Affordable Learning Georgia Affordable Materials Grants  
Transformation Grants Final Report

*(or Textbook Transformation Grants, if R17 or earlier)*

Once you have completed this template, to submit your Final Report, go to the [Final Report submission](https://survey.zohopublic.com/zs/xTCCvG) form.

The final report submission form allows you to submit the following:

* This completed narrative document (required)
* Syllabus or syllabi (required)

*If multiple files, compress into one .zip folder*

* Qualitative/Quantitative Measures data files (optional, as needed)

*If multiple files, compress into one .zip folder*

Follow the instructions on the webpage for uploading your documents. Based on receipt of this report, ALG will process the final payment for your grant. ALG will follow up in the future with post-project grantee surveys and may also request your participation in a publication, presentation, or other event.

# General Information

**Date:** May 2024

**Grant Round:** 23

**Grant Number:** 659a

**Institution Name(s): GGC and KSU**

**Project Lead:** Rebecca Flynn

**Team Members (Name, Title, Department, Institutions if different, and email address for each):** Rebecca Flynn, Professor and Assistant Chair, English, GGC: [rflynn1@ggc.edu](mailto:rflynn1@ggc.edu); Stephanie Denny, Lecturer, English, GGC: [sdenny@ggc.edu](mailto:sdenny@ggc.edu);Tammy Powell, Professor, English, KSU: [tpowel25@kennesaw.edu](mailto:tpowel25@kennesaw.edu); Jeanne Law, Professor and Director of Composition, English, KSU: [jlaw29@kennesaw.edu](mailto:jlaw29@kennesaw.edu); Stephen Bartlett, Professor, History, KSU: [sbartlet@kennesaw.edu](mailto:sbartlet@kennesaw.edu); Rebecca Cooper, Professor, Curriculum and Instruction, GGC: [rcooper5@ggc.edu](mailto:rcooper5@ggc.edu); Tom Lilly, Assistant Provost for Academic Assessment and Accreditation, GGC: [tlilly@ggc.edu](mailto:tlilly@ggc.edu); Mark Partridge Associate Professor, Economics, GGC: [mpartridge1@ggc.edu](mailto:mpartridge1@ggc.edu); Jessica Estep, Associate Professor, English, GGC: [jestep@ggc.edu](mailto:jestep@ggc.edu); Emily Morris, MA student KSU: [emorri60@students.kennesaw.edu](mailto:emorri60@students.kennesaw.edu); and Kiara Rodriguez, undergraduate student at GGC: krodriguez21@ggc.edu.

**Course Name(s) and Course Numbers:** Composition 1101

**Semester Project Began:** Summer 2023

**Final Semester of Implementation:** Spring 2024

**Total Number of Students Affected During Project:** 1,122

# Narrative

Georgia Gwinnett College has experienced remarkable growth since its founding, and this rapid expansion has complicated efforts to standardize gateway English course quality. This project aimed to address challenges associated with this growth by developing assessment models and a standardized template course for English 1101, utilizing varied online content and low-cost materials. The template will benefit full and part-time faculty alike and ensure continuity in instruction. In addition to our aim to alleviate financial burdens on students by adopting affordable texts, we drew insights from similar initiatives that aid student success at Kennesaw State University. Positive outcomes, such as improved pass rates among part-time faculty, will significantly benefit both students and the English department at GGC.

**Key Outcomes**

Because ENGL 1101 is a gateway course, it is an important contributor to retention, promotion, and graduation. Composition courses at GGC were capped at 22 students per section. The Fall 2023 pilot included 14 Instructors across 30 sections. We also included a non-pilot sample to compare to the pilot sample. The non-pilot cohort consisted of 6 instructors across 21 sections. This study affected roughly 1,122 students.

* Outcome 1. Establishing a standardized course template for Composition 1101, incorporating adaptive learning resources
* Outcome 2. Faculty utilized the TiLT framework to create transparent assignments, ensuring consistency and clarity across all sections of Composition 1101. This standardized approach enhanced instructional quality, benefiting both instructors and students.
* Outcome 3. Our project positively impacted students by significantly reducing the cost of course materials and providing standardized, high-quality education. Students benefited from the incorporation of adaptive learning resources, particularly multilingual writers who found tailored support in the course e-book. Moreover, the establishment of clear instructional standards enhanced student learning outcomes and performance.

