

1-1-2011

Building a Learning Community within the Constraints of Open Enrollment

Megan Pugh

SIT Graduate Institute, megan.pugh@mail.sit.edu

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Recommended Citation

Pugh, Megan, "Building a Learning Community within the Constraints of Open Enrollment" (2011). *MA TESOL Collection*. Paper 502.

Building a Learning Community within the Constraints of Open Enrollment

Megan Pugh

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts in teaching degree at
the School for International Training Graduate Institute, Brattleboro, Vermont

April 2011

Advisor: Leslie Turpin

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This project by Megan Pugh is accepted in its present form.

Date: April 2011

Project Advisor: Leslie Turpin _____

Project Reader: Debbie McLaughlin _____

Acknowledgments: I would like to thank my professors at SIT, especially Radmila Popovic whose excitement for teaching is contagious, my SMAT 27 and SMAT 28 cohort, especially my roommates Rachel Goodman and Roger Ramirez for staying up all night with me, my wonderful creative reader Debbie McLaughlin, my patient advisor Leslie Turpin, Rashmi Koushik for always being there when I need it the most, my fellow teachers at Renton Technical College and Highline Community College for their contributions, my mother and father for their constant love, and my husband for his savvy technical support.

Abstract

This paper introduces the ways in which the challenges of open enrollment ESL programs affect both students and teachers and the importance of group cohesion in adult learning. The effects caused by open enrollment can be abated by building a strong community of learners through involving new students to build a sense of belonging to the class, meeting the needs of individuals within the group, having a supportive learning environment, and using selected best teaching practices to build community. With the solutions proposed in this paper, teachers can meet student needs and the negative effects of open enrollment will be minimized.

Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Descriptors

English Second Language

Teaching Skills

Teaching Styles

Classroom Techniques

Participatory Approach

Social Change

Student Teacher Relationship

Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE	1
Introduction.....	1
Defining Open Enrollment.....	3
WorkFirst Program’s Impact on Open Enrollment.....	4
Low Literacy Students Impact	4
Connections Build Community.....	5
CHAPTER TWO	9
Building Better Attendance.....	9
Connecting new students to build a sense of belonging to the class.....	11
CHAPTER THREE	16
Meeting the Needs of the Individuals within the Group	16
CHAPTER FOUR.....	21
Creating a Supportive Learning Environment	21
CHAPTER FIVE	25
Best Teaching Practices to Build a Learning Community	25
Best Teaching Practice 1: Dialogue Journaling	27
Best Teaching Practice 2: Language Experience Approach	28
Applicable Assessment Strategies in Open Enrollment.....	29
CHAPTER SIX.....	31
Using the Participatory Approach.....	31
Example of a Code to Discover Learner’s Needs	34
CHAPTER SEVEN	37
Conclusion	37

References..... 39

Table 1: ESL Enrollment Descriptions of Washington State Community Colleges 43

Appendix 1. Goal Setting Worksheet 45

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

English as a Second Language classes in the Community College setting in Washington State are large with a constantly shifting enrollment. The open enrollment environment differs from the model of a closed class grouped for a fixed term. This is both a problem and an opportunity. My assumption is that by building a learning community, students can practice language learning skills cooperatively while increasing attendance and motivation. This paper focuses on practical techniques to build community in the classroom, as well as presenting tools to meet individual needs within a large fluctuating group.

The demand for ESL rises every year. Overall, it is the fastest growing area of adult education. The United States has seen a steady increase in the foreign-born population since the 1970's. Recent statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey reports "there were 37.5 million foreign born individuals in the United States in 2006, representing 12.5% of the total U.S. population" ("Education for adult," 2010). Population projections for the next 10 years indicate that the number of adult English language learners in the United States will continue to grow. In the article "The ESL Logjam: Waiting Times for Adult ESL Classes and the Impact on English Learners," Dr. James Thomas Tucker discusses the exorbitant need for more ESL classes: "according to the 2000 Census, approximately 21.3 million people in the United States—more than the population of Australia—speak English "less than very well" (2006, p. 1).

Dr. Tucker's report interviews 184 ESL providers from twenty-two cities in sixteen states across the nation. The report says almost three in every five ESL providers have waiting lists and that many colleges can't begin to deal with the extraordinary demand and have had to abandon

wait lists altogether. Students can wait three years or longer, and yet many ESL providers have had to discontinue classes or can't add new classes because of a lack of funding. One school that demonstrates this is Rio Salado Community College: the largest adult ESL provider in Arizona offering 33 classes per day reports a waiting list of over 1,000 people and waiting time of up to eighteen months (Tucker, 2006, p. 14).

Some providers try to fix the waiting lists with a variety of methods. Some schools temporarily place students at the wrong ESL level until an opening appeared at the right one, or by opening a multilevel holding tank class that gives the students a chance to get started. This has also been criticized because the attrition rates are found even higher for these kinds of classes since it is difficult for the teacher to juggle all the different levels in one classroom. Also because "students must often sacrifice precious free time to attend, since many hold two jobs, support families, and have to learn English in the few hours available in the evenings" (Tucker, 2006, p. 1) and if they don't feel like they are getting what they need from the class, they often demonstrate this by dropping out.

Classes have had to increase, up to as many as 40 students. This is double what most providers have said is optimal for instruction (Tucker, 2006, p. 18). Ms. Rasay, an instructor in California, explains that "adult schools in California are criticized if there are long waiting lists, so they pack in the classes." She reports that the "class sizes were increased because her program is serving a much larger population of adults than what is funded" (p. 119). In New York City the need for adult ESL classes is estimated at one million, but only 41,347 adults were able to enroll in 2005 because there just weren't enough classes available. On the other hand, the Massachusetts Department of Education tells their providers to limit the number

attending classes to 20 students maximum and offer one on one tutoring, but this also has been criticized because it “limits the number of students who are served” (p. 120).

Defining Open Enrollment

One of the numerous hurdles that we face as English language teachers here in the Washington state community colleges is the open enrollment system since it fragments the learning community with students starting in the class at any given time. Describing the open enrollment system, a teacher clearly expressed this dilemma when she responded to the question of how an open-door policy influences what is going on in the classroom:

I think, in an ideal world, or in an ideal setting, it probably would be better to have a closed door policy for a certain given period of time: to go from A to B [progressively in a curriculum] Do they [students] master it; have some kind of a pre-test, a post-test? But in the real world, we're just like a big merry-go-round— people hopping on and off all the time. So we just kinda keep getting on it and maybe we are just hoping for the best. (Schalge and Soga, 2008, p. 156)

Open enrollment means taking in new students on a continuous basis, often called rolling registration. Semi-managed or managed enrollments have specified entry points; for example, in the first weeks of the quarter, every month of the quarter, or two times a quarter. Because of the high attrition rates common among adult ESL programs, having classes that are only half-full by midterm doesn't serve the growing immigrant populations. Schools with open or managed enrollments agree that it is important to keep classes full since it gives more ESL students opportunities to get into a class.

