Destandardizing Standardized English and its Assessment:

Diversifying, Equitizing, and Fostering Success in College Composition

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Sabbatical Project Report
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Land Acknowledgement:
We acknowledge Moorpark College occupies the unceded traditional land of the Chumash people who have stewarded it throughout generations. As we honor the Chumash people with gratitude, we commit to learning how we may be better stewards of this land we inhabit as well. We seek to build relationships with the Chumash community through academic pursuits, partnerships, historical recognitions and community service as these relationships are foundational for inclusive and equitable education and community engagement (Moorpark College Multicultural Day).

Social Justice & Equity Statement:
We embrace and value the varied experiences that each member of our community brings to the college and respect the intersecting identity of each individual. We actively work to ensure that all learners can access and participate in a safe, meaningful, engaging, and challenging learning environment (Moorpark College Mission, Values and Vision).

Antiracism Statement:
We affirm our commitment to recognizing, addressing, and eradicating all forms of institutional and systemic racism and ethnic oppression. We are committed to creating and maintaining an environment of anti-racism and identifying resources and opportunities to advance this work (Moorpark College Mission, Values and Vision).

Language Diversity Statement:
Diverse languages and dialects are welcome in this course! There is no inclusive Standard Written/Academic English. Here, I value your personal linguistic expression, and those of others in the course. This course expects students to honor this policy, seek out clarification as necessary, and not assert a "correct" grammar (Katie Booth, English M01A, M01B, M01C Syllabi).

I REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ACT OF SILENCING, and I want to encourage you to incorporate into your writing your Vernacular Englishes. As a White European American, my privilege has also handicapped me: my subject expertise and knowledge is limited by language supremacy. Thus, my specialism in the study of English language and literature emerges from White European pedagogy. I can show you what I know and I want you to show you what I know. Thus, I encourage you to learn all that this course has to offer AND where your own linguistic patterns participate in the same conversation through the process of code-meshing:

- "Code-meshing pedagogies […] look at this divide between the acceptable codes of public and academic discourse versus the marked codes of home and social discourse, and contend that these multiple codes of English can fruitfully co-exist" (Jay Hardee, "Code Meshing and Code Switching," American University Library, 2022).

The most exciting part of learning about reading, writing, and critical thinking strategies, in my opinion, is that it encourages curiosity and wonder about all language and expression. When you read on and learn about White European composition strategies and tools, think about where your own language has similar or divergent strategies and situations. *None is more important than any other* and, most importantly, if an aspect of language that is important to you is not on the list, that is because *I do not know it, not because it is not worthy of this list*. So, I invite you to educate me in the process of your own education and remember that what follows are just some of the keys to the many castles of writing and spoken word pieces creators use and that students should analyze in their essays this semester (Katie Booth, "English M01A Writing Tips and Tools Booklet," Spring 2024).

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Chapter 1: Grammar, Grades, and Me

> "When you're born into a society that has such histories of racism as we have, no matter what you think, what you do personally, you will participate in racist structures if you are a part of larger institutions like education, like the discipline of composition studies, or the teaching of writing in college. This doesn't make us bad people, but it does mean we must rethink how we assess writing, if we want to address the racism" (Asao Inoue, *Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies: Teaching and Assessing Writing for a Socially Just Future*, 8-9).
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> "Agency, dialogue, self-actualization, and social justice are not possible in a hierarchical system that pits teachers against students and encourages competition by ranking students against one another" (Jesse Stommel, "Why I Don't Grade," 1).

Introduction and Project Contexts

A memory I carry with me, despite being nearly 30 years beyond it, places me back in my 9th-grade high-school English classroom. My classmates and I were organized in rows of approximately 5 students each and the class was split into 2 sides, each side facing the other so it always felt like we were about to fight. While I generally loved English class, in equal measure I despised grammar days. The horrific brick of a textbook felt even heavier as I would pull it from my backpack and place it on my desk, opening it to the day's lesson. The teacher would offer a brief lecture on a specific topic and then the torture began: student-by-student, row-by-row, we had to orally complete one of the practice activities. For points. Every lesson saw me do exactly the same thing: frantically counting the number of students ahead of me to work out which problem I'd be responsible for, then desperately trying to work out the correct answer before it was my turn to speak aloud; I was determined not to lose face or credit. The anxiety made me sweat and had me on the brink of tears EVERY. SINGLE. TIME. I have absolutely no recollection of getting these activities right or wrong; instead, I feel still the sickening sensation of judgement and fear of failure that shaped my experience of them. I also remember from these moments my distinct

resolution to never, ever, under any circumstances, do grammar work again. At that point in my life, I was NOT planning to be an English major or educator.

The anxiety that shapes my seminal memories of English language studies emerged from persistent imposter syndrome and perfectionism, just some of the residual side effects of a traumatic childhood. But, I am White and my home, school, and life languages have always comprised Standardized English—although both sides of the family emerged from Ashkenazic Jewish communities throughout Eastern Europe until the 19th-century when they immigrated to Ireland, and in the 20th-century, when they immigrated to Canada and the US. I was the lucky child that was born into the prized linguistic system; I was raised by White parents, who were raised by White parents, and I didn't have to learn to shift my English to suit specific purposes or prejudices. It wasn't until I moved out of the US and, ironically, to another English-speaking country, that I felt a small sense of what minoritized students feel when presented with English language expectations that challenge their own, and are graded for it. As a university junior studying at the University of Leeds in Northern England, I delighted in the language experiences I had that were so different from my own: "Ahwl-rite, pet?" my usual bus driver would salute me with every morning; "fancy a pint?" my hallmate's boyfriend would ask on a "Thirsty Thursday." That year, I collected similar dialect artifacts in a scrapbook and treasured them, laughing when I didn't understand my friends, or they didn't understand me. Fast-forward to my PhD studies and TA work at the University of London 6 years later and I was still delighting in the turns-of-phrase that marked my favorite literary works, but now was responsible for insisting on a more standardized, "appropriate" way to discuss them in certain parts of my life. Grammar and

grading came back into my reality and I was just as anxious about this then as I had been in 9th-grade.

One of the courses I was a TA for during my PhD studies stands out to me still as one of the worst teaching days of my 19-years of experience—and, I taught middle school! I am still embarrassed by the way I handled the situation. A perpetual overachiever, I made sure my course sections not only discussed the week's lecture and literature, but also focused on developing writing skills with a focus—of course!—on Standardized English grammar, aka Standard Written/Academic English. Most students grumbled along with me about the activities because they hated grammar studies, too, but appreciated my intentions (and their improved coursework grades). But one student dug her heels in and waged a war against my grammatical regime. The final bloody battlefield was the semi-colon. While I worked our section through the cutesy activities I'd cleverly constructed to demystify the pesky piece of punctuation, she seethed. At first, she kept her anger to the by-then-familiar barely audible sighs and eye-rolls; these then progressed over the early weeks of the semester to muttered remarks; finally, one week she challenged me out loud: the use of the semi-colon as I was teaching it was WRONG because I was AMERICAN and the British used the punctuation DIFFERENTLY. As I've hinted, I did not handle the situation like a professional and, instead, engaged in linguistic war right then and there, which resulted in her storming out of the classroom, changing sections, and me being summoned to the main lecturer's office for an uncomfortable conversation (not to mention likely losing face with my remaining students). Frustratingly, the lecturers *agreed* with me that teaching grammar was important—they also confirmed that my teaching of the semi-colon was, in fact correct, and even went so far as to suggest that it was their American exchange students that

brought them the most joy because "they could actually write." But my role as a TA was to focus on ensuring the literature was understood and could be written about. Even though students were penalized for grammar errors in their final papers. The contradiction was infuriating and added fuel to my fire: I was NOT going to use grammar as some unspoken secret code that students knew or didn't, lost points by, or didn't.

Once I earned my PhD in English Studies and entered the workforce as Dr. Bronsten, the feeling about teaching grammar was altogether different as I opted to return to secondary school teaching instead of pursuing a position in higher education. At my fancy Oxford boarding school, I was Super Grammar Girl, star of the Proper English Usage Show, lighter of the way towards wonderful writing. I was tasked by the Department not just to create grammar lessons for my and others' classes, but also to compile a grammar handbook that the English faculty could use to implement grammar instruction into their lessons. Why me? Because I am American; my Department Chair, like my UL lecturers, believed that Americans knew how to write right. Outside of the department, classroom, and school, I was relentlessly, if generally lightheartedly, teased about my accent and dialectical expressions; let it suffice that British folks aren't as enchanted by American English as Americans are of the British English. Yet, in the elite boarding school that oozed power and privilege for a select few, I was the godsend they all needed to prepare their precious pupils for the greater things in life, while demystifying the process for my arguably more articulate colleagues. I spent countless hours researching the hell out of all things standardized English grammar because I still—STILL—did not have confidence in my own knowledge. Sometimes I think about what the department did with my tome and hope that it disappeared when I left that teaching position and England. But, I mostly look back on

that work with embarrassment, both because of the fraud it made me feel like and because I now know that promoting a standardized English language is unethical, harmful, racist, and so many other things that I resolutely am not. My 14-year-old self would be surprised to learn that grammar remains a significant part of my life. Now, though, I can finally do the destruction work she fantasized about by working towards destandardizing Standardized Writing English and its assessment in order to diversify, equitize, and foster student success in composition courses and—dare I say it—far beyond them?

The Project

Radical selfness is deeply connected to linguistic freedom because language is an intrinsic part of an individual's consciousness and identity; that connection is why language and assessment justice is so important for our students, and ourselves. Composition courses and writing assignments pervade all academic disciplines and many student support services; and, so does "the pain linguistic racism inflicts" on students attempting to navigate writing across academia (Catherine Savini, "10 Ways to Tackle Linguistic Bias in Our Classrooms," *Inside Higher Education*, January 26, 2021). Standard Written/Academic English and conventional grading systems are steeped in racist beliefs and practices that promote outdated curricular views of success that harm learners. I believe that the campus community is compelled to evolve curricular experiences so that they connect with, reflect, honor, and amplify our student's voices as they are, not only once they are shackled by standardized English expression and its assessment.

Current scholarship on language and assessment equity predominantly exists in the study of linguistics, which makes sense as Standard Written/Academic English promotes a

grammatical system that codifies spelling, punctuation, word choice, sentence construction, and expression in general. The assessment of these features in composition courses and other curricular writing experiences reinforce the supremacy of SW/AE in this way because they always ultimately measure success according to mastery of White English. This project is not a linguistic project; it does not work through the evidence that Black, African American, Latine, Chicano, Asian American, Indigenous, and all other Vernacular Englishes have structured grammatical systems that prove their equivalence to those in standardized English. Like Anne Curzan, et. al., I believe that "Standardization often hides the fact that all varieties of all human languages are equally capable of being 'grammatical'" because "users have strong understandings of the rules that govern the variety"; thus,

> Discussing language standardization is critical, given how deeply ideologies about language use and correctness are embedded in our social interactions with one another and in our cognitive capacities to both produce and interpret language ("Language Standardization and Linguistic Subordination 20).

Linguistic subordination is a reflection of micro- and macro-aggressions that attempt to assert a viewpoint about language that upholds the White English language as the superior form of English and, therefore, justifies denigration of other Englishes. However, linguists have long proved that there is no inherent superior English dialect in the English language; the power ascribed to White English is socially constructed. According to Globo, one of many language translation products, "Dialects are […] based on the same language but with variations that can make a big difference in the way you communicate with people," whereas "Languages are often considered more clearly defined and formal and are generally adopted as official languages of countries" ("Language vs. Dialect: What's the

Difference?"). Dialect is synonymous with "variation," not inferiority; grammatical patterns, structures, and expectations exist in all dialects, not just the language they emerge from. This similitude means that, while individuals may "initially have a hard time understanding exactly what people are saying" when engaging with dialects outside their own, generally the challenge is "not enough […] to make it impossible to communicate[…] because they are all variations of Standard American English" (ibid.). In conversations about linguistic justice, common and misinformed arguments are that English dialects outside of White are inferior to because they a degradation of Standard English. Critics often cite the use of slang in these arguments as evidence that accepting a wide variety of Vernacular Englishes means accepting unsophisticated expression that threatens the integrity of Standardized English. This critique is a false dichotomy: English is not the only "good" English, and Vernacular Englishes are not "bad". This critique is also a racist genetic fallacy: non-White Vernacular Englishes are not bad because they are not White. Yet, these arguments continue to hold immense weight, particularly in academic composition spaces (courses and services), and that is what this project seeks to show is a socially constructed and, thus, dangerous perspective to hold.

