Reading and Writing Program - Book 3* (Heinle & Heinle, 1995), a challenging book of essays, poems, and narrative reading selections on Career Choices, Identity (Gender Roles), Working for Social and Political Change, Language in Conflict, and Relationships (Marriage). It is also a workbook with exercises on reading comprehension and process writing with portfolio assessment. In addition to writing and reading strategies, the book discusses, explains, and practices critical thinking skills. All skills presented and practiced in the text are systematically explained with examples and listed in a Reference Section that appears as an Appendix in the back of the book.

ENGLISH 3103-3104 (Basic Intermediate English)

The Basic Intermediate English 3103-3104 sequence at the UPR-Cayey Campus develops the students’ language skills with an emphasis on reading as well as critical thinking and paragraph writing strategies during the first semester. Moreover, during the second half of the course sequence, the students read literary works and are introduced to the elements of various literary genres for a better understanding and enjoyment of literature. However, the course is clearly not a course in literature.

Students who have obtained a score of 4 or 5 on the College Board Advanced Placement Test receive six credits for this course sequence.

DESCRIPTION

The descriptions of Basic Intermediate English are identical and quite vague. They read as follows:

This course is designed to fulfill the requirements for first year English for students who have an intermediate proficiency in the English language. (Syllabi, p. 1)

The sequence consists of two three-credit courses that meet three hours per week.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See explanations and Chart # 6 in the Introduction to the curriculum at UPR-Cayey.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The general objectives list the development of literacy and language skills as well as critical thinking and reading strategies in English 3103 to which the development of writing, the reading of literary works, and strengthening the students' self-image are added in English 3104. Again, literature is presented here as a means to develop language skills rather than the content of the course.

The specific objectives for each course are very similar, except that they are taken a step further in English 3104 (second semester). Whereas students practice basic reading strategies during the first semester (e. g. identifying main ideas and supporting details, skimming and scanning, vocabulary building), they concentrate more on developing their writing skills during the second semester. In the first half of the sequence students write paragraphs, while the second half guides them to write compositions.

Oral communication skills are practiced during both semesters through class and group discussions as well as oral presentations throughout the year. Grammar and mechanics (not further specified during the first semester) are included in both syllabi as well. The second semester syllabus lists punctuation marks, capitalization, and commonly misused words as areas to be covered.

In the affective domain, the second semester syllabus is more explicit than the first semester syllabus which merely states that the course should

help students "acquire a taste for good reading, expand their concept and knowledge of the world." (Syllabus, English 3103, p. 1)

The syllabus for English 3104 mentions the affective domain at various points. The following quote serves as an example:

To have students participate in individual and group discussions so they ... realize they have something of value to say both in oral and written forms of expressions ... [and] can feel more comfortable talking in front of the class. (Syllabus 3104, p. 1)

CONTENT

The content of these two courses is, without any doubt, skill oriented. The emphasis in both semesters is on the development of oral and written communication skills in English as a second language with the addition of reading literary works in the second semester. Moreover, both courses aim to develop the students' critical thinking ability and to expand their knowledge of the world.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Except for a reference to small group and class discussions as well as group work in the Instructional Model component of both syllabi, no recommendations are made as to the suggested methodology in these courses. It can be assumed that the communicative learning approach is applied because of the nature of the courses and the level of preparation of the students.

TEXTBOOK(S)

The English 3103 syllabus does not mention any textbook. It is likely that a grammar book and a reader are used to develop the desired language skills.

In English 3104 the syllabus suggests a textbook on writing skills, *The Developing Writer*, a grammar handbook, *Grammar and Composition - Book 3*, and an English/English dictionary, *The American Heritage*. Bibliographical details of these publications are not provided.

9. UPR - Aguadilla

The documents from UPR - Aguadilla have not been received. In a telephone conversation, the following information could be obtained:

UPR Aguadilla offers two levels of English to their incoming freshman students (basic and intermediate) with two courses each. The following Chart # 7 provides an overview of these two levels and corresponding CEEB scores for placement:

CHART # 7

Course(s)		CEEB scores
ENGL 3101	ENGL 3102	200 - 580
ENGL 3103	ENGL 3104	581 +

10. IAU - Metropolitan Campus

INTRODUCTION

The first-year curriculum in English at Inter – American University of Puerto Rico (IAU), Metropolitan Campus, consists of two courses (three credits each) in communication skills at four different levels. Students are placed according to their scores on the English section of the College Entrance Examination Board. (See Chart # 8 below.)

Students who score below the requirement of the basic level, take the one-semester course “Elements of Basic English” which they have to pass with a minimum grade of “C” before being admitted to the basic level of the regular program. This course does not count towards the credits required for the university degree.

Students who have taken and obtained a score of 4 or 5 on the College Board Advanced Placement Test in English receive six credits and continue with the third (second year) course at the advanced level. The majority of freshman students at IAU, Metropolitan Campus, take the Basic English sequence (ECS 1101-1102). The Advanced Level, for which

Advanced Placement credits are granted by the University, has the least number of students.

Syllabi for the third courses at all three levels have been received also, but second-year courses do not form part of this study. Therefore, they have not been included in this analysis but can be found in Appendix E.

The following Chart # 8 illustrates placement criteria for the IAU Metropolitan Campus:

CHART # 8

Course(s)	CEEB (ESLAT) Scores
English 0010 (Elements of Basic English)	399 or less
ECS 1101-1102 (Bas. Comm. Sk. English I+II)	400 - 499
ECS 1201-1202 (Intermed. Engl. Comm. Sk. I+II)	500 - 599
ECS 2311-2312 (Adv. Engl. Comm. Sk. I+II)	600 +

All three levels are language skills oriented. However, the second semester course on the advanced level is literature based and includes the analysis and discussion of various literary genres.

The courses have a three-credit value each.

ENGLISH 0010 (Elements of Basic English)

DESCRIPTION

This course is designed for students who lack basic communication skills in English, and the official catalog description reads as follows:

Intensive study and practice of the basic elements of the language with the purpose of developing students’ confidence and ability to communicate in English. (Syllabus, p. 1)

The course is a requirement for all those students who scored 399 or less on the English section of the College Entrance Examination Board (ESLAT).

Although English 0010 is a three-credit course, these credits do not count towards the degree. Students have to pass this course with a minimum grade of “C” before they can continue in the basic level of the regular first-year program. The course meets for three hours per week in the classroom and an additional hour per week in the language laboratory.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See explanations and Chart # 8 in the Introduction to the curriculum at IAU-Metro.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The syllabus clearly describes this course as language skills oriented with an emphasis on basic vocabulary and structure. All four language skills are developed at the basic level of communication. Oral communication skills (listening and speaking) focus on recognition and differentiation of sounds and recall of information in simple dialogues, basic vocabulary in oral discourse, and details and order of presentation of details. Exercises include, but are not limited to, the oral description of objects and people and the retelling of stories by answering questions.

Among the written communication skills, reading strategies are emphasized: recall of details, differentiation between main ideas and supporting details, facts and opinion, the sequence of events, vocabulary building skills, grammatical functions of inflectional suffixes). Basic writing skills (taking dictation, copying a text correctly, answering simple questions in writing and composing short paragraphs) are developed as well.

In the affective domain, the course aims to develop “a positive attitude towards the language in use and the content of the course.” (Syllabus, p. 2) Overall, the course is designed to improve not only the students’ language ability but also their confidence in themselves to communicate in English as a second language.

CONTENT

As can be observed from the description of its goals and objectives, English 0010 is designed to meet the needs of students who have not reached an ability level in English that allows them to begin their regular course work in English at that point. It

is a skills oriented course with the purpose of preparing students for the first-year basic curriculum in English. At the same time, it attempts to help students overcome a “high affective filter” (Stephen Krashen) that might keep them from making progress in the target language.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

There is no section in the syllabus that addresses this component of the study explicitly. However, the nature of the course and the activities mentioned in the syllabus point towards the use of the communicative and collaborative learning approaches combined with oral skill building techniques. Audiovisual aids are included in the list of materials.

TEXTBOOK(S)

No specific texts are mentioned. Instead, reference is made to textbooks, workbooks, and a dictionary in general, and audiovisual aids and resource materials from the library as well as additional materials prepared by the teacher. Textbooks are selected by professors teaching the course.

ECS 1101 - 1102 (Basic English Communication Skills I and II)

DESCRIPTION

The courses ECS 1101 - 1102 constitute, as the title indicates, a basic course sequence designed to develop the students’ oral and written communication skills in English as a second language.

Whereas the first-semester course emphasizes “auditory comprehension and oral production [and includes] basic vocabulary acquisition” (Syllabus, ECS 1101, p. 1), the second semester course focuses on the development of the students’ reading skills and introduces paragraph writing. Both are three-credit courses and require additional hours in the language laboratory.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See explanation and Chart # 8 in the Introduction to the curriculum at IAU-Metro.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The ECS sequence 1101-1102 aims to develop the students' "knowledge of the vocabulary, structures and functions presented in the course through a communicative approach" (Syllabi, p. 1). A comparison of the two syllabi shows that they both include the development of all four language skills but with different emphases and difficulty levels.

During the first semester, the students' oral communication skills are enhanced through simple oral discourse. Among the reading strategies included in the syllabus are previewing, deriving meaning from simple written discourse, and applying specific strategies for vocabulary expansion. Students' writing is developed through dictation, formulation of simple questions and answers, and expressing ideas in simple written discourse.

The second semester syllabus continues with the development of oral language skills, but shows a stronger emphasis on the improvement of the students' reading ability. Among the reading strategies mentioned in the second-semester syllabus are: extracting meaning from context and relating it to the students' own experience, identifying facts in a selection, main ideas (stated and implied) and supporting details in paragraphs, the sequence of events, cause and effect relationships, and vocabulary building. Paragraph writing is reinforced, but given less emphasis than the development of reading strategies.

In the affective domain, the course sequence aims to "develop a positive attitude toward the English language as a means of communication ... [and] To recognize the value of learning the English language for personal enrichment and knowledge." (Syllabus, ECS 1101, pp. 1, 2; almost identical wording in ECS 1102 syllabus.) Moreover, both courses aim to "develop an awareness of the cultural similarities and differences between the Spanish and English communities." (Syllabi, p. 2)

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

The syllabi for ECS 1101-1102 do not include a separate section on methodology. They do mention, however, the communicative approach and group work as well as class discussions to obtain the desired results in students' knowledge and attitude.

TEXTBOOK(S)

No specific titles are mentioned in the syllabus. Instead, reference is made to textbooks and workbooks in general, a dictionary, visual aids, tape recordings, and videos. The choice of textbooks is made by professors teaching the course.

ECS 1201 - 1202 (Intermediate English Communication Skills I - II)

DESCRIPTION

The sequence ECS 1201 - 1202 (Intermediate English Communication Skills I and II) is designed to develop oral and written communication skills in English as a second language in students who scored between 500 and 599 on the English section of the College Board Entrance Examination (ESLAT). Both are three-credit courses and are sequential. A comparison of syllabi shows that the basic difference between the two courses is the type of text chosen for each: narrative during the first semester and expository during the second.

The ECS 1201 course description reads as follows:

Development of oral and written communication skills with an emphasis on the reading of narrative texts such as stories and short novels and on the development of argumentative and critical oral exposition. Analysis of complex grammatical structures in context. (Syllabus, p. 1)

The second semester description is the same, except for the reading material which is specified as "expository texts, such as essays, magazine articles, and textbooks." (Syllabus, p. 1)

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See explanations and Chart # 8 in the Introduction to the curriculum at IAU-Metro.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of both courses is the students' development of oral and written communication skills in English as a second language with an emphasis on reading skills during the second semester and oral skills during the first. The objectives of each of the

two courses differ in their level of complexity and the type of reading material.

The reading strategies listed during the first semester are, in general, more basic and are practiced with a narrative text. They include skimming, finding main ideas, making inferences based on contextual clues, and guessing the meaning of words through context. During the second semester, these skills are taken a step further and practiced with an expository text. They encompass the evaluation of “arguments for the validity of logical reasoning” (Syllabus, p. 2), recognition of the more common fallacies, distinction of fact and opinion, author’s purpose, and organizational patterns.

Writing strategies include expressing ideas based on classroom and outside experience during the first semester and mainly summary writing as a reading strategy during the second. Grammatical and lexical accuracy together with correct spelling and punctuation are practiced during both semesters.

In the affective domain, the two courses aim at the same objectives, i. e., “To develop a positive attitude toward the language, its use, and the value of the course.” (Syllabi, p. 2)

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

The syllabi do not mention the approach or method used to accomplish the goals and objectives of this course sequence. The section Activities in both syllabi mentions class discussions, lectures, group work.