Another reason for having multiple entry periods or open enrollment is because students don't live on the community college term schedule. They may find themselves starting or

stopping school for a variety of reasons, whether it is because they are out of work and deciding to go back to school or because they found a good daycare situation that allows them the time they need to attend classes. Their desires or needs to start studying English don't necessarily coincide with the semester or quarter schedule.

WorkFirst Program's Impact on Open Enrollment

An influence on the open enrollment system here in Washington State is the WorkFirst program that supports training and education for low-income parents. Participation in WorkFirst programs is federally mandated. Federal regulations require WorkFirst parents to participate in employment, job search, or training components for 30 hours per week, which includes ESL. With the increase in WorkFirst programs around the state, there is a greater need for open access to English classes that fit around their work schedule because studying English is a component of the entire program package. Since the community colleges receive funding from the state Department of Social and Health services, specifically for the WorkFirst program, it promoted the need to have open enrollment in order for students to start school immediately once they joined the program ("Workfirst at a," 2009).

Comment [LT1]: add for

Low Literacy Students Impact

Another complication arises when new students have either little or no educational background. These low literacy students have to be taught about school, the expectations from the teachers, the importance of doing homework, how to study at home, and even classroom etiquette all while learning to read, write, and speak. "It can take eighteen months to two years to acquire sufficient literacy skills before illiterate Spanish-speaking adults can even begin to learn English" (Rodríguez, Burt, Peyton, & Ueland, 2009, p. 28). Therefore adult ESL providers must

deal with many challenges in addressing the language and literacy needs of their low level beginning students as well.

Every group has its dynamics, especially within each of the learner's abilities. Some learners have strong backgrounds in education holding high school or college degrees, and some do not. Some students are coming from Roman languages; some are coming from completely different scripts. Some students are literate in their native language, and some are only semi-literate. Posing yet another challenge are students whose education came from in the home, farm, or are from oral based cultures with no learned written language at all. Pre-literates, the current coined term, are learning a written language for the first time and cannot rely on written translations back into their native languages, only on spoken language experience. At "level 1" a student might be entering on day one of their new experience here in the US, or perhaps they have been here 12 years or more and have decided to start going to school. This means that the latter student will have background knowledge of US culture, written words, phrases, and literacy. The former student will be less knowledgeable about the culture and written language that surrounds them.

Connections Build Community

Dornyei's research on how to improve learner motivation says that social factors such as group dynamics and the learning environment affect the learner's attitude, effort, classroom behavior, and achievement (Moss & Ross-Feldman, 2003, n.p.). Therefore, a classroom environment that encourages group cohesion in the classroom is overall beneficial for learning. Clarena Larrotta, who wrote an article *Bringing Community to the Adult ESL Classroom*, remarks:

Community building is an important, if not essential, element of adult English as a second language learning. Communities, whether civic, work, religious, or identity-based, are the contexts within which we cease to be alone and become connected with others. When adult learners feel that they belong to a place ... they invest in their learning and take ownership of the curriculum. That is why [teachers] consider that adult learning in general and language learning and teaching in particular happen best within the notion of “community” (2009, p. 75).

Each student should feel that they have something to contribute to the class and that their participation is valuable. Teachers are the main proponents of these ideas, and they influence their students to become functional participants in the classroom based on their interactions. The more students feel safe participating, the more they will interact with other students and the more English they will consequently acquire.

Richard Weber, a writer for the National Training Laboratories Institute whose organization focuses on group dynamics, diversity, and inclusion discusses in his article “The Group: A Cycle from Birth to Death” (1982) how every group goes through a process that cycles much like the pattern of a person growing up. The first stage, called infancy, is when the group is just forming. The new members introduce themselves and evaluate their compatibility towards each other and compare their reasons for being there in the group. At this stage, group members experience anxiety as they get to know each other and try to find ways to feel more comfortable. They look to the leaders of the group with dependency and for guidance.

After a base level of expectations and similarities are understood, the group moves into the rebellious adolescent stage where members challenge the previous leader or leaders in order to take back their own individuality and influence in the group. This stage is mostly one of

reactions and doesn't promote a foundation for learning. Because of changes in the composition of the group, with either new members joining or members leaving which often happens in an open enrollment classroom, the group can stay unfinished; drifting back and forth from stage one of infancy to stage two of adolescence.

In the third and final stage of the group, the members begin to position themselves for their own independence and interdependence amongst the group. Facilitating the class community to move to stage three is important for groups involved in education because the strength of the group comes from its cohesiveness. Together the group can take on tasks and accomplish them. Effective learning comes in stage three because the group is then ready to reach their learning goals working collaboratively and cooperatively. They are more prepared and able to share their processes, failures, and successes (Weber, 1982).

Adult learners should be respected as knowledgeable, and the materials should mirror their own communities and culture identities while integrating the learner's need to belong to a community. This brings forth the question of how a group can sustain and deepen the cohesion that they are developing in a situation that is by nature fragmented in an open enrollment system. In this paper I have chosen four areas to examine using a participatory Freirian perspective, both by posing questions to local Washington State teachers and by researching solutions on how to build a sense of community within the open or semi-managed enrollment system found in many community college ESL programs. In order to build a learning community within an open enrollment system, there are multiple issues which teachers must find workable solutions:

- Adjusting the course to handle the unpredictable attendance and helping new students belong
- Meeting the needs of the individuals within the group

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- Creating a supportive learning community through best teaching practices
- Using the participatory approach

CHAPTER TWO

Building Better Attendance

Vignette: First I start out with a class half full in the first weeks of the quarter. Then as the word gets out that the classes are free or have a nominal fee of \$25, more orientation sessions fill up and more students start attending my class. About two-thirds the way through a 10 week quarter I'm welcoming almost double the number I had on the first day. The class size almost explodes and there aren't enough chairs, until finally students have other activities that take their time away from school. In the last few weeks of classes the numbers drop off slowly until there are about as many students as had originally started.

One challenge facing the community cohesion is the fluctuation in attendance. This is a common problem shared amongst teachers, however unproven or undocumented. There are many outside factors that contribute to the erratic attendance, such as the need for daycare, having multiple jobs or changing job schedules, or illness for either the student or a family member that can keep students from attending regularly, but I will cover how teachers can help to address student attendance through curriculum choices later in Chapter 3.

I've taught in an open-entry open-exit program for almost forty years. I guess you can say I'm used to it! Since our program is non-credit and free, students can leave at any time with no consequences. Having students come in during the semester can often add a spark, although there is the flip side that it can be harder to hold on to a new student (qtd from www.eslcafe.com).