Rather than focus on linguistic nuance, this project emphasizes how the universal fact that vernacular English languages outside of White English is still denied in English classrooms and academic writing spaces in order to suggest ways to dismantle the language supremacy that governs composition-centric classrooms and campus work. I believe that by debunking the myth that mastery of SW/AE is the only key to success in academic and real-world spaces, instructors, counselors, student support workers, and administrators can strengthen the campus and classroom communities they seek to cultivate; in many

ways, therefore, I believe that language and assessment equity are the missing pieces to this equity work. Asao B. Inoue, in "Forward: On Antiracist Agendas" argues that academic workers

> often take for granted that […] authority granted by the institution to teach a class, to grade students' performances, to rank students according to so-called ability gives us the right to also have authority over other aspects of students' lives, actions, behaviors, and words" (*Performing Antiracist Pedagogy in Rhetoric, Writing, and Communication* xiv).

Discussions about language supremacy are incomplete without the other side of SW/AE: assessment, standardized and otherwise. In many ways, English courses—especially the gatekeeper transfer-level English courses M01A, M01B, and M01C in particular—have taken the "authority" awarded it to construct and measure students against ideals far beyond classroom spaces. I believe this is both dangerous and unethical.

Language and grading equity are fundamentally intertwined; we cannot promote the centering of diverse vernacular Englishes without dismantling conventional grading protocol steeped in SW/AE supremacy that disparages it. In Frankie Condon and Vershawn Ashanti Young's "Introduction" to *Performing Antiracist Pedagogy in Rhetoric, Writing, and Communication*, they argue that academia has "not meaningfully addressed the perniciousness and ubiquity of structural racism and the rhetorics of racism (however coded) that sustain its everyday reproduction within the academy" (4). The English Department at Moorpark College works tirelessly to ensure that course learning outcomes and classes support student-centered pedagogy and experiences. Yet, the language of Department rubrics and CLOs still promote racist views of language and hold White

language as the standard students need to be measured against if they are to achieve success in English classes. In our 2021 CLO revision work, small progress was made, shifting from measuring "Standard Written English" to "academic prose;" I and others argued for this shift because, at the time, this seemed to be enough to dismantle SW/AE. It wasn't. I have since learned that these are the same, just coded differently. Thus, the antiracist work we believed we were doing, continued to promote racist views of language. I hope that this sabbatical project will help not just the English Department but all college composition spaces to see why, where, and how the real antiracist work needs to focus.

In many ways, it is easiest for the community to see the and thus react against physical racism and discrimination than it is to view grammar and assessment practices similarly. However, views about language create and perpetuate views of people, and thus both are equally problematic and in need to destruction. Anne Curzan, et. al., explain this symbiotic relationship in "Language Standardization and Linguistic Subordination" (2023). They argue that

> the specific ways beliefs and ideologies about [language supremacy] allow judgments about language to become judgments about people, especially groups of people who share, or are presumed to share, gender, race, ethnicity, social status, education status, and numerous other socially salient identities" (Curzan, et. al. 18).

We have seen the conflation of language prejudice and people prejudice most clearly since 2020. Racially motivated murders, violence, and terrorism that have always existed and their proliferation in 2020 offered the world an opportunity to probe deeply into the ways that racism doesn't just exist in these publicly enacted tragedies but also in the intangible institutional values and hidden course curriculum that results in institutional racism. In fall

2020, the Moorpark College Academic Senate released its Resolution in Support of Black Lives Matter, declaring that

> Continued attacks on Black bodies are only the most recent examples of four hundred years of systemic racism and oppression against Black, Indigenous, and other people of color in the United States; that this legacy of white supremacy and terrorism continues to threaten the health and safety of our students. (Patty Colman and Core Members of Teaching Women and Men of Color Advocates (TWMOCAs) at Moorpark College)

Then, in spring 2021, it released its Resolution in Solidarity with the Asian American and Pacific Islander Community, declaring that

> Community College educators have a special role to play in defying the dark tide of hate that is increasing exponentially during the pandemic. Only by beaming a light on racism, can we stand firm against it and supplant its detrimental effects with the life-asserting experience of education that will enlighten our students, aligned with our college mission, vision, and values. (Ray Zhang)

These Resolutions are used to mobilize institutional change in the academic spaces of Moorpark College and the Ventura County Community College District. The work of antiracism in classrooms is essential to dismantling the racism that initiates and perpetuates acts of physical racism. However, that classroom work in the English discipline, what I see as one of the most rigidly racist relics of White supremacy ideology in American education, continues to perpetuate harmful perspectives that limit the success of minoritized students because of their experiences and expressions of the English language.

Diversifying our curriculum is not enough; academia must use the practices of linguistic justice and grading equity to dismantle language oppression and encourage academic success by celebrating diverse means of expression in assessment, liberating students to learn in freedom, rather than in fear, of the writing experiences that comprise the vast majority of courses and services they will take participate in during their community college study, and beyond it. I agree with Mya Poe's argument in "Reframing Race in Teaching Writing Across the Curriculum" (2017) that "simply asserting that linguistic diversity is a good thing does not help us teach writing better" because although "many faculty may agree with the spirit of linguistic diversity" many also "reject multilingualism in disciplinary contexts because of the belief that Standard English is the only dialect used in professional work" (*Performing Antiracist Pedagogy in Rhetoric, Writing, and Communication* 100). As long as writing is measured by "the belief" of a "Standard English," antiracist writing instruction and assessment fails. The heart of this work is cultural intelligence through the lens of language diversity as a cultural asset and assessment as an instrument for growth; my project strives to dismantle White Language Supremacy (WLS) and replace it with a pedagogy that supports all students in celebrating their story in their language. This project has immense potential to support all writing-centric courses and services college-wide, especially transfer-required composition activities in both courses and services in the areas of onboarding, enrollment, retention, and transfer. I believe that, as part of a Hispanic Servicing Institution and self-proclaimed antiracist advocate for minoritized student success, the campus community is compelled to evolve curricular experiences so that they connect with, reflect, honor, and amplify our student's voices.

As the District continues to be tasked with measures like AB705 and AB1705, it is likewise tasked with prioritizing cultural intelligence and tackling hard conversations about things like artificial intelligence and its impact on the academy. I see language justice and grading equity as the heart of these conversations. These two elements, according to my extensive research, are the core of curricular transformation because it is through the experience of linguistic freedom that students are liberated to engage their studies as whole beings, proud of their vernacular origins rather than debilitated by them. It is not enough for a single instructor to adopt this belief and put it into practice; our entire community must also take on this value and commit to the process of attitudinal transformation about language and its assessment.

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Chapter 2: Language and Assessment Justice Contexts

> "Our perception of the difference between an acceptable and unacceptable dialect depends on the power and prestige of the people who speak it" (Richard Lloyd-Jones, "Explanation of Adoption of the CCCC's Students' Right to Their Own Language Resolution," 1974, 19).

> "Language standardization supports one of the most consistent forms of gatekeeping, and one in which every field represented in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences participates" (Anne Curzan, et. al., "Language Standardization and Linguistic Subordination" 20).

An interesting connection I made early in this project is that the conversations around language justice and assessment equity both emerged in the 1970s. And, really, I shouldn't have been surprised given that these specific shifts in educational philosophy emerge after a period of revolt and revolution in America's history:

> The 1960s was a decade when hundreds of thousands of ordinary Americans gave new life to the nation's democratic ideals. African Americans used sit-ins, freedom rides, and protest marches to fight segregation, poverty, and unemployment. Feminists demanded equal job opportunities and an end to sexual discrimination. Mexican Americans protested discrimination in voting, education, and employment. Native Americans demanded that the government recognize their land claims and the right of tribes to govern themselves. Environmentalists demanded legislation to control the amount of pollution released into the environment. ("Overview of the 1960s")

Radical pedagogical shifts often emerge from protest. During the 1960s, change was happening whether Americans—and the world—wanted it or not. And, with all of the shifting outside of classroom walls, it's not surprising that revolutions were happening inside them, too. Interestingly, the revolutions of 2020 unleashed a new demand for

linguistic justice resultant of the influx of police brutality and murders of Black Americans; thus, education has seen an influx of conversations about culturally responsive pedagogy, inclusive curriculum, and other variations of equity-minded learning transformations.

The work of dismantling oppressive language and assessment policies emerges from California's early push-back against equitable education expectations. In their book, *Language and Social Justice in Practice* (2018), UC Santa Barbara Professors Mary Bucholtz, Dolores Ines Casilla, and Jin Sook Lee explain the importance of understanding that language privilege emerges from standardization and minoritization—the deliberate act of one group making their language and race superior to others. Bucholtz, Casilla, and Lee see the 20th-century as a particularly oppressive period for minoritized speech communities from which academic systems are still recovering. They explain that Californian voters navigated

> a climate of anti-immigrant hysteria that began in the 1980s and 1990s. In 1986, California voters passed Proposition 63, which made English the state's official language [which] was followed in 1994 by the openly xenophobic Proposition 187, or "Save Our State" initiative, which aimed to deprive unauthorized immigrants of education and health care services. Thus, by 1998, the groundwork was in place for California voters to approve Proposition 227, a ballot initiative ending nearly all bilingual education in public schools. (Bucholtz, Casillas, and Lee, "California Latinx Youth as Agents of Sociolinguistic Justice, 166).

The silencing that these Propositions mandate applies to all minoritized groups living and learning in California schools. Although Latine and Chicano Vernacular Englishes, Black and African American Vernacular Englishes, Asian American Vernacular English, and so many

other Vernacular Englishes are not inferior to White Vernacular English, public policy used rhetoric to portray these as inferior to it because that ideology perpetuates White language supremacy and privilege. The purpose of this section of the project is to offer some historical context for the motivation behind necessary pedagogical transformations that can undo the racist harm of this legislation and help the educators and administrators support all of our students in working not just to move successfully through academia but beyond it into fulfilling personal and work lives.

Meaning Over Mechanics: The CCCC's Students' Right to their Own Language (SRTOL) Resolution (1974)

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) organized in 1911 with the design of challenging the existing practices associated with standardized testing used in college acceptance decisions ("What Is NCTE?"). Seeing these tests' connection to negative impacts on classroom pedagogy, the organization evolved over the ensuing years into a collaborative space for English teachers to discuss, challenge, and evolve the ways that English studies are taught. During that time, the organization created branches in the various levels of education to specialize in curricular conversations at the elementary, middle, secondary, and college levels. Specific to this project's purposes is the Conference on College Composition and Communication, which since 1949 "has provided a forum for all those responsible for teaching composition and communication skills at the college level, both in undergraduate and graduate programs" ("What is CCCC?"). Even more important to my work is the CCCC's 1974 position statement, "Students' Right to Their Own Language".

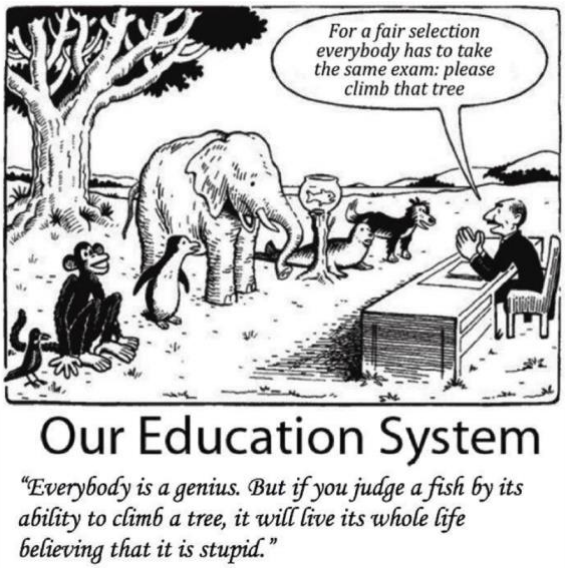
19 years into my teaching career, and 4 years into my concentrated work on language and grading equity, was the first time I'd heard of the CCCC, their position on student language variations, and the important work it has and continues to do for English educators at the college level. Yet, as the racial and health events of 2020 emerged, so too do the names of some of the most prominent voices in the call for language justice and culturally responsive pedagogy appear on the lists of committee members across the sub-committees evolved out of CCCC's SRTOL resolution. Interestingly, this statement iterates many of the same calls for diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in composition and communication studies at the college level that inform a resurgence of this focus in scholarship from 2015-onward, particularly the literature that links America's racial reckoning in 2020 and the essential DEIJ work tasked to the academy as a result.

