

Council of Provosts College First-Year Curriculum Proposal, revised

February 2017

The Council of Provosts (COP) respectfully submits a revision to its “Proposal to Revise College Core Courses” (2016). In place of a required, uninterrupted two-quarter sequence, COP proposes a required fall reading course followed by the opportunity to take a college-based winter writing course—a two-quarter “First-Year Experience” for students who choose it. A course description and draft course learning outcomes, both from our original proposal, are included as Appendix 1 and 2.

Definitions

- **College requirement:** a college-specific Core course required of all incoming lower-division students for graduation.
- **College 1 (Academic Literacy and Ethos):** a college-themed course focusing on critical reading and academic discourse proposed to satisfy the college requirement.
- **Entry Level Writing Requirement (ELWR):** a UC-wide requirement preliminary to campus-specific composition requirements.
- **Composition 1 (C1) and Composition 2 (C2):** sequential UCSC-specific lower-division writing requirements satisfied by passing appropriate courses.

Overview

The broad goals of COP’s revised proposal remain the same as in its 2016 proposal: to offer students the best opportunity to succeed at UCSC by providing them a strong foundation in critical reading, thinking, and writing, a cornerstone of student success and excellence at the university and beyond. Our revised proposal recognizes that the system of Core and composition (C1 and C2) courses, approved by the Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) over ten years ago, no longer serves UCSC’s student demographic. Too many pedagogical expectations piled onto Core courses, and too great a proliferation of different Core models as a result of demographic changes, have led to uneven experiences for students. (See Appendix 4 of the original proposal for an account of the recent history of Core.) The proposed new system meets CEP’s expectation that college and writing requirements be satisfied independently and that writing requirements be satisfied sequentially.

Good academic writing rests on effective reading habits and skills. Recent studies conducted at Colleges Nine and Ten and Crown College suggest that UCSC’s specific cohort of incoming students stands to benefit from focused attention on reading and critical thinking, attention that should also improve their proficiency in writing.¹ Thus, this proposal defines a new model for the college requirement: Academic Literacy and Ethos, offered in the fall quarter as “College 1,” a

¹ Tonya Ritola and Anna Sher, “Criteria-Based Assessment of Critical Reading, Thinking, and Writing Outcomes in the C1 College Core Course” (2015); Ritola and Sher, “Criteria-Based Assessment in Writing 20: Part 1, The Crown Model” (2016); Ritola and Sher, “Criteria-Based Assessment of the C1 Course: Part 2, The Crown Model” (2017).

course that will equip students to succeed not only in required composition classes but in any other courses requiring close attention to reading.

This proposal draws on recent research on student success, including literature confirming the **power of cohort-based learning and meaningful topics in intellectually intimate settings.**² Critically, COP's proposal leverages UCSC's established structures for cohort-based learning through the living/learning settings of UCSC's colleges. As powerful amplifiers for students' learning experience, the colleges encourage students living together in a community to share in a larger intellectual conversation and experience. As the student success literature shows, this experience is a driver for academic success, particularly in the first year of college, encouraging students' sense of belonging and academic engagement.³

College 1, Academic Literacy and Ethos, will teach ways (strategies) and kinds (genres) of reading, knowledge that will, in turn, provide students with tools for successfully engaging with readings they encounter in other classes; it will also teach students about "academic ethos"—habits of mind that shape how one participates in, and consequently feels a sense of belonging within an academic community.

Recognizing that repeated encounters with familiar materials and concepts deepen students' engagement and facility with those concepts, and consistent with the student success literature, COP proposes that students at each college also have the opportunity to enroll in college-themed winter C1 and C2 courses, writing classes that engage thematic knowledge students accumulate in College 1. Thus our revised proposal comprises the following:

(1) **College 1**, 30 students, a required 5-unit course on reading and academic ethos, taught in fall at the colleges by instructors qualified to teach genres and strategies of academic reading.

² See, for instance, George Kuh, *High-Impact Educational Practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter* (Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities); Carol Geary Schneider, "Liberal Education and High-Impact Practices: Making Excellence--Once and for All--Inclusive." In Kuh, *High-Impact Educational Practices*, 1-8; Michael Stebleton, Krista Soria, Ronald L. Huesman, Jr., and Vasti Torres, "Recent Immigrant Students at Research Universities: The Relationship Between Campus Climate and Sense of Belonging," *Journal of College Student Development* 55:2 (2014): 196-202; Soria and Stebleton, "First Generation Students' Academic Engagement and Retention," *Teaching in Higher Education* 17:6 (2012): 673-685.