One way to build better attendance is to stress the connection between regular attendance and progress. Early in the quarter tell students that they'll receive a report of their attendance hours at the midterm and end of the quarter as part of their progress report. Some teachers have required students to fill out an absence form for all missed classes and notify students when they have four unexcused absences. That said, being flexible in excusing absences is important since adults do have other responsibilities and take employment and adult/parent responsibilities seriously. If at all possible, teachers could redirect students with erratic attendance to another class with fewer required hours. At the end of every quarter along with course completion certificates, another option is to award certificates for outstanding attendance.

Another way is to have an attendance policy that is very clear. A teacher at Highline decided to have an attendance policy that requires students to attend 80% in order to be eligible to move up to the next level. Before she required this, students were absent much more often, but with a strict attendance policy attendance increased. This visibly cuts down on having to catch students up and give them missing handouts.

By teaching classes through different themes or topics lasting two to three weeks, new students can start the next topic with the class completely fresh like the other students. As each topic starts, teachers can learn about the new students who have just joined the class and see where their language skills are through a process called schema activation. Schema activation is a process by which general information on the topic is drawn out from the learners' own experience and knowledge. There are various ways in which relevant schemata may be built upon through using visual aids, discussion of real-life experiences, role-play, introduction of key vocabulary, and questioning and brainstorming.

Connecting New Students Builds a Sense of Belonging to the Class

“I think it can make it very difficult to gauge learners' needs and learner relationships are bound to be less close” in an open enrollment class (qtd from www.eslcafe.com).

New students start when they decide to come. Teachers expect them to come in on Mondays, only to be surprised when they start on a Wednesday. I will suggest a few different approaches with late enrollees that teachers have used. In classes where there is the help of a volunteer tutor or a teaching assistant, pair them with newcomers to practice necessary foundation material using selected worksheets and timed pull-outs. This strategy works well for concentrated catch-up, but it needs to be limited to 30 minutes or less in order for a new student to have sufficient opportunity to interact with classmates and participate in portions of the planned lesson.

If there is already a low-level subgroup, often in beginning ESL classes, invite the new student to join them for group-work activities. In my experience, this seems the most comfortable and productive strategy for new students. It allows instant support and manageable success immediately. High-low pairings offers a good way to facilitate a sense of community after students get to know one another, but for newcomers it can be too intimidating at a time when students may be feeling a little anxious already. Another possibility is to seat a new student near someone from the same country or hometown so that they may ask questions and share in some familiarity. Reviewing language associated with social skills and group work such as *take turns, sorry to interrupt, can you please repeat that* enables students to relate to their group as they would in their first language.

It may seem too redundant but recycling the same activity but with new vocabulary or grammar can be good for students. Since they already know how to do the activity, students can focus on the material instead of the instructions. Having routines throughout the week might help new students get into the procedures faster, even if they can't attend class every time. Routines help to provide a sense of stability in the classroom by helping students know what to expect and how to act. For instance, by using a vocabulary game such as 'Go fish' or 'Memory' every unit, students can practice the new vocabulary without having to focus on learning the rules or directions for a new game.

A strategy that many teachers use to connect new students with students who have been previously attending is to use different grouping strategies that allow students to practice with different students every day or multiple times in a multi-hour class. This can be achieved by asking students to number themselves from one to the number of groups you want to have, then put all the one's together, all the two's together, and so on so that they get randomly mixed up. Other instructors have passed out color papers, or playing cards with four in a set; four kings, four aces, to help to group accordingly. If you have 24 students, pass out six sets of four cards mixed up. Then they do a group activity with four students having the same set and then rearrange again asking students to arrange by the same number or face card. There are many other methods for mixing partners for activities including split sentences, word opposites, and digital/analog/written times that help get students moving and talking to each other in an effort to locate their matching partner. Another suggestion is to spend the beginning of group work having students ask personal information questions to each other such as their name, where they are from, where they live, and with whom they live with. They'll get to know each other better and form a connection as classmates in a learning community.

Learning names gives everyone a sense that they belong there and that people care enough about them to call them by their name. It is great when the teacher learns all the names of the students on the first day. But if by the fifth week then can't remember the new students names, the students can feel neglected. A teacher suggested using name placards or tags throughout the quarter so that other students can call on each other. Learning names "[speeds] the getting-to-know-you process necessary for strong communities to form" (Martinsen, 2009, p. 58).

The hardest part is getting the students to learn each other's names since they don't think it is a valuable way to spend time in class; they would rather be learning verb tenses than names. Showing your interest in their names and encouraging frequent interaction where they have to know the other person's name in order to complete an activity is helpful. This can contribute even if students aren't able to come every day. When doing an activity where they have to request information from their partner, make sure they have to request their name in addition to the material you are covering. Another way to practice names is by doing a names crossword on the board in the beginning of class. Before every activity, have them say "Hello, my name is ____, nice to meet you" and then change it up and teach "(guess the name), right?" Or "What's up (name)?"

Introductions of new students are also great practice opportunities, though always put the task on the class, rather than the new student. Have students practice general and acceptable questions for new students to answer. Another example is "fact or fiction?" interviews. The new student sits at the front of the class with two volunteers, one of each side of the new student. Classmates ask questions about the new student and the volunteers answer as if giving true statements. Since no one knows anything about the new student, these fictional answers can

be quite funny, especially to the new student. The new student gives a thumbs-up for correct answers or thumbs-down for incorrect answers. If incorrect, the new student gives the correction. This is low pressure for the new student and good question formation practice for everyone else, and the laughter tends to make everyone more comfortable.

Another introduction activity is "Timeline to Text" group writing. Two or three students go to the board with the new student, ask basic life event questions, and quickly draw the student's timeline. Then another pair works together to write on the board a short paragraph about the student with the whole class's help. The new student then listens to the finished paragraph read aloud by classmates and edits any mistakes. By using these strategies, it doesn't take long for new students to interact with their classmates.

Having new students enter every week means that it is harder to give the new students a strong welcome, harder to find out where their abilities are in comparison to the rest of the class, and harder to integrate into the group. I believe it is important that the teacher address their needs by readdressing what the class is learning at intervals. One potential solution some schools have experimented with is to have starting periods within the quarter. These starting periods would ideally be far enough apart so that the group has a chance to jell, get familiar with each other, and importantly so that the teacher can limit the number of times she/he goes over the syllabus, over procedures, and over previously covered material. Repetition is great for students to a degree, but can also be very time consuming and tiresome for both the students and the teacher. As an instructor on Dave's ESL Café said, "the obvious downside to open enrollment is teaching the verb 'to be' for the fifth time in the final month of the first year class, to which I'm sure many teachers here can relate" (www.eslcafe.com).