CCCC's SRTOL resolution states:

> We affirm the students' right to their own patterns and varieties of language—the dialects of their nurture or whatever dialects in which they find their own identity and style. Language scholars long ago denied that the myth of a standard American dialect has any validity. The claim that any one dialect is unacceptable amounts to an attempt of one social group to exert its dominance over another. Such a claim leads to false advice for speakers and writers, and immoral advice for humans. A nation proud of its diverse heritage and its cultural and racial variety will preserve its heritage of dialects. We affirm strongly that teachers must have the experiences and training that will enable them to respect diversity and uphold the right of students to their own language. ("Students' Right To Their Own Language")

I am struck by how familiar the ideology in this statement is to contemporary academic goals informed by DEIJ practices. It connects a student's dialect with their "identity and style," something culturally responsive teaching practitioners argue for support and protection of. It also points out the "myth" that there exists a "standard American dialect," the important perspective explaining that Standard Written/Academic English is in fact a product of standardization, not an inherent linguistic fact. The writers of the CCCC's also emphasize that the suggestion of a superior SW/AE is an illustration of White language privilege, which is a form of social dominance that is sustained by "false" and "immoral advice". Thus, language diversity, they argue, is a matter of American patriotism and it is, therefore, an educator's responsibility to "uphold the right of students to their own language," something they need specialized training to be able to do. Based upon the extensive research I've undertaken since COVID closed schools worldwide and George Floyd's public murder sparked a powerful demand for racial justice, nothing in this statement is new or news. I believe the challenges contemporary fights for updated versions of the CCCC position emerge from the language and ideology of the resolution itself: an emphasis on the deep injustices and harm that White language privilege and supremacy ideology continue to cause minoritized students, from the moment they begin institutionalized education systems. As we head into election season, it appears that the sociopolitical climate in 1974 and 2024 are not so different.

Standard vs. Standardized: Assessment Equity Conversation Contexts



The above comic has been circulated so many times in recent years that most of my students cheerfully let me know that they've seen it before—in other classes, in high school, in middle school, and even in elementary school (Nayeli Lomeli, "Fact Check," *USA Today*, April 27, 2021). I love the pervasiveness of it because I think it makes a strong point that standardization in any form is utterly ridiculous; in other words, standardized testing is problematic because there are no standard learners. The point is meant to provoke a more critical lens through which to view standardized assessment as limited and limiting.

When considering standardized testing, the first thing that comes to mind is tests like the SAT, ACT, GRE, LSAT, and all the other institutionalized national assessments. Interestingly, as of 2020, the UC system no longer uses SAT or ACT test scores as part of their admissions process ("First Year Requirements," University of California). While many other universities, both private and public did the same during COVID, a significant number of these institutions reinstated or plan to reinstate the use of standardized test scores as part of their admissions process in coming years. Currently, 5 out of 8 Ivy League

universities, 4 out of 8 top private universities, and 8 out of 25 top public universities use standardized testing in their admissions process ("List of Colleges Dropping & Reinstating ACT/SAT Requirements," *Horizon Education*, May 3, 2024). Unsurprisingly, elite universities reinstated or continued using standardized testing scores in their admissions process once the COVID pandemic stopped hindering students from taking the tests. It's striking, however, that only 32% of top public universities across America followed suit.

As Paul Tough argues in *The Years That Matter Most: How College Makes Or Breaks Us*[1] (2019), university acceptance is a divisive process and one that thrives on inequities and racial and economic injustice perpetuated by standardized entrance exams. Tough details how a "task force" organized in 2020 under then-president of the University of California, Janet Napolitano, to research the impact of standardized tests on UC acceptances. The first recommendation was to keep the tests in the admissions procedures because omitting test scores, they argued, meant relying on "the use of high school grades in admissions" that were "fraught with equity issues" that they believed standardized tests mitigated (Tough 334). Varsha Sarveshwar, President of the UC Student Association and student at UC Berkley at the time of Tough's writing, argued, paying for test preparation courses wasn't a problem for wealthy families. However, "For lower-income students, who are disproportionately Black, Latinx, and Native, as well as rural students, preparing is on them," which "is a classist and racist expectation" (Tough 335). Fortunately, on May 21, 2020, UC regents voted unanimously to stop using standardized tests in their admissions

[1] Tough revised and republished this book as *The Inequality Machine: How College Divides Us* in 2021 and after the COVID-19 pandemic was revealing stark education inequities to "more fully [convey] the reality of higher education's dominant function today" (xi).

process and the UC remains “test-blind” to this day, with no plans to reinstate standardized or other testing into their admissions process.

That standardized testing debates have been largely limited to state, national, and international exams. I believe, however, these assessments are products of what I view as the even more problematic system that is meant to compliment, illustrate, or at the very least be compatible with test scores: grades. In this project, I assert the importance of understanding arguments against standardized test scores in college admissions because they also open up conversations around the inequities and injustices that inform conventional grading practices. Grades, too, have been unfairly attempting to standardize—in order to label—students as capable or incapable since their inception in 1785 by Yale’s then-president, Ezra Styles (Lori Santos, “Making the Grade” 01:27-02:18). Styles’ work emerges in the context of the American Industrial Revolution, when the construction and dissemination of standardized products was essential to determining workers’ pay. Since, grading systems in both factory and academic settings have been revised and restructured, always with the view of standardization in mind, little has changed since the establishment of the A-F and 4.0 grading scales that were codified in the 1940s (Janel Mitchell, “History of Traditional Grading”). Whether weighted or unweighted, points- or percentage-based, grades are riddled with noise that tells students and educators little about their strengths or growth areas. Elements like extra credit, late points, assignment weighting, inclusion of early fails, tutoring, instructor bias, and so many more distractors, grades as they are conventionally used can never truly reflect a student’s skill mastery. And, as in most socially constructed systems, it is minoritized students that suffer the most from this system.

Standardized testing is the frame text for conversations about grading inequity. With extensive research into the heavy-hitting voices leading this conversation, Michelle Larson with The Center for Teaching Excellence at the University of Nebraska (Lincoln) explains the many—MANY—ways that grading "undermines learning":

> Traditional grading systems are highly subjective and internalize instructor biases (Sadler 2005, Schwab et al. 2018, Link and Guskey 2019, Feldman 2019). Traditional grading systems pit students and instructors against each other by making grades a commodity that students must negotiate with the instructor (point grubbing), instead of building trusting relationships that allow for students to learn from their mistakes, take risks, and be creative (Feldman 2019). Additionally, these grading systems can increase stress and anxiety in students (Chamberlin et al. 2018) while reducing cooperative learning, critical thinking, creativity, and motivation (Strong et al. 2004, Chamberlin et al. 2018, Schwab et al. 2018, Feldman 2019). At their core, grades are highly subjective due to a lack of consistency in what and how learning is measured (Sadler 2005, Schinske and Tanner 2014, Buckmiller et al. 2017, Scarlett 2018, Schwab et al. 2018, Link and Guskey 2019, Towsley and Schmid 2020, Zimmerman 2020). Instructors have different criteria for how students earn grades with many using a mixture of effort, achievement, and behaviors to assess student learning (Buckmiller et al. 2017, Schwab et al. 2018, Feldman 2019). When non-content aspects (attendance, participation, late penalties, extra credit, etc.) are included in grades, the grades become inaccurate for determining student learning (Buckmiller et al. 2017, Schwab et al. 2018, Feldman 2019, Link and Guskey 2019). Additionally, because each instructor determines the categories, weights, and other

> factors included in a final course grade, grades become unreliable indicators of a student's understanding of the content (Link and Guskey 2019) and are not comparable across instructors or institutions (Schwab et al. 2018). ("Alternative Grading For College Courses" 2023).

I appreciate how neatly Larson can articulate the issues in conventional grading as evidenced by instructor subjectivity and bias, students' system-induced grade grubbing behavior, the detrimental mental health effects of grading systems, and simple inaccuracies due to what I call "noise" that has no relevance to a conversation about a student's skill knowledge.

Yet, these problems ooze from daily grading travesties. Just this weekend, my 12-year-old and I had a (another) conversation about grading inaccuracies. As she is a highly anxious kiddo, I have taken great pains to teach her all I'm learning about the flaws in grading systems because, for the first time in her life, her school is giving students' traditional letter grades; until this school year, she has been standards-based graded since entering formal education in Pre-K. The latest conversation came out of her frustration that she achieved an 88% on her recent 8th-grade Algebra test because she lost 2 points for talking to a classmate when they were reviewing the test. While I, of course, reminded her of appropriate class etiquette, I focused more on the complete disconnect between the behavioral point deduction and her math knowledge. The fact that the test was assessing Algebraic competencies and that she was penalized on that same test for talking to a friend when she wasn't supposed to illustrates just how ridiculous conventional grading practice can be. Even worse, this teacher is a former high school math teacher and regularly insists that her strictness in this and many other course policies is preparing students for high

school, which is in turn preparing them for college. As a fellow educator, I completely appreciate this teacher's desire to establish behavioral standards in her middle school classroom, and that she is also trying to demonstrate a course trajectory for her student's math studies; however, in doing so as she is, she is illustrating just how problematic, negligent, and harmful this road is when it fails to consider assessment equity.

California's Fight for Equity: Assembly Bills 705 (2017) and 1705 (2022)

Assembly Bills 705 (2017) and 1705 (2022) have become a forced reckoning with much of what is wrong with American education systems. These bills ask us to confront many uncomfortable truths: that American educational patterns are conformist, promoting White supremacy values around learning, language, assessment, and success; and, that higher education admissions processes, as made unavoidably public in 2019 through scandal, are capitalist, elitest, nepotistic, and racist.

Much like the argument standardized testing discussed in Chapter 2, AB 705 asserts that students, particularly those from racially and economically marginalized populations, are put at an increased disadvantage, disproportionately placing into and, ultimately getting stuck in, remedial college-level English and math courses. AB 705, which went into effect in 2018,

> requires that a community college district or college maximize the probability that a student will enter and complete transfer-level coursework in English and math within a one year timeframe and use, in the placement of students into English and math courses, one or more of the following: high school coursework, high school grades, and high school grade point average. (California Chancellor's Office, "What is AB 705 and AB 1705?").

Because of inequitable placement practices, minoritized students have historically been significantly less likely to complete their English and math requirements, and their transfer degrees, than their White counterparts. In shifting the emphasis on standardized test results as placement determinants to the more holistic view of coursework completed and their overall high school GPA, the argument is that minoritized students will enroll in appropriate courses and be more likely to complete transfer-level English and math in less time and that they will, therefore, be more likely to persist in their degree pathways as well. The largest aspect of AB 705, however, is the dismantling of remedial English and math courses in California community colleges.

Using research-based arguments, the legislation showed that minoritized students were disproportionately placed into remedial English and math classes when, in fact, there was no evidence to support the argument that these remedial courses would improve their outcomes in transfer-level English and math; moreover, by being required to take additional courses, minoritized students were more likely drop-out not just of the additional courses, but their entire program of study. Instructors were tasked with embedding additional support into transfer-level English and math courses for students dubbed at-risk. Across the state of California, implementation design was left up to college and department discretion. According to the California Acceleration Project, "At some CA colleges, students are placed into corequisite-supported classes based on their high school GPA or other multiple measures. At others, corequisite support is optional" and there are two primary ways that corequisite support courses manifest: in "Linked courses" where students "Students enroll in linked sections of two courses: a standard college-level course (e.g., college composition, statistics, applied calculus) and a support course. The support course

is typically a non-transferable “basic skills” or “noncredit” course and taught by the same instructor as the parent course” (California Acceleration Project, “Corequisite Design”). This is the mode that Moorpark College deploys, linking certain English M01A (English Composition) and English M91AS (non-credit co-requisite lab course). Some other CA community colleges offer “Enhanced courses” in which “Students who want or need additional support enroll in a single, higher-unit version of the college-level course” depending upon their high school GPA” (California Acceleration Project, “Corequisite Design”).

I was part of the earliest efforts of the Moorpark College English Department to embed additional support into a select number of linked English M01A/M91AS courses. The Department opted for a non-credit corequisite lab course and the four pilot instructors worked in a Community of Practice throughout the spring 2020 semester, with the goal of launching these courses in fall 2020. And, we all know what happened in the spring of 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic complicated all planning moves mostly because the ComP was preparing to teach these courses on campus, not online; only half of us were even certified to teach Distance Education courses at that point. Since, there has been significant discussion over the benefits and detriments of teaching linked English M01A/M91AS embedded lab on-ground and online. Since 2020, more instructors have taught linked M01A/M91AS classes and it is now generally offered on-campus, online asynchronously, and as a hybrid.