TEXTBOOK(S)

Specific titles of textbooks are not mentioned in the syllabus because that choice is made by professors teaching the course. A dictionary and audiovisual aids supplement the text.

ECS 2311 - 2312 (Advanced English Communication Skills I - II)

DESCRIPTION

The first-year, advanced level sequence ECS 2311-2312 consists of two courses with three credits each and a different emphasis in each one. Whereas the first semester focuses on the development of

writing skills (comparable to the traditional “freshman writing” class), the second semester is based on literature.

The first semester syllabus reads as follows:

Analysis and discussion of paragraph and essay models. Writing of different types of paragraphs and essays. (Syllabus, ECS 2311, p. 1)

This course is a prerequisite for ECS 2312.

The course description of the second-semester course (ECS 2312) clearly shows a shift towards literature:

Analysis and discussion of literary works of diverse genres. Writing of essays on themes suggested by the readings. (Syllabus, p. 1)

Students who obtain a score of 4 or 5 on the College Board Advanced Placement Test in English receive six (6) credits for this course sequence. These entering freshman students go directly to the third semester, second-year course (ECS 2313) when they begin their studies at IAU.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

This course is open to students with a score of 600 and above on the English section of the College Board Entrance Examination.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The objective of the first-semester course, according to the General Schedule for ECS 2311, is to

expose students to the various rhetorical styles and to provide practice in the process of writing essays using correct grammar, syntax, and different modes of essay development. (General Schedule, p. 1).

It is obvious that this first semester, advanced level course aims to develop students’ writing ability through the process approach in various kinds of expository writing.

The specific objectives of ECS 2311 include form and function of grammar elements (sentence structure and other grammatical norms of standard English) and the conventions of writing. Moreover, students practice to use the writer’s tools (dictionary, thesaurus, handbook) and ways to

achieve coherence, logic, and unity in their essays. Students also apply rhetorical techniques (such as descriptive, narrative, comparison/contrast) and organizational patterns and are encouraged to develop their personal style.

The syllabus for the second-semester course, ECS 2312, specifies the objectives as follows:

To expose the students to a variety of literary selections ... [so that they may] recognize the basic elements of fiction, poetry and drama, and may develop their ability to use these elements in their own reading, analysis and interpretation of literature. (Syllabus, p. 1)

These objectives clearly reflect an introductory course to literary genres and their analysis and discussion as well as the continued development of students' writing ability.

In the affective domain, the first semester course aims to develop a positive attitude towards the language and writing, while the second course attempts to cultivate a positive attitude towards literature, its value and meaningfulness.

CONTENT

The first semester course is designed to develop the students' writing ability through practice of the various phases of the writing process and by using different rhetorical styles. Form and function of grammatical elements of standard English as well as conventions in writing are emphasized in this context.

During the second semester, the students turn their attention to the

sequential study of the elements of fiction, poetry and drama applied to a variety of selections from various countries. ... Critical reading and critical writing to provide an integrated study of literature and composition. (Syllabus, p. 1)

Analysis and interpretation of literary works as well as development of the ability to write about literature form the core of this course.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

The process approach to develop the students' writing ability is used during both semesters. Peer

revision as part of the writing process entails cooperative learning techniques in small groups. Reader response theory is mentioned as an approach to literary analysis during the second semester.

TEXTBOOK(S)

Textbooks are not mentioned in the syllabi, but instead in the General Schedule. Selection of didactic materials depends on a majority decision of professors teaching the course.

The textbooks mentioned in the General Schedule are Mary Lou Conlin's *Patterns Plus* (no further bibliographical entry provided), and Houghton Mifflin's 1995 edition of *A Short Prose Reader With Argumentation* for the first semester, and *Literature and the Writing Process* by Elizabeth McMahan, Susan Day, and Robert Funk (Macmillan, 1996) for the second semester. Textbooks clearly reflect the specific nature of each of the two first-year courses at the advanced level.

11. IAU - San Germán Campus

INTRODUCTION

The first-year curriculum in English at Inter American University of Puerto, San Germán Campus, is also characterized by three levels: basic, intermediate, and advanced with a pre-basic course for those students who did not reach the minimum score on the English section of the College Board Entrance Examination as established by the University. Students are placed according to their scores on the above mentioned exam as follows (Chart # 9):

CHART # 9

Course(s)	CEEB (ESLAT) Scores
English 0020 (Pre-basic)	449 or less
ECS 1111 - 1112	450 - 549
ECS 1113 - ECS 2214	550 - 649
ECS 2227 - 2228	650 +

As the course title (English Communication Skills - ECS) indicates, all first-year courses are language skills oriented, except for the second semester on the advanced level which is an introduction to the analysis and discussion of literary genres. Most of the students take the first level, ECS 1111-1112. All courses have a value of three credits.

Students who obtained a score of 4 or 5 on the College Board Advanced Placement Examination in English, are given six (6) credits and go directly into the third semester course at the advanced level, ECS 2229. The syllabus for that course was also submitted, but not included in this study because ECS 2229 is a third-semester (second year) course.

ENGLISH 0020

DESCRIPTION

This three-credit course is designed for students who lack basic communication skills in English, and it prepares them for the regular course sequence. The description reads as follows:

Intensive practical study of the basic elements of the English language. . . . The course entails two additional hours of laboratory work per week. Preparatory course. It requires a minimum grade of C. It will not be counted as part of the credits required to complete a university degree. (Syllabus, p. 1)

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

Students with a score of less than 449 on the English section of the College Board Entrance Examination have to take this course and have to pass it with a minimum grade of "C" before beginning in the regular basic English curriculum.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Through reading and the formulation of questions and answers as well as translation from English into Spanish and vice versa, the students are being prepared for the regular first-year program in English. At the end of the semester, they "must be familiar with the major features of English inflection, including different forms of regular verbs and common irregular verbs". (Syllabus, p. 1) The work in the classroom is reinforced through work in the language lab as well as the tutorial lab where the stu-

dents' grammatical skills are strengthened through translation and other practice exercises.

The affective domain is not mentioned.

CONTENT

The content of the course is clearly language skill oriented with a primary focus on grammar and translation. Work in the classroom is complemented in two labs.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

The syllabus does not mention any specific methodology. However, the objectives indicate a language teaching approach through translation where objectives are developed by translating texts from and into both English and Spanish, and practicing grammatical structures in the process.

TEXTBOOK(S)

The textbook referred to in the syllabus is Fannie Safier's (1996) edition of *Impact: Fifty Short Stories*, (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publ.) A bilingual dictionary is recommended.

ECS 1111 - 1112

DESCRIPTION

The course descriptions of this first-year sequence reflect their language skills oriented nature and the basic level in English as a second language.

ECS 1111 requires a minimum score on the English part of the College Board Entrance Examination (CEEB 450-549) or a minimum grade of "C" in the preparatory course, English 0020. Its catalog description reads as follows:

This course is based on simple texts and its focus is on the development of basic vocabulary and communication skills in English, both oral and written form. (Syllabus, ECS 1111, p.1)

ECS 1112 continues the language skill development in students and specifies:

It is designed to help students increase the understanding of vocabulary and acquire written and oral precision in English through

extensive reading of non-simplified texts.
(ECS 1112 Syllabus, p. 1)

Classroom work is reinforced in the laboratory during the year.

Both are three-credit courses.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See explanations and Chart # 9 in the Introduction to the curriculum at IAU-San Germán.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Whereas the goals of the ECS 1111 syllabus are organized in the following categories: Vocabulary, Questions, Writing, Oral, and Assessment, the objectives of the ECS 1112 syllabus are divided into three language skills: Reading, Writing, and Speaking. However, the content in both is very similar.

Within the above mentioned categories, the ECS 1111 objectives include formulating and answering questions as well as summarizing text information both orally and in writing. Vocabulary building strategies, the ability to organize information from texts, and to identify main ideas and important arguments form part of this course.

The sequential character of ECS 1111 and ECS 1112 is indicated by listing most of the same objectives. In addition to the previously mentioned strategies and skills, the second semester also includes describing, organizing, and summarizing written information and reacting to a text.

The affective domain is not mentioned in the syllabi.

CONTENT

The content of this first-year sequence is oriented towards developing the students' basic language skills in English as a second language and to give them the tools to use it correctly orally and in simple written form. The syllabi do not indicate whether there is an emphasis on one language skill over the other or whether they are all practiced and developed equally in both semesters.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

No specific remarks are made as to the methodology that the professors use to reach these objectives. Journal writing is required in the second semester.

TEXTBOOK(S)

The sequential character of these two basic, first-year courses is also shown by the use of the same textbook and materials: Joan Baker González and Eileen Blau's *Building Understanding - A Thematic Approach to Reading Comprehension* (1995) published by (Addison-Wesley Publ. Co.) and an English-English dictionary.

ECS 1113 - ECS 2214

DESCRIPTION

The intermediate level, first-year sequence is designed to develop students' reading comprehension of academic texts during the first semester and their essay writing ability during the second. Each course has a value of three credits, and the first semester course is supplemented by two additional hours of laboratory work per week.

Students must have obtained a score between 550 and 649 on the English section of the College Board Entrance Examination or completed successfully the two courses on the basic level in order to be admitted to ECS 1113. Thus, this course is not only a first semester course on the intermediate level but also the third course in the basic English sequence (ECS 1111-1112-1113).

According to the course description, English Communication Skills 1113

is designed to develop an in-depth knowledge of English through extensive reading of the selections that are taken from different disciplines of academic learning. The primary emphasis is on reading comprehension and expansion of vocabulary. However, there is also emphasis on written as well as oral expression concerning the selections assigned to be read for class and laboratory. (Syllabus ECS 1113, p. 1)

The purpose of this course, then, is to prepare the students to read material related to their concentration and/or profession with comprehension and to

develop their ability to express themselves in English both orally and in writing.

The catalog description of ECS 2214 emphasizes the development of students' writing ability through the process approach and reads as follows:

Introduction to the process of writing: organization, writing, revision, and critique and correction of written work. Emphasis on organization of paragraphs within essays. Study of grammar according to student needs. Related readings. (Syllabus ECS 2214, p. 1)

A clear division is established between the emphasis in the first semester (reading ability) and the second semester (writing ability) at the intermediate level. Overall, both courses aim to develop the students' academic and professional skills in English as their second language.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Among the objectives listed in the first semester course, ECS 1113, reading – related strategies are given priority: vocabulary building skills, answering questions related to the text orally and in writing, discussing the text, making inferences, identifying main ideas of paragraphs and whole selections, summarizing both orally and in writing, and note taking.

According to the ECS 2214 syllabus, students' writing ability is developed through the process approach. They work with simple, compound, and complex sentences, different types of paragraphs, principles of point of view, audience, and tone, mechanics, and other elements of writing.

The affective domain is addressed in the syllabus of the first semester when it states that "It is hoped that the student will develop a positive attitude towards English and its use." (p. 2)

CONTENT

The content of the two courses complement each other: development of academic reading skills during the first semester and writing skills during the second.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Except for the reference to the process approach in developing students' writing ability, methodology, approach or techniques are not mentioned in either of the two syllabi.

TEXTBOOK(S)

During the first semester, the students read essays to develop academic reading skills: Gerald Levin, *Short Essays*, (1995), published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publ. Company and use the *Chicago English-Spanish Dictionary*.

The materials for the second semester course reflect the writing emphasis: the text is Pearlman, et al. (1989), *Guide of Rapid Revision Workbook* (no further bibliographical details provided). Students select their own readings. Both an English/English dictionary and an English/Spanish dictionary are recommended.

ECS 2227 (Composition Skills English I)

ECS 2228 (Introduction to Literature)

DESCRIPTION

The first-year, advanced level sequence ECS 2227 (Composition Skills English I) - ECS 2228 (Introduction to Literature) consists of two courses (three credits each). Whereas the first semester concentrates on developing the students' writing skills (comparable to the traditional "freshman writing" class), the second semester is an introductory course in literature. This level is designed for students who already possess the basic communication skills in English and can go beyond that.