³ See, for example, Chun-Mei Zhao and George Kuh, "Adding Value: Learning Communities and Student Engagement," *Research in Higher Education* 45:2 (March 2004); and The Council of Independent Colleges, "Living-Learning Communities and Independent Higher Education," *Innovations in Teaching and Learning Research Brief* 4 (October 2015). "Learning communities" are defined in many ways, commonly (but not exclusively) involving arrangements for students sharing two or more intentionally related classes in common (as would students who opt for the full First-Year Experience, and, currently, as do students at Stevenson and Crown Colleges, students in Stretch versions of Core, students who enroll in Rachel Carson College-themed sections of Writing 2 following Core). Shared living space enhances shared learning space. Zhao and Kuh show that learning community experience in the first year is linked to positive outcomes through the senior year (127), and that for both first-year and senior students, learning communities are "associated with higher levels of academic effort, academic integration, and active and collaborative learning," among other effects (124).

This course would satisfy the college requirement; an incoming class of 450 students at a single college would yield 15 sections of College 1; and

(2) **C1 and C2 courses**, 25 students, 5-unit winter courses on writing keyed to themes or materials raised in College 1 and taught at each of the colleges by instructors qualified to teach composition. The number of sections would be a matter of agreement, though C1- and C2-qualified students should have the opportunity to enroll at their college.

Key revisions

This revision takes into account CEP's response to VPAA Herbie Lee (6/20/16), and provisional agreements worked out during summer 2016 in a series of meetings convened by Vice Provost and Dean of Undergraduate Education Richard Hughey and representatives from the Council of Provosts and the Writing Program. The revised proposal preserves many of the research-backed practices suggested by the student success literature while establishing greater choice for students and making fewer demands of the Writing Program. It addresses a mandate to separate Entry-Level Writing Requirement instruction from C1 instruction, and addresses two other requirements from CEP: first, that COP address the de facto segregation in Core courses caused by the tracking of students by their writing levels; and second, that COP's proposal achieve curricular consistency across the colleges.

There are two main technical differences between the original and the revised proposal. The first is a modest increase in the size of the 5-unit college requirement, from 28 in the original proposal to 30 in the revised proposal. The second is a shift from a required two-quarter sequence ("First-Year Experience") for all students to a two-quarter sequence offered at all the colleges. This sequence would begin with the required fall course, Academic Literacy and Ethos, followed in winter, for those who opt in, by C1 and C2 writing classes thematically linked to the colleges. These winter quarter classes would thus build on the reading and critical thinking objectives developed in College 1 and allow interested students to engage further in the thematic focus introduced in fall quarter.

This proposal thus retains the **option** of an integrated two-quarter first-year experience at each of the colleges **without making it required**, thereby preserving students' choice and ensuring flexibility for them in designing their schedules, in keeping with CEP's preference. This optional sequence offers students the opportunity to deepen their engagement with topics introduced in Academic Literacy and Ethos while fostering sense of belonging via cohort-building around shared learning goals and college identities.

Additional features

We expect the Writing Program to offer appropriate curricular paths for first-quarter ELWR-required domestic and international students, all of whom will be simultaneously enrolled in College 1. For domestic students, this may take the form of a course similar to Writing 20 and bearing 2 or 5 units depending on the student's level of readiness. We expect international students to enroll in 5-unit courses, probably from the suite of Multilingual Curriculum courses

offered through the Writing Program. After their first quarter of enrollment, these students, we expect, will be served by the usual range of composition courses for domestic and international ELWR-required and ELWR-satisfied students.

CEP has indicated that while it “does not support mandatory linkage of the lower-division writing courses to a specific topic (e.g., the college themes) or quarter (winter of the first year) as proposed by the Provosts,” it believes that “to the extent possible, students should be given the opportunity to take a C1/C2 course related to the theme of their college if they wish to do so,” and that “ideally, they should be able to take these classes in or near their college to perpetuate the sense of community established in College 1” (CEP to Lee, 6/20/16). Our proposal is consistent with both aspects of CEP’s position.