According to the CLO assessments completed in 2023,

> During the fall 2023 semester, student success rates met or exceeded the goal of 75% in all courses. Disaggregated data reveals that white students are passing CLO

> assessments at a higher rate than Hispanic students. However, in English M01A, the gap between white and Hispanic students fell significantly from 19% (Spring 2023) to 8% (Fall 2023). On another positive note, Black or African American students are passing the assessments at a higher rate. In English M01A, 71% of Black or African American students passed the assessment, compared to only 61% in Spring, 2023. In English M01B and M01C, 100% of Black or African American students passed the CLO assessments. (Ryan Kennedy, "SLO Report and Update" Feb. 22, 2024)

Collectively, at least, success rates at least for course learning outcomes across mandatory transfer-level English courses meet most targets and is closing equity gaps. However, spotlighting success rates for linked M01A/M91AS courses has been both trickier to tease out and also does not provide a positive picture of the work instructors are doing. Linked M01A/M91AS courses do not have high success rates, according to conventional measurements. The data shows that only 59.8% of students enrolled in a linked M01A/M91AS pass the course. Details of the numbers for fall 2021-spring 2024 are as follows:

Table 1. "English M91AS," Program Planning: Success & Retention Grade Enrollment Data

Success | Ethnicity — Overall Campus Success | 78.0%

Term	American Indian/Alaskan Nat..	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic	Pacific Islander	Two or More Ethnicities	Unreported	White	Grand Total
Fall 2020		75.0% 8	33.3% *	55.6% 45	100.0% *	66.7% 6	0.0% *	71.4% 63	**64.8% 128**
Spring 2021	100.0% *	62.5% 8	0.0% *	50.0% 48		50.0% *	0.0% *	67.2% 58	**57.7% 123**
Total	**100.0% ***	**68.8% 16**	**16.7% 6**	**52.7% 93**	**100.0% ***	**60.0% 10**	**0.0% ***	**69.4% 121**	**61.4% 251**
Fall 2021		66.7% *	50.0% *	57.6% 59		40.0% 10	100.0% *	57.4% 68	**57.2% 145**
Spring 2022	0.0% *	75.0% 8	28.6% 7	48.2% 85	0.0% *	57.1% 7	100.0% *	57.4% 54	**51.2% 166**
Total	**0.0% ***	**72.7% 11**	**33.3% 9**	**52.1% 144**	**0.0% ***	**47.1% 17**	**100.0% ***	**57.4% 122**	**54.0% 311**
Summer 2022			0.0% *	37.5% 8		0.0% *		100.0% *	**41.7% 12**
Fall 2022	100.0% *	60.0% 15	83.3% 6	51.2% 86	0.0% *	42.9% 7	100.0% 5	60.5% 43	**57.0% 165**
Spring 2023	100.0% *	58.3% 12	100.0% *	41.0% 61	100.0% *	53.8% 13	100.0% *	71.1% 76	**58.9% 168**
Total	**100.0% ***	**59.3% 27**	**77.8% 9**	**46.5% 155**	**50.0% ***	**47.6% 21**	**100.0% 7**	**67.8% 121**	**57.4% 345**
Summer 2023		100.0% *		60.0% 10				91.7% 12	**80.8% 26**
Fall 2023		71.4% 7	33.3% *	58.2% 55		50.0% *	100.0% *	85.0% 40	**68.5% 111**
Spring 2024		80.0% 10		66.1% 59		50.0% *	100.0% *	63.6% 33	**67.0% 106**
Total		**81.0% 21**	**33.3% ***	**62.1% 124**		**50.0% 6**	**100.0% ***	**77.6% 85**	**69.1% 243**
	80.0% 5	**69.3% 75**	**44.4% 27**	**52.9% 516**	**42.9% 7**	**50.0% 54**	**88.2% 17**	**67.3% 449**	**59.8% 1150**
	80.0% 5	**69.3% 75**	**44.4% 27**	**52.9% 516**	**42.9% 7**	**50.0% 54**	**88.2% 17**	**67.3% 449**	**59.8% 1150**
	80.0% 5	**69.3% 75**	**44.4% 27**	**52.9% 516**	**42.9% 7**	**50.0% 54**	**88.2% 17**	**67.3% 449**	**59.8% 1150**

Source: "English M91AS," Program Planning: Success & Retention Grade Enrollment Data Table, https://tableau.vcccd.edu/#/views/MCPP_2024-25/SucRet/ef983f2f-0e74-4350-bd76-f5ab706c9105/ce6e5595-537c-43fa-a82b-8f6596a50e14?:iid=2/. Accessed 25 Sept. 2024.

For myself and the other instructors of linked M01A/91AS courses, this data is devastating. White, Indigenous, and AAPI students numerically perform significantly better than other student populations, averaging 64.5% between fall 2021 and spring 2024. Black, African American, and Hispanic students are averaging a 48.65% rate of success in these courses. In conventional grade terms, these numbers are atrocious, and as Mya Poe argues, frustrating because, "the achievement gap frame can be difficult to challenge because administrative audiences gravitate to stories that rely on statistical evidence that seems irrefutable" ("Reframing Race in Teaching Writing Across the Curriculum" 91). The linked M01A/91AS course instructors are perpetual over-achievers and care deeply about our students and their success, spending far more than our contracted hours working with populations that

generally need more support than we ever have to offer them. However, the consensus in the M91AS Community of Practice consistently insists that success in these courses cannot be measured in the conventional way (e.g. earning a passing grade). Much like standardized testing and institutionalized grading systems, students' final course grades were consistently inconsistent with what their instructors viewed as their skills and capacity. As well, faculty preparation for the type of pedagogical shifts required to support student populations targeted by AB 705 needed far more support than even the practitioners expected.

From 2020, AB 705 became a regular part of curricular discourse in the department, across the college, throughout the district, and even in regional high schools. In my work as English Transitions Coordinator,[2] my conversations with high school English faculty members and administrators began to focus increasingly on the linked M01A/91AS courses and their benefits to students. And, according to the California Chancellor's office, AB 705 is working. Extensive research shows "unprecedented increases in the number and percentage of students completing math and English milestones for transfer and a college degree" and, most importantly, "Every student group examined to date has achieved substantial gains in access to, and completion of, transfer-level math and English" ("What is AB 705 and AB 1705?"). Course deployment, however, has been inconsistent and, as a

[2] Since 2015, English Transitions has been a partnership program between Moorpark College's English Department faculty members and 14 regional high school English faculties. Under my leadership, volunteers from the MC English team partner with and act as a point of contact throughout the year for a regional high school English Department and seek to facilitate collegial conversations about curricular design and student success. These conversations have led to extensive conversations across the region and important conversations about students' academic success. In spring 2023, Moorpark College hosted English and math faculty from the college and regional high schools to discuss AB 705 and 1705 in detail, share pedagogical best practices, and work together to bridge gaps in student success at the high school and college levels of education. We hope to continue this tradition along with the English Transitions partnerships.

consequence research shows that “critical equity gaps remain,” which the revision and extension of “AB 1705 addresses” by focusing on “inequitable and uneven implementation of AB 705” through an Equitable Placement, Support and Completion Funding Allocation (California Acceleration Project, “What is AB 705 and AB 1705?”). The result was “$64 million (one-time funding) in the 2022 Budget Act” allocated thusly:

> (1) Thirty-four percent of funds as a base allocation to all community colleges ($21,760,000).
>
> (2) Thirty-three percent of funds to community colleges with below average enrollment in transfer-level mathematics or English courses ($21,120,000).
>
> (3) Thirty-three percent of these funds shall be awarded to community colleges with below average rates of students successfully completing transfer-level mathematics or English courses within one year of their first attempt in the discipline ($21,120,000). (Aisha N. Lowe, “Required Action: Equitable Placement, Support and Completion (AB 1705) Funding Allocation and the Submission of Funding Plans,” California Community Colleges Memo, May 1, 2023)

Moorpark College received roughly $800,000 to address remaining equity gaps and I have felt honored and excited to participate in the many innovations that began during the 2023-2024 academic year, including continued work with the linked M01A/M91AS ComP and several summer reading and curricular revision projects.

I have consistently been an avid supporter of AB 705 and AB 1705 from their beginnings. What I have realized in my work, however, is that even these measures create and perpetuate harm because the foundation of course inequity and injustice isn’t addressed. Without linguistic justice and assessment equity, no Assembly Bill, policy, or

project will erase the harm academia causes or the resultant hits to student success. This is because, as the CCCC's Statement on White Language Supremacy explains, "our profession's pedagogies and assessment practices of linguistic diversity and inclusion have tried to fit students and faculty of all backgrounds into existing oppressive structures" when the real work should be to "push to dismantle all systems rooted in WLS and advocate for investment in BIPOC communities as we work toward liberatory languages and systems that honor the full humanity and equality of all people" ("CCCC Statement on White Language Supremacy" June 2021). Where I see existing work to be done in English and composition spaces particularly is in the breaking down of White language privilege and conventional grading structures because, without this work, our efforts are trying to fit "into existing oppressive structures," rendering our efforts essentially ineffectual. Hence, this sabbatical project.

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Chapter 3: The Intersection of Language Justice and Grading Equity

> "Since English teachers have been in large part responsible for the narrow attitudes of today's employers, changing attitudes toward dialect variations does not seem an unreasonable goal, for today's students will be tomorrow's employers. The attitudes that they develop in the English class will often be the criteria they use for choosing their own employees." (Richard Lloyd-Jones, "Explanation of Adoption of the CCCC's Students' Right to Their Own Language Resolution," 1974, 23)

> "If you grade writing by a so-called standard, let's call it Standard English, then you are engaged in an institutional and disciplinary racism, a system set up to make winners and losers by a dominant standard. […] To evaluate and grade student languaging by the method of comparing it to some ideal standard or norm—no matter what that norm is—will participate in racism." (Asao B. Inoue, "Foreword: On Antiracist Agendas," *Performing Antiracist Pedagogy in Rhetoric, Writing, and Communication*, Frankie Condon and Vershawn Ashanti Young, eds. University Press of Colorado, 2017.)

I am a child of the 80s but I lived at home for the 90s childhoods of my two younger siblings, and began my teaching career when my students were born in the same years that my siblings had been. Thus, the hit cartoon "Spongebob Squarepants" (1999-Present) figures a lot in my early experiences of teaching, both in mypedagogical learning and my instructional design (despite my being an ardent Disney fan). The episode I return to most frequently for classroom activities and professional development presentations is "Squid On Strike" (Season 2, Episode 40a, December 10, 2001). In this episode, Squidward, philosophical and existentialist employee of the Krusty Krab restaurant and colleague of the titular simple and literal-minded Spongebob decides that he has had enough of the abuse doled out by his tyrannical boss and decides to go on strike, and inspires Spongebob to join him. When using this episode in my classes, I incorporate it into lessons about figurative language and rhetorical strategies, how they can be used both effectively and ineffectively in argumentation, and just to have a lot of nostalgic fun during a challenging

lesson. After all, student buy-in is one of the most important elements that leads to their success.

Since the first conception of this sabbatical project in 2020[3], however, I have used this episode as a framework for my burgeoning desire to participate in the destruction of existing oppressive establishments and reimaging of equitable, diverse, and inclusive academic systems. The Krusty Krab, like education, was built upon expectations and assumptions that benefit individuals with the social power to command them, Mr. Krabs' unethical business operations in the cartoon, White supremacy ideology in real life. As the cartoon's resident radical, Squidward eventually explains his intentions to the simple-minded Spongebob and when the latter finally understands the former's true meanings, a revelation in mind and action takes place:

> Squidward was right! I can't just sit here, it's time for action! *[He kicks open his front door, hammer and saw in hand. He runs to the Krusty Krab and into the dining room]* I will restore the working man to his rightful glory. I will dismantle this oppressive establishment board by board! *[He pulls up a loose floorboard. He then saws a table in half]* I will saw the tables of tyranny in half. Gnaw at the ankles of big business! *[He takes a bite out of a wooden column]*. (04:32-06:20)

I appreciate Spongebob's spunk because I, too, believe "it's time for action". Spongebob, however, focuses on a literal dismembering of Mr. Krab's unjust and inequitable institution. I, however, take a less physical approach to dismantling education systems (you're welcome). When I first began my journey toward language and assessment equity, I focused on grading because the numerical formulas were becoming increasingly subjective,

[3] Project CHESS 2020-2022 Cohort

inconsistent, and confusing in my classroom experience. And, the more I learned about just how inaccurate conventional grading systems are, the more I felt compelled to abandon them. My Spongebob-esque revelation led me here.