Comment [LT4]: Add s

Many TESOL programs have a component where student teachers must work a number of hours in an ESL class to get experience. Having an aide can be a lifesaver, especially someone from an ESL graduate program who is dedicated to helping students because they want to be teachers. With the help of your aide, assign a group of students with clear instructions as to how to cover previous material. However, without your own classroom, this is not easy! Teachers in this situation often have to resort to lugging a mini-filing cabinet around with them, especially for level one classes, in which the range of learners can span from “just got off the airplane” to “been here for 15 years but never had time to go to school”. If you are in the place to advocate on behalf of teachers, ask the administration to give teachers a classroom of their own with a place to easily store previous materials, supplies, and day to day paperwork needs.

CHAPTER THREE

Meeting the Needs of the Individuals within the Group

While the factors that cause attendance to fluctuate are not controllable, the class and course material are. A teacher can play an important role in attending to students needs by planning classes that come from class conversations about students' issues which through teaching specific language; the student's needs are met. As David Schwarzer, the author of *Practices for Teaching the "Whole" Adult ESL Learner* summarizes:

This means that a part of the teacher's job is finding reading materials of high interest and relevance to the language learners' lives and making them a part of the group's conversation and vocabulary work. Doing this could enhance the adult learners' motivation to learn (2009, p. 26).

In the 2001 article *Then I Stop Coming to School: Understanding Absenteeism in an Adult English as a Second Language Program*, a study of classroom behavior in adult literacy programs found that "even though teachers' most commonly expressed goal was to meet learners' needs their teaching does not reflect this goal. The researchers saw little evidence of teachers thoroughly assessing learners' needs or evaluating whether instruction was meeting individual or group needs" (qtd. in Schlage & Soga, 2008, p. 152). According to the ethnographic study, their data suggested that learners' absenteeism comes from dissatisfaction and anxiety stemming from not participating in choosing the learning topics and goals. A teacher directed curriculum keeps students from developing a sense of ownership over their learning process. Understanding this, but also realizing that teachers might feel not in control of the course material or that their theories of teaching and learning are being dismissed in the belief that the students can direct themselves, it is crucial to leave space in the curriculum for student need focused lessons.

As I do a needs-assessment and interview students on their goals, I listen to what they need and want to work on. I do my first needs assessment in the first week, and then I do a check-in with the goals the students had come up with three weeks later and once more before the end of the quarter. This way we could address the original students' goals and make goals for the new students. I use a collection of pictures to help get students talking, thinking, and writing about what they find important (see Appendix 1: Goal Setting Worksheet, at the end of this paper). For example, I had four students who wanted to take the citizenship test. I arranged for the librarian to come to my class to show my students what kinds of ESL materials there are in the library, including citizenship material. This met the goal of those students as well as inviting other students to use another tool for learning a language, the library.

The next time we revisited goals, a newer student said they had such listening problems that they just couldn't understand very much unless it was written. In the next few weeks I brought in children's books on tape from the library to use as a listening exercise that they could do at home, listening and pausing to write as much as they could, then listen again and check how they did. I also found some free ESL listening websites for the student to use on the school's computers or in the public library and had a lesson on how to get on and off the sites since many of my students did not have experience using a computer. We recycled these activities till they felt they could do them on their own.

Another important aspect is to help students find a goal that can be reasonably accomplished in the allotted time. If the quarter is ten weeks, then make the goal achievable so they can see they are accomplishing what they came to the class for. Rob A. Martinsen explains that "the teacher contracts with the student to provide teaching that will help the student meet that need, and the student, based on that expectation, commits to participating in the course"

(2009, p. 56). Since they are spending their valuable time in your classroom, then they need to be reciprocated with their goals being met.

Schlage and Soga say that adult ESL students are “active agents who make judgments according to their own value systems” (2008, p. 152). Their article reiterates the need for the course material to reflect what is important in the student’s daily life. When this is fully acknowledged, then the class is giving the students a chance to connect English to their personal experiences. Schalge and Soga demonstrated this by talking about a class that had a lot of Somali students. A Somali community has strong ties to family, so their teacher designed lessons that incorporated their children; they wrote Somali stories in both English and Somali for their children to read. The outcome was very successful because of its culturally sensitive nature, collaboration amongst the students, and because it built on the students need for family connections. While it is very rare that classes are homogenous and have the same needs, addressing the needs of a group of students within the class helps the other students see that the teacher is putting the students needs truly first. By showing the investment of the teacher in the students, this will perpetuate students’ investment in the course.

Students’ unhappiness with the class can also come from unpredictable learning topics or obscure curriculum objectives. In the study about absenteeism, it was found that learners became unhappy with classes when they did not understand teachers' intentions or expectations. In a student interview, the student didn’t understand why the teacher was having them alphabetize a list of groceries. The teacher remarked later that her intention was to teach life skills and that alphabetizing words is a necessary skill for employment. This example shows how more effective communication between teachers and students regarding the objectives and expectations may increase student satisfaction in their classes.

In Malcolm Knowles book *The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species*, he has a comprehensive chart of how he perceives the role of the teacher. For each learning situation he has teaching principles, for example, as a student realizes he needs to learn, the teacher helps the students to plan their goals for improvement and “identify the life problems that they experience because of gaps in their personal equipment” (Knowles, 1973, p. 70). The learning environment is “characterized by physical comfort, mutual trust and respect, mutual helpfulness, freedom of expression, and acceptance of differences” (p. 71). The teacher arranges the classroom to increase interaction such as not having people sit behind one another, treats each person with respect for their feelings and ideas, and encourages cooperative activities while reducing competitiveness.

As the learners begin to identify their goals, the teacher acts as a colearner and shares some of his own person and feelings with the class, and together they “formulate learning objectives in which the needs of the students, of the institution, of the teacher, of the subject matter, and of the society are all taken in account,” the learners then agree to “share of the responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience and therefore have a feeling of commitment towards it” (p. 71) and participate actively. Here the teacher can share his ideas and opinions on what makes a good curriculum design and the students can choose between the different materials together. They can also talk about the way they want to show their learning progress and what kinds of assessments or criteria to judge by.

Malcolm Knowles views adult learners as independent self-directed individuals who are capable of taking responsibility for their own learning. This learner centered approach defines teachers and students as joint inquirers, both invested in the learning process. For most adult

students, self-improvement is a the primary motivational factor for participation. They expect to have an influence on what and how they are being educated as well as being able to see the direct application of what they are learning. They also expect that their feedback to the instructor will be acted on. Adult learners can monitor their own learning outcomes based on their own goals. Therefore, including the adult learner in the curriculum decisions and in the feedback process can lead to increased learner motivation.