Finally, we propose that Stevenson College maintain its unique status as the only college offering its two-quarter First-Year Experience to all of its students. This proposal is consistent with student choice if students are told about Stevenson’s two-quarter sequence upon admission—as they are now—and are not placed at Stevenson without their assent to that sequence. We do not believe this will significantly affect student choice: Stevenson already offers a two-quarter Core and is consistently one of the top choices of students who SIR at UCSC, often for the very reason of its unique academic experience.

Rationale

CEP has stressed the importance of flexibility and choice in students’ schedules, a value of particular importance to students who aspire to major in programs that place special demands on their time. COP’s revision addresses this value, recognizing that some students will not wish to enroll in a two-quarter First-Year Experience or be able to fit such a sequence with major pre-requisites. It is likely, however, that enough students at each college will want to have the two-quarter experience to fill several winter classes. This is currently the case for college-themed winter Writing 2 courses at Rachel Carson College.⁴

As a shift from the multiple existing models of Core,⁵ the proposed fall College 1, Academic Literacy and Ethos, offers a new procedural focus (on **ways** of reading), a new conceptual focus (on **kinds** of reading), and a new ethical focus (on **building an ethical intellectual community**) tied thematically to the intellectual foci of each college. This course will improve students’ skills in working with texts and strengthen their sense of belonging to an intellectual community. It will teach practical skills and “habits of mind” that have been shown to demystify academic materials and processes and promote independent, self-reflective, and collaborative participation in campus culture: in short, an academic ethos.⁶

⁴ To aid planning, students in the first year of the new program could be surveyed to predict how many students in the following year would want a college-themed writing course.

⁵ Appendix 4 of COP’s original Core revision proposal describes the recent history of college Core courses, including the multiple competing imperatives governing current Core classes.

⁶ See Jennifer Fletcher, “Critical Habits of Mind: Exposing the Process of Development.” *Liberal Education* (Winter 2013) 99:1.

In defining the college requirement as a course meant to equip students with knowledge about, and strategies for, reading itself, COP's proposal makes visible an intellectual value assumed by the university but officially articulated until now as a technical skill (e.g., textual analysis) or a stepping stone to other accomplishments, such as writing (reading as one of the expectations of the composition requirements). The course will teach students to be able to read academic discourse effectively and critically, recognize its many forms, think about their readings with complexity, understand what's at stake in them, draw connections between the readings and their own perspectives, and link the readings to larger contexts: the course expects students to become critical thinkers, able to navigate different academic contexts. **Academic Literacy and Ethos thus makes explicit as an object of study the university's most fundamental (and perhaps least defined) expectation: reading itself.**

For this reason, among others, Academic Literacy and Ethos must be required and must be a 5-unit course. As indicated in our original proposal, fewer than 5 units would isolate the college requirement from the rest of the university curriculum and signal that the subject of the course is not central to our mission as an institution. The opposite is the case, and as the studies at Colleges Nine, Ten, and Crown suggest about student proficiencies, our students need more attention to reading rather than less. Effective reading skill is a well-documented need of students transitioning to college from high school. A Carnegie Corporation (2010) report states that of students measured as basic, proficient, or advanced readers via the National Assessment of Educational Progress, "less than 10 percent of 17 year olds, regardless of race/ethnicity or SES [socioeconomic status], are able to comprehend complex texts" at the "advanced" level.⁷ The report makes a case for teaching more complex and context- or discipline-attentive ways of reading. Academic Literacy and Ethos, with its foci on acquiring reading knowledge and skills, and academic habits of mind, and its emphasis on enabling students to employ these ways of thinking in other settings, is foundational to the work of the university and to success within it. Further, the colleges are central to fostering a sense of community, connection and belonging among our students, especially during their transition to university. The research is clear: cohort-building has been shown to improve students' sense of belonging; strengthen their social connection to and support by their peers and teachers;⁸ increase motivation;⁹ and promote a culture of collaborative active learning.¹⁰ These effects

<https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/critical-habits-mind-exposing-process-development>

⁷ Carol D. Lee and Anika Spratley, "Reading in the Disciplines: The Challenges of Adolescent Literacy" (New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 2010). 2.

⁸ Maureen S. Andrade, "Learning Communities: Examining Positive Outcomes," *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory, and Practice* (2007) 9: 1–20.

⁹ Jennifer L. Crissman, J. L. (2001). "Clustered and Nonclustered First-Year Seminars: New Students' First-Semester Experiences," *Journal of the First-Year Experience and Students in Transition*(2001) 13: 69–88.