The first-semester syllabus (ECS 2227) reads as follows:

Extensive reading and analysis of the writing process. Writing with emphasis on skills of organization and revision necessary for expository writing. (p. 1)

The description and the title of the second-semester course clearly indicate the shift towards literature during the second half of the advanced level sequence:

General study of literary genres.
Development of the skills needed for the analysis, interpretation, and appreciation of literature. (ECS 2228 Syllabus, p. 1)

ECS 2227 (first semester) is a prerequisite for ECS 2228. Both courses have a value of three credits each. Students who passed the College Board Advanced Placement Examination with a score of 4 or 5, are given six (6) credits for these two courses and go directly into the third-semester course.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

This course is open to students with a score of 650 or above on the English section of the College Board Entrance Examination.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

During the first-semester course (ECS 2227), the students' writing ability is developed through the process approach, a review of grammar elements, and the conventions of writing as well as the use of the writer's tools, such as the dictionary, the thesaurus, and a word processor. The students are guided to develop their own personal style and to differentiate between opinion and fact. Overall, according to the syllabus, the students "Use various prewriting and rhetorical strategies to help organize a coherent and logical piece of writing keeping in mind the process, purpose, and audience" (p. 1). Moreover, the course syllabus includes practice of four basic modes of discourse (description, narration, persuasion, and exposition) as well as the application of expository strategies, such as example, process analysis, division/classification, comparison/contrast definition, and cause/effect. These objectives clearly reflect a course designed to develop the students' writing ability in English.

The objectives for the second semester (ECS 2228 - Introduction to Literature) indicate an introductory course to literary genres and their analysis and discussion as well as the appreciation of literature. It includes the critical analysis and interpretation of the elements of the short story, poetry, and drama. Specialized vocabulary and terminology in the anal-

ysis of literary works are practiced. Cultural contexts in the reading material are compared and contrasted, and commonly shared cultural and literary heritage is pointed out. The ability to write about literature is also developed during the second semester. Students generate different kinds of written analyses, such as character study, theme development, structural approach, and author's style (see also Syllabus ECS 2228, p. 2).

The affective domain is mentioned in the second-semester syllabus when it refers to "a positive attitude towards the language and its use through the study of pertinent literary examples" (Syllabus ECS 2228, p. 2). It seems that most English courses aim to develop a positive attitude towards the English language.

CONTENT

In general terms, the first-semester course (ECS 2227) is designed to develop the students' writing ability to a level where they can write essays and develop their own personal writing style based on correct grammatical usage and following the conventions of writing.

The second semester (ECS 2228) introduces students to various literary genres (short story, poetry, and drama) and their analysis, interpretation, and appreciation. Moreover, the students practice writing about literature using the appropriate vocabulary and terminology.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

This component is not specifically addressed in either of the syllabi. However, the first course uses the process approach to teaching writing which involves work in small groups and, thereby, creates a cooperative learning environment.

TEXTBOOK(S)

The textbooks chosen for each of the advanced courses clearly reflect their specialized nature. The first semester course ECS 2227 uses Kim Flachmann and Michael Flachmann's *The Prose Reader: Essays for Thinking, Reading, and Writing*, 1993, (Prentice Hall), showing the connection and interrelatedness between the reading/writing skills. During the second semester (ECS 2228), the students use X.J. Kennedy's *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*, 1987 (Harper Collins).

12. University of the Sacred Heart

INTRODUCTION

The first-year curriculum in English at the University of the Sacred Heart offers the incoming freshman students four different levels of achievement according to their scores on the English section of the College Board Entrance Examination. The course sequence at each level is summarized and illustrated in the following Chart:

CHART # 10

Course(s)	CEEB (ESLAT) Scores
English 031	474 or less
English 107 - 108	475 - 574
English 113 - 114	575 - 644
English 121 - 122	645 +

Students who have obtained a satisfactory score on the College Board Advanced Placement Exam in English receive six credits for the first-year sequence English 121-122 and continue with second year courses. All courses have a three-credit value.

It is interesting to note that the syllabi include a detailed justification of why English should be included in the curriculum when Spanish is the main language for communication in our society.

ENGLISH 031 - (REMEDIAL ENGLISH)

Syllabus has not been received.

ENGLISH 107 - 108 (ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION I AND II)

DESCRIPTION

The two courses are clearly oriented towards language skills and closely connected insofar as the first course, English 107, aims to build (and/or review) and practice the grammatical foundation for the development of listening and speaking skills as well as reading and writing skills practiced during the second semester, English 108. Consequently, English 107 is a prerequisite for English 108, and students must pass both courses with a minimum grade of "C". Both courses have a three-credit value and require additional time in the language laboratory.

The course description of English 107 states that it

is an intensive study of English grammar. As a starting point for oral and written expression the students will review the grammatical elements which for the sentence and their relationship to one another. The basic elements of oral and written communication are studied emphasizing ease and exactitude of expression. (Syllabus, p. 1)

Thus, during the first-semester English course at the basic level (English 107), students develop a grammatical foundation starting at the sentence level in the context of oral and written expression.

The second semester (English 108) continues to build on this grammatical foundation laid in English 107 and goes beyond that to develop the students' oral and written communication skills. The course description states that it

emphasizes aural-oral skills, reading and writing skills, and basic elements of grammar necessary for efficient oral and written communication in English. (Syllabus, p. 1)

It can be observed that the emphasis in the second semester shifts somewhat away from grammar and increasingly towards speaking and writing, including reading and listening skills.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See Chart # 10 above for a summary and illustration of placement criteria.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives in both courses are clearly subdivided into the four language skills with vocabulary and syntax mentioned as additional components. English 107 lists basic English grammar elements (including present and future tenses, affirmative and negative statements, questions and short answers, subject and object pronouns, question words, etc.), an active, controlled vocabulary of 1000 words, development of students' reading comprehension through intensive and extensive reading of dialogues, short stories, essays, and short, adapted novels that use the controlled vocabulary and syntax reviewed during the semester. Moreover, the students' writing skills are developed through writing questions and unstructured paragraphs in a variety of contexts. Students practice and enhance their speaking skills through classroom interaction in discussions related to the readings and other assigned activities not further specified in the syllabus.

These skills are expanded and include knowledge of additional grammar elements and vocabulary in the second semester course, English 108. In addition to the above mentioned objectives, English 108 adds critical thinking skills and a better understanding of self and the world.

Short stories, essays, dialogues, and short, simplified novels form the basis for this second-semester course. The students' writing ability is developed to a point where they can form "good sentences and develop coherent paragraphs." (Syllabus p. 2)

CONTENT

Congruent with its objectives, the content of the English 107-108 sequence consists of building the grammar foundations primarily but not exclusively during the first semester within the context of oral and written communication and to further develop the students' language skills during the second semester. The grammar component is de-emphasized and the addition of the development of critical thinking skills and a better knowledge of self and the world are added.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Except for small group and oral activities which point to a communicative and cooperative approach to teaching language skills, the syllabi do not specifically mention the language teaching approach used.

TEXTBOOK(S)

Both courses use textbooks developed by members of the faculty at the University of the Sacred Heart. In English 107 students use *Snapshots* by Myrna Monllor, Helen Domenech, Luz E. Torres, and Judith V. Santos. In English 108, students use *Roll It* by Helen Domenech, Myrna Monllor, Judith V. Santos, and Luz E. Torres. No further bibliographical specifics are provided for either of the textbooks.

ENGLISH 113 (READING FOR COMMUNICATION)

ENGLISH 114 (WRITTEN COMMUNICATION)

DESCRIPTION

Whereas students read simplified and adapted materials in the basic level, students read non-simplified texts at the intermediate level which is open to students with a score between 575 and 644 and those who obtained a minimum grade of "C" in English 107-108. The emphasis in English 113 is on developing the students' reading skills and in English 114 their writing skills. Of course, the other three language skills are also included. Both courses have a three-credit value.

According to its course description, English 113

combines intensive reading with oral and written communication skills. Students read articles, stories, essays, poems, and novels and react to these readings in a variety of oral activities and written assignments. (Syllabus, p. 1)

Although the texts used to increase students' reading comprehension skills are literary works, English 113 is not a course in literary analysis but in language development.

English 114, on the other hand, develops the students' writing skills, in part, through the process

approach to writing. The syllabus for this course states that it

teaches and applies the basic principles of effective composition, and also helps students to master important grammar, punctuation, and usage skills. (Syllabus, p. 1)

Students need to pass this course with a minimum grade of "C".

ACHIEVEMENTS LEVELS

See remarks and observations above (DESCRIPTION) and also Chart # 10.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Although the objectives reflect the particular emphasis in each of the two courses, they also show their sequential character and students' increasing ability levels. For example, a 1600-word vocabulary knowledge is developed in English 113 which is expanded to 1900 words in English 114. An 80% accuracy in speaking and writing activities is the goal in English 113 which is increased to an 85% accuracy in English 114. While English 114 focuses on the development of the students' ability to write a 3 - 5 paragraph essay, in English 113 the objective in writing specifies editing for content and grammar (which is only one step in the process of writing) as its writing objective (length of writing is not specified in this course).

CONTENT

Overall, both courses aim to develop all four language skills in students as well as their knowledge of vocabulary and syntax. Literary works form the basis of the reading material in English 113, while English 114 concentrates on the development of writing strategies to enable the students to write compositions.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Small and large group discussions (as well as role playing, debates, and panel discussions in English 113) in both courses and individual and small group writing especially in English 114 point to the communicative (and collaborative in English 114) approach in the classroom.

TEXTBOOK(S)

In English 113 the textbook *Patterns and Themes* by Judy R. Rogers and Glenn C. Rogers (no further bibliographical details provided) and a novel (not further specified) form the basis of instruction. Films and slides are added to the materials used in this course. In English 114, the textbook is *Strategies: Planning, Writing and Editing* by J. Santos and M. Wekander (no further bibliographical data), supplemented by Newsweek.

ENGLISH 121 - ENGLISH 122

DESCRIPTION

Students who have taken the College Board Advanced Placement Program in English are given credit for these two courses and continue in the second-year curriculum in English. A justification for offering these courses in the curriculum is part of both syllabi.

English 121 and 122 are clearly courses in literary analysis, the first one of poetry and drama and the second one of fiction.

The course description of English 121 reads as follows:

Study of poetry and drama as genres. Critical analysis of representative works from both genres. (Syllabus 121, p. 1)

The focus in English 122 is on fiction. Students analyze "representative works from both the short story and novel" (p. 1) according to the syllabus. Both courses have a value of three credits and meet for three hours per week.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

English 121 and 122 are open to students who obtained a score of 645 or above on the English section of the College Board Entrance Examination or have satisfactorily completed ENG 113-114. A sequential character of the two courses English 121 and English 122 is not specified in the syllabus.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The objectives in each of the syllabi reveal that both courses (a) deal exclusively with literary analysis and (b) aim to reach the same objectives within

different literary genres: English 121 in poetry and drama and English 122 in fiction, the short story and the novel. Among these objectives, the syllabi mention: to acquire the appropriate terminology for literary analysis and discussion, to increase students' knowledge about the origins and the development of the specific genres and their outstanding representatives, to study the basic elements of each genre and to read and discuss critically the specific literary works within their social and cultural contexts.

Although the affective domain is not specifically addressed in the syllabus, at one point, it nevertheless mentions the development of respect for the opinions about and interpretations of literary works by others as one of the objectives. This clearly refers to an affective element, as does the discussion of cultural contexts of literary works because that may lead to a more tolerant attitude on the part of the students towards "otherness" through broadening their minds and understanding beyond their own cultural and social contexts.

CONTENT

Literary analysis is the content of both courses. Of course, to achieve the objectives, students use English as a means of communication both orally and in written form. This practice, in turn, improves students' language skills as well, in addition to the literary knowledge they acquire. At no point, however, can we infer that these courses are designed to develop the students' language skills through literature. Literature is taught in its own right in English 121-122.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Except for a brief reference to "Individual and group discussions and presentations" (syllabi p. 3) and "Oral and written reports" (ibid.), the syllabi do not mention any method or approach in particular. From these classroom techniques, we can conclude that students are probably actively involved in the analysis and discussion of literary works both orally and in writing.

TEXTBOOK(S)

Both courses use the same literary anthology: X. J. Kennedy's *Literature: An Introduction to Poetry, Fiction and Drama*, 1987, (no further bibliographical entry provided).

13. Pontifical Catholic University of PR - Ponce Campus

INTRODUCTION

Pontifical Catholic University offers a varied and flexible curriculum to serve students' needs. Students who score between 200 and 399 on the English section of the College Board Entrance Examination (ESLAT) take English 001, an intensive remedial course without credit. Students with an ESLAT score of 400 to 499 take English 110 which is primarily a grammar and vocabulary building course. These students then continue in English 114 in their second semester. English 114 is also the first-semester course for students with a score between 500 and 699 who take the intermediate sequence English 114 and English 115. Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico also offers English 114 Honors/Continental for Advanced Placement students and those in the Honors Program. However, this course is not frequently offered.

Students with a strong background in English (exact CEEB scores not yet decided upon) take English 213 and English 214, Advanced Reading and Advanced Composition, respectively.

Students who have participated in and taken the exam of the College Board Advanced Placement Program in English are not given university credits automatically (regardless of the scores obtained) but are instead placed in English 114 and English 115, unless they challenge this decision.