CHAPTER FOUR

Creating a Supportive Learning Environment

The “Ideal” Classroom Description: The classroom has students writings published up on the walls, along with their personal introduction story with their photos. The classroom rules that have been decided cooperatively are visible, and the students and teacher have all agreed by signing their names on the bottom. Soft music plays as students walk in, and there is coffee or tea available. One student brings in cookies from his workplace to share. The tables are set up so that no student has his back to another. Students greet each other by name. A group is helping each other finish the homework assigned the day before. Another group is quizzing each other on new vocabulary. The teacher has written the agenda up on the board and is asking the students which part of the agenda they want to start with.

In the late 1970’s, a psychologist named Georgi Lozanov introduced the argument that students naturally set up psychological barriers to learning based on fears that they will be unable to perform and the belief that they are limited in their abilities to learn. Lozanov began to develop a language learning method that focused on "desuggestion" of the limitations learners think they have and providing the sort of relaxed state of mind that would facilitate the retention of material to its greatest potential. This method became known as Suggestopedia, whose intended purpose is to enhance learning by lowering their anxiety, suggests “if students are relaxed and confident, they will not need to try hard to learn the language, it will come naturally and easily” (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 82).

Comment [LT5]: Don’t forget this year

This principle holds that the teacher is seen as someone to be trusted. To enable students to trust the teacher there must be a sense of commitment from the teacher to the students. Social contracts between the teacher and the student need to exist from the first day. If there is a commitment shown by the teacher to follow through on each request from the students, there is more trust found in the relationship. If the teacher says he or she will bring a particular material, return tests, or sing a song, then he or she has to follow through, otherwise students will begin to doubt that they can trust the relationship. Especially since the classes are short in comparison to their other commitments, the student and teacher relationship creates a big piece of the community in the classroom. Suggestopedia also affirms that once students trust the teacher, they can be more secure in their abilities and if they feel more secure, they can be more spontaneous and less inhibited, necessary for language acquisition.

Music helps the student to reach a certain level of relaxation and comfort which in turn increases receptivity. A teacher I interviewed uses music and singing in her classroom. She does not focus on the form of linguistic message, just the communicative intent. Her students love to sing songs in their native tongue, consequently bringing in English songs helps them to express themselves in the new language. Suggestopedia theory agrees that songs are useful for freeing the speech muscles and evoking positive emotions. Music suggests that learning is easy and pleasant.

Other teachers teach songs related to specific units or grammar points or as background music for in class free-writing or reflective writing activities. Playing or teaching related holiday music introduces the cultural aspect of music. One teacher for Valentine's Day played love songs from everyone's native country via the Internet and then talked about them and noted similarities or differences, mood, emotional responses, and traditional instruments sparking one

of her liveliest discussions. Sharing music from students' cultures can contribute to building understanding and tolerance for new cultures within the learning community.

By setting an encouraging atmosphere in the classroom through a positive attitude, the teacher can set the tone for the class. To create this positive environment for learning there also needs to be copious written language around the students to enhance their peripheral learning. Post stories of students' success and display student work throughout the quarter. This has an observable affect on student interest and involvement. Teachers do this in a variety of ways such as creating big colorful bulletin boards with world maps, student photos, written texts, and completed project posters and drawings, as well as a series of student-illustrated anecdotes and idioms. The personalized space and display of their own work usually energizes and highly motivates students.

One teacher talked about how she provided coffee and tea urns and students would take turns bringing snacks. In many cultures, community is built around food and drinks, providing great networking and community-building time. There can be management issues if the burden falls on the aide or instructor and becomes expensive. However, by having students sharing the responsibility to bring in the materials for break time, it provides way of listening in to your students' issues and concerns which then can be addressed in the class. Also many of the evening students come straight from work and delay their dinnertime so they enjoy when teachers incorporate food or candy in activities.

Another way to help students get to know one another is get out of the classroom occasionally, whether on campus outings like library tours or program/lab orientations, focused "walk and talk" excursions, or off-campus field trips. Outings are terrific opportunities for people-connections as well as community connections and provide real-world skills practice.

Roleplays are a way to get students to work jointly and use language through taking on a specific role. Students can prepare a dialogue prior to making a collaborative presentation. Roleplays provide a way of “using elements of real-life conversations, such as repetitions, interruptions, hesitations, facial expressions, [and] gestures” which can make the classroom feel less contrived and more authentic (qtd. in O’Malley and Pierce, 1996, p. 85).

In the principle of teaching called Community Language Learning, students are encouraged to talk about how they felt during a lesson, conversation, or activity. This technique of sharing the learning experience shows other learners that they are not alone in the difficulties of learning a language, and also helps them to get to know each other better as people lending a hand to creating a sense of a learner’s community. The current practice tells teachers to reflect on their teaching as a way of noticing what works and what doesn’t. This also goes for students, asking students to become active learners and share what works and doesn’t with each other is a big step to becoming independent learners.

CHAPTER FIVE

Best Teaching Practices to Build a Learning Community

Vignette: I use tasks to get students to work together. I watch the learning community build over different projects. For example, in a level one class I set groups out to find and cut out pictures by the food groups. I teach turn taking vocabulary and have seen this make another improvement in the community because they know how to offer someone else a chance to respond in groups. I also ask them to have pretend shopping party with the pictures while making sure everyone in the group has a task.

Because adult immigrants living in the United States need to learn English for many different reasons, there needs to be a variety of strategies designed to meet their language learning needs. Research on second language acquisition points out that motivation, interaction, and task and problem based learning are key features of successful language learning. Instructional practices that reflect these features show promise in adult ESL instruction and increasing the interaction amongst classmates enhances the connections within the classroom community.

Common across the different schools researched for Heidi Sprigley's paper *One Size Does Not Fit All*, is that ESL programs didn't use a singular teaching approach but a compromise of multiple approaches. Both the teacher and students have different perspectives of what is needed to be learned or the best way to teach. "Learners' resistance to or support for various [teaching] orientations also shape the dynamics of the classroom," says Sprigley (1993, p. 452). Using multiple approaches to address different parts of a unit can help students gain exposure to the different kinds of approaches and reach students with different learning styles. She suggests

that though some students feel more comfort in traditional learning methods, they benefit from being exposed to different techniques and approaches as long as it is tied together clearly and not just a “smorgasbord of educational offerings that serves to absolve teachers from examining their own philosophies and keeps them from exploring the perspectives that students bring to class” (p. 463).