*Summary of your transformation experience, including challenges and accomplishments:*

The experience of developing, coordinating, and implementing a pilot for English 1101 was overall a smooth process. Participating faculty were on the whole responsible with the tasks they were assigned, and they were also fully engaged when it came to the assessment process. There were some initial glitches when using the Achieve software (the low-cost text the course used), but the Achieve team members were quick to offer support.

One potential issue when using Achieve relates to AI. As we were rolling out the pilot, ChatGPT was hitting the scene, and Achieve does not yet host an AI screening site. Our college relies on D2L/Turnitin AI screening software to screen for plagiarism, so if students turn in final papers to a tertiary site that does not screen, we are not able to catch AI generated texts to deselect artifacts from final scores. We are looking into workarounds to address the issue.

*Transformative impacts on your instruction/Transformative impacts on your students and their performance:*

There are several transformative impacts on instruction and student performance that we were able to infer based on the preliminary data from department assessment in Student Learning and Licensure (SL&L), institutional data (including pass rates) and the faculty and student surveys associated with this project.

The Fall 2023 pilot included 14 Instructors across 30 sections (243 artifacts submitted in total, of which we selected 216 to assess for SL&L). We also included a non-pilot sample to compare to the pilot sample. The non-pilot cohort consisted of 6 instructors across 21 sections (254 artifacts submitted in total, of which we selected 114 to assess for SL&L).

For SL&L assessments, we assessed one artifact from the course, which students composed during the second half of the semester. Both pilot and non-pilot course artifacts were assessed, with the pilot course artifacts scoring higher in measure than the non-pilot artifacts.

We also looked at institutional data reflecting student performance in terms of course grades. In the study conducted across multiple sections, both experimental and control groups were evaluated to assess student performance. This student sample is smaller than the SL&L sample as we only looked at data of students who completed the IRB consent form and removed 1101 corequisite courses.

When focusing solely on the experimental section (pilot courses), consisting of 129 students, a higher pass rate of 86.8% was observed. Conversely, the control section (non-pilot courses), with 62 students, exhibited a lower pass rate of 72.6%. When considering all 1101 sections collectively (in addition to pilot and non-pilot sections), consisting of 2065 students, the pass rate was 68.2%. **Therefore, the pilot template courses resulted in a 20% increase in pass rates.**

*Describe lessons learned, including any things you would do differently next time.*

We planned to submit a conference presentation proposal to the February 2024 Conference on Diversity, Equity, and Student Success (AAC&U); however, we were still gathering, correcting, and analyzing the data at that time. Instead, we will develop our data when working on the ALG Research Grant we were recently rewarded. We are currently mapping out ways to publish our results after spending more time working with the numbers. We will present the final report to project stakeholders and the GGC community at the beginning of fall semester.

For next year’s grant, we will also modify the survey by including questions that speak to the course template content that is and will be further curated for our diverse student body. We aim to capture pointed feedback on perceptions of inclusivity from our diverse student population. For the summer ALG Research grant, we will disaggregate student demographic criteria from SL&L assessment results and institutional DFW rates for pilot and nonpilot courses. This should give us precise insights into whether our content design had an effect on students according to specified institutional demographics.

*Describe any materials you created or revised/remixed that will be shared with the public. Include the* [*open license your materials will be shared under*](https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/)*—for most materials, this will be an Attribution 4.0 License (CC BY) as required in the Grants Request for Proposals.*

Some of the materials for this course that we developed include:

* A facilitator guide that provides week-by-week lecture and discussion ideas, including terms that may need defining for students, questions about the readings, and important reminders to share with students.
* Essay assignments that follow the TILT framework and have associated rubric and peer review questions.
* Resources, activities, and additional assignments that align with course objectives, speak to our diverse student body, and meet accessibility standards.
* A syllabus and schedule that can be adapted by faculty as needed.

We also revised/remixed materials from Kennesaw State University’s English 1101 Composition course that they created as part of a previous ALG Transformation grant. Our attribution license is CC BY-SA.