The following Chart # 11 gives an overview of placement criteria at the Pontifical Catholic University in Ponce:

Chart # 11

Course(s)	CEEB (ESLAT) Scores or other criteria
English 001	200 - 399
English 110 (English 114)	400 - 499
English 114 - 115	500 - 699 or placement by director or satisfactory completion of English 110
English 114* Honors/Continental English 115* Honors/Continental	Advanced placement and Admission to Honors Program
English 213 English 214	Satisfactory completion of English 114 or direct placement by directors Satisfactory completion of English 114 or advanced placement

The Pontifical Catholic University in Ponce submitted the most detailed and structured syllabi for all their first-year courses in English. Following the same overall format, the syllabi did not only contain information about course description, objectives, evaluation, textbooks, and bibliographies as most syllabi do, but also provided detailed charts that list the specific objectives by TASK, COURSE CONTENT and SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES for each task within each objective. Thus, the syllabi gave a detailed account of every aspect of the course.

In the following, the courses or course sequences are analyzed and their most characteristic features described.

ENGLISH 001 PRE-BASIC ENGLISH

DESCRIPTION

Students who score between 200 and 399 on the English section of the College Board Entrance Examination are placed in Pre-basic English 001 which according to the syllabus is

an intensive remedial course that focuses on grammar and oral skills. There is an emphasis on vocabulary improvement developed through the integration of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. (Syllabus, p. 1)

No credits are granted for this Pass/Non-Pass course which meets for three hours per week and requires further practice in the language lab. The number of students is limited to 25 per section.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

As mentioned above, students who score between 200 and 399 on the English section of the College Board Entrance Examination (ESLAT) are placed in English 001.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The general objectives are, according to the nature of the course, broken down into the four language skills that this course practices and emphasizes, i. e., listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing. Within each of these categories, basic oral and written communication skills are included.

Listening and speaking skills are practiced on the sentence level by asking and answering questions. Students practice reading and writing within the parameters of grammar and vocabulary presented throughout the course.

CONTENT

A detailed chart that forms part of the syllabus lists the specific tasks and their content within each of the four language skills. To summarize them here would not do them justice and would go beyond the scope

of this analysis. However, they are included in Appendix E for further information.

Overall, this course reviews and reinforces students' basic oral and written communication skills including but not limited to pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, reading comprehension, and the mechanics of writing. Writing is practiced primarily on the sentence and paragraph level.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Despite its overall detailed nature, methodological remarks are not made in the syllabus, except for a list of suggested activities for each of the tasks within specific objectives. In the objectives Listening and Speaking, minimal pair drills, repetition and substitution drills, completion and transformation drills, mim-mem exercises are mentioned. These types of exercises form an integral component of the audio-lingual method which seems to be predominant in the development of students' oral communication skills in this course. Since these exercises are complemented by role-playing, pair practice, and other small group activities (section size is limited to 25 students), it can be assumed that cooperative learning strategies are incorporated as well.

TEXTBOOK(S)

Students use Betty Azar's *Basic English Grammar*, 1984 (more recent edition available), published by Prentice Hall Regents. This grammar handbook and workbook is a widely used standard textbook for courses of this nature. It provides clear and simple grammar rules, charts, and explanations as well as exercises mostly on the sentence level and seems to be well – suited for the type of course described in the syllabus.

ENGLISH 110 GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY

DESCRIPTION

The title refers to English 110 as a grammar and vocabulary course. Students with a score between 400 and 499 are placed in this course which, according to the syllabus,

is designed for students who need reinforcement of grammar skills as well as the development of vocabulary. These will be

reinforced through the integration of the four language skills. (p. 1)

The course has a value of three credits and meets for three hours per week.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

As mentioned earlier, students with a score of 400 to 499 on the English section of the College Board Entrance Examination are placed in this course.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The general objectives are listed by language skills and reflect a slightly higher level of achievement than in English 001, but are quite similar. For instance, whereas English 001 states under Speaking "Ask and answer questions as well as converse in short guided communicative activities applying vocabulary and grammar presented throughout the course" (Syllabus, p. 1), English 110 aims to develop the students' ability to

Respond to and phrase questions as well as converse in controlled or free communicative situations (interviewing, dialogues, role playing) applying the grammar, vocabulary, and phonemic distinctions presented. (Syllabus, p. 1)

This observation holds for each of the objectives. Activities are still controlled and limited, but they resemble everyday situations of communication. Overall, it can be summarized that this course is designed to develop students' ability to communicate orally and in writing on a basic level.

CONTENT

A detailed chart that forms part of the syllabus lists the specific tasks and their content within each of the four language skills. To summarize them here would not do them justice and would go beyond the scope of this analysis. However, they are available in Appendix E, should they be needed for any particular aspect.

According to the nature of this course, the content deals primarily with pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, reading with comprehension, and basic writing, such as dictation, sentence completion, and Cloze exercises.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

No particular section of the syllabus indicates any specific method or approach. However, the suggested activities use the terminology of the audio-lingual method and the communicative approach in small groups.

TEXTBOOK(S)

The textbook mentioned in the syllabus is Elaine Kirn and Jack Darcy's *Interactions I: A Communicative Grammar* (1985) published by Prentice Hall Regents which also points to an interactionist approach to second language teaching reflected by the suggested activities.

ENGLISH 114 (BASIC PRINCIPLES OF READING AND WRITING)

ENGLISH 115 (ORAL COMMUNICATION AND LISTENING COMPREHENSION)

DESCRIPTION

It is interesting to note that the course numbers English 114 and English 115 do not indicate a sequential order in which the students take these courses. Students who obtained a score between 500 and 699 on the English portion of the College Entrance Examination Board (or placement by the director or satisfactory completion of English 110) take these courses.

Whereas English 114 develops students' reading and writing abilities, English 115 is designed to enhance the students' oral communication skills. The number of students is limited to 30 per section. Both courses have a three-credit value each.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

As mentioned earlier, the requirements to be admitted to English 114 are either a score between 500 and 699 on the English section of the College Entrance Examination Board, or direct placement by the Director of Freshmen Students or the Direc-

tor of the English & Foreign Languages Department, or satisfactory completion of English 110. English 115 does not indicate a specific CEEB score. Information obtained directly from the Director of the English & Foreign Languages Department indicated that students who have taken the College Board Advanced Placement in English exam are also placed in this level, regardless of their scores, unless this decision is challenged.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Objectives of English 114 are listed within each of the language skills developed: writing, reading, and dictionary skills. The goal in writing is to enable students to write a five-paragraph essay that satisfies the basic conventions of writing using a variety of developmental patterns. The students' reading comprehension is enhanced through the practice of reading strategies and by learning how to use a dictionary for reading and writing effectively.

English 115, on the other hand, develops the students' oral communication skills, including the phonological patterns of English, form and meaning of linguistic elements, and comprehension of native speech at normal speed. Listening skills are reinforced in the language laboratory.

CONTENT

A detailed chart forms part of the syllabus and lists the specific Tasks, Course Content, and Suggested Activities for each skill developed in each of the two courses (Writing, Reading, and Dictionary skills in English 114; Listening and Speaking in English 115). Although a detailed report on these tasks and their specific content would be beyond the scope of this analysis, the effort and diligence that went into the design of these courses is evident and need to be mentioned. Syllabi are included in Appendix E in case any aspect should need further examination.

In summary, basic grammar elements are reviewed, writing conventions (such as paragraph coherence, unity, and structure, developmental patterns) are introduced and practiced together with a number of reading strategies (such as making inferences, distinguishing between opinion and facts, etc.) in English 114. Moreover, vocabulary building strategies are expanded in the development of both reading and writing.

The content of English 115 deals with the phonological pattern of English and a variety of listening and speaking exercises. These include, but are not limited to, repetition and practice drills, conducting interviews, carrying on a conversation in different social situations, relating personal experiences and feelings, and recalling specific information orally.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Development of students' writing and reading abilities seems to be achieved in a traditional approach. The Suggested Activities column in the syllabus lists exercises such as filling in blanks, multiple choice, picture description, relating past experiences, finding topic sentences and supporting details, narrating an unforgettable experience, and describing a favorite person.

Reading comprehension is enhanced through oral and written questions, multiple choice exercises, sequencing of events, discussion of articles, distinction between facts and opinions, completion of a narrative, and other similar types of assignments.

In English 115, listening and speaking skills are developed through pattern drills and in the context of communication. Meaning differentiating intonation is practiced also. Dialogues, message taking, interviewing different people, participation in debates and in skits, role play in specific situations, and word game activities show the large variety of possibilities presented in the Suggested Activities column in the syllabus for English 115 to develop the students' oral communication skills. It seems that the emphasis in English 115 is the creation of real life situations in the ESL classroom, which some ESL researchers regard as one of the conditions for successful second language acquisition.

TEXTBOOK(S)

Two textbooks are used in English 114: John Ellis et. al.'s *Write On! A Grammar-Composition Workbook*, 1994, published by Plaza Mayor, San Juan; and Elaine Kirm and Pamela Hartmann's *Interactions II: A Reading Skills Book*, 1990, published by McGraw Hill. Both books seem to be particularly well – suited for the purpose of this course.

Clarice Jones and Jean H. Miculka's *Speaking American English*, 1992, published by

South-Western Publishing Co. is the textbook for English 115. Again, this is an appropriate textbook for the development of the skills that this course emphasizes.

ENGLISH 114 HONORS/CONTINENTALS

DESCRIPTION

English 114 Honors/Continental is a special course for high achieving students admitted to the Honors Program and through advanced placement. This course

is designed to strengthen, develop, and enrich writing and reading habits in students admitted to the honors program. The writing component leads the students from the development of an effective paragraph using different writing styles to the completion of a five-paragraph essay. The reading component emphasizes comprehension and analysis of different methods of paragraph development as well as the use of specific reading strategies in fictional and non-fictional selections. (Syllabus, p. 1)

The similarity to the regular English 114 is obvious and probably intentional since they both share the same course number. This course seems to develop the same language skills (reading and writing) as the regular English 114, but on a more advanced achievement level and based on readings selected from both non-fiction and fiction.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

The syllabus does not clarify whether advanced placement refers to the College Board's Advanced Placement program in English or a university-internal placement for students of the Honors Program. Exact College Board Entrance Examination scores in English have not been established yet, but a score in the upper 600/700 range is contemplated.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Since this section of the syllabus is very similar to the corresponding section of the regular English 114 course, we will not discuss it in detail. (For more information, the corresponding syllabus is referred to in Appendix E.) The only difference is the addition

of reading fiction as well as non-fiction and the introduction of devices necessary for literary analysis and writing about literature.

CONTENT

In English 114 Honors/Continental, grammar elements are not mentioned in the syllabus, as they are in the regular course. Otherwise, the specific content is very similar. Some skills, such as identification of main ideas and note taking for example are added to the reading strategies and writing skills, respectively. But basically, English 114 Honors/Continental is a course designed to develop students' writing ability through reading fiction and non-fiction.

METHODOLOGICAL ACTIVITIES

No reference is made to any approach or technique used in the development of the skills mentioned. The bibliography emphasizes the reading-writing connection. References to the teaching of writing do not seem to include the teaching of writing as a process.

TEXTBOOK(S)

The textbook used in this course according to the syllabus is Susan Fawcett and Alvin Sandberg's *Evergreen with Readings: A Guide to Writing*, 1992, published by Houghton Mifflin Company.

ENGLISH 213 (ADVANCED READING)

ENGLISH 214 (ADVANCED COMPOSITION)

DESCRIPTION

Students with a strong background in English take English 213 (Advanced Reading) and English 214 (Advanced Composition). For both courses, English 114 is a prerequisite, but students can also be placed directly in English 213 by the Director of Freshmen Students or the Director of the Department of English & Foreign Languages and in English 214 through advanced placement. Again, it is not stated whether "advanced placement" (not capitalized) refers to internal (Pontifical Catholic Uni-

versity) or external (College Board Advanced Placement Program in English) criteria. Equally, the syllabi do not indicate whether these two courses form a connected sequence or provide a choice since English 214 only mentions English 114 as a pre-requisite, not English 213. Both courses have a three-credit value.

According to its description, English 213

offers an intensive reading experience to develop reading skills. In addition to the textbook, selections from magazines, newspapers, and other sources are used. Writing skills previously learned in pre-requisite courses will be applied based on reading material covered in the course. (Syllabus, p. 1)

English 214, on the other hand,

offers the student an intensive experience in English essay-writing, with review of grammatical and syntactical structures. (Syllabus, p. 1)

These two courses could, but do not have to, be a sequence.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

See remarks and observations above under DESCRIPTION and also Chart # 11.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Based on non-fiction reading materials, students enhance their reading comprehension, critical and analytical abilities and increase their passive vocabulary in English 213.