Language and Assessment Equity at Odds

Standardized testing and conventional grading systems are equally problematic because they misrepresent student capacity, potential, and success. It isn't always easy, however, to see the connection between language justice and grading equity, which I believe intersect in important ways that make-or-break student success, an argument also made in the 1974 "Students' Right to Their Own Language" position statement. The statement collaborators assert that

> test results are reported in terms of comparisons with the groups used for standardizing […] Used carelessly, standardized tests lead to erroneous inferences as to students' linguistic abilities and create prejudgments in the minds of teachers, counselors, future employers, and the students themselves. (SRTOL 17)

Standardized testing results are powerful and dangerous because they don't create an uncomplicated picture of a students' learning style and aptitude for school personnel, yet they inform the type of support students get (if any), their course level placement and, most worrying of all, inform students and school personnel's perception of a student's learning capacity and achievement potential. It is the "inferences" made based upon tests that are built around the belief in a single, unified English language and its expression, that creates ripple effects in student's academic experiences, and not usually for the better.

The problem remains, however, that language justice and grading equity stay at odds, even in the most revolutionary classrooms. For example, according to many language and assessment equity workers,[4] a common suggestion is to offer students low-stakes assignments that give the option or require students to write in their own dialect. While these activities can do a great deal in the way of bolstering students' self-confidence if handled in a culturally responsive way, the issue is that standardized English expression is still privileged because students are expected to return to them in high-stakes assignments; in other words, the writing that really matters (for a grade, for a rank, for a qualification) is Standard Written/Academic English (SWAE). Even worse, suggesting that dialects other than SW/AE are low in stakes reinforces the minoritization of other classroom dialects; language and assessment are not inclusive. According to Richard Lloyd-Jones, "it is one thing to help a student achieve proficiency in a written dialect and another thing to punish him for using variant expressions of that dialect" ("Explanation of Adoption of the CCCC's Students' Right to Their Own Language Resolution" 23). Minoritized students are penalized for their own language and, with the UC and CSU systems no longer using standardized entrance exams in their admissions procedures, language and assessment equity is now an even bigger obstacle to their academic success, and that outside of education because their course grades are that much more significant to determining their admissions offers. Thus as Megan Von Bergen, avid ungrader, suggests language and assessment equity needs to be "a flashing warning indicator for ongoing injustice" and "that yes, the way our society is organized does harm to people; that yes, the way we teach and assess writing perpetuates that harm" ("Defining Ungrading" 140). 2020 hit me profoundly because I became so much

[4] Blum, Feldman, Inoue, Kohn, Sackstein, Stommel

more compelled to stop causing "harm" to my students and though I had been doing social justice work in my classrooms since entering them as a middle- and high-school English teacher in 2004, I wasn't do enough because I was still clinging to the existing systems of language and assessment standards and grading practices.

The problems with conventional language and grade assessments are not limited to instructors and districts. These are internalized and perpetuated by students and this has become most apparent in my classes since the public release of artificial intelligence software like ChatGPT that students have full access to. Yet, although discussions about AI began in my English Department in earnest in 2023, the premise of the problem actually emerges in the 1974 "Students Right To Their Own Language" position statement. In his explanation of the contexts of the CCCC's resolution, Richard Lloyd-Jones argues that

> Those who succeed may become so locked into the rewarding language patterns that they restrict their modes of expression and become less tolerant of others' modes. Those who do not succeed may be fluent in their own dialects but because they are unable to show their fluence, get a mistaken sense of inferiority from the scores they receive. (16)

I have found, particularly in my youngest students who dual-enroll in my English 1A courses and are anywhere from 14-17 years old, that they are profoundly more "locked into" the perspective that there is one way to write well and they are "reward[ed]" at their high schools with grades, advanced placement, college credits, and more when they "restrict their modes of expression." Even more frustrating and worrying is that they are "less tolerant of others' modes," which I see problematize student interactions such as peer reviews and discussion. Every semester I spend a significant amount of time reminding

students of my anti-racism and language justice policies and assignment instructions that stipulate students *not* discuss issues of grammar, spelling, or mechanics when completing what I call "Classmate Conversations."[5] This is the single most challenging shift I have to help students make when they enter my classes, which I believe attests to the harm existing language and assessment systems cause, and which is spread through a class like a disease, no matter how few students believe in it.

To illustrate what I'm trying to express here, I want to share a recent experience in my linked M01A/91AS class from spring 2024. My spidey senses were alerted to a potential AI-user issue in early course discussions because the submissions were too crisp and polished to reflect a typical writing style at the start of this course. After the student's first major assignment was flagged as 93% AI-generated, and knowing that this student was a high-school dual-enrolled student, I decided to probe a bit further, both with this research and the student's working style in mind.

- **Bronsten Comment #1:** Hi, [Student]. This essay is coming up as 93% AI-generated in several checkers that I've used.[6] The contents, however, feel authentic to me and I wonder if you're relying on software like Grammarly to modify your expression, or some other type of writing enhancer? Please let me know a bit more about your process here. Above all, I want to discourage you from using these resources, particularly as this class is 100% safe to do that in: you don't get grade impacts from

[5] I present these in full in Chapter 4.

[6] I initially use the embedded Turnitin.com AI-detection results that work as part of the Canvas-TII LTE partnership, as they neatly identify problem areas and have increased in reliability in the 2023-2024 iteration of the software. Once I decide that there is what I deem an actual AI-use problem, I then move outside of TII and copy-and-paste sections of potential problem essays into other detection programs like ZeroGPT and Grammarly's AI-detection programs. If they all more or less align with the initial TII flags, I reach out to and have conversations with students, probing the discussion with curiosity as I do in the exchanges I've included here.

grammar because of the linguistic justice and anti-racism policies. Please try to celebrate and amplify your authentic writing voice. Without letting it out to play, you'lll [sic.] never be able to find out what it's truly capable of. Also, the essay needs to open with a title, followed by an epigraph from the MU transcript (if that's the Unit 1 media you opt to work with). Please revise. I look forward to hearing from you. (Feb 11, 2024, assignment comment, "Essay #1: Defining Education Best Draft For Now")

- **Student's Reply to Comment #1:** Hello Dr.Bronsten! So at my high school, I have gotten pretty used to checking to make sure my essays are checked and everything's all good to submit just for my personal reasons (I'm a bit of a perfectionist.) So, it could be the several websites I put it through but I have also submitted it to a website called "Paper" and it is used and provided by my High School. I edited the essay as well per your comments and hope to improve with time. Thank you! (Feb 11, 2024, assignment comment, "Essay #1: Defining Education Best Draft For Now")
- **Bronsten's Reply to Student's Reply to Comment #1:** Thanks for checking in [Student]. In future, please don't use these resources—trust your voice and the safe space of this classroom to give it play. Just open a fresh document and go for it ☺ (Feb 12, 2024, assignment comment, "Essay #1: Defining Education Best Draft For Now")
- **Bronsten's Comment #2:** [Student], several resources are flagging this work as predominantly AI-generated. I would like to learn a bit more about your writing process so I can understand this flag a bit better. As you know, using AI resources to generate material for classes at MC is strictly prohibited, as this is a form of

academic fraud. Please tell me about what resources you've used to help you write this piece so I can work out what, exactly, is being flagged by the various systems we use. (March 1, 2024, assignment comment, “Essay #: Formal and Informal Educations Complete Draft”)

- **Student’s Reply to Comment #2:** Hello Dr. Bronsten, I'm not sure as to why it's appearing as Ai flagged but I can explain to you my writing process. I have used your template examples and followed them, I made my rough draft of my essay using basic words, I then use a rephrase to make it sound a bit more professional and to spruce up my writing, I then use my high schools recourses with the essay checker, I also put it through an essay checker that gives me suggestions as to what I should fix or elaborate on, also use a bit of gram marly throughout the process, I also have it edited with Net tutor, and lastly, I use the class recourses with the works cited checker (just to make sure it follows MLA formatting). (March 1, 2024, assignment comment, “Essay #: Formal and Informal Educations Complete Draft”)
- **Bronsten’s Reply to Student’s Reply to Comment #2:** Hi, [Student]. Thank you very much for your detailed email and complete transparency. This fully explains what the system checks are flagging up and confirms my own suspicions. I want to reiterate the course's anti-racist and linguistic-justice-oriented stances: you are never penalized for grammar, spelling, mechanics, or any other language system you have been made to believe is superior to any other. While I appreciate your drive to present your best work, I want to caution you against your over-reliance on programs designed to "correct" your work. In using these, rather than trusting your unique, authentic voice, you are silencing yourself and equally not learning about

the voice you have or allowing it to evolve and grow. Moreover, when you rely on these resources, you are violating the College's and Course's policies on academic integrity because you are presenting artificial intelligence-generated work as your own, which it is not based upon the heavy use of "correction software". Please, therefore, do not submit work for the course that uses this technology. I absolutely appreciate the pressure students feel to "sound" a particular way; and, your position as a high school student in a college course must understandably add anxiety about your performance and ability to keep up in a course that isn't conventionally set up for students at your age and learning level. But, it is essential that you focus instead [of] on correction software on your own ability to acquire, practice, and master information; you are shortcutting that process when you leave it to technology. This course, if no other, is the BEST place for you to stop relying on that technology because it is 100% safe for you to do so; again, the ungrading philosophy is all about learning and growth, and the philosophies around English language and expression ask you to engage through your English, and no one else's. Let me know if you would like to speak further and we can arrange a Zoom. (March 1, 2024, assignment comment, “Essay #: Formal and Informal Educations Complete Draft”)

- **Bronsten’s Final Comment on the Last Submission for Comment #2:** This is a strong draft. Please ensure you are clear on how to write this and other assignments for the course without the use of AI software: celebrate, don't silence, your voice! (March 6, 2024, assignment comment, “Essay #: Formal and Informal Educations Complete Draft”)

As you can see, this student dug their heels into the process they had been conditioned to believe was the only way to achieve their view of success. Their concern is entirely focused on highly-rated language expression, and I cannot deny that the writing the student submitted was an absolute pleasure to read because it spoke grammatically and mechanically to my White language supremacy biases that I have to actively work to silence when I engage with student work now. Something, however, resonated with this student eventually and they evolved their work and thinking about language usage over the course of the semester, as evidenced by the trajectory of their AI-usage:

- Essay #1 AI-Use Percentage: 93% (first submission), 84% (resubmission)
- Essay #2 AI-Use Percentage: 71%
- Essay #3 AI-Use Percentage: 3%
- Essay #4 AI-Use Percentage: 25% (this project asked students to write a narrative reflection on the course learning experience and argue for their transcript grade, both sections of which were 0% AI-generated; the other part of the project comprised essay revisions, and the 25% reflects the total AI-generated percentage of all 3 previous essays. That number represents a significant decrease in AI use in the first 2 essays).

This student took a lot of convincing to reach the final numbers in AI-usage that they received. It felt, at times, like I was weaning them off of a drug, and because of their hectic school, sports, community service, and other extracurriculars schedule (that's a whole other college admissions inequity conversation I can't tackle in this project), it was impossible for our schedules to align to discuss the matter synchronously, which may or may not have impacted how long it took the student to shift their level of AI-use.

> Of biggest concern is one of their first comments that they are "a bit of a perfectionist," which is often a symptom of language and assessment bias and the anxiety it perpetuates. Of bigger concern, though, is the huge amount of extraordinary lengths the student goes to in order to produce what they deem acceptable work:
>
> > I have used your template examples and followed them, I made my rough draft of my essay using basic words, I then use a rephrase to make it sound a bit more professional and to spruce up my writing, I then use my high schools recourses with the essay checker, I also put it through an essay checker that gives me suggestions as to what I should fix or elaborate on, also use a bit of gram marly throughout the process, I also have it edited with Net tutor [sic.], and lastly, I use the class recourses with the works cited checker (just to make sure it follows MLA formatting).

I offer students what I call suggested outlines for major writing assignments; as many students use these as do not, and both submissions are equally successful or unsuccessful. This student, however, adds into their writing process paraphrasing software seeking a "professional" and "spruc[ed] up" tone, then shifts to an "essay check," "Grammarly," "Net Tutor," and a "works cited checker". While I may have once been thrilled by this show of dedication to their learning, I now have a much healthier attitude toward work; call me crazy, but this writing process is completely unsustainable. And, most upsetting, is the levels of silencing they apply. Having never met this student synchronously, I wonder what their voice even sounds like. And, though I mark it as a victory that the AI-use detected almost negligible amounts of AI-generated text in this student's work by the end of the semester, I wonder if this student has ever known their authentic writing voice at all. That's a challenging existential condition to face when starting college coursework. Yet, students

are perpetually rewarded for it and I don't trust that they won't relapse into the behaviors that have suited them for so long once leaving my class. And, this student's experience is far from unique in my courses; I use them because they are (ironically) the most articulate and transparent about their process, which I have received in pieces from others for years. At the heart of all of these experiences, I believe, is the anxiety I see in these students' desire to write just right, and that makes me in equal measure sad about their current experiences and empowered to change the pathway for others.