¹⁰ Katerine Bielaczyc and A. Collins (1999), "Learning Communities in Classrooms: A Reconceptualization of Educational Practice." In C. M. Reigeluth (Ed.), *Instructional-design theories and models: A new paradigm of instructional theory*, Vol. II (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1999): 269–292; B. L. Smith, J. MacGregor, R. S. Matthews, and F. Gabelnick, "Learning Communities: Reforming Undergraduate

promote deeper, more transferable learning¹¹ and increased persistence, and, together with the academic purpose of the course, merit students' time and attention.

Some empirical evidence bolsters our point of view about the number of units. Crown College has experimented with a 2-unit course (Crown 79) in the fall whose course learning outcomes align with those of the proposed College 1 in the areas of critical thinking and discussion and of creating a sense of belonging. Students expressed dissatisfaction with a course that seemed to give insufficient depth to these topics. Though a second iteration of the course with academic aims aligned much more closely with those of the subsequent Core class has been more successful, these outcomes strongly suggest that a low-unit course is insufficient to fulfill the aims of Core. Finally, a low-unit fall course poses the significant additional problem of leading most incoming frosh to take either fewer or more than the optimal 15 units, which would set them up for an extremely difficult first quarter in college and is ill-advised according to the empirical literature.

In establishing that students take a reading (College 1) course first, before enrolling in a university-level writing course such as Composition 1 or 2, the proposal recognizes a logical developmental sequence: first reading, then writing.¹² Further, in proposing that at each college students have the opportunity to enroll in a writing class immediately following their reading class and thematically linked to it, COP's proposal aims to exploit, for writing purposes, the procedural and conceptual knowledge about reading, and topical knowledge of the course theme, gained in Academic Literacy and Ethos. This sequencing should be particularly valuable in college-located C2 classes, whose mandate to engage students in research will be enhanced by a second quarter course linked to the ideas or readings of College 1.

Why do we need such a course at UCSC? The recently completed assessment of C1-level classes at Crown College shows that C1 students perform satisfactorily less often in the domain of "critical thinking" (~43%) than in "reading" (55%) and "writing" (50%) (Fig. 1).¹³ These results are in line with those of the prior study during 2014-15 at Colleges Nine and Ten,¹⁴ and are

Education." San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass, 2004; Vincent Tinto, "Learning Better Together: The Impact of Learning Communities on Student Success in Higher Education" *Journal of Institutional Research* (2000) 9: 48–53; Zhao and Kuh (2004).

¹¹ J. Grose-Fifer, Kimberly Adilia Helmer, and T. M. Zottoli, "Interdisciplinary Connections and Academic Performance in Psychology-English Learning Communities" *Teaching of Psychology* (2014) 41(1): 57-62.

¹² The distinction is, in reality, not so stark: students will write in their reading course, just as they will read in their writing courses. But the focus of each class will be distinct, and the order sequential. The sequence of reading followed by writing will likely be less visible for ELWR-required students, however, who will take a Writing Program class—for most version of Writing 20—concurrently with College 1. Ritola and Sher (2016) indicate that achieving efficacy in "critical reading" is highly important to students' success in satisfying the ELWR while taking Writing 20. Thus the relationship between College 1 and fall Writing 20 courses (or a variant) should be carefully assessed.

¹³ Ritola and Sher (2017).

¹⁴ Though the Colleges Nine and Ten study (Ritola and Sher 2015) indicates that "Students demonstrated a relatively higher proficiency in the Critical Reading domain (56-63% met/exceeded expectations) than in Critical Thinking (49-61%) and especially in Writing (39-52%)," proficiency levels are comparable at

further supported by students' own sense of their abilities, as reported in survey data captured in the Crown study (2017; see Section 3). They are also supported by the earlier study at Crown (2016) which found that facility in critical reading among ELWR-required students was directly linked to their facility in other domains. The "Recommendations" section states "This study provides evidence that the Colleges and the Writing Program should strengthen the first-year curriculum to help students achieve higher proficiencies in Critical Reading, which would positively influence students' development in Critical Thinking and Writing and, potentially, beyond W20 and the College Core course." The Crown (2017) study's "Implications" section echoes that statement: "Critical Reading is a foundational proficiency that affects students' development in other domains, including Critical Thinking and Writing." A course focusing on intellectual engagement, assigning the complex readings expected at the university level, and teaching strategies for effectively engaging them, should significantly fill the gaps in "reading" and "critical thinking" and improve students' performance in writing as well.