English 214 aims to develop the students' writing skills to enable them to "write a 500-word essay which incorporates the elements of good writing, using various strategies of writing" (Syllabus, p. 1) and to write effective paragraphs.

The affective domain is mentioned in English 214. The syllabus states that "the students will reinforce Catholic values, adopting a Catholic point of view in their writing" (Syllabus, p. 4). English 214 also includes the psychomotor area where "the students will be encouraged to use proper penmanship, formal headings, and margins when writing." (Syllabus, p. 4)

CONTENT

The content of both courses is congruent with their respective objectives. English 213 develops reading skills, such as recognition skills (theme, main idea, major and minor details, setting, characters, and plot, and sequence of events), inference level skills (distinction between fact and opinion, comparison and contrast, cause and effect, outcomes), features of writer's craft (shades of meaning, point of view, methods of paragraph organization), recognition of different types of essays (narrative, expository, etc.) and vocabulary building strategies.

The content of English 214 (Advanced Composition) reflects the traditional approach to teaching writing through pre-writing techniques, outlining, writing the thesis statement and the introductory paragraph, developing the body of the essay, and writing the concluding paragraph. Basic elements of "good" writing, such as clarity, unity, coherence, conciseness, and correctness are also included. Syntactical structures and other grammatical elements are reviewed as they are needed in writing. This course description resembles very much that of a stateside first-semester writing course.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Typical activities are suggested to develop students' reading skills. No specific indications as to the methods used by the instructors are provided in the English 213 syllabus.

The English 214 syllabus lists the following teaching strategies: lectures, class discussions, reading and grammar exercises, outlining, writing (done individually and in groups) and optional special projects. It is difficult to infer any particular approach from these strategies, but they seem to point to the traditional approach to develop students' writing skills.

TEXTBOOK(S)

The textbook in English 213 is Haverman, Wiener's *Basic Reading Skills Handbook*, 1994, published by Houghton Mifflin Company, together with the computer study modules that accompany the textbook. Audio-visual aids, an English dictionary, and library materials are also used.

In English 214 Regina Smalley and Mary Ruetten's *Refining Composition Skills* (no further

bibliographical details provided), and an English dictionary are used to develop students' writing skills.

14. Polytechnic University of PR

INTRODUCTION

Polytechnic University of PR offers its courses on a trimester schedule. Thus, students take traditional second-year courses already during their first year. For the purpose of this study, however, we have considered only those courses that are comparable to the first-year curriculum in English based on a semester schedule.

We had received insufficient and, at times, contradictory information, and, although the analysis here is primarily based on the written material submitted, it also includes information obtained verbally from the two different offices involved. The first two courses, English 100 and English 110, are offered by the Office for Incoming Students and Retention (ODRE), whereas the following course, English 111, and all other second-year (English 251) and upper level English courses are offered by English professors in the Faculty of Arts, Science and Technology.

The basic English curriculum at the Polytechnic University of P.R. is divided into three different levels using primarily the students' scores on the English portion of the College Board Entrance Examination. The majority of incoming students are placed in English 100 (300 - 599). However, they can test out of this course on the basis of a diagnostic test administered by the University. If students obtain a score of 80% or higher, they take the following course, English 110, which is designed for students with a CEEB score between 600 - 749. Those students who obtain a CEEB score between 750 - 800 immediately take the second trimester course, English 111, followed by English 251 which would already be a second-year course in a traditional semester-schedule.

Students continue to take English courses after the first year, some in accordance with their concentrations. Although second- and third-year syllabi have also been provided by the Polytechnic University of

Puerto Rico, they have not been included in the analysis since the focus of this study is the first-year curriculum, but they are available in Appendix E.

The first-year curriculum in English at the Polytechnic University of Puerto Rico can be summarized as follows:

CHART 12

Course(s)	CEEB (ESLAT) Scores
English 100	300 - 599
English 110	600 - 749
English 111	750 - 800

**ENGLISH 100
PREPARATORY ENGLISH**

DESCRIPTION

From the description, it can be observed that this is a basic course in English as a second language. In particular

It intends to give them a command of the fundamental structure on [sic] the English Language. The over [sic] approach is used. Skills in reading and writing are developed. (Syllabus, p. 1)

This trimester course has a value of three (3) credits; the number of contact hours per week is not mentioned. The syllabus states that students can test out of this course if they obtain a score of 80% or higher on a diagnostic examination in which case they take English 110. (See below.)

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

According to the information submitted, this course was designed for students who obtained a CEEB score between 300 and 599. It is interesting to note the 300-point range in one course and to compare it with other institutions where the cut-off point for the **advanced level** is at a CEEB score of 599. It also seems that the course was not designed with the

student in the upper half of the range in mind, but rather for those that cannot test out of it. For further details, see also Chart # 12 in the Introduction.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The cognitive part in this component of the syllabus reflects the strengthening of the students’ oral and written communication skills as they pertain to their academic and professional lives. Listening and speaking skills are practiced in simple forms, everyday conversations and by asking and answering questions. The development of students’ reading strategies (such as making inferences, predictions, skimming, scanning, vocabulary building skills) and their writing abilities (not further specified) form the gist of this course.

The affective domain aims at helping students to lose their “fear of trying to speak English” (Syllabus, p. 1) and to improve their attitude towards reading (ibid., p. 2).

CONTENT

The content of English 100 consists primarily of grammar elements as well as reading strategies. Although the development of students’ writing ability is mentioned in the General Objectives, it is neither included in the Specific Objectives, nor in the Content part of the syllabus. A detailed list of basic grammar elements, such as verb tenses, pronouns, possessive forms, prepositions, and adjectives is provided. The content in Reading is specified in terms of identification and formulation of the topic and the main idea of selections and the distinction between facts and opinions.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

The syllabus contains a section on Methodology, but mentions only oral drills, reading and writing as well as question and answer exercises, drills on the board, and home assignments. It is not possible to infer a single method or approach to teaching from this information. The term drills is part of the audio-lingual method, and it could very well be that the oral approach used to develop the students’ listening and speaking skills is based on this method. However, the rest of the activities form part of any teaching technique.

TEXTBOOK(S)

The textbook in this course is *Success - Communicating in English*, Book 3, by Michael Walker, published by Addison Wesley, (1995). (See also section on Textbook(s) below.)

ENGLISH 110 - ENGLISH 111 (ENGLISH READING AND WRITING)

DESCRIPTION

These courses are also offered on a trimester basis and meet for two-hour lecture periods twice a week. Both courses have a value of three credits each. English 110 is a pre-requisite for English 111.

The course description for English 110 states that

Emphasis is placed on listening, speaking, reading, and writing to increase students' capability for establishing logical thoughts. It also improves the students' ability in reading and gives them a command of the fundamental structure of the English language. (p. 1)

According to this description, the course is basic in its character which is confirmed by the objectives listed. (See Goals and Objectives below.)

English 111 (English Reading and Writing) is the third trimester course the students take, unless they tested out of English 100, in which case it is the second. It is

designed to develop reading and thinking skills necessary to comprehend a reading text in a meaningful way. It focuses on oral and written answers of discussion questions and summaries of selections discussed in class. (Syllabus, p. 1)

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

There seems to be a contradiction between the high CEEB scores (between 600 and 749) mentioned in English 110 and the basic character of both courses according to the syllabi.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

English 110 is designed to develop the students' proficiency in reading in English as a second language and their basic writing skills for academic and professional purposes. The students also enhance

their knowledge about the basic grammatical structures and increase their vocabulary. Writing is taught on the sentence and paragraph level and includes summaries.

Specific reading and writing skills included in English 110 are further developed in English 111. Vocabulary building strategies and the elements of the short story are added in English 111. Writing includes development of different types of paragraphs.

The affective domain is addressed briefly in English 111 which states that the "course is designed to help students develop a positive attitude toward reading literary genres such as poems, short stories, and essays." (Syllabus, p. 1).

CONTENT

English 110 and 111 are designed to develop students' oral and written communication skills. It seems that all four language areas are equally developed together with basic grammar and vocabulary in English 110. The following semester, the short story component is added, and the students refine and reinforce their reading and writing skills. English 111 is basically a course that helps the students to increase their language skills.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Whereas the English 111 syllabus does not include this component, in English 110 peer tutoring and cooperative learning are mentioned. No further explanations are given, and it can be assumed that students work in small groups on joint projects in the classroom, which would create a collaborative environment.

TEXTBOOK(S)

Textbooks are listed for both courses. The textbook and workbook used in English 110 are *Success - Communicating in English* and the *Bonus Practice Book #4*, both by Michael Walker, published by Addison Wesley Longman (1995). This textbook integrates the four language skills and addresses the young adult. The textbook in English 111 is *Mosaic II - A Reading Skills Book* by Brenda Wegmann and Miki Prijic Knezevic, published by McGraw Hill (1990). The readings in this book include excerpts from textbooks, magazines, and poetry among other sources. Both books are for students of English as a second language.

Chapter 3

Synthesis: Identification of Common Elements

Introduction

Through the analysis and description of the first-year curricula in English at the fourteen (14) participating universities in Chapter 2, a number of common elements could be identified, despite the obvious differences and discrepancies that exist from one institution's curriculum to another. Chapter 3 highlights this common ground using the descriptors and sections that formed the basis of Chapter 2. However, for reasons of clarity, the sequence will be altered, i.e. we will begin with the discussion of Achievement Levels. Then, in order to avoid repetitions, the categories of Description, Goals and Objectives, and Content will be dealt with together in one section. Methodological Observations and Textbook(s) will follow as two separate sections.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

It is interesting to note that the majority of universities place their incoming freshman students according to their achievement levels identified by the scores they obtained on the College Board Entrance Examination. Twelve out of fourteen institutions offer their students from two to four different levels of English, with six universities/campuses providing courses at four different

achievement levels. Of course, the larger the number of students, the more diversity the first-year curriculum in English reflects so that the different needs of their students can be adequately served.

The three levels that can usually be found in the first-year curricula in English at the participating universities/campuses are: basic, intermediate, and advanced levels. Except for one institution, the "cut-off" points vary from 50 up to 100 points by universities/campuses. Those institutions that offer four levels, usually subdivide their basic level and add a Pre-basic course designed for students whose background is insufficient to start at the basic level. The lowest cut-off point for the advanced level is 600 on the CEEB.

Unfortunately, only few universities/campuses indicated at what level most of their students are placed although they had apparently been asked to do so. The level that usually receives the largest number of students was not indicated in most cases. For those institutions/campuses that did provide this information, we could observe that the majority of students were placed in courses at the basic level, i.e. their students scored in the 300/400 range on the English section of the College Board Entrance Examination. In one university/campus 85% of their August 1996 freshman population entered the

basic level. Unfortunately, insufficient data do not allow for generalizations. However, it would be interesting to analyze further students' achievement/placement levels in order to obtain a more accurate student profile in English when they begin their studies in higher education.

The data we have received with regard to the College Board Advanced Placement Program in English are insufficient because very few universities/campuses indicated for which courses their institutions grant credits. Some additional information was obtained verbally. In general, we can observe that universities grant six (6) credits for the two advanced level courses in English if students obtained a score of 4 or 5 on the Advanced Placement Test. Only one institution indicated that it does not grant credits automatically, but uses the test results instead for placement of students in their advanced level courses, unless this decision is challenged by the student. One institution/campus uses the results of the Advanced Placement Test for placement purposes.

DESCRIPTION - GOALS AND OBJECTIVES-CONTENT

Course Descriptions: In general, course descriptions reveal the basic focus and character of the courses offered. However, it is only through the general and specific objectives that these courses are "given life" and substance and can be better understood and appreciated.

All courses at the basic, intermediate, and advanced levels in English have a value of three credits. It is interesting to note that pre-basic courses are either not given any academic credit, or they do not count for degree requirements. Some institutions specify that students have to obtain a minimum passing grade of "C" in these courses to take basic level courses.

All semester courses meet for three hours in the classroom, except for one institution where they meet for 3 ½ hours. One institution with a trimester schedule offers two two-hour classes per week. In addition to classroom work, most pre-basic and basic level students get further practice in a language -, or reading -, or tutorial lab (or a combination of these), thereby increasing the students' exposure to the target language. Some institutions offer additional lab time to their intermediate level students. No institution requires

additional lab work from students at the advanced level. One university campus mentions specifically the use of computer software in the lab to develop students' reading skills.