Assessment Alternatives

Although conversations about grading practices are nothing new, the COVID-19 pandemic spurred a more pronounced discussion in light of the educational inequities the global shutdown exposed. The pandemic helped more educators understand what Joe Feldman argues in his book *Grading For Equity*, that "Too many external factors that are outside of students' control can make assignments impossible to complete. Students who have fewer resources and a weaker safety net have been disproportionately harmed by these practices" (qtd. in "'Amazing and Very Challenging': More Educators Rethink Grading," *NEA News*, National Education Association, May 14, 2021). Feldman helps explain what I call the noise that drowns out grading equity; and, the fact that the vast majority of these are "out of students' control" highlights the inaccuracy of conventional grading and, more importantly, the harm it causes to the most vulnerable learners. Equitable grading practices generally encourage student involvement and advocacy, and I believe it's essential to allow for students to weigh in on how they are assessed, particularly given the life circumstances that can be so powerfully affected by the grades attributed to them and their work. According to

high-school student Aakrisht Mehra, a better alternative is “Standards-based grading” because it “measures academic achievement without considering […] subjective metrics” by focalizing “academic achievement against specific content standards, offering students multiple opportunities to demonstrate knowledge,” and ultimately “assigning […] grades […] based on students’ mastery of the content, making the process more transparent and individualized” (Aakrisht Mehra, “There’s a more equitable way to grade; districts should invest in it," June 4, 2024). Mehra makes powerful points about the benefits of standards-based assessment, and it’s interesting to see these emerge from a student.

At the same time that the pandemic highlighted many social inequities, and it created an opportunity to lean into the conversation around existing assessment practices in education, and many of these conversations have continued to evolve, despite many of the discussion points and suggested interventions being not very new at all. I see AB705 and AB1705 resonate with the California Community College’s Student Learning Outcomes movement, which was made part of school accreditation standards in 2002 by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (CCCO, “Agents of Change: Examining The Role of Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Coordinators in California Community Colleges” 5). Proponents believed that “Outcomes and assessment, that benefit student learning, must focus on the dynamic roles of faculty and on the teaching-learning interface, emphasizing pedagogical techniques and observable student learning” ibid. 8). What I appreciate about this explanation, my year as an SLOC, and my ongoing SLO assessment work as English faculty is the emphasis on SLO assessment as a “benefit” to students in their learning trajectory, and the importance of a strong relationship between instructors and learners. Yet, in practice, SLO construction and assessment is secondary to

conventional course assessment; colleges are using 2 tools to measure the same thing, and both speak discrepantly. For example, students can pass the CLO and fail the course, or vice versa. And this disconnect is again due to a larger disconnect in assessment and its meaning: CLO assessments snapshot one specific assignment that for any number of reasons may not accurately reflect student capacity and skillset; and, course grades generally factor in noise that misconstrues what a student's grade actually comprises.

CLO assessment—just as conventional course grading—can't give a genuine and accurate picture of a student's knowledge and grades because it is yet another product of standardization. The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges expressed in conversation with the SLO movement "concerns about the implications of the new standards and its emphasis on student learning outcomes" because it feared that "the new standards would lend themselves to a 'one size fits all' approach for all of California's 109 community colleges, similar to the testing imposed on the K-12 system as part of the No Child Left Behind initiative" (ibid. 10). The spirit of SLOs speaks to the spirit of assessment justice work. When I assumed the position of Student Learning Outcomes Coordinator at Moorpark College (2016-2017), I was enthusiastic about the potential for SLOs to revolutionize conventional assessment practice. And, I was met with as much frustration and suspicion from faculty who saw SLO construction and measurement as another educational fad that would eventually fade away as I have been when I mention that I ungrade. Both in my work as SLOC and as an educator tasked with devising, revising, and assessing SLOs in my classes, I don't believe we're using outcomes as effectively as we can, and this is, I believe, because we are clinging to conventional assessment practice: points, percentages, extra credit, penalties, and so forth. That noise is drowning out grading equity.

So, if not conventional grading, then what? Happily, the choice is ours! The main types of non-traditional grading are: mastery-based, competency-based, contract, specification, and, ungrading. The Center for Transformative Teaching and the University of Nebraska (Lincoln) offers the most straightforward explanations of all of these but ungrading. According to Michelle Larson for the Center, "Traditional grading systems have many inherent issues that undermine learning," ("Alternative Grading For College Courses" 2023), alternative grading practices are based in standard-based grading practiceswith the goal of restoring learning to education. These include:

- Mastery-Based Grading: this grading system is defined by the practices of "providing students with learning objectives for course content, allowing students opportunities to show mastery on assessments that are aligned to the learning objectives, and giving students multiple ways to demonstrate mastery of each learning objective" (Larson, "What is Mastery Grading," January 30, 2023). In this style of grading, instructors must establish learning outcomes, what measurements constitute success, how measurements will convert into grades (points, assignments, criterion, etc.), and encourage resubmissions until mastery is achieved.
- Competency-Based Grading: this grading system is defined by "using learning objectives that are distilled down to finer-grained learning targets, providing students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery, and basing the course grade on not only the number of standards met but also on specific levels of mastery for the standards" (Larson, "What is Competency-based Grading," January 30, 2023). In competency-based grading, instructors establish learning outcomes and

then “bundle” groups of assignments into specific grade categories. Larson’s example:

Grade	**Unit Assignments**	**Unit Project**	**Unit Exams**
Bundle 1 Requirements to earn a C in the course	Complete five of the assignments at 70% accuracy	Complete the project by addressing five of the components	Earn at least a 70% on each learning objective in the unit exams
Bundle 2 Requirements to earn a B in the course	Complete seven of the assignments at 80% accuracy	Complete the project by addressing eight of the components	Earn at least an 80% on each learning objective in the unit exams
Bundle 3 Requirements to earn an A in the course	Complete ten of the assignments at 80% accuracy	Complete the project by addressing all ten of the components	Earn at least a 90% on each learning objective in the unit exams

- Contract Grading: this type of grading system blends standards-based grading with instructor/student partnerships to build “student-created contracts [or] community-based contracts” (Larson, "What is Contract Grading," January 30, 2023). Contract-based grading builds on “community-based pedagogy and democratic discussions […] to define criteria for the assessment and then self-assessment and peer-review are used to determine if a student’s work meets the requirements for mastery” (ibid). This grading system was my first departure point from conventional grading, and I illustrate my experiences in Chapter 4.

- Specification Grading: this type of grading takes aspects "of mastery grading (meeting proficiency before continuing to the next topic), competency-based grading (expands on mastery but allows students to determine the level of competency met by selecting specific assessments to complete), and contract grading (students negotiate a contract with the instructor to complete specific amount or type of assessments) to ensure students meet the learning objectives for a course" (Larson, "What is Specifications Grading," January 30 2023). In specification-grading, there are clear expectations about the amount of assignments and the scores necessary to earn a specific letter grade. A significant departure from the other types of grading here is in the additional work students can choose to do, which gives them an opportunity to establish autonomy over the course grading schema. Larson's example:

Grade	**Weekly Quizzes**	**Midterm Project**	**Unit Exams**	**Additional Requirements**
Bundle 1 Requirements to earn a C in the course	Earn at least a 70% on 10 of the 15 quizzes	Met 12 of the 20 specifications on the project rubric	Earn at least a 70% on each learning objective in the unit exams	No additional requirements
Bundle 2 Requirements to earn a B in the course	Earn at least an 80% on 12 of the 15 quizzes	Met 15 of the 20 specifications on the project rubric	Earn at least an 80% on each learning objective	Students complete one additional assignment for each unit with at least a 70%

Grade	Weekly Quizzes	Midterm Project	Unit Exams	Additional Requirements
			in the unit exams	for each learning objective in the assignment
Bundle 3 Requirements to earn an A in the course	Earn at least an 80% on all 15 quizzes	Met 18 of the 20 specifications on the project rubric	Earn at least a 90% on each learning objective in the unit exams	Students complete three additional assignments for each unit with at least an 80% for each learning objective in the assignment

I appreciate how much work goes into all of these alternative grading systems, and MC faculty know just how complicated it is not just to devise learning outcomes for students, but to measure student success accurately. Where all of these popular grading alternatives fall short, however, is in the fact that they haven't actually dismantled conventional grade practice: the instructor still determines what constitutes letter grades, the percentage of assignments corresponds to a conventional grade band (A = 90-100%, B = 80-89%, C = 70-79%), and students with the most academic privilege who can do more work due to better and consistent access to resources are unfairly rewarded with the opportunity to achieve higher grades; and, the grades themselves are defined by conventional numerical standards, which problematizes the ability to achieve language equity in a composition-centric classroom. Contract-grading does, to an extent, allow for collaboration in determining the specific skills and their demonstration that constitute specific grades, but

it is ultimately grade-orientated and, thus, learning remains secondary to points and percentages. These are just some of the reasons why I believe ungrading is the best way for faculty to measure student understanding and centralizing learning and growth.

Dr. Spongebob, Dismantling the Establishment System By System: Ungrading

Let me be clear: ungrading does not mean "not grading." When I first explain that I ungrade, students and colleagues—especially high school faculty members—often remark that it must be so nice not to grade. Students become confused and, when they do not fulfill the requirements of my course ungrading philosophy policies, they argue that there are being penalized for work that I don't grade. These are misunderstandings of the concept and practice of ungrading. While I don't slap a percentage, points, or letter grade on student work, I write extensive and detailed feedback on assignments; in many ways, therefore, I'm doing as much "grading" as I ever was, and usually far more, but in a profoundly more useful way. And, I love it because shedding the coat of letter grades is liberating; my stress levels come down along with my students'. All educators know that, although some assignments fall neatly into letter-grade categories, most of the time we find ourselves dancing between standards, adjusting measurements, and trying to find a way to justify the final grade settled on. 19 years into the game, this should be easy for me but it never is, particularly because English assessment is problematically subjective, though the English discipline wants to pretend otherwise, which becomes another threat to grading equity. I can't count the number of times I knew a specific letter or number on a student's essay would break the writer's heart and dishonor the unquantifiable successes of their work (persistence and risk-taking, to name a few). Thus, like most ungraders, I "aim to create

positive atmospheres devoid of fear and threat and focused on learning" (Susan Blum, *Ungrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning* 10). Ungrading feels to me the best way to stop hurting and start overhauling a long-broken system.

So, here's an answer to the big question: What actually is ungrading (or "de-grading", or "not grading")? It is the classroom decentering or complete removal of conventional letter and numerical grades in favor of formative feedback, student-instructor partnerships, and intrinsic motivation; it is also a social justice call-to-arms in academic spaces that seeks to render the classroom, curriculum, matriculation, articulation, and graduation pathways anti-racist, inclusive, and accessible. Ungrading acknowledges that educators and education systems do not have complete and overruling power of an individual's ability to obtain academic success and restores the purpose of education—learning—to its rightful central place in education. Ungrading, however, is not easy to put into practice and because it is a pedagogy that celebrates academic freedom and allows for enough trust of the subject-matter expert to determine how best to support their students' learning, it really is a paradox of awful and wonderful choice. I also believe it is an opportunity. According to Starr Sackstein, veteran educator, education consultant, instructional coach, and speaker,

> Too often we assume that because things were a certain way when we were in school, they must remain that way. But the world changes. Kids change. Learning tools change. We would be remiss if we just kept doing the same thing because it is how we have always done it. And since grades have never made sense, why would we want to perpetuate a practice that only hurts kids? ("Shifting the Grading Mindset" 81).

2020 initiated powerful changes that rocked global understandings of mental and physical health, and uncovered dangerously persistent racism. In the years since, artificial intelligence software launched what felt like a personal attack on writing integrity and purpose. Change is inevitable and clinging to the old ways simply because that's what educators, administrators, and politicians know, is irresponsible and dangerous. Change can be scary, but change is essential to the development of the world and the launching of young people into that world as confident, healthy leaders does not depend on letter grades, percentages, points, and other meaningless data that attempts to quantify what is truly unquantifiable.