**Link to SoftChalk course materials:** [**https://kennesaw.softchalkcloud.com/lesson/serve/95b8qMS7vFOkpt/html**](https://kennesaw.softchalkcloud.com/lesson/serve/95b8qMS7vFOkpt/html)

# Quotes

*Provide quotes from students evaluating their experience with the no-cost learning materials.*

* The emphasis on the comprehensive writing process and critical thinking skills. The course doesn't just focus on the final product but guides students through the entire journey of crafting a well-structured and thoughtful piece of writing.
* The textbook. It was very easy to read and navigate, and gave lots of helpful tips and information I used in my writing.
* What I found most helpful about this course was improving my writing skills. In previous composition classes, we were tasked with writing elegant essays in a short amount of time and had little to no mistakes. This felt nearly impossible. However, in this course, we were given plenty of time to really flesh out our ideas and correct any issues there may be in the essay by asking the professor for help or using other resources provided to us.
* I feel like more assignments should have been on Achieve instead of D2L to make me feel like I got my money's worth.
* Adding more short videos definitely would help clear up some confusion as also make retaining the information better.
* What I found the most helpful about the course was the assignments that were given to us since many of the assignments would lead to an essay. I found them to be helpful and relevant and a good guide for future assignments. All of the assignments were relevant to the following materials.

# Quantitative and Qualitative Measures

## Uniform Measurements Questions

*The following are uniform questions asked to all grant teams. Please answer these to the best of your knowledge.*

**Student Opinion of Materials**

**Was the overall student opinion about the materials used in the course positive, neutral, or negative?**

The total number of students affected by this pilot project was larger than the pilot sample, as many faculty taught with the template (or modified versions of it)but opted out of the pilot study. The number of respondents is less than the pilot study, as student response rate was less.

* Positive: \_\_86 % of \_\_\_\_50\_\_\_\_ number of respondents
* Neutral: \_\_\_8 % of \_\_\_\_50\_\_\_\_ number of respondents
* Negative: \_\_\_6 % of \_\_\_\_50\_\_\_\_ number of respondents

**Student Learning Outcomes and Grades**

**Was the overall comparative impact on student performance in terms of learning outcomes and grades in the semester(s) of implementation over previous semesters positive, neutral, or negative?**

*Student outcomes should be described in detail in Section 3b.*

Choose One:

* \_\_X\_ Positive: Higher performance outcomes measured over previous semester(s)
* \_\_\_ Neutral: Same performance outcomes over previous semester(s)
* \_\_\_ Negative: Lower performance outcomes over previous semester(s)

**Student Drop/Fail/Withdraw (DFW) Rates**

**Was the overall comparative impact on Drop/Fail/Withdraw (DFW) rates in the semester(s) of implementation over previous semesters positive, neutral, or negative?**

The experimental section (pilot) group size is 129 students who had a pass rate of 86.8%.All 1101 sections during the same semester (excluding the pilot courses), comprising 1,936 students, had a pass rate of 67%. This sample is less than the total number of students affected as these numbers reflect those who completed the IRB consent forms.

\_\_13.2% of students, out of a total \_129\_\_\_\_\_\_ students affected, dropped/failed/withdrew from the course in the final semester of implementation.

Choose One:

* \_X\_\_ Positive: This is a lower percentage of students with D/F/W than previous semester(s)
* \_\_\_ Neutral: This is the same percentage of students with D/F/W than previous semester(s)
* \_\_\_ Negative: This is a higher percentage of students with D/F/W than previous semester(s)

## Measures Narrative

*In this section, summarize the supporting impact data that you are submitting, including all quantitative and qualitative measures of impact on student success and experience. Include all measures as described in your proposal, along with any measures developed after the proposal submission.*

*[When submitting your final report, as noted above, you will also need to provide the separate file (or .zip with multiple files) of supporting data on the impact of your Textbook Transformation, such as surveys, analyzed data collected, etc.]*

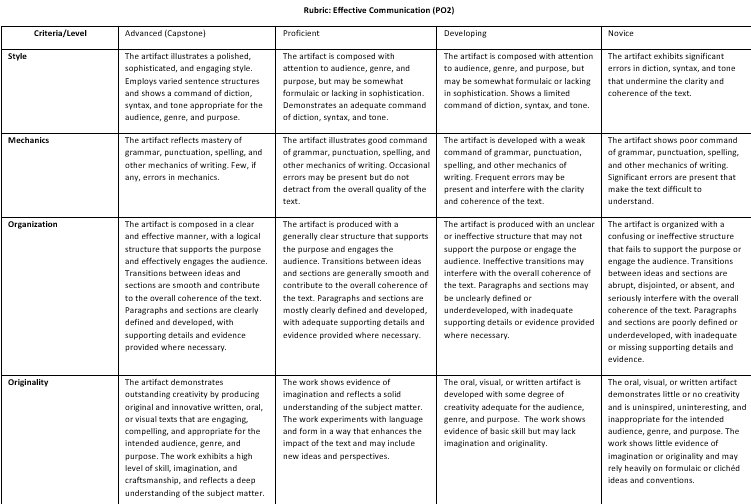
**Research Findings**

Student Learning and Licensure (SL&L)