Goals and Objectives: Most syllabi do not make a distinction between these concepts and list course objectives only. Some institutions/campuses distinguish between general and specific objectives, others list objectives only. For the purpose of this study, a general approach to these terms was adopted. I looked at **what** was stated rather than **where** something was mentioned.

An overwhelming majority of courses at all levels, even at the advanced level, aim to develop the students' oral and written language skills. At all institutions, language skills mean communication skills in English with one institution/campus developing some translation skills as well. Even in those courses where literature is the content of the course at the advanced level, literature often becomes the means to develop oral and written language skills in addition to literary knowledge.

Another common element is the separate list of objectives regarding the four language skills broken down into listening, speaking, reading, and writing and dealt with in that sequence in most cases. Usually, listening and speaking skills are emphasized at the less advanced levels; reading and writing at the intermediate level. Writing about and reading literary works are the primary focus at the advanced level (minimum CEEB score 600).

At times, we are reminded of the audio-lingual method with its sequential approach to develop language skills. However, there is an important difference that we can observe now: language skills are no longer dealt with in isolation but as a whole, and meaning is stressed at all levels. Most syllabi reflect an integrated approach of enhancing the students' overall language ability with specific emphasis on particular skills in the different courses.

Analysis and discussion of literary works and the development of students' knowledge about and appreciation of literature are only part of the advanced level courses (CEEB score 600 or above). Thus, only the six (6) institutions/campuses that offer an advanced level curriculum provide their freshman students with this type of experience. Other institutions/campuses may offer this kind of course to their students at a later time.

Another interesting point is the small number of institutions that mention objectives in the affective domain. Especially at the pre-basic and basic levels, this component mostly refers to the students' motivation to learn English and their general attitude towards the language itself. It seems that these students have not developed a positive attitude towards English and are not sufficiently motivated to make progress in their second language studies when they enter college.

The objectives in the affective domain for students at the intermediate and advanced levels seem to address human and cultural as well as social values, respect towards others rather than attitude towards the language and motivation to advance in the language (as in the basic level). Usually, the goal at the advanced level is to develop the students' enjoyment of literature and their understanding and appreciation of others who may be different in some way. Issues mentioned include such aspects as gender, race, and nationality.

Most curricula aim to achieve these objectives through the analysis and discussion of literary works. It seems all three value levels in the affective domain from the fundamental value of receiving, to responding, to the third level of valuing (Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia, 1964) are addressed at some point at the advanced level. However, they cannot be found in the syllabi in any systematic way or embedded within a particular paradigm.

Content: The content of most first-year curricula in English reflect overwhelmingly the development of communication skills in the students' second language. Only in the advanced level courses offered at six out of 14 institutions, first-year students discuss and analyze literary works. According to the syllabi, at least one course at the advanced level is an introduction to literature at these institutions.

We could further observe that grammar elements are mostly addressed, as can be expected, in the pre-basic and basic courses, less so at the intermediate level, and only to a limited extent at the advanced level. Across all institutions, the focus on form (emphasis on grammatical elements and accuracy) shifts towards the primary focus of developing stu-

dents' fluency with accuracy in oral and written communication with increased language ability.

Oral and written communication skills are developed in the basic level with a practical view to everyday use of the English language and with academic as well as professional goals in mind. Students are guided in their listening and speaking skills in order to be able to take messages in English, carry out simple conversations, follow instructions, summarize information provided orally (recall), and ask and answer questions.

Their reading and writing skills are developed at the intermediate level through vocabulary building techniques and the practice of specific strategies that the students can use in any language (Spanish or English), such as identification of main ideas and details, distinguishing between fact and opinion, organizational patterns of development of a paragraph and/or essay, outlining, pre-writing, drafting, and revising. In this way, the English courses are designed to develop specific skills that the students need in other academic subjects and in their careers later on.

In general, the first-year course sequences at the pre-basic, basic, and intermediate levels reflect a clear shift from a liberal arts curriculum some twenty years ago to one that is more oriented to meet the students' future academic and professional needs. The curricula at these levels that form the basis for the present study seem to indicate that their primary goal is to equip students with the necessary tools to advance in their academic studies and be prepared for their professional careers. With this goal in mind, they aim to enable students to communicate in English both orally and in writing.

The advanced level courses, however, are more geared towards providing these students with the additional experience of reading literature for analysis, enjoyment, and appreciation but also to learn about other cultures, different times and social contexts, to address human values, and to form "the educated person" as a whole. Since the language of communication in these courses is English, communication skills are, of course, further developed as well.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

It is interesting to note that this component was addressed directly and specifically only in some syllabi. This “lack” may be a reaction to the over-emphasis of one method (audio-lingual) over any other approach in the 1970’s. After a decade of experimenting with new “Designer Methods” (David Nunan, 1991), language teachers now use their own knowledge, experience, and judgment to choose the appropriate and optimal approach eclectically to develop the desired objectives in their particular students.

However, even if this section is not directly mentioned in the syllabi, some general trends become obvious. These tendencies consist of

- (a) A communicative approach to language teaching in a cooperative learning environment including group work. This approach often leads to collaborative projects and attempts to create a natural setting for classroom learning;

- (b) The teaching of grammar in the context of oral and/or written communication, not in isolation;
- (c) The process approach to writing; and
- (d) Portfolio assessment in writing.

In general, the syllabi reflect recent findings and developments in the second language teaching/learning process and their application to the classroom.

TEXTBOOK(S)

Whereas some syllabi provide the title, author(s), year, and publishing company of the textbook(s), others only specify the type of textbook(s) used, and still others give incomplete bibliographical information or none at all. However, with this limited information, an effort was made to provide a list of the textbooks mentioned in the syllabi. This list is categorized by the two communication skills (oral: listening and speaking; and written: reading and writing) and literature. (See Appendix C.)

Chapter 4

College Board Advanced Level Course in English Comparative Analysis

Advanced Level Program In English

Goals and Objectives, Content, Methodological Observations, and Textbooks.

INTRODUCTION

The analysis of the College Board Advanced Level Program (also called Advanced Level Course in English) is based on the 1995 edition of the Course Description and Teacher's Guide. It does not only serve as a syllabus and curriculum of the one-year program but also as a "mentor" to the teacher and the administrators at participating high schools. It addresses a variety of issues in addition to those that usually form part of a teaching syllabus and is, therefore, much longer (39 pages).

Among these additional issues are, for example, the type of students that should be selected to participate in this course and the type of teacher that should be entrusted with working with these students. Desirable physical facilities are also mentioned. This study will focus on the identified categories, i.e. Description, Achievement Levels,

DESCRIPTION

Overall, the Advanced Level Program in English consists of an ambitious curriculum that can be compared to the curriculum at the advanced level at the six institutions/campuses that offer that particular level. According to the general course description,

The Advanced Level Program in English is equivalent to an intermediate level first-year university course with emphasis on literature and composition. (Guide, p. 1)

Based on reading representative works in five literary genres (essays, short stories, novels, drama, and poetry), the course is designed to prepare "the students for broader independent reading" (ibid.) and to develop the students' oral and written communication skills. In this one-year course,

the students are trained in reading and interpreting, understanding the organization of literary works, forming opinions about what

they have read, and presenting and defending their opinions effectively. (ibid.)

The course is divided into four Units: Oral Communication Skills; The Essay and Expository Writing; Prose Fiction; and Poetry and Drama. Each Unit is described in a separate syllabus which states the Description, General and Specific Objectives, Suggested Activities (as well as additional desirable and enrichment activities), Evaluation Criteria, and Teaching Strategies and/or Suggestions. In the following, a brief overview and summary of each Unit is provided.

UNIT 1: **ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

The activities in this Unit are designed to provide the students with an effective command in communicating information, opinions, ideas, etc. in formal and informal speech situations. The Guide considers this command of oral communication skills “fundamental to the development of advanced reading and writing.” (Guide, p. 3)

UNIT 2: **THE ESSAY AND EXPOSITORY WRITING**

This Unit is designed to prepare students for their academic and professional life in Puerto Rico by enabling them “to read and write technical and expository material in English. ... [It] includes the reading, discussion, and analysis of prose selections in order to improve the students’ basic reading and interpretive skills.” (ibid.) As in the previous Unit, it is stressed that the work done here will allow students to do “advanced work in the analysis of fiction, poetry, and drama.” (ibid.) Thus, Unit 1 and Unit 2 are seen as providing the students with the necessary competencies to reach the more advanced goals in Units 3 and 4: the analysis and discussion of Prose Fiction, and Poetry and Drama, respectively.

UNIT 3: **PROSE FICTION**

According to the description, Unit 3 studies

the elements of fiction through readings in the short story and the novel. Practice in the oral and written literary analysis of these readings should enable the students to evaluate fiction. (ibid.)

From the description it is clear, that the purpose of this Unit is to develop the students’ oral and written ability for literary analysis.

UNIT 4: **POETRY AND DRAMA**

Through reading poems and plays, the students’ ability to understand, interpret, and appreciate poetry and drama is to be developed in this particular Unit. The hierarchical nature of these Units becomes evident through their descriptions. The purpose of the course is to develop the students’ ability to analyze and discuss literary works critically (Units 3 and 4), with Units 1 and 2 preparing them for this goal.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

The College Board Teacher’s Guide specifies the type of student that should be accepted in this course rather than the selection procedures themselves. According to the Guide, the students should have completed English 10 and 11 and demonstrate a high intellectual capacity as well as good study habits, speak and understand oral and written English with ease and be highly motivated to continue their studies at a university. (P. 2)

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Although the Guide states General and Specific Objectives separately for each Unit, they are discussed here together to focus more clearly on the specific purpose of this study. For more details, the Teacher’s Guide can be consulted, and reference to the Guide is established throughout this discussion.

According to the Objectives of each Unit, the Advanced Placement Course in English is designed to develop the students’ ability “to organize and express their thoughts in logical sequence” (Guide, p. 6) orally and in writing in formal and informal situations, to read with comprehension and interpret representative literary works from non-fiction and fiction (p. 23) and to foster the enjoyment of poetry (p. 30).

Among the objectives in **Unit 1 (Oral Communication Skills)**, the Guide lists students’ ability to organize and express their thoughts in logical sequence, to evaluate attitudes and values, and to distinguish between facts and opinions among

other skills (pp. 5-6). In **Unit 2 (The Essay and Expository Writing)** the objectives specify the development of the students' basic reading and interpretative as well as writing skills and the ability to evaluate non-fiction (p. 16). **Unit 3 (Prose Fiction)** states further development of students' reading and comprehension skills as well as their ability to identify and discuss the elements, methods, and techniques of analysis in prose fiction (p. 23), and to "see the relation between poetry and other genres as forms of communication" (p. 30) in **Unit 4 (Poetry and Drama)**.

An analysis of the Specific Objectives for each Unit confirms the advanced level and traditional outline of this course, insofar as it develops students' oral and written communication skills primarily with the purpose of discussing and analyzing literary works in fiction and non-fiction. In that respect, it seems to be a course in freshman composition and an introductory course in literature (pp. 20, 23-24, 30).

With regard to grammatical elements, Unit 1 (Oral Communication) mentions the use of correct English structure and idiomatic English as specific objectives without further details. (p. 6) Grammatical elements are identified more specifically in Unit 2 (Expository Writing, p. 20) and could be compared to the test specifications for the Grammar Part on the Advanced Placement Test to ensure test validity.

The affective domain is addressed in particular in Units 3 and 4 which mention students' increased ability to appreciate prose fiction (p. 23) and enjoy poetry (p. 30), respectively. The affective domain is primarily designed to influence students' attitude towards literature in a positive way.

CONTENT

The content of the first half of the course (Units 1 and 2) is designed to develop students' oral and written communication skills to enable them to discuss and analyze literary works critically. The second half of the course (Units 3 and 4) deals with the elements of prose fiction, poetry, and drama as well as methods and techniques of analysis in the different genres. The highly advanced character of these two units is evidenced not only by the specific objectives but also the essential, desirable, and enriching activities (the latter two are optional) that

are listed in the second half of the course (pp. 24-25, 31, 32-33).

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Each Unit includes a detailed section specifying the suggested essential activities and additional desirable and enriching activities. These suggestions show a wide variety of possible classroom procedures where formal and informal real life situations in oral and written communication are practiced in the first two Units.

The discussion method where the teacher primarily functions as a moderator is recommended to develop students' ability to read literary works with understanding and to analyze and discuss literature using the appropriate terms. The use of audio and audio-visual material is recommended in Unit 4 for the analysis of poetry and drama. It is also suggested to invite local poets and playwrights to speak to the class (p. 33). We can observe an extraordinary effort in all Units to make the learning experience as meaningful as possible to the students and to help them establish a connection between their classroom and the "real" world outside.