Judging by the results of the Crown (2017) study, Academic Literacy and Ethos (College 1) is likely to be especially important to first-generation students and a significant percentage of English language learners. First-generation C1 students showed important gaps in proficiency relative to other students in half of the criteria examined, including a dramatic (27%) gap relative to other students in "independent thinking" (Fig.3), one of three criteria measured in the domain of "critical thinking." On the same criterion, "late bilingual students" (i.e., students who self-identified as having had a first language other than English) also "demonstrated significantly lower proficiencies compared with their monolingual peers...independent of the impact of first-generation status."¹⁵ Therefore, improving proficiency within the "critical thinking" domain is likely to have a strong impact on student success for first generation and late bilingual students, who (with some overlap) constitute 50% and 25% of UCSC's student population, respectively.

The Crown (2017) study also identifies a subpopulation of ELWR-required students who progress more slowly in all areas, staying at the "beginning or unacceptable" category after completing Writing 20 in the fall (Table 5). The largest deficits seen for "slow progressors," based on their failure to satisfy the ELWR in fall, correspond to areas belonging to the critical thinking domain (Fig. 17). Thus College 1 is likely to have a noticeable positive impact on ELWR-required "slow progressors" as well.

Examining the efficacy of a new Writing Center at Crown College via a survey of student visitors, the Crown study also showed that, although only 9% of students reported coming in order to "understand...my course readings" (Table 10), 89% found Writing Center tutors useful in helping them understand these readings. This strong disconnect between students' stated motivations for attending tutoring sessions and the useful outcomes they reported suggests that students didn't know what they didn't know: that they might not have realized the extent to which

Crown and Colleges Nine and Ten and indicate that proficiencies in the domains of reading, critical thinking, and writing all need improvement, improvement that could be achieved in part via the curricular change proposed in this document.

¹⁵ Ritola and Sher (2017), Section 2: Results; Part 2: Equity in Learning Outcomes.

they did not understand the required readings. This also suggests that closer attention to reading itself, the aim of Academic Literacy and Ethos, would better prepare students to write effectively, including arranging paragraphs and logic. Both point to the need for a reading course in the first quarter.

Many students will appreciate and benefit from the two-quarter First-Year Experience model that COP's proposal enables; integrated two-quarter sequences are already popular at UCSC and will be more popular when offered at all colleges.¹⁶ Student success literature makes a point that underrepresented and first-generation students particularly benefit from integrated first-year experience courses--the sort of extended engagement with practices and ideas that offering the First-Year Experience model at each of the colleges will provide.¹⁷ Advising, and at times requiring, students to make wise educational choices is one of the main responsibilities of the colleges; thus colleges will require all incoming students to enroll in Academic Literacy and Ethos, and may choose to encourage students especially likely to benefit from the integrated curricular experience to understand its value and consider enrolling in the winter college-aligned writing courses, perhaps through a system such as directed self-placement. A recent report on "Stretch" Core at Oakes College (2016) speaks directly to this point: the overwhelming majority of Oakes students (most of whom are first-generation college students and/or students of color) reported the Oakes theme, communicating diversity for a just society, was important, very important, or essential to their academic success, and that their skills improved markedly during the second quarter of the course.¹⁸

COP proposes Academic Literacy and Ethos classes capped at 30 for several reasons. First, student success literature is clear on the value of small, cohort-based classes that promote a sense of belonging. While writing classes at UCSC are capped at 25 (the upper end for effective writing classes), Academic Literacy and Ethos courses are classes focusing primarily on reading, and thus represent a smaller per-student workload for instructors—an important element. While the literature on optimal class size is not extensive, it indicates that class participation drops off sharply within a fairly narrow window between 30-34. There are very few classrooms at the colleges that accommodate above 30. Locating College 1 at the colleges—or, minimally, at sister colleges—is an important element in fostering sense of belonging: the colleges as home.

¹⁶ See, for example the popularity of Stevenson College, with its two-quarter Core course, and years of college-themed Writing 2 (C2) classes at Rachel Carson College.

¹⁷ Kuh (2008).