The rubric we used for assessing the Composition 1101 artifacts was the one we used for our English program outcome 2 (PO2) on effective communication. This rubric assesses the following learning objectives set for Composition 1101:

1. Compose expository writing (e.g., descriptive, process, comparison/contrast, cause/effect, problem/solution) using methods of organization and structure that are clear and appropriate to the form.
2. Practice writing processes, including brainstorming, prewriting, drafting, revising, and reflecting, in academic writing.

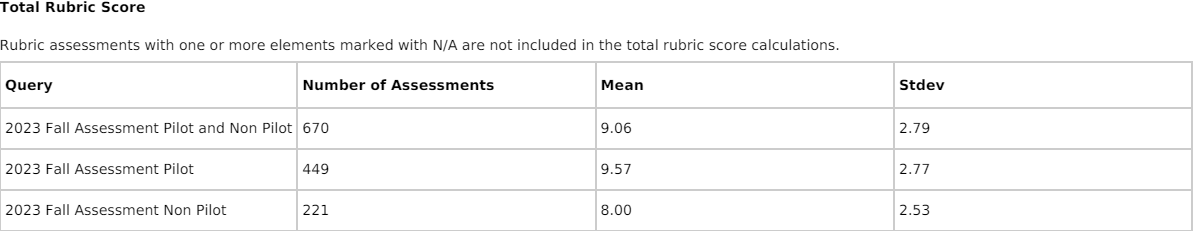
Within stated guidelines, students are asked to produce effective creative, professional or scholarly written, oral, or visual texts that are appropriate for audience, genre, and purpose. These students were scored on four levels (Advanced, Proficient, Developing, and Novice) and according to four criteria (Style, Mechanics, Organization, and Originality).



A total of 335 artifacts were collected and 670 assessments were conducted during Fall 2023, comprising both pilot and non-pilot evaluations. Among these, the mean total rubric score was 9.06, with a standard deviation of 2.79. This indicates that the criteria being evaluated were generally met or exceeded, demonstrating that the criteria were generally well-performed or well-implemented across pilot and non-pilot scores.

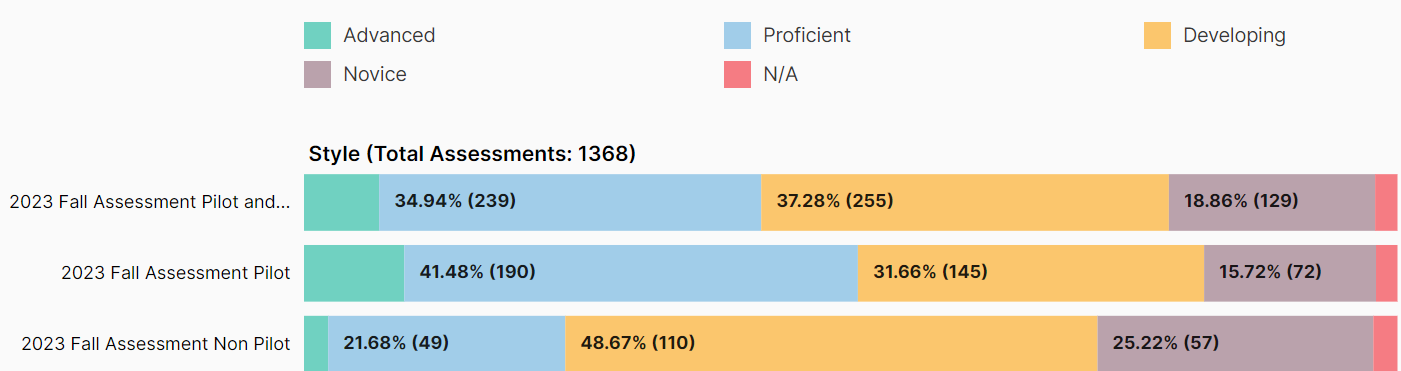
Further analysis reveals a distinction between the pilot and non-pilot assessments. Among the 449 pilot assessments conducted, the mean total rubric score was notably higher at 9.57, with a standard deviation of 2.77. This suggests a more consistent and potentially more effective implementation of the evaluated criteria within the pilot context.