Units 1, 3, and 4 include reference material for the teacher with regard to the content as well as teaching procedure in each Unit. Teaching Oral Communication (pp. 10-15) is the Appendix to Unit 1, Elements of the Short Story is the Appendix to Unit 3 (pp. 27-29), and Elements of Poetry (pp. 34-36), and How to Read a Play (pp. 37-39) are the Appendixes to Unit 4. The only Unit without any separate reference material is Unit 2 on The Essay and Expository Writing. Material on the approach to teaching writing as a process in a classroom setting could be added to this Unit, although teacher's references to that effect are included in the bibliography section Suggested Texts and References. (pp. 4-6)

TEXTBOOK(S)

The list of suggested texts and references provided for each Unit is comprehensive and allows for sufficient choice to meet the needs of different schools in the public as well the private sectors. A copy of the list is provided in Appendix D.

Comparative Analysis

INTRODUCTION

In the following section, the common elements of the first-year curricula in English at the fourteen participating institutions/campuses of higher education in Puerto Rico that were identified in Part II will be compared to the curriculum of the College Board Advanced Level Course in English (ALCE). For the purpose of this comparative analysis, we will use the same criteria as before, i.e. Achievement Levels, Description - Goals and Objectives - Content, Methodological Observations, and Textbooks.

ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS

Most universities assign their incoming freshman students at least to two different levels of achievement: basic or intermediate. Many of them offer a third alternative, the advanced level, to provide a more challenging experience for the better prepared student. The College Board Advanced Placement Course in English, according to its title and curriculum content, is designed for this type of advanced students. However, in its Introduction, the Teacher's Guide states that it "is equivalent to an intermediate level first-year university course with emphasis on literature and composition" (p. 1).

The high school student that qualifies to participate in the Advanced Level Course in English, according to the criteria in the Teacher's Guide, is highly prepared in English, motivated for college studies, and possesses a high intellectual ability (Guide, p. 2). Obviously, this type of student is not the average college student at most universities and would not take an intermediate, but an advanced level course in English.

So the question arises whether the Advanced Placement Course in English is designed as an equivalent to intermediate level first-year university courses in English (as the course description states [Guide, p. 1]) or as an alternative for the exceptionally gifted and well prepared students at the advanced level (as the type of students described and the curriculum seem to indicate [Guide, pp. 2, 3]).

According to the information provided, most universities grant six (6) credits for their highest level courses in English to those students who obtain a high score (4 or 5 in most cases) on the Advanced

Level Course test. This means that the students receive credits for two advanced level courses at most institutions and at the intermediate level at some. Thus, the policy we can observe seems to be guided by the highly advanced nature of the Advanced Level Course in English, rather than the College Board's intention to offer a course "equivalent to an intermediate level first-year university course." (Guide, p. 1)

DESCRIPTION - GOALS AND OBJECTIVES - CONTENT

Course Descriptions: All course descriptions seem to be designed primarily to teach English communication skills. For the most part, the descriptions of both the first-year courses at the universities/campuses and the College Board Advanced Level Course in English are organized by oral and written communication skills and further subcategorized into listening and speaking on the one hand and reading and writing on the other. However, it is usually clarified that all four skills are developed in each course and dealt with in context, while specific skills are emphasized in different courses.

Whereas pre-basic and basic levels mostly focus on grammar and the development of students' oral communication skills, intermediate and especially advanced level courses are designed to develop the students' reading and writing skills. At the advanced level, enhancing the students' ability to discuss and analyze literary works is added. The College Board Advanced Level Course in English seems to fit right into the advanced level university course descriptions which, for the most part, develop the students' essay writing skills and their ability for literary analysis of different genres.

Goals and Objectives: A comparison between the Goals and Objectives that the universities/campuses set in their courses and those of the Advanced Level Course in English reveals the very ambitious nature of the latter. The College Board's Advanced Level Program in English sets extremely high goals for the participating twelfth graders. These goals are hardly matched by any of the universities/campuses in this study, not even in their advanced level courses, with the possible exception of two campuses that offer Honors English courses. So it seems that the College Board's Course in English given during the senior year at high schools is even more advanced than the third level (advanced) courses at the university level.

Content: The curricula at the pre-basic, basic, and intermediate university levels are clearly designed to prepare the students in English as their second language for their academic studies and to give them the tools they need in their future professional careers. The advanced level university courses include two additional elements: composition writing and the experience of literature.

The College Board's Advanced Level Program in English is designed to develop students' oral and written communication skills during the first half of the course so that the students are equipped to do the more advanced work during the second half of the program, i.e. discussing and analyzing literary works in fiction and non-fiction. Its content reflects primarily an introductory course in literature and writing, developing also oral communication skills.

With the exception of advanced level courses, most first-year university curricula are designed to prepare students to function in the immediate academic world (e.g. be able to read textbooks in English) and later on in their professional career (e.g. write reports, give oral presentations, write a résumé). On the other hand, university advanced level courses and especially the College Board's Advanced Level Course in English, while not disregarding the professional world tend to reflect the more traditional goal of an educated person in the humanities who is capable of expressing him- or herself appropriately in English orally and in writing and knowledgeable about literature.

METHODOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Whereas only some university syllabi specifically address this component, the Teacher's Guide (1995) for the Advanced Level Course in English provides a great deal of information on this topic. Mostly in quite elaborate and detailed appendixes to Units 1, 3, and 4 and the lists of suggested activities for each Unit in the Teacher's Guide, valuable information is presented about different approaches and techniques to develop the desired skills and knowledge in the students.

The basic difference between methods and approaches suggested in the Teacher's Guide for the Advanced Level Course in English and those in the

university syllabi is that they are specifically outlined in the Guide and can only be inferred in most university syllabi. But both (university syllabi and the Teacher's Guide of the Advanced Level Program in English) reflect a communicative approach to language teaching with an emphasis on interaction in English in the classroom setting.

TEXTBOOK(S)

The list of Suggested Texts and References included in the Teacher's Guide for the Advanced Level Course in English (see Appendix D) is extremely comprehensive and definitely sufficient and appropriate for each of the four Units that form part of this course. It would be interesting to find out which of the suggested texts and references students and teachers do, in fact, use.

A comparison of the list of textbooks mentioned in the university syllabi (see Appendix C) and the College Board's Teacher's Guide for the Advanced Level Course in English (see Appendix D) reveals that mostly different books are used in each. Of course, we do not have this information from all universities because not all syllabi included current textbooks.

None of the textbooks used at the universities for the development of their students' oral skills is mentioned in the College Board's Teacher's Guide. With regard to Writing and Literature, two textbooks in each of the two Units are the same. The Teacher's Guide does not include a specific category of grammar books, but includes some in Unit 2, Writing.

It has to be stressed again at this point that the discussion of textbooks here is based solely on the information provided by the universities in their syllabi. Some university syllabi mention specific titles and/or authors (see Appendix C). Others provide a list of suggested books from which the professors can choose (these lists are not included here), and still others do not mention textbooks at all or specify that they will be selected by the professors teaching the course. Moreover, syllabi that do mention specific textbooks did not always include complete bibliographical entries.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

This study has shown the characteristics of the first-year curricula in English at the universities/campuses that receive ten (10) or more students from the Advanced Level Course in English. There are three basic elements that can be identified in these curricula:

- (1) The distinction of different levels (pre-basic/basic; intermediate; and in six institutions/campuses, advanced) can be observed in the majority of institutions/campuses to respond to the varying abilities of students' achievement in English when they enter college. Although all universities / campuses use the students' scores on the English section of the College Entrance Examination Board for placement purposes, cut-off points differ greatly among universities.
- (2) The nature of all courses with the exception of the most advanced courses at some institutions/campuses is primarily geared towards developing students' oral and written communication skills.
- (3) Literary analysis and discussion of works from different genres in the first-year curriculum in English are

offered primarily at the advanced level where this level exists.

Overall, it can be observed that the first-year curricula at the universities/campuses in Puerto Rico are more similar than they are different. The general objective across the curricula is to enable students to understand and respond to oral and written English to an extent that allows them to function in the academic and professional world within the parameter of each level. Of course, a student that starts at the pre-basic level will not reach near target language ability within one year.

It is also interesting to note the congruence between the first-year advanced curriculum at the six universities/campuses and the College Board's Advanced Level Course in English offered to seniors at high schools. A comparison of university course descriptions with the curriculum of the Advanced Level Course in English, shows that the latter is at times more ambitious in its goals and objectives. It seems justified for universities to grant six credits for those students who obtain a high score (usually 4 or 5) on the test at the end of the Advanced Level Course in English.

A discrepancy, however, was observed between the overall advanced nature of the Advanced Level Program in English and the stated purpose of the program. According to the Teacher's Guide, the

purpose is to offer a course that is “equivalent to an intermediate level first-year university course with emphasis on literature and composition” (p. 1).

The Student Guide for The Advanced Level Program in English is not accurate in its description either when it states that “The Course is equivalent in content and difficulty to the first-year English courses offered in most colleges and universities in Puerto Rico” (Student Guide, 1995, p. 1). Depending on the level we are comparing it to, it is probably a lot more difficult than the average first two courses in English that the entering students will be taking at the college level.

Intermediate level university courses primarily enhance oral and written communication skills through reading expository selections and, in some cases, narratives. In general, they are not designed to develop the students’ ability for analysis and discussion of representative works from five literary genres and the enjoyment of literature.

This study has resulted in a multitude of information about first-year university curricula in English in Puerto Rico. It is hoped that these insights can be utilized to the students’ advantage wherever they take English, whether it is during their last year at high school or their first year at the university.

Decisions can only be taken after careful consideration and analysis of the options and their implications for the students. Educational programs have to provide the best possible opportunities so

that all learners can improve their English, from the less proficient to the highly prepared student. It seems that the Advanced Level Course in English is a challenging experience for those students who have already achieved a high level of English before they enter college.

The purpose of this study was (a) to describe first-year university curricula in English, (b) to identify their common elements, and (c) to compare these to the curriculum of the College Board’s Advanced Placement Program. It is my hope that this study has complied with its task and provides the requested information which, in turn, has to be embedded in the wider context of all efforts and analytical data available to the College Board before specific recommendations can be made.

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San Juan, Puerto Rico,

March 7, 1997

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Brumfit, C. J. & Johnson, K. (1979). *The communicative approach to language teaching*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Hunt, K. W. (1965). *Grammatical structures written at three grade levels*. Research Report No. 3, Champaign, IL.: National Council of Teachers of English.

Krathwohl, D. R., Bloom, B. & Masia, B. R. (1964). *Taxonomy of educational objectives*. Handbook H: Affective Domain. New York: David McKay Co.

Lighthown, P. & Spada, N. (1993). *How languages are learned*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Littlewood, W. (1988). *Communicative language teaching*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Miller Cleary, L. & Linn, M. D. (1993). *Linguistics for teachers*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Nunan, D. (1991). *Language teaching methodology: A textbook for teachers*. New York: Prentice Hall.

Oller, J. W. (1993). *Methods that work*. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle Publishers.

Appendixes

Appendix A

TABLE #1 BASIC FIRST-YEAR CURRICULA IN ENGLISH

UNIVERSITY	SEM I	SEM II	CEEB SCORE
UPR-Río Piedras	ENGL 3003 ENGL 3101* ENGL 3103 ENGL 3011 – 3012 (Honors)	ENGL 3004 ENGL 3102* ENGL 3104	480 or less 481 - 580 581 - 680 681+
UPR-Mayagüez	Prebasic: ENGL 0066 ENGL 3101* ENGL 3103 ENGL 3011 – 3012 (Honors)	ENGL 3102* ENGL 3104	469 or less 470 - 569 570 + (Prereq.: 4 or 5 on the CEEB Advanced Placement English Test)
UPR-Arecibo	ENGL 3101* ENGL 3103	ENGL 3102* ENGL 3104	579 or less 580 +
UPR-Humacao	Prebasic: ENGL 0060 ENGL 3101 ENGL 3103	ENGL 3102 ENGL 3104	450 or less 451 - 580 581 +
UPR-Bayamón	ENGL 3101 ENGL 3103	ENGL 3102 ENGL 3104	451 - 580 581 +
UPR-Ponce	ENGL 3101	ENGL 3102	Not indicated
UPR-Carolina	ENGL 3101*	ENGL 3102*	Not indicated
UPR-Cayey	ENGL 3101 ENGL 3103*	ENGL 3102 ENGL 3104*	450 - 599 600 +
UPR-Aguadilla	ENGL 3101 ENGL 3103	ENGL 3102 ENGL 3104	200 - 580 581 +

IAU-Metro	Pre-basic: ENGL 0010 ECSG 1101 ECSG 1201 ECSG 2311*	ECSG 1102 ECSG 1202 ECSG 2312*	399 or less 400 - 499 500 - 599 600 +
IAU-San Germán	Pre-basic: ENGL 0020 ECS 1111 ECS 1113 ECS 2227*	ECS 1112 ECS 2214 ECS 2228	449 or less 450 - 549 550 - 649 650 +
U. of the Sacred Heart	ENGL 031 ENGL 107 ENGL 113 ENGL 121*	ENGL 108 ENGL 114 ENGL 122*	474 or less 475 - 574 575 - 644 645 +
UPC-Ponce	ENGL 001 ENGL 110 (ENGL 114) ENGL 114 ENGL 114* - 115* Honors/Continental Advanced Placement and admission to Honors Program ENGL 213 Satisfactory completion of English 114 or direct placement by directors; ENGL 214 Satisfactory completion of English 114 or advanced placement;	ENGL 115	200 - 399 400 - 499 500 - 699 or administrative placement or satisfactory completion of ENGL 110
Polytechnic U.**	ENGL 100 ENGL 110 ENGL 111 ENGL 251	(Pre-req. Engl. 110) or (equiv. to sec. yr.)	300 - 599 600 - 749 750 - 800

*Students from the Advanced Level Program in English receive 6 credits for these courses (where this information was provided).