¹⁸ Regina Langhout, et al., "Oakes Core Course: Communicating Diversity for a Just Society: Motivation and Learning Outcomes Assessment for Stretch Core" (2016). Stretch students' experience of the Oakes Core is no doubt tied to their specific two-quarter "learning community" experience, which involved the same set of students and the same teacher. Students who opt for the First-Year Experience (College 1 plus a college-themed C1 or C2 course) will experience a different form of learning community structure: thematically linked courses that sequentially teach the linked concepts of reading and writing. For common types of learning communities, see Vincent Tinto, "Learning Better Together: The Impact of Learning Communities on Student Success," in *Promoting Student Success in College* Higher Education Monograph Series (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University): 1-8; p. 3.

Details

Though many details would need to be worked out to implement this proposal, COP recommends the following with regard to hiring and enrollment.

College 1: Though Academic Literacy and Ethos will require a new set of criteria for hiring and evaluating the teachers of the course, we expect lecturers to be largely drawn from the pool of lecturers currently teaching Core. (Exception: Writing Program faculty who currently teach Core will most likely be teaching fall sections of Writing 20 for matriculating but ELWR-required students.) A professional development workshop on approaches to teaching reading is planned for summer 2017 for current faculty.

We also expect advanced graduate students to be candidates for GSI-ships teaching College 1. Graduate students who have taken the Writing Program's graduate pedagogy class have regularly been employed in Core courses. GSIs hired to teach College 1 will be expected to demonstrate professional readiness to teach reading, perhaps via a course during the year or a workshop during the summer.

College-themed C1 and C2 courses: These courses will be offered by faculty qualified to teach composition. Many of the most experienced Writing Program faculty are intimate with college Core courses, their themes and materials, and would be strong choices by the Writing Program to teach college-themed Writing 1 (C1) and Writing 2 (C2) courses. As the significant majority of Writing 1 and Writing 2 courses are theme-based, pedagogically this would not be a departure for the Writing Program or its faculty.

Enrollment: College-themed C1 and C2 courses would benefit from enrollment by students familiar with the college, its College 1 readings, and its community. Thus initial enrollment in these courses should be from the colleges. Some students, however, may be attracted to a writing course thematically linked to another college; and some writing classes may not reach full capacity if restricted to the college alone. Thus we suggest first-pass enrollment restricted to members of the college, and second pass enrollment opened to other students.

Budget

These adjustments to the first year curriculum reduce the total cost of Academic Literacy and Ethos with respect to our original proposal. They also reduce the number of offerings of second-quarter college-themed writing courses in comparison to the original proposal, though they do not change the total number of writing classes required by students at UCSC. (As we expect these courses to be offered by the Writing Program as part of its regular curriculum, the writing courses would also not affect the Core curriculum budget.) Via a Memorandum of Understanding, reductions in the cost of Core classes--now called College 1--could be used to offset the Writing Program's offerings of college-themed winter C1 and C2 courses.

The Colleges are committed to the success of each of their students and have invested in many programs that support their progress. The following activities and programs are among the programs that will benefit from and synergize with a strong first- year curriculum to promote student success:

- Science Learning Community (SLC): The SLC is a program offered to first-year students pursuing majors in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) from Crown, Merrill, and Oakes Colleges. The SLC supports students making the transition from high school to the expectations of a research university and the STEM curriculum. Research has shown that forming study groups in the sciences promotes collaborative learning and group problem solving, which are key to student success. Undergraduates within the year-long Science Learning Community program form a supportive group from the start, as they are housed in close proximity. Participating colleges team up with the campus Academic Excellence (ACE) program, which offers problem solving sessions facilitated by a Leader and undergraduate Co-Leader for selected STEM classes frequently chosen by first-year students. In 2017, the affiliated colleges anticipate offering two sections of a new Math 3-equivalent course, mostly for frosh. The SLC and affiliated ACE sessions are co-funded by the participating colleges and ACE; the math courses are funded by a recent grant awarded to UCSC in connection with its Hispanic Serving Institution status.
- College Scholars Program: The College Scholars program is a program open to qualifying first-year students at Cowell, Crown, Kresge, Merrill, Porter, and Stevenson Colleges. (Qualification is based on grade point average, satisfaction of the ELWR, faculty endorsement, and student application.) It combines the former First Year Honors and Challenge Programs, offering “fall start” (recruited out of high school) and “spring start” (recruited out of Core and first-quarter courses) a faculty lecturer series; a choice of many small, research-oriented seminars; and the opportunity to conduct funded research. This program is co-funded by the Division of Undergraduate Education and the affiliated colleges. One of the key elements of the “fall start” component is a section of Core, a powerful cohort-building experience that draws from the intellectual tradition of the colleges.
- West Side Writing Center (WWC): The WWC serves students at Kresge, Oakes, Porter, and Rachel Carson Colleges. Coordinated and staffed by graduate students, the West Side Writing Center provides tutoring services in a college-based location (Oakes) available to all students at the affiliated colleges, including students enrolled in college Core courses, and all their classes with a writing component, including both lower-division writing courses and disciplinary communication courses. The WWC is funded jointly by the Division of Undergraduate Education, a temporary appropriation of student fees (via SFAC), and the affiliated colleges.