What I most appreciate about ungrading is that change makers leading its charge for grading equity centralize humanity at the heart of their decision to ungrade students. These academics base their arguments on trusting that students are the best resources for understanding their learning capacity, and that ungrading can truly be made to accommodate all kinds of learners and educators because there is no single way to execute the practice. These revelations speak to the heart of what Moorpark College is doing with the AB 1705 grant money they received in 2023, and they also highlight the support for applying Universal Design for Learning across college courses and student services to bolster student success, which is the umbrella theme of the MC's professional development activities ("Applying Universal Design to Support I.D.E.A.A."). Three separate English stipend projects during summer 2024 asked faculty to read pedagogy books that suggested ways to re-engage students in their learning by making instructional shifts that promote community and accessibility (*Small Teaching Online*, 2019, by Flower Darby), learner-teacher partnerships and formative feedback (*Learning that Matters: A Field Guide to Course*

Design for Transformative Education, 2020, by Caralyn Zehnder and Cynthia Alby, et. al.), and student agency and pedagogy that encourages motivation and engagement (*How to be a Successful Student: 20 Habits Based on the Science of Learning*, 2018, by Richard E. Mayer). Campus emails were flooded in August and September 2024 with calls for participation in even more stipend projects that involve researching best practices in fostering student success through intentional relationship- and community-building in student-oriented classrooms and services. The College is focused on improving student success not through rigid structures but, instead, by humanizing the work they do with and for students.

It is becoming increasingly clear that heart work, as I see to be MC's and the English Department's focus, is the strongest predictor of student success. In their campus-wide research into faculty and student use of and perspective on ungrading across the University of Colorado, Denver, Amy Hasinoff, et. al., noted that survey "respondents consistently and overwhelmingly reported that they felt instructors cared about them, trusted them, supported them, and that they could trust their instructors in their ungrading course more than other courses" ("'Success was Actually Having Learned:' University Student Perceptions of Ungrading" 7). It should be no surprise that trust given is trust earned, and that students learn more and perform better when in relationship with faculty, rather than in a conventional learning hierarchy. Ungrading dismantles the traditional and outdated top-down approach to student assessment that conventional grading encourages and, because the assessment style emphasizes individualization and differentiation, it creates an opportunity for educational institutions to do what Megan Von Bergen calls "the work of reimagining […] education and assessment around the human needs of the students we teach, their own locatedness in society and the identities they bring to our classrooms"

("Defining Ungrading" 140); it is the focus on humanity that "urge[s] us as educators to recognize and respond to injustice in the ways that are open to us within our classrooms, institutions, and communities" (ibid. 140).

According to Jesse Stommel, a veritable celebrity in the seminal research on and practice of ungrading,

> Students are increasingly conditioned to work within a system that emphasizes objective measures of performance and quantitative assessment. It's important to acknowledge that these systems have been (in some cases intentionally) crafted to privilege certain kinds of students. It's also important to acknowledge that, in lieu of these systems, there are tacit expectations that still favor already privileged students. Students who are female, Black, Brown, Indigenous, disabled, neurodivergent, queer, etc. face overt and systemic oppression whether expectations are explicit or implicit. (Jesse Stommel, "How to Ungrade," *Ungrading* 34)

Stommel's suggestion that learners have been groomed by academic systems to accept and believe conventional grading is significant; this ideology is driven into learners' understanding of education as soon as they enter it as children, and I find it as hard to persuade students as much as colleagues about the benefits of ungrading even when conventional grading is causing immense harm. The "privilege" that grade systems have afforded already-privileged populations is hard to relinquish in many cases, and minoritized populations internalize and accept—though they do not agree with—systems they have been accustomed to being harmed by. Thus, as Asao B. Inoue, seminal voice in equitable grading discussions, argues that grades, like language privilege, "[are] learned, but not always by choice" (*Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies* 23). I believe that

ungrading becomes a representation of how social justice can be achieved in, and capitalist ideology that grading emerges out of removed from, K-college classrooms.

American systems are generally entrenched in capitalist values, which uphold many American ideals. The foundations of the country and its autonomy from Great Britain are firm; just look at the 2024 election campaigns and their arguments built upon America's founding views in the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and so forth. These expectations are absolutely fundamental to America's understanding of who it is; however, there is something that needs to be said about applying outdated expectations to contemporary systems without some sort of evolution. I don't deny what Alfie Kohn, another foundational voice in the evolution of ungrading conversations, suggests and know that "There is certainly value in *assessing* the quality of learning and teaching, but that doesn't mean it's always necessary, or even possible to *measure* those things—that is, to turn them into numbers" which I also agree is "a refreshing counterpoint to today's corporate-style "school reform" and its preoccupation with data" (Kohn, "Case Against Grades" 146). Grades are transactional and a "corporate-style" artifact of capitalist social values that have no place in learning spaces with children or adults. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed to the world the importance of a more holistic approach to embracing humanity and supporting its individuals. Traditional grading violates so much about what we know to be true about learning and learners, and the spirit of nurture and community that education has proved is essential not just to student success in academic spaces, but to the successful cultivation of happy, healthy human beings who can go on to live productive, successful, creative, and fulfilling lives for themselves, making our world more humane as a result.

Over the years, I've become increasingly confident and clear in expressing my approach to ungrading and appreciate that the beauty of ungrading is its variety: there is no one way to do it and most practitioners that use this assessment system do so in different ways. In my construction, students are asked to focalize accountability, completion, personal reflection, growth and revision. If they do these things, which are, in line with my ungrading philosophy policies, they earn the right to self-assign their transcript grade at the end of the course. Non-mandatory coursework (discussions, peer review) is always intentionally designed to start or comprise a component of the mandatory work (which is determined by official Course Objectives), but never penalizes students when they can't complete these assignments. I have found, however, that students generally complete this work and more consistently than they did when it counted for points and the deadline pressure removed. Late submissions, which I call "off-calendar work," is unpenalized, and I never require students to give me a reason for their need to submit work off-calendar. I do, however, ask that they let me know when they are working outside my course schedule so that they learn to take the initiative to retain their enrollment and I can offer additional support or coordinate services for them, as necessary. The off-calendar policies also become opportunities for trust-building, because I never go back on my word (even in those moments when I am so frustrated that I would like to). In my attendance and participation syllabus policies, I explain this requirement and make them aware that students who do not participate in course activities for 2 weeks, Monday-Sunday, can be dropped. I remind them of this policy anytime they do not submit an assignment and in weekly course announcements.

Late-work is a frequent talking point in Department conversations and, especially, linked M01A/91AS Community of Practice discussions about student success. Most of the time, reticence about accepting late-work or foregoing late penalties emerges from faculty fear that these will challenge their ability to stay on the course schedule. These are valid and important concerns; instructors are human, and we have to need boundaries to protect our courses, our students, and ourselves. I have learned over the years to create what I call "fixed deadlines" to ensure I protect my own sanity and ability to meet college record deadlines. These include

- the Mandatory Attendance Quiz, which is due Friday of the Week 1; this quiz asks students to review the course orientation and protocol material and shows me that they are not just real students,[7] but that they are also prepared to engage strategically and regularly in the course, which I have taught asynchronously since 2020. I also require students to earn 70% or higher to retain their enrollment, which ensures they review the material they need to before taking on the course.
- the College Drop Deadline, which is usually around Week 13; I require that all Units 1-3 work is submitted by this deadline because the final weeks of the semester are spent revising that work and constructing the final portfolio. It has been the case that students who don't finish the first 3 units by this deadline do not complete or pass the course. This deadline also ensures that students drop the course if necessary before it is too late to do so.

[7] Since pandemic funding started supporting students, there was an increase of fake and fraudulent enrollments that attempt to gain access to funds without actually taking courses.

- the final project deadline, which is usually the Sunday between Final Exam weeks 1 and 2; this date gives me time to review student work and address any issues in conversation with them, which is also a significant part of my ungrading philosophy policies (incomplete projects, errors in file submissions, etc.), before semester grades are due.

My approach to ungrading builds upon contract grading in that I set out specific completion requirements for student work: students must earn a "Complete" in my gradebook on specific assignments. I use the Complete/Incomplete option in my Canvas LMS gradebooks, and completion is determined by the presence of assignment requirements, which are limited to demonstrating specific skills (e.g. rhetorical and literary analysis) and incorporating specific components (e.g. 2 readings/media from the unit). What is not included in my assessment of an assignment's completion is quality in the conventional grading sense; I don't attribute to these works A, B, C, D, or F grades. Instead, I draw students' attention to requirements and then provide them with detailed feedback about the ideas and skills they are asked to demonstrate their level of mastery of. They can resubmit their work as many times as is necessary to show their mastery and earn the "Complete" designation, and they can also decide for themselves if a skill is something they want, need, or have time to practice. I also ask that they demonstrate thoughtfulness, which at first seems another nebulous term used to give grading power back to me; however, this is not my approach. Because first and second-year transfer-level English courses (English M01A, M01B, M01C) emphasize critical thinking and composition, my feedback focuses on effective argumentation, particularly in the way of evidentiary support; thus, when students half-ass their work (one-sentence answers, little detail) I draw their attention back to the

skills we're focalizing in the assignment, and their purpose. Generally, students that submit incomplete work do not provide evidence for their perspectives, do not explain their perspectives, or both. Thus, until they do both of these things, their work is rendered incomplete and, thus, must be revised until it is complete, if they choose to do this. Grammar, mechanics, dialect, and syntax are never part of the completion measurement, but I do ask students to consider their use of language, punctuation, and so forth when I am unclear about their point; however, I am mindful to word my feedback in a way that asks students to consider their expression in the context of efficacy so they can be in command of their purpose.[8]

Below is the most recent iteration of my course ungrading philosophy policies

Class Ungrading Philosophy Policies (Spring 2024)

When I tell my students that our course is ungraded, I am regularly met with equal measures jubilation and skepticism; I also reluctantly admit that I keep this fact undercover outside of my classrooms unless directly asked. The most common concern in all cases is academic transcripts, particularly if a student's goal is to transfer after their time at Moorpark College; for faculty, there is the additional worry that ungrading equates to lowering standards. I cannot blame you or my colleagues! American academia has done a very good job indoctrinating us all to a system that was designed and continues to maintain social dynamics more concerned with power and privilege than with learning and growth. Yet, grades constitute so much behavioral noise that has nothing to do with course objectives (late penalties, extra credit, participation, homework) that they are never truly accurate measures of student learning anyway. So, as the investors on "Shark Tank" (NBC) say, I'm out.

Thus, my Course Ungrading Philosophy declares that:

You will earn the right to self-assign your final transcript grade for the course, in conversation with me and the class rubrics we devise throughout the course, if you thoughtfully and fully

a) complete* all assigned essays, essay reflections, and essay revisions,
b) complete* as much of the other assigned coursework as possible,
c) commit to the process of learning, practicing, and revising by attending a support session** for each essay

[8] In Chapter 4, I illustrate my approach to ungrading with sample assignments and feedback.

**for an assignment to be complete, it must be noted as "Complete" in the Canvas gradebook. Incomplete work can be revised/redone.*
***students can meet this requirement by working with me in Course Connections, meeting with a Writing Center tutor online or in the Writing Center, or working with their email tutor, or using NetTutor through our Canvas page. Essays drafted and submitted in in Week 5, Week 9, Week 13, and Week 16.*

Important Notes:
There are certain qualifiers in this Ungrading Philosophy that are important for you to understand:

- **There are 3 fixed deadlines this semester:**
  - **All students must take and pass with 70% or higher the Mandatory Attendance Quiz by 11:59pm on January 12.** Students that do not do so will be dropped from the course.
  - **All work for Units 1-3 must be submitted by 11:59pm on April 14.** This is to ensure I have time to feedback on Essays 1-3 so you can revise them in Essay #4.
  - **Essay #4 must be submitted by 11:59pm on May 5.** This is to ensure I have time to assess these and record final grades in accordance with the College grade deadlines.

- **An assignment is complete when it is noted as "Complete" in the Canvas gradebook:**
  - If a Best Draft For Now is Incomplete, you must ensure that the essay is made Complete in the Essay #4 revisions. There is no additional resubmission for these essays beyond that final project, but I am always happy to help you with your revisions before that assignment is due.

- **Students can meet the Support Meeting requirement synchronously or asynchronously:**
  - Synchronously: working with me through Zoom Course Connections and/or meeting with a Writing Center tutor online or in the Writing Center
  - Asynchronously: submitting work to the MC email tutor, or to NetTutor through our Canvas page.
  - Plan ahead! Essays are drafted and submitted in Week 5, Week 9, Week 13, and Week 16.

- **Students must submit proof of their participation in a support meeting in the body of every Essay Best Draft For Now to meet the mandatory meeting requirement of the Ungrading Philosophy Policies:**
  - You can briefly detail the date, time, and tutor name of your meeting along with what you worked on and how you plan to use what you learned, OR
  - You can put a screenshot of the session report (from WC tutors and NetTutors) in the body of your Essay Best Draft For Now.