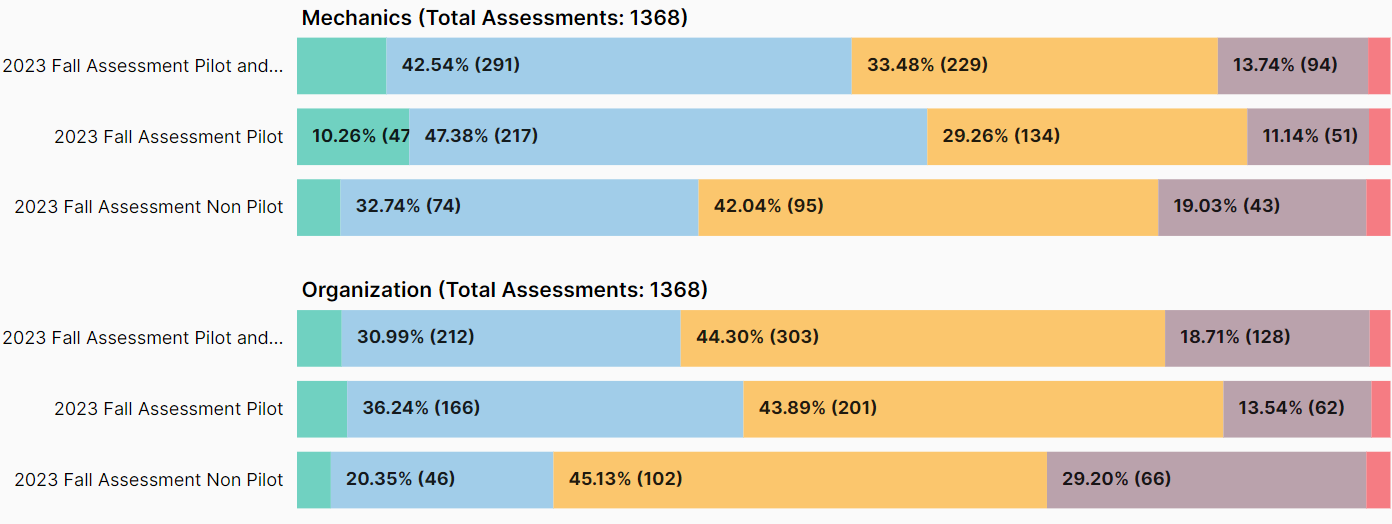
Conversely, the 221 non-pilot assessments yielded a slightly lower mean total rubric score of 8.00, with a standard deviation of 2.53. While still indicating a relatively positive performance, the lower average score and wider variability suggest areas for improvement or potential challenges within the non-pilot evaluations.

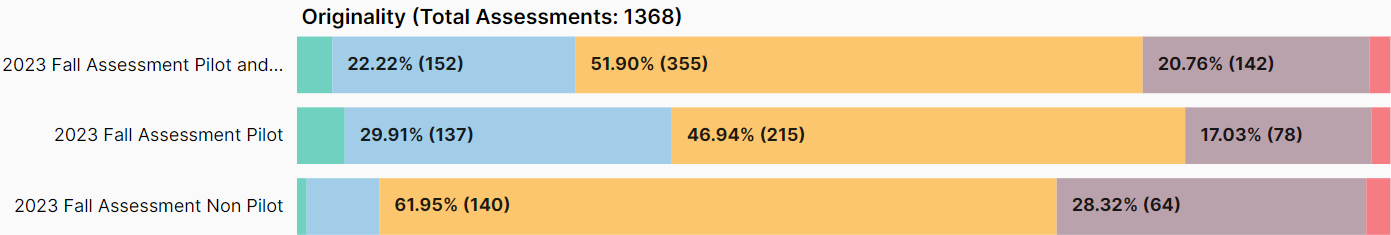


The rubric results by element show that according to all criteria (style, mechanics, organization, and originality), the pilot courses outperformed non-pilot courses.