- East Side Writing Center (EWC): The EWC is intended to serve students at Colleges Nine and Ten, and Cowell, Crown, Merrill, and Stevenson Colleges. If funded, the EWC's staff of undergraduate tutors will be trained by the Writing Program and supervised by a College Writing Coordinator. The EWC will consolidate tutoring for Core that is currently offered and supervised separately at each of the colleges into two college-based locations, Merrill and Stevenson colleges; it will expand access to tutoring services to all students at the affiliated colleges, not just those who are ELWR-required. A proposal for student fee funds (via SFAC) has been submitted, and the affiliated colleges have made financial and in-kind commitments.

APPENDIX 1 COURSE DESCRIPTION

College 1, Academic Literacy and Ethos—the college requirement

In separating C1 and C2 from the Core course, our proposal also recasts the college requirement, which exists in University regulations, and defines it clearly as a requirement in “Academic Literacy and Ethos” (ALE). Students may fulfill it by completing College 1 with a grade of C or higher.

The college requirement must be satisfied at the start of each student’s experience at UC Santa Cruz, because College 1’s pedagogy, subject matter, and approach to the formation of academic community are logically prior to the General Education requirements and major requirements that students complete in the academic divisions. With distinctive Course Learning Outcomes (see below), ALE will offer all students a foundation for intellectual exploration and personal development as members of an academic community, by teaching practical skills and “habits of mind” that have been shown to demystify academic materials and processes and promote independent, self-reflective, and collaborative participation in campus culture.¹⁹

The content of College 1 will vary according to the intellectual, creative, and ethical traditions of the colleges. However, all colleges will design an ALE course that introduces first-year students to higher education from three distinct but related vantage points that are characteristic of membership in a university community: *analysis*, *self-reflection*, and *engagement with others*.

By *analysis*, we mean that College 1 will teach students practical strategies for reading, annotating, summarizing, rereading, and posing questions about course materials that are directly applicable to their coursework in other divisions.[2]²⁰ At each college, the course will expose students to texts that are drawn from a range of academic and creative disciplines but also connected to each other thematically. College 1 will use those thematic connections to foster a critical dialogue about “big questions”, is rooted in the analytical comparison the course texts’ different resources for expression.

¹⁹ Jennifer Fletcher,

<https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/critical-habits-mind-exposing-process-developmen>
t.

²⁰ Wendy Hall Maloney, “Connecting the Texts of Their Lives to Academic Literacy: Creating Success for At-risk First-year College Students”, *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* 46 (8) 2003: 664-73.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable.40017171>

In this sense, ALE courses prepare the way for, and support, courses that carry the Textual Analysis and Interpretation General Education code (TA), but they have different goals. *The Navigator, 2012-14* defines the primary aim of TA-bearing courses as the development of “higher-order reading skills”; presumably, these reading skills are related to the specific discipline in which the TA course is offered.²¹ CEP’s website for General Education Requirements describes the goals of TA courses, somewhat more expansively, as the development of “higher order reading skills” and “learning to read closely and attentively, to pay attention to detail, and to grasp the larger argument or fuller implications of a text,” but the accompanying list of courses that satisfy TA suggests that they are mainly upper-division courses with clear disciplinary inflections.²²[4] The college requirement will prepare students for the more advanced work that they will do in TA courses, by focusing instruction on the acquisition of transferable “lower-order” habits of reading. What we mean is the sort of textual knowledge that, as professionals, we draw on without even knowing we have it, but that novices to university-level reading—especially students underprepared upon arrival at UC Santa Cruz—need to learn. ALE makes explicit otherwise hidden codes for reading, such as how to recognize and describe the conventions that signal the difference between one kind of text and another. It also teaches effective reading practices, such as how to annotate texts in ways that promote comprehension and rereading and make important concepts, textual structures, and nuances of expression memorable. Perhaps most importantly, ALE will enable students to begin developing critical awareness of their own ways of making sense (and not making sense) of texts, fostering the capacity for metacognition that is essential for critical self-reflection as well as discovery about the world beyond the self.

