

SUBJECT: Matriculation: ENGH 0890, ENGH 0990, ENGL 1010

DATE: 27 February 2005

This memo and research report is part of my fulfilling my proposal for release time and is described in that proposal on page two. The proposal is available at <http://www.uvsc.edu/basiccomp/releaseprop.pdf>. Among other findings, the following statistics suggest that, from the students' perspectives, ENGH 0990 may have purposes other than preparation for ENGL 1010: many ENGH 0990 students do not enroll in ENGL 1010 after ENGH 0990 and many leave the college after ENGH 0990. ENGH 0990 students not enrolling in ENGL 1010 afterwards but remaining enrolled in the college may suggest a policy change and ENGH 0990 students leaving the college after their course may suggest that the ENGH 0990 curriculum may include an "adult education" track.

**Background**

Matriculation may be defined as students completing a sequence of composition courses: ENGH 0890, ENGH 0990, and ENGL 1010. I collected data on this matriculation pattern with the support of the Office of Institutional Research during the 2002-2003 academic year. At that time, not all of the data I collected was publicized or shared with faculty members, so this memo/research report summarizes the former and previously unpublicized data.

**Placement: The Context for Matriculation**

The current placement system creates an important context for understanding matriculation. To explain, while the current placement system places students into ENGH 0890 and ENGH 0990, not all of those "placed" students enroll in the courses. See Table 1.

Table 1.

First-Time Freshmen: Comparing Placement to Enrollment			
Semester	Students Placed into ENGH 0890 and ENGH 0990	Students Enrolled in ENGH 0890 and ENGH 0990	Students Who Were Placed into But Not Enrolled in ENGH 0890 and ENGH 0990
Fall 1998	1,167 (low)	675	492 (low)
Fall 1999	911 (low)	692	219 (low)
Fall 2000	859 (low)	682	177 (low)
Fall 2001	872 (low) 927 (more accurate)	849	23 (low) 78 (more accurate)
Fall 2002	831 (low)	726	105 (low)

The totals of students who are placed into ENGH 0890 and ENGH 0990 are low for *excluding* transfer students; therefore, the total numbers of students who are placed but not enrolled in ENGH 0890 and 0990 are also low. This exclusion seems significant, for instance, because in the Fall of 2001, 55 transfer students were placed into ENGH 0890 and ENGH 0990. Therefore, 872 first-time freshmen plus 55 transfer students had been placed into ENGH 0890 and ENGH 0990, a total of 927. The total number of students placed but not enrolled in ENGH 0890 and 0990, therefore, becomes 78, not 23. These 78 students represent approximately three sections.

The department may want to discuss (1) how may we secure more recent and similar data, (2) why so many students are being placed into ENGH 0890 and 0990 but are not enrolling in either courses, (2) whether we should require students placed into ENGH 0890 and 0990 to enroll in those courses, and (3) whether more ENGH 0890 and ENGH 0990 sections and teachers are needed.

***Previous Matriculation Information: Beginning in the Fall Semesters of 1999, 2000, 2001***

- Approximately 38% of ENGH 0890 fall students enrolled in ENGH 0990 in the spring, regarding the fall semesters of 1999, 2000, 2001.
- Approximately 43.5% of ENGH 0990 fall students enrolled in ENGL 1010 in the spring, regarding the fall semesters of 1999, 2000, 2001.
- After completing ENGH 0890 in the fall, approximately 12% of those students completed ENGH 0990 in the spring and ENGL 1010 in the following fall semester, regarding the fall semesters of 1999, 2000, 2001.

Regarding fall semesters, if we are to serve our students' needs as well as encourage retention, then we may want to know why over 50% of our ENGH 0890 and ENGH 0990 students do not enroll in their next composition course in the spring. We may also want to know if this was the trend during the fall semesters of 2002, 2003, and 2004.

***Previous Matriculation Information: Beginning in the Spring Semesters of 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002***

- Regarding spring semesters of 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002, approximately 12% of ENGH 0890 spring students enroll in ENGH 0990 during any summer session; however, approximately 77% of ENGH 0890 spring students do NOT enroll in any summer sessions.
- Regarding spring semesters of 1999, 2000, 2001, and 2002, approximately 12% of ENGH 0990 spring students enroll in ENGL 1010 during any summer session; however, approximately 82% of ENGH 0990 spring students do NOT enroll in any summer sessions.

Only 12% of spring ENGH 0890 and ENGH 0990 students are taking their next required composition course in the summer. As a department, we seem to have a poor understanding of what happens to our ENGH 0890 and 0990 students after their spring semester. Although we may assume that they return to college in the fall semester, the data from the fall semesters also suggests that an easy explanation of our students' motivations – they stay on campus and enroll in required compositions courses sequentially – does not work. An implication here may be that we can not improve our curriculum for our students, or our possible advising them in the future, until we understand their motivations better.

***New Matriculation Information: Students Enrolling in ENGH 0990 and then ENGL 1010***

One explanation for “where” students go after completing ENGH 0990 may be that ENGH 0990 students are transferring to other colleges or universities in Utah. Table 1 addresses that possibility. Data suggests that relatively few ENGH 0990 students transfer to other colleges or universities.

For three years, over half of our ENGH 0990 students are *not* enrolled in ENGL 10101 in the following spring semester. These statistics suggest that, from the students' perspectives, ENGH 0990 may have purposes other than preparation for ENGL 1010. Perhaps, we need to discuss why ENGH 0990 students are not matriculating into ENGL 1010 and create a research design to understand this event and our ENGH 0990 students' educational purposes better. Some required compositions courses have two tracks, that allow students to choose which track best suites their educational purposes. Perhaps, too, the Department of Basic Composition may want to advocate for a new policy that states ENGH 0990 students are required to enroll for ENGL 1010 after ENGH 0990. This requirement may be part of the basic composition program and justified as a way to better prepare students to write across the curriculum during their college careers.

Table 2

	Fall: ENGH 0990 Students	Spring: Students matriculating into ENGL 1010.	Spring: Students not matriculating into ENGL 1010.	Spring: Students not taking ENGL 1010 but remaining at UVSC.	Spring: Students who left UVSC.
Fall 1999	415	187 Students (45% of 415)	228 Students (55% of 415)	123 Students (30% of 415)	105 Students (25% of 415)
Fall 2000	426	184 Students (43% of 426)	242 Students (57% of 426)	117 Students (27% of 426)	125 Students (29% of 426): 57 transferred within Utah but 68 did not.
Fall 2001	459	196 Students (43% of 459)	263 Students (57% of 459)	113 Students (25% of 459)	150 Students (33% of 459): 48 transferred within Utah but 102 did not.

Note: The ENGH 0990 students in the fall semesters are the same students being tracked in the spring semesters.

### ***Greater Considerations***

First, if the present placement system continues, then we do not have data regarding matriculation through required composition courses for recent academic years: 2002-2003 and 2003-2004. Prospects are poor for having this data for the 2004-2005 academic year, too. Nevertheless, we need data regarding these recent years to understand trends in the previous data, to measure the possible effect of the new portfolio curriculum, to guide new department research designs, and to improve policies in the department that affect our students' lives.

Second, if the present placement system is changed, then we need new valid and reliable department research to understand or anticipate how that change may affect matriculation through required composition courses.