SL&L Rubric Report

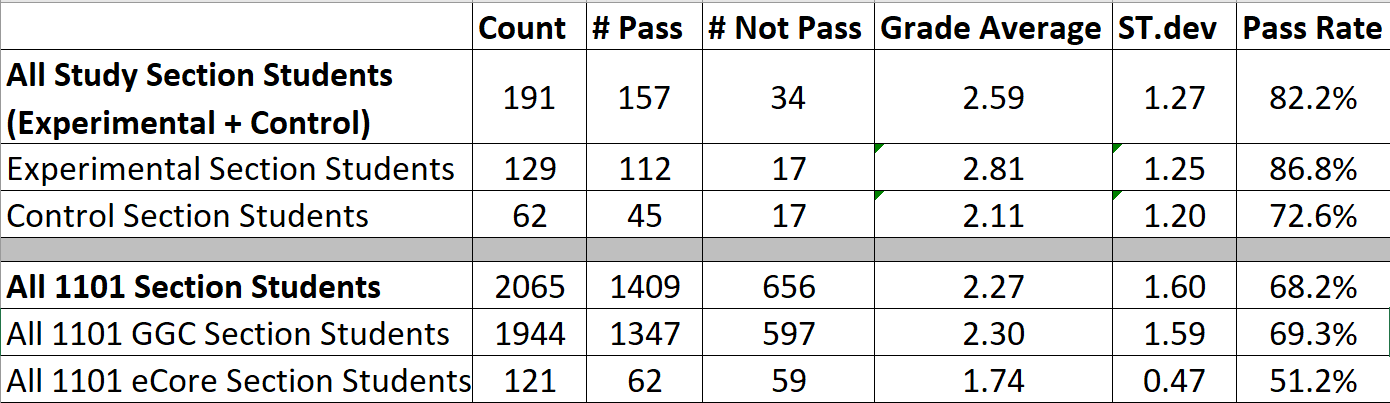






Institutional Data

We also looked at institutional data reflecting student performance in terms of course grades. In the study conducted across multiple sections, both experimental and control groups were evaluated to assess student performance. This student sample is smaller than the SL&L sample as we only looked at data of students who completed the IRB consent form.

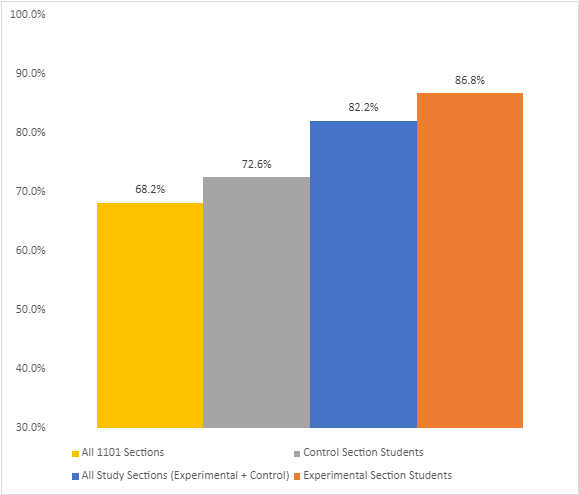


The combined data from all study sections (pilot and non-pilot), comprising 191 students, revealed that 82.2% of students passed their assessments. Among them, 157 students successfully passed, while 34 did not meet the criteria for passing. On average, students achieved a grade of 2.59, with a standard deviation of 1.27, indicating a moderate level of variability in performance.

When focusing solely on the experimental section (pilot courses), consisting of 129 students, a higher pass rate of 86.8% was observed. Within this group, 112 students passed, while 17 did not. The average grade in this section was slightly higher at 2.81, with a comparable standard deviation of 1.25.

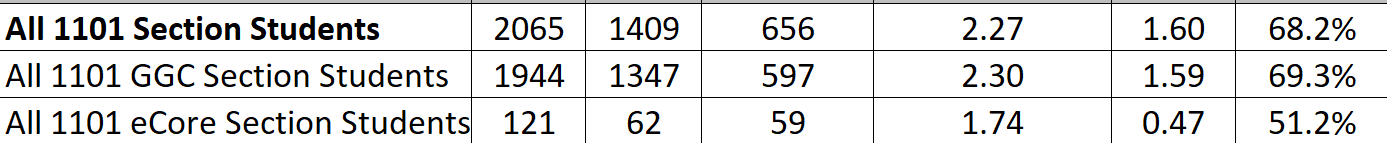
Conversely, the control section (non-pilot courses), with 62 students, exhibited a lower pass rate of 72.6%. Here, 45 students passed, while the same number did not. The average grade in the control section was lower at 2.11, with a slightly smaller standard deviation of 1.20.