In developing this capacity for *self-reflection*, students will also learn to identify what they want to do with the materials to which the course exposes them, and to articulate the meaning of those materials for themselves: for example, how to define, revise, and pursue their academic goals as they establish themselves as members of our community; how to choose a major that is appropriate for their specific interests and abilities; how to balance depth of specialization in a major with broad exposure to many different fields of study; and how to uphold our campus’s communal standards and values (for example, academic integrity).

Finally, College 1 will lay a foundation for *engagement with others*, both within the college and across the campus, by teaching students how to listen to peers and faculty members with different points of view; how to engage in critical dialogue about fundamental questions and their own life experiences that is based on mutual respect and a desire for knowledge and understanding; and how to share their learning with others.

Redefining the college requirement in these terms, as a course that helps new students become thoughtful and productive members of our academic community, combines a rigorous

²¹ <http://registrar.ucsc.edu/navigator/section3/gened/beginning2010/gen-ed-codes/ta-code.html>

²²

<http://senate.ucsc.edu/committees/cep-committee-on-educational-policy/ge-requirements/textual-analysis-interpretation.html>

introduction to critical reading and an exposure to a range of disciplines and questions with an induction to academic community that responds to each student's needs and aspirations; creates a sense of agency and responsibility in every student; encourages students to build relationships with other students and with faculty, and staff; and contributes to success in coursework and timely completion of degrees. If the campus embraces our proposal to redefine the college requirement as a requirement in ALE, it will make a clear and unequivocal commitment to fostering a sense of optimism and self-efficacy among all undergraduates, but especially among students for whom the transition to university is daunting and who are at high risk of being barred or disqualified or of abandoning their studies.²³

²³ See Chemers, Martin M.; Hu, Li-tze; Garcia, Ben F. "Academic self-efficacy and first year college student performance and adjustment", *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 93 (1) 2001: 55-64. This study of the effects of academic self-efficacy and optimism on students' performance in coursework concludes that "[a]cademic self-efficacy and optimism [are] strongly related to performance and adjustment, both directly on academic performance and indirectly through expectations and coping perceptions (challenge-threat evaluations) on classroom performance, stress, health, and overall satisfaction and commitment to remain in school."

APPENDIX 2
DRAFT COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR COLLEGE REQUIREMENT (ALE)²⁴

Students will demonstrate the ability to use strategies for reading and annotating texts within one or more intellectual domains.

Students will demonstrate the ability to comprehend what they read.

Students will demonstrate the ability to recognize and comment on the relationship between the form of a text and the intellectual context in which it was written.

Students will demonstrate the ability to reflect critically upon the relationship between the course materials, their own experience, and the experience of other members of the course.

Students will demonstrate the ability to embrace contradictions in the course materials and in their own and their classmates' thinking, speech, and writing.

Students will demonstrate the ability to foster cooperative and critical discussion among their classmates.

Students will demonstrate the ability to take risks in writing and discussion, in the sense of overcoming fear of embarrassment or rejection or of failure in completing assignment successfully—for example, by extending the reach of an assignment or discussion to new materials and questions, or by advocating for an unusual or unpopular point of view .

Students will demonstrate the ability to respond productively to conflict generated by fundamental questions, controversial topics, and unpopular ideas.

Students will demonstrate the ability to draw explicitly from knowledge gained in this class and apply it in novel situations.

²⁴ These course learning outcomes are excerpted with permission from *Assessing Outcomes and Improving Achievement: Tips and tools for Using Rubrics*, edited by Terrel L. Rhodes. Copyright 2010 by the Association of American Colleges and Universities. The specific outcomes are drawn from learning outcomes for “reading,” “creative thinking,” “teamwork,” and “lifelong literacy.” The AACU has developed corresponding rubrics for assessing these CLOs. See <https://www.aacu.org/value-rubrics>. These CLOs should be considered a draft in advance of our development of the course itself.