A challenging aspect to this is choosing complementary approaches in which both the teacher and students alike see value. There needs to be clear communication on the teacher’s part to explain why he or she wants to do something a particular way, especially if it is not under the traditional teacher centered umbrella of practices that the students might be more comfortable and used to, such as task-based or participatory approaches. This can be negotiated with the class by being told what the individual teacher believes are the best ways to learn, both clarifying for the students as to why they are being asked to do a particular activity while ratifying the instructor.

A teacher at Highline Community College draws her teaching from multiple methodologies and views a multiple-approach as malleable and effective. She notes that it’s the combination of student feedback and progress that drives her method selection. In her opinion, this varied approach seems to be well-suited to open-enrollment. It tends to feel somewhat modular, designed with standardized units, for easy assembly and repair and flexible arrangement and use over the course; where, if one method fails to hook and sustain student interest or support learning, the next may succeed. Multiple approaches may better reflect the depth and range of educational backgrounds and the expectations evident in diverse immigrant populations in the U.S. and may better support individual differences with respect to learning styles and motivation. She adds that developing the flexibility to move

between different methods, or to draw elements from each, has also served to build discernment and confidence in her abilities as an instructor.

There has been a recent shift in language learning away from a focus on grammar toward a greater focus on communication and a focus on meaning. The realization has been made that literacy doesn't exist in isolation but is part of the interaction with the world around through a process called negotiation meaning. Teachers have realized that language is not a set of rules and it is no longer enough for students to learn only grammar. Instead of trying to cover ESL content that has been predetermined by a text book, teachers need to discover the real content that's important to their own students.

Acquisition requires meaningful interaction in the target language, during which the acquirer is focused on meaning rather than solely on form. Language learning and community building can be increased when students work together to overcome a challenge or problem that affects them and other members of the class and/or society as a whole. As students take on issues that affect them, they are creating a social covenant in the classroom because instead of acting out of self-interest, they are working toward helping each other thus becoming invested in their learning community. The following are two examples of best teaching practices and ways to use authentic assessment in an open enrollment system.

Best Teaching Practice 1: Dialogue Journaling

Journaling helps build the rapport between the student and the teacher and allows for a relationship through writing that may not build otherwise; for example, in a multilevel class where a student who isn't as strong as the others doesn't communicate as much in class, or for students who are shy about their language ability but find that the time and space that writing gives them allows them more confidence. "In our intermediate adult ESL class, the journal

served as a channel to open up the dialogue we needed in order to make community possible” between the teacher and the shyer student (Larrotta, 2009, p. 41).

This tool helps to learn more about students and for students to reflect on their learning, increase fluency and increase their motivation to write since they are having a personal conversation with their teacher. Teachers have said that they enjoy reading their students’ entries and responding to them as they get to share a little personal insight with each student while able to assess their writing skill. The goal is not to correct the writing; instead, journaling makes it possible to talk about the mistakes in writing and model correct structures through the teacher’s responses. The class as a whole makes up the guidelines, such as asking students to write out two questions at the end of each entry so that both the teacher and student felt confident to be able to respond to at least one of the questions, or ensuring that length didn’t matter as long as there was indeed an actual dialogue happening. Creating the guidelines together as a class helps to ensure everyone is committed to journaling. Dialogue journaling can also give teachers some idea of the grammar to review through the repetitive mistake patterns coming from the journals (Larrotta, 2009, p. 37).

Best Teaching Practice 2: Language Experience Approach

Language Experience Approach (LEA) proves to be another useful technique to creating a community in the classroom since it uses the students’ own experiences for the basis of literacy development. Students will get to learn of an experience that happened to another classmate or group of classmates personally and share the process together of the building the story in English. The use of personal stories makes the material of immediate relevance to the students themselves and to their classmates since they know the person and can now relate to a part of their life.

These “learner-generated texts” are then used as material for reading, discussion, skills building and further writing (Singleton).

LEA’s collaborative process starts with the discussion of an experience or an event; the story is then transcribed by the teacher or another more advanced literate student. The story can be built from a shared holiday, music, photos, or videotapes. In this technique, the rule is to write down only the sentences exactly as generated by the students and for the teacher or student scribe to correct the grammar. The scribe then reads the story back together with the students. The group works together to revise the text, look for grammar errors, spelling mistakes, and ensure that the meaning is clear. This approach is valuable to students who are more orally efficient but want to work on their writing (Guth and Wrigley, 1992, p. 31).

Applicable Assessment Strategies in Open Enrollment

Corrections needed to remain gentle and discreet, since the idea is to create a positive environment. Evaluations can come from more authentic class performance since formal tests disrupt the relaxed atmosphere important for learning. Authentic assessments show the teacher where students are without the need to cause fear of failure for students. They are useful in an open enrollment setting since tests and quizzes create a measurement of progression through numbers, it can get stressful when the students don’t have an equal number of scores having started at different points in the quarter. Authentic assessment is learner centered, promoting students to self assess and become “self-regulating learners who have control over their learning,... collaborate with other students in exchanging ideas [and] providing support to their peers” (O’Malley and Pierce, 1996, p. 7).

Portfolios, for example, can show a progression from the first day to the last day indicating the entire range of what students learned as well as what is needed for further instruction. Portfolios start with clearly stated criteria that both the teacher and students have discussed and agreed upon in the form of a rubric, checklists, or rating scale. As the pieces are completed, students can use the criteria to self check their own work, or with a partner to see their own progress. Through this self assessment, students become more confident and independent in their learning process. Together with the class teachers can decide the minimum requirement of pieces in the portfolio, and what kinds of student work to include. I have included rough draft and final writings, speaking presentations, drawings, group project evaluations, learning logs, and interviews with the community.

Learning logs can also provide a form of authentic self assessment. At the end of a class students are asked about what they learned that day, what was hard to understand, and what they will do to understand better. This puts some of the learning responsibility on the student to reflect and think about what they could do to help themselves reach their goals.

CHAPTER SIX

Using the Participatory Approach

Vignette: Once last quarter it was brought to my attention that students were upset by the increase in the parking fee. The next day I drew a picture on the board of three people riding in a car. I asked them about the picture. I wrote up a conversation about carpooling. In this conversation one student had to go straight from work to school, another had to come from home to shower after a day at construction work, and the last one had to sometimes share the car with her daughter. How could the three people share the same carpool tag? The students related the story to their own situations, and decided not to take any steps further. They decided that paying the parking was fair since they didn't have to pay for the class or textbooks.

The social change based language learning, also called the participatory approach, was popularized by the work of Paulo Freire, an educator who developed the approach while working with peasant groups in Brazil. Freire stressed in his writings that the prior experiences, knowledge, strengths, and community concerns of the learners must be the starting point for literacy instruction. Freire also stressed the use of literacy development for personal transformation and social action. A participatory approach not only develops words and themes meaningful to learners, but also extends those themes and activities into action that will better the learners' lives (Auerbach, 1992, p. 10).