When considering all 1101 sections collectively (in addition to pilot and non-pilot sections), consisting of 2065 students, the pass rate was 68.2%. Among them, 1409 students passed, while 656 did not. The average grade across all sections was 2.27, with a larger standard deviation of 1.60, indicating greater variability in performance compared to the individual experimental and control sections.



Incidental Findings

This summer as we work further with our findings, we will take a more granular look at course modality (online, F2F, hybrid) and pass rates. Our preliminary data also encourages us to compare the pass rates of our online asynchronous courses with those of USG eCore courses. Initial data shows concerning numbers:



The eCore Section, with 121 students, has a pass rate of 51.2%. Here, 62 students passed the course while 59 students failed. Next steps for our team will be to look more closely at the GGC online versions of template and non-template courses. We anticipate that the pass rate for template asynchronous courses will be higher than eCore courses, which are also online and asynchronous. The reason this is important data for GGC is that during Fall 2023 when this data was collected, we lacked course coverage and referred students to eCore courses when our own 1101 courses filled. If we find evidence that pass rates are indeed higher with online asynchronous template courses, we may argue that resources be allocated toward hiring English faculty who can teach gateway courses, resulting in increased pass and retention rates.

Grade Distribution

Out of the 129 students who completed the IRB consent form in the experimental section (pilot), there were 51 students who received an A grade, 31 students who earned a B, 30 students who achieved a C, 6 students who were awarded a D, and 11 students who received an F. In the control section (non-pilot), of the 60 students who completed the IRB consent form, 8 students received an A grade, 16 students earned a B, 20 students achieved a C, 9 students were awarded a D, and 7 students received an F.

Comparing the grade distributions between the two groups, we observed that the experimental section (pilot)had a larger number of students achieving A grades (51) compared to the control section (non-pilot) (8). Additionally, the experimental section had more students achieving B and C grades compared to the control section. Conversely, the control section had slightly more students receiving D and F grades compared to the experimental section.

Conclusion

These findings suggest that the experimental section (pilot) demonstrated the highest pass rate and average grade, indicating potentially more effective instructional strategies or interventions. Meanwhile, the control section (non-pilot) exhibited a lower pass rate and average grade, pointing towards areas for improvement or alternative approaches. Evaluating performance across all sections provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of different teaching methodologies and their impact on student outcomes.

# Sustainability Plan

*Describe how your project team or department will offer the materials in the course(s) in the future, including the maintenance and updating of course materials.*

The sustainability plan for offering the materials in the course(s) in the future involves a structured approach to ensure ongoing availability, maintenance, and updating of course materials. Starting in Fall 2024, all part-time faculty will use the course template. The remaining faculty will be encouraged to use the template as a low-cost option, and we will inform faculty on the higher pass rate of the course compared to non-template courses. The Composition Committee will oversee the maintenance of the template, and update any information, materials, or links as deemed necessary. To encourage faculty to use elements of the course template, we will make it editable. This way faculty may include specific exercises or assignments they would like to teach within the broader template structure. We will also continue to offer instructional support to faculty that will acquaint them with the template instructional design, including training on using the embedded technology tools that result in creating interactive and engaging course materials.

# Future Affordable Materials Plans

*Describe any impacts or influences this project has had on your thinking about or selection of learning materials in this and other courses that you will teach in the future.*

Initial discussions with stakeholders centered around the cost and technological requirements of Achieve, which were perceived as potential obstacles for our students due to the cost ($40). Because of this, we decided to apply for a new ALG Transformational grant, one that was no-cost and did not use Achieve. Following the fall pilot, data revealed new insights for our Corequisite courses that utilized Achieve (we removed the corequisite sample from our results). Pass rates for Achieve-integrated 1101/999 courses stood at 50%, contrasting with an 87% pass rate for standalone 1101 courses utilizing Achieve. Going forward, we will use this data to compare the future non-Achieve pilot template corequisite results with those of Fall 2023 for our year-end report (2025).

# Future Scholarship Plans

Presentation to English Faculty Fall 2024.

The team plans to make the results of the study available in multiple academic and public spaces, including proposals to the 2025 USG Teaching & Learning Conference and to MacMilan Education’s edited academic blog series. Further, with revisions to this project, we hope to present this work at other USG institutions with diverse populations to consider how to meet students where they are in first-year writing spaces. With the ALG research grant awarded to the team, we also plan to dig deeper into the data and its implications for students at minority-serving and first-generation-serving institutions. We plan to propose an article to the *WPA Journal*, an imprint of the Council of Writing Program Administrators.