** Polytechnic University's courses are based on a trimester schedule

Appendix B

TABLE #2 - GLOSSARY OF TERMS

TERM/CONCEPT	EXPLANATION
1) Description	Includes official course title, course number, number of credits, pre-and co-requisites if applicable.
2) Achievement Levels	This term refers to student placement according to their achievement levels in English, evidenced by their scores on the English section of the College Board (ESLAT) exam (CEEB scores) and/or other criteria.
3) Goals and Objectives Knowledge Skills Affective Domain	<p>Due to the variety in format and scope of syllabi among the universities, this category includes the following areas:</p> <p>Student's knowledge about the language including grammar, vocabulary, the writing and reading process, literature, literary genres analysis, etc.</p> <p>Specific linguistic skills in oral and written communication as well as study skills, library skills, etc.</p> <p>This category includes students' attitude and motivation to increase (a) their knowledge of the English language, (b) their ability to analyze human values, their own self worth, and/or (c) understanding of "otherness" through reading and discussing literature and/or other texts.</p>
4) Content	Refers to material covered in the course in general terms.
5) Methodological observations	This category includes all procedures, techniques, suggested activities, guidelines, references to research in the area, etc., that the faculty follows to reach the objectives and to teach the content of the course.
6) Textbook (s)	This term refers to texts used in class and materials that form part of the course.

Appendix C

TEXTBOOKS

Oral Communication Skills: Listening and Speaking

Dunkel, P. A. & Gorder, C. G. (1987). *Start with Listening*. Heinle & Heinle.

Huizenga, J. & Thomas-Ruzic, M. (1992). *All Talk*. Heinle & Heinle.

Tanka, J. & Most P. (1990). *Interactions I: A Listening/Speaking Book*. McGraw – Hill.

Written Communicaton Skills: Reading

Baker González, J. & Blau, E. (1995). *Building Understanding – A Thematic Approach to Reading Comprehension*. Addison – Wesley.

Blanton L. & Lee, L. (1995). *The Multicultural Workshop: A Reading and Writing Program* (Book 3). Heinle & Heinle.

Dubin, F. & Olshain, E. (1984). *Reading on Purpose: Building Cognitive Skills for Intermediate Learners*. Addison – Wesley.

Flachmann, K. & Flachmann M. (1993). *The Prose Reader: Essays for Thinking Reading, and Writing*. Prentice – Hall.

Haverman & Wiener. (1994). *Basic Reading Skills Handbook*. Houghton Mifflin.

Kirn, E. & Hartmann, P. (1990). *A Reading Skills Book*. Heinle & Heinle.

Levin, G. (1995). *Short Essays*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Myers, L. (1987). *Stories From Latin America*. Prentice Hall.

Smith, L. & Mare, N. N. *Concepts for Today*. Heinle & Heinle.

Walker, M. (1995). *Success – Communicating in English and Bonus Practice*, Book 3 and 4. Addison Wesley Longman.

Wegmann, B & Prijic Knezevic, M. (1990). *Mosaic II – A Reading Skills Book*. McGraw – Hill.

A Short Prose Reader with Argumentation. (1995). No author or other bibliographical information provided.

Patterns and Themes. No further bibliographical information provided.

Written Communication Skills: Writing

Broukal, M. (1996). *From Paragraph to Essay*. Prentice – Hall.

Conlin, M. L. *Patterns Plus*. (No further bibliographical information provided).

Fawcetts, S. & Sandberg, A. (1992). *Evergreen with Reading: A Guide to Writing*. Houghton Mifflin.

Fryenberg, G. & Boardman, C. (1990). *You're in Charge*.

McMahan, S. D. & Funk, R. (1996). *Literature and the Writing Process*. Macmillan.

Pearlman et al. (1989). *Guide of Rapid Revision Workbook*. No further bibliographical details provided.

Reinking, H. & Von der Osten. (ed. not indicated). *Strategies for Successful Writing*. Prentice – Hall.

Smalley, R. & Ruetten, M. *Refining Composition Skills*. No further bibliographical information provided.

Troyka & Nudelman (1990). *Steps in Composition*. Prentice – Hall.

Grammar in the Context of Language

Azar, B. (1992 and 1994). *Fundamentals of English Grammar*. Prentice – Hall.

Blanton L. L. (1988). *Idea Exchange I*. Newbury House.

Broukal, M. (1996). **Weaving it Together.** Book 3 and 4. Heinle and Heinle.

Domenech, H., Monllor, M., Santos, J., & Torres, L. *Roll It*. No further bibliographical information provided.

Kirn, E. & Jack, D. (1990). *Interactions I: A Communicative Grammar*. McGraw – Hill.

Monllor, M., Demonech, H., Torres, L.E. & Santos, J. *Snapshots*. No further bibliographical information provided.

Schoenberg, I. *Focus on Grammar: A Basic Course for Reference and Practice*. (No further bibliographical information provided.)

Literature

Hall, J. B. & Hall, E. *The Realm of Fiction*. (No further bibliographical information provided.)

Kennedy, X. J. (1987). *Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama*. Harper Collins.

Roberts, E. V. & Jacobs, H. E. (Eds.) (1992). *Literature: an Introduction to Reading and Writing*. Prentice – Hall.

Safier, F. (1996). *Impact: Fifty Short Stories*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Simmons & Stern. (1992). *The Short Story*. National Textbook Co.

Dictionaries and Thesauri

In addition to these textbooks, mono- and bilingual dictionaries, and a grammar handbook and thesaurus for writing courses are required by most universities/campuses.

Note: Bibliographical entries are incomplete due to incomplete information in syllabi.

Appendix D

TEXTBOOKS COLLEGE BOARD ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSE*

Oral Communication Skills (Unit One)

1. **Celce-Murcia, Marianne; Donna Brinton and Janet Goodwin.** *Teaching Pronunciation. (Reference book for Teachers)*, 1995.
2. **Dale Paulette and James C. Wolf.** *Speech Communication for International Students.* Prentice – Hall Regents, 1988.
3. **Dunbar, Ronalds and A. E. Heike.** *Building Fluency in English: Conversation Management* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice – Hall, 1985.
4. **Echevarría, Ellen W.** *Speaking on Issues.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1987.
5. **Gilbert, Judy B.** *Clear Speech.* 2nd Ed., Cambridge University Press, 1994.
6. **Hunt, Gary T. and William F. Eadie.** *Interviewing: A Communication Approach.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1987.
7. **Jones, Clarice M. and Jean Miculka.** *Speaking American English.* South-Western Publishing Co., 1992.
8. **Jones, Leo and C. Von Baeyer.** *Functions of American English. (Communication Activities for the Classroom).* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
9. **Rooks, George.** *The Non-Stop Discussion Workbook.* 2nd Ed., Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 1981.

10. **Schechter, Sandra.** *Listening Tasks.* Cambridge University Press, 1994.
11. **Tillit, Bruce and Mary Newton Bruder.** *Speaking Naturally.* Cambridge University Press, 1994.

The Essay and Expository Writing (Unit Two)

1. **Booth Olson, Carol.** *Practical Ideas for Teaching Writing as a Process.* Sacramento, California: Department of Education, 1987.
2. **Clouse, Barbara F.** *Transitions from Reading to Writing.* New York: McGraw – Hill, 1994.
3. **Day, Susan and Elizabeth McMahon.** *The Writer's Resource.* New York: McGraw – Hill, 1988.
4. **Ellis, J. et al.** *Write On! A Grammar Composition Workbook.* Ed. Plaza Mayor, 1994.
5. **Fawcett, Susan and Alvin Sandberg.** *Evergreen (with Reading).* A Guide to Writing. 4th Ed., Houghton Mifflin, 1992.
6. **Krisher, Trudy B.** *Writing for a Reader.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice – Hall, 1995.
7. **Krisher, Trudy B.** *Writing for a Reader: Instructor's Guide.* Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice – Hall, 1995.
8. **Langan, John.** *College Writing Skills with Readings.* 2nd Ed., New York: McGraw – Hill, Inc., 1989.
9. **Lannon, John.** *The Writing Process.* 2nd Ed. Boston: Little, Brown, 1986.

10. **Mackie, Benita and Shirley J. Rompf.** *Building Sentences: Instructor's Manual with Tests.* 3rd. Ed., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice – Hall, 1995.
11. **Mackie, Benita and Shirley J. Rompf.** *Building Sentences.* 3rd. Ed., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice – Hall, 1995.
12. **Muller, Gilbert H. and Harvey S. Weiner.** *The Short Prose Reader.* 7th. Ed., New York: McGraw – Hill, Inc., 1994.
13. **Pemberton, Carol.** *Writing Paragraphs.* Allyn & Bacon, 1991.
14. **Schoen, Carol; Nila Gandhi-Schwatlo and James Vaughn.** *The Writing Experience.* 3rd. Ed., Harper & Collins, 1989.
15. **Smalley, Regina L. and Mary K. Ruetten.** *Refining Composition Skills.* 2nd. Ed., New York: Macmillan, 1986.
16. **Strang, Steven M.** *Writing Exploratory Essays.* Mountain View, California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1995.
17. **Sullivan, Kathleen E.** *Paragraph Practice.* 7th. Ed., New York: MacMillan, 1994.
18. **Werner, Agnes B. et. al.** *Readings in Prose.* 3rd. Ed., Río Piedras, UPR Press, 1980.
19. **Wiener, Harvey S.** *Creating Compositions.* New York: McGraw – Hill, 1987
20. **Withrow, Jean.** *Effective Writing.* Cambridge University Press, 1995.
2. **Baym, Nina; Ronald Gottesman; Laurence B. Holland; David Kalstone; Francis Murphy; Hershell Parker; William H. Pritchard; and Patricia B. Wallace.** *The Norton Anthology of American Literature.* Shorter 3rd. Ed., New York: Norton , 1989.
3. **Buscemi, Santi and Charlotte Smith.** *75 Reading Plus.* 2nd. Ed., New York: McGraw – Hill, Inc., 1994.
4. **Crews, Frederick.** *The Random House Handbook.* 6th. Ed., New York: McGraw – Hill, 1994.
5. **Diyanni, Robert.** *Literature: Reading, Fiction, Poetry, Drama, and the Essay.* 3rd. Ed., New York: McGraw – Hill, 1994.
6. **Dunkel, Patricia and Phyllis L. Lim.** *Intermediate Listening Comprehension.* 2nd. Ed., Heinle & Heinle, 1993.
7. **Emery, Donald W.** *English Fundamentals.* 10th. Ed. Forma, New York: Macmillan, 1994.
8. **Fairbanks, A. Harris.** *Fact, Value, Policy: Reading and Writing Arguments.* New York: McGraw – Hill, 1994.
9. **Foley, Barbara H.** *Listen to Me!* 2nd. Ed., Heinle & Heinle, 1993.
10. **Foley, Barbara H.** *Now Hear This!* 2nd. Ed., Heinle & Heinle, 1994.
11. **Half, Donald.** *To Read Literature: Fiction, Poetry, Drama.* 2nd. Ed., New York: McGraw – Hill, 1987.
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*Source: The College Board Advanced Level Program in English. Course Description and Teacher's Guide. (1995), p.p. 4-6

Appendix E

SYLLABI OF FIRST-YEAR CURRICULA AT PARTICIPATING COLLEGES

On file at The College Board offices in San Juan, P. R.