As Freire believed, students have to learn the language to advocate for themselves and the ESL classroom is the place to begin this process. Traditional programs view students as empty vessels or passive recipients of instruction to be taught to fit into society. Freire states

“classroom processes themselves are disempowering because they rehearse students for submissive roles in the social order outside the classroom” (Auerbach, 1992, p. 15). Many ESL textbooks don’t give student the language to actively challenge the forces that keep them marginalized. However, if the class can take into consideration their own learning and decide what is of importance together with the instructor, this beginning discussion will give them a sense of empowerment within the learning environment and later the tools to empower themselves in their life outside of the classroom.

The first part of the participatory approach is to actively listen to your students through observation of ways they learn, interact with each other, their body language, how they treat the teacher, and what they say during breaks. One idea Auerbach suggests is to try learning about the communities they live in. It is important to ask them to share things they can bring from home that means something to them, or from their culture. Ask them draw or write about parts of their communities that are important to them, share cultural rites such as wedding traditions, becoming an adult, and baby showers. Another idea is to request them to interview their family or friends because it might reveal an area of the student’s personal concern. Ask students to compare their lives from their home country and here in the US by topics of work, family, education, and health. This way the teacher can get a genuine feel for what issues are of importance to the students.

The next step is to have a dialogue where everyone in class is involved in an exchange, both student to student and teacher to student. Since the students are adults, they are asked to bring their concerns to the classroom which then becomes the relevant material for language learning, “as students to exercise control within the classroom by choosing which issues are crucial, they will gain confidence to use English to make changes outside of school.”

(Wallerstein, 1983, p. 194). Learning from each other in a two way process of sharing helps take the teacher out of a lecturing authoritative role and helps the students to feel more comfortable since they are learning about their teacher as a person. This relationship also allows for more open discussion and feedback that teachers need in order to choose curriculum that the students want and need. The stronger relationship between the class members themselves and the teacher will strengthen the learning community abating the fragmentation found in an open enrollment system.

Two features are central to this approach, strategies for turning students into the most vital resources for language learning, and action as the practical outcome of language learning activities. Rather than presenting the students with synthetic materials developed outside the classroom, Auerbach advocates that teachers combine conscious listening, namely a sympathetic awareness of what students' real concerns are, with catalyst activities, language activities that get students to open up and express their real thoughts and feelings. Once the teacher has identified major themes in students' lives with these ways in, she can use a variety of tools to draw students into the intentional use of language to address the issues they see as important. These tools can include photos, pictures, fables, proverbs, published works of fiction, or children's books. One of the most powerful tools is called codes, or codifications in Freire's terms, carefully written dialogues in which characters reveal very controversial attitudes towards a social question. An example of a code will follow at the end of the chapter. It is important to make sure the code is easy to relate to and has multiple sides to an issue, this way different students can relate in their own way.

Comment [LT6]: I'd delete
A couple of things to watch for and
replace it with "It is important to"

The teacher promotes critical thinking through posing questions and the students relate the code to their lives and to society as a whole. The first line of questioning is to describe the

content of the code. Next, students are asked to define the problem, then to personalize and relate the problem to their own lives. The teacher guides the students into a discussion of the bigger picture and consequences. It is very important that the teacher not lead the students with ideas of their own, but to let them find their own solutions. The final stage is finding an action that is real to the situation such as writing a letter or autobiographies, creating a student produced publication, requesting specific needs, or making a change in their ESL education/curriculum. Most text books teach the language of expressing opinions, purpose, or survival, but few teach the language of action or empowerment to ESL students. Freire desired to help students to advocate for themselves, starting with giving them the language and critical thinking skills that they need through working together in community to compose a critical action.

I believe that as a result of using this approach, the teacher will be more attuned to his or her students' needs. Teachers will be able to address issues that are of importance to the students and in turn, students will get what they need from the class in both a social aspect and in a respectful way of learning language. Through this attention the teacher pays to the issues that come up in their lives, students will see the value of their class and attend frequently. As the attrition rate decreases, the learning community is enhanced. In the following section, I outlined an example of what Freire called a code, a dialogue where four characters reveal their attitudes towards their ESL class, which through using the participatory approach line of questioning, can be used to find out the real needs of the class.

Example of a Code to Discover Learner's Needs

Jose: Hi Tran, how are you? You like our English class?

Tran: Sure Jose. Learning English will help me to get a job. Unfortunately the class is talking about family members and that's boring to me. I need more information on how to get a job.

Shimsina: Yeah, I think our teacher doesn't care about my opinion. Last week she asked us to write what we like and didn't like about the class on a card but she is still teaching us the same things.

Jose: How about you Amina, what do you think about our class?

Amina: Well, I studied really hard for the vocabulary test today, but the teacher said we weren't going to take it today. She hadn't even written it yet!

Jose: That's sucks. Yeah, I don't understand why we are learning about recipes in class. I don't even cook. What does that have to do with me?

After clarifying the meaning with the students, teachers can use this dialogue by following the steps of questioning process.

- Describe the Content: The students are asked where and what happened.
- Define the Problem: The teacher asks the students: What is the problem? What are the different perspectives of the problem?
- Personalize the Problem: How do you connect to the people in the story? Has this ever happened to you? Do you know anyone in a similar situation?
- Analyze: How does your situation compare with others in the class? Are there any common ideas? What are the roots/ causes/ consequences of the situation? Who benefits? Who doesn't?

- Alternatives: Discuss solutions to the problem. What can we do to change this situation? What are our options? What do we want to be different/ same? What possibilities are there within the constraints?
- Critical Action: What action could we take? What are the next steps? Who will do what and when? Where can we get more information or help?

After following this line of questioning, teachers can begin by discussing where English is used and what kind of language the class needs to learn, such as the different aspects to getting a job, or what questions to ask a child's teacher, or learning vocabulary related to sports. The teacher could facilitate through demonstrating how to map out a brainstorm for the language used around specific situations students find themselves in, including getting a job, going to the doctor, talking about family, talking on the phone, making appointments, or talking to child's teacher.

Students can poll each other about their interests or needs in learning English. Depending on the level of the students, the teacher could supply a list of topics with room for added suggestions that students can write in themselves. As a group, tally the group's interest areas in a graph. This information can be used to create a timeline showing when the class will begin addressing each of the interests. Together, students could come up with a group project that embodies as many of the interests as possible. An instructor could suggest that the students make a goal that they think is achievable by the end of the timeline and request them record their goal in order to revisit it later in the quarter and or add their goals to the timeline.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Conclusion

Administrators and teachers have differing opinions on what makes for better instruction. At several of the Washington community colleges, ESL administrators have decided to choose a closed system for the following reasons; it allows for progressive instruction, allows teachers more instructional time than time spent orienting new students, and retention is higher when the groups start and finish together. However, other administrators suggest that open or managed enrollment serves a greater number of students and gives flexibility and immediate access to students who have life or work issues that do not fit into the regular quarter schedule. Table 1: ESL Enrollment Descriptions of Washington State Community Colleges illustrates the variety of enrollment systems in Washington State and the administrators' reasons for their enrollment decisions.

The community college system serves a growing number of immigrants and refugees every year. For this reason, my ESL program administrators have decided to offer open enrollment classes which in turn have impacts on both the teacher and students. This paper offers both new and experienced teachers techniques and activities to use to enhance their learning communities in the classroom as well as suggesting to administrators how to make classes successful for students and teachers.

Community building is not one activity or a group of activities that takes place at the beginning of the year. It is an ongoing project that has undeniable benefits; bonds are made between peers increasing their motivation to attend class. Students who feel comfortable and able to make mistakes without fear of criticism are more likely to take risks with their language use, and these risks pay off in the form of increased fluency and English proficiency. By

encouraging teachers to build a learning community where students have a sense of belonging and their specific learning needs are met, they will persist in their studies and attendance will improve, reducing attrition rates and therefore the constant influx of new students.

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Table 1: ESL Enrollment Descriptions of Washington State Community Colleges

School and Number of ESL Students Per Year	Is your school open, managed enrollment, or closed?	What is the reasoning behind the decision?
Open Enrollment Schools		
Highline Community College 6800	Open enrollment	Both to serve WorkFirst students and to serve as many students as possible
Renton Technical College 3000	Open enrollment till 7 th week	Not enough funding to meet the community need, keep classes open to serve as many students as possible
Big Bend Community College 650	Open enrollment, with waitlists.	Removing barriers and serving students as soon as they indicate ready. WorkFirst students are required to start immediately.
Yakima Valley Community College 2400	Open enrollment. Classes are open till filled.	To reach class capacity, more flexible for students
Columbia Basin College 1700	Open enrollment. Classes are open till filled.	Flexibility and immediate access for students who have life/work issues that do not fit in regular quarter schedule
Edmonds Community College 4800	Open enrollment till the 7 th week.	Returning students get priority
Managed Enrollment Schools		
Bellingham Technical College 300	Managed, replacing non-attending students mid quarter	Keeps integrity of the classroom and allows for more teaching than orienting new students
Clark College 1937	Managed enrollment with several entry points. Open enrollment off-campus.	Classes do not meet caps at the beginning, high numbers of students need multiple avenues for enrollment

Whatcom Community College 1000	Managed with 2 entry points, beginning and mid quarter. Off campus classes are open.	Considering not having mid quarter entry due to inconsistent teaching. Piloting a mid quarter class to hold new students.
Everett Community College 3000	Managed through 3 rd week with exceptions.	Fill classes as much as possible
Wenatchee Valley College 800	Managed with a waitlist, 3 unexcused absences and a student is dropped and replaced by someone on the waitlist. WorkFirst classes remain open.	Open enrollment was difficult for progressive instruction and high attrition rates for new students creating a lot of time and energy for staff
South Seattle Community College 2000	Managed (open for the first two weeks) Open for WorkFirst students. Gateway multilevel class at mid quarter.	Classroom based model with identified outcomes that mid quarter students won't be able to complete
Closed Enrollment Schools		
Bates Technical College 260	Closed after the 5 th day of class, if needed a mid quarter entry in some classes.	Mid quarter still gives students the 40-50 hours need for testing.
Clover Park Technical College 400	Levels 1-6 are closed after 2 weeks. Open supplemental classes with 3 entry points,	Progressive curriculum and higher attendance. Continue to look at enrollment models with intent to change as needed.
Tacoma Community College 600-700	Closed after the first week. Exceptions is a WorkFirst ABE/GED class open for referrals	Retention and progress is much stronger when the groups start and finish together

Appendix 1. Goal Setting Worksheet

Name _____

PLAN FOR YOUR FUTURE

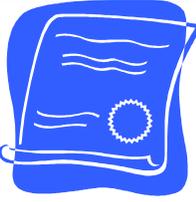
Do you want to learn about this? Circle Yes or No.

<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Obtain a GED/ Other Certification</p>	<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Talk to a school advisor or counselor</p>
<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Take an ESL Class</p>	<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Find an ESL Study Partner</p>
<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Learn Basic Computer Skills</p>	<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Join International Fair</p>
<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Visit Student Success Center</p>	<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Find a Technical Program you are interested in</p>

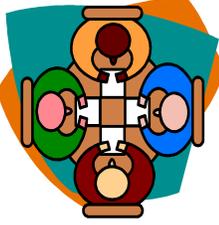
Looking for a Job? What skills do you need to learn?

<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Write a Resume</p>	<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Search for a Job in a Newspaper/ On the Internet</p>
<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Complete a Job Application on Paper/ Internet</p>	<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Interview for a Job</p>

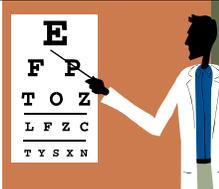
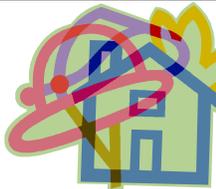
What documents do you need? Circle YES or NO for each thing.

<p>Yes No</p>		<p>ID / Driver's License</p>	<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Library Card</p>
<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Vehicle Insurance and Registration</p>	<p>Yes No</p>		<p>CPR / First AID Certification</p>

Circle the Service and Community activities you would like to learn about.

<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p>		<p>Volunteer at an Community Service Organization</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p>		<p>Attend a City Council Meeting</p>
<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p>		<p>Volunteer at your children's school or event</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p>		<p>Attend a School Board Meeting</p>
<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p>		<p>Donate Blood</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p>		<p>Visit a local Farmers Market</p>
<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p>		<p>Donate unwanted household items</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p>		<p>Go to a local Fair or Festival</p>

Bring your family together. Circle what you plan to do with your family.

<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Make a Monthly Budget</p>	<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Read to my Child</p>
<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Eat a Meal together with my family</p>	<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Have a Family Outing to the zoo/ science center/ park</p>
<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Help my child with Homework</p>	<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Take the family for a Medical Checkup or Eye exam</p>
<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Discuss and Write a Family Emergency Escape</p>	<p>Yes No</p>		<p>Try a new sport or hobby</p>

Write about your family. Think about what is important for your family to do together. You may use the ideas above in your paragraph.

THINKING ABOUT GOALS

SHORT TERM: What are your short term goals this quarter?

This quarter I want to...

LONG TERM: What are your long term goals this quarter?

In 3 to 5 years I want to...