How to Measure Your Success on Essays:

Without traditional grades and points, you may at first feel adrift. BUT, you will know far more clearly where you are in terms of your strengths and growth areas without these. There are essay rubrics that will also give you an overview of these elements and they work thusly:

- 3 = Ready to Launch: the assignment demonstrates consistency and confidence with the targeted course skills and you are ready to level these up.
- 2 = Generally Solid: the assignment demonstrates a mostly consistent, confident ability with the targeted course skills, and more practice would strengthen these.
- 1 = Not Yet: the assignment does not demonstrate consistent, confident ability with the targeted course skills. Return to the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet and arrange time to work with me and the college tutors.
- 0 = No Evidence: the assignment does not demonstrate the targeted course skills. It might be off topic, missing required components, or just not have been submitted.

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Chapter 4: Doing Language and Assessment Justice

> "it takes courage to do right by kids in an era when the quantitative matters more than the qualitative, when meeting (someone else's) standards counts for more than exploring ideas, and when anything "rigorous" is automatically assumed to be valuable. We have to be willing to challenge the conventional wisdom, which in this case means asking not how to improve grades but how to jettison them once and for all" (Alfie Kohn, "The Case Against Grades" 152).

> "ungrading pushes us to acknowledge that yes, the way our society is organized does harm to people; that yes, the way we teach and assess writing perpetuates that harm" (Megan Von Bergen, "Defining Ungrading" 140).

Alfie Kohn is one of the big voices in the argument against grades and his focus on the limitations of quantitative assessment in measuring student success is where I fall in the conversation myself. Ask any of the linked English M01A/M91AS Community of Practice members, and you'll learn that this is actually where many of us fall when it comes to discussions about what "student success" actually means; whereas the institutions believes it's a measurable number (C, B, A, Pass grades, percentages), practitioners working with students, and particularly those in the linked M01A/M91AS courses show a different picture. In my personal experience, success often means:

- Signing up for the course in the first place, even if it isn't completed or passed.
- Remaining enrolled past the drop deadline, even if the course isn't complete or passed.
- Turning in an assignment, even if it doesn't pass with a C or better.
- Turning up to class meetings, even if assignments aren't completed or turned in.

This qualitative measurement of student success is wildly important in the context of the work of ABs 705 and 1705, and particularly with regard to conversations about language and assessment equity. If we still measure unstandardizable students by standardized measurements, our data is meaningless; if we are neglect to account for the fact that minoritized students bring 12+ years of social, emotional, and education trauma with them into our classrooms, a single class in a single semester is not going to be enough to mitigate the damage and open the success gates in any substantial way that will reflect in qualitative measurements, though there are of course the

outliers. That is a progressive and developmental challenge that existing assessment—conventional grades and institutional measurement—can't account for. And, if instructors are sensitive to this knowledge, if they aren't adjusting their grading system to account for language justice and assessment equity, the data is inaccurate again. I'm with Kohn: it's time "to jettison [grades] once and for all" in the spirit of accurately and holistically understanding our students and privileging their unique visions of student success over our own.

My Policy & Pedagogy Evolution

A common misconception in casual conversations about culturally responsive pedagogy is that curricular diversification is enough to construct equitable classrooms. It is not. Choosing a diverse range of readings and media for students to engage with is essential to establishing anti-racism, language justice, and assessment equity in classrooms, but there are many examples that position diversification as the goal. For example, in the meetings I have had with English Transitions[9] partners since 2020, English faculty at the local high schools are eager to celebrate their transformed junior and senior electives, offering a range of diverse literature, engaging topics, and enthusiastic students as evidence that they're doing important change work. They absolutely are; however, these courses still measure student success in conventional ways: based upon the White language supremacy ideology surrounding Standard Written/Academic English and conventional grading, both in the name of preparing students for standardized tests and college-level courses, and the real world.

This shift is arguably as harmful if not more so than asking students to read and mimic Eurocentric literary values about reading and writing; now, students are being shown more diverse ways to express the human condition but actively discouraged from using those styles to evolve

[9] English Transitions is a partnership program that brings together regional high school English, Special Education, English Language Learning, and administrators and Moorpark College English Department faculty members in the spirit of collegiality and learning.

their own writing. Thus, minoritized literature remains exoticized and distanced—students can look, but they can't touch. And, this disconnect illustrates what I view as the most important argument in my sabbatical project: we can't simply bandage with diversity the existing attitudes toward and assessments of language in order to truly achieve anti-racist classroom practices; we have to dismantle them altogether. What follows are examples of how I've created and embedded research-informed anti-racist, language-justice and equitable-assessment oriented classrooms in:

- syllabus policies
- low- and high-stakes assignments
- sample essays I've written
- the language of assignment rubrics
- the language of personalized feedback

All of these shifts have evolved since 2020 and it is only since 2022, when I started to truly see the intersections of language and grading justice that I made some of the biggest shifts in my classroom work. I point this out to suggest that it takes time to evolve a clear sense of what language and assessment equity looks like in individual classrooms because that requires educators to actively work to unlearn what they've experienced and how they've taught. It also requires a high degree of acceptance, humility, and flexibility because ideologies shift as new research emerges. Thus, anti-racist classroom policy and practice is an ever-fluctuating system.

What follows in the rest of the chapter is something of a show-and-tell. I take and annotate elements of my English M01A (linked with M91AS and standalone), English M01B, and English M01C.

Reshaping the Syllabus around Anti-Racism, Language Justice, and Ungrading Policies
From Syllabus "Course Values" **<u>Anti-Racism Statement</u>**

I work hard to acknowledge and strive to eradicate all forms of racism and ethnic oppression. This course aims to create a brave space that enables everyone to engage openly, safely, and honorably with their education. In taking this course, I expect that we will all do our best to embrace these values; though we might make mistakes, we must all work to practice thoughtful respect of everyone and their individual truths.

Linguistic Diversity

Diverse languages and dialects are welcome in this course! There is no inclusive Standard Written/Academic English. Here, I value your personal linguistic expression, and those of others in the course. This course expects students to honor this policy, seek out clarification as necessary, and not assert a "correct" grammar.

Course Ungrading Philosophy

I ungrade all work for this course to focalize learning and growth through practice. If you honor the philosophy policies (detailed on Canvas), you will earn the right to self-assign your end-of-term course grade. *If you are using this course as a pre-requisite for another course, you must have a C, B, or A on your academic transcripts.*

"English 1A Originality of Thought and Work Policies (Plagiarism and Fraud)"

Highlighting Key:

- **I focus on explaining my policies as emerging from my learning, ungrading, and language justice stances because I believe that inequitable policies around these cause most cases of "cheating" and the fear of work not being "good enough"**

Although this policy is included in my course syllabus, I want to isolate it here as well because it is incredibly important that you are very clear on what constitutes "originality of thought and work" in a world with rapidly changing technology designed to make your life easier. **Along with being an ungrader, I believe that all work (school, professional, life) should be meaningful and useful, hence why I see learning and growth as more important than grades. Likewise, I believe that creative, personal expression and ideas are more important than standardized language, and I want students to celebrate and build on their uniquely individual strengths.**

AI software, however—much like all the other tools across the years (essay-writing services, literature guides, individual assignments completed collaboratively, borrowing from a classmates' discussion post or essay drafts, and so on)—supports uniformity, standardization, and conformity. **Why oh WHY would you spend money going to college to learn to be just like everyone else?!**

So, here is my official position on AI and all other learning tools and resources:

- AI software is a useful resource: use it to get started! use it to explore deeper! use it to think creatively! if you want to do so, use it to initiate your writing process!
- AI software is a source similar to dictionaries, encyclopedias, databases, and search engines; if you use it in submitted work, you must account for your use of it by putting quotation marks around directly quoted material (e.g. copy-paste-submit) and include parenthetical citations for these quotations as well as summaries and paraphrases of AI-

generated content; a Works Cited page citation is required, too (here's a link to guidance Download a link to guidance on how to cite AI).

- **AI software does not generate original thought but, rather, collects the very basic foundations of understanding: do not allow it to speak *for* you; you cannot check out as the main voice in any of our conversations!**
- When students do not acknowledge their sources, be they publications, books, journals, or reference guides, their work is the product of plagiarism or academic fraud.
- When students submit material written by AI resources, even if the material was originally their own but rephrased, they are committing academic fraud. **Again, DON'T SILENCE YOURSELF! Take advantage of this course's stance on language justice and ungrading to practice your beautiful, authentic voice—you'll find out so much about yourself in the process!**
- Additional Fun Facts:
    - Did you know that when students adopt and adapt other students' work as their own through summary or paraphrasing, that constitutes plagiarism?
    - Did you know that when students submit work written by tutors, friends, family, or other human resources, they have committed plagiarism?

What happens if Dr. Bronsten sees that I have plagiarized or committed academic fraud?

- In the first instance, I will ALWAYS give you the benefit of the doubt and reach out to you on a social and emotional level. **In my 19 years as an academic, I know that students turn to shortcut methods out of desperation: they fear lack of success, they are overwhelmed by all they have to do, or they have some combination of both.** My goal in these cases is to get to the issue, not simply bandage it and, thus, I will reach out to you, we will have a Zoom conversation, and we will make a plan to get you the support and confidence you need.
- In the next instance, I will go through the process above, in addition to filing a report with the Behavioral Intervention Team, which also goes onto your official academic transcript. At that point, the Dean and other administrators will take over working with you. Behavior Intervention & Care Team. Their job is not to penalize you, but to go deeper into the reasons you may have made the choice to shortcut your learning in an effort to find the best means to support your academic success through the maintenance of integrity.
- In the 3rd or subsequent instance, I will no longer accept coursework submissions from you.

Carrying the Syllabus into the Classroom with a "Homemade" Writing Handbook called the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet

From "Writing Tips and Tools Booklet"

Highlighting Key:

- **Clear class policy that rejects White language supremacy**
- **Multiple statements that emphasize code-meshing**

College-Level Expository Writing

Brace yourself: this is NOT a grammar course. **This course rejects White language supremacy and does not support the silencing of individual, cultural linguistic expression.** So, when it comes to learning to write rhetorical analysis work, you will do so under the **framework of discipline-specific expectations and within the context of your own linguistic and dialect uses and experiences (this is called "code-meshing"; languages are "codes" and you will "mesh" together the codes of academic English class with your own language and dialect usages)**.

When writing material in a course setting like this one, it is important to adopt the writing style of the English discipline and expository work. And, **you will learn how use English-specific jargon in the course essays (narrative, rhetorical analysis, literary analysis, reflection and revision) to demonstrate what you learn, as well as incorporate your own language and dialect patterns to stay true to your authentic, autonomous writer's voice**.

In order to demonstrate that you understand and can satisfactorily use the competencies of this course, you must be mindful of your audience and your purpose, and master the definitions of the rhetorical elements we study and so you **can use them in your written work to amplify your language and perspective, but not replace it**. And, don't be afraid to also show off what you know of rhetorical elements from other English classes; remember, too, that there is more to the story than is written here.

From "Writing Tips and Tools Booklet"

Highlighting Key:

- Images are used strategically to illustrate course values. This image comes from Disney's *Strange World* (2022) and illustrates blended families and diverse racial and LGBTQI+ characters.
- **I detail my shared experience of standardized English to create a context for students, as I have found them reluctant to step away from a grammar-centric experience of English. My goal is to empathize with them, to help build trust.**
- **Because of their reluctance to release SW/AE from their focus, I give them a bit of the research behind my values and practice. I find that other "big" voices than my own can help them see that I'm not just doing something random or crazy. I especially like having material from UCSB, as it's local and makes the conversation hit closer to home for them.**
- **I classify SW/AE as an artifact of "White European" linguistic culture to separate it from a standard and create a more fluent conversation that shows how and where their language and dialect patterns fit into the course, too. I make sure to say A LOT that I welcome their additions and that I, too, need to learn, which I find helps build trust and help explain code-meshing.**

Writing & Language Diversity

I, like you, have been schooled in an academic system that emerges from a rich national and cultural history. Part of that history claims that White European English is superior to "broken English," like African American, Latine American, and Asian American Englishes. If you are taking this class, you have navigated the student experience of White European English privilege since entering the classroom, being taught and expected to master the grammar of this English and see deviance from it as incorrect, imprecise, wrong, or worse, unsophisticated, broken, and bad*.

I REJECT THESE RACIST, EXCLUSIONARY BELIEFS.

Here's some conversation around linguistic justice that is likely more prevalent than you know and which I think can help you to see this perspective more clearly:

- In their book, *Language and Social Justice in Practice* (2018), UC Santa Barbara Professors Mary Bucholtz, Dolores Ines Casilla, and Jin Sook Lee explain the importance of understanding that language privilege emerges from standardization and minoritization—the deliberate act of one group to make their language and race superior to others. This work began with colonialism and the American Slave Trade and persists in political spaces to this day. Bucholtz, Casilla, and Lee focus on the last 20th-century as a particularly potential period of oppression in California, when Californian voters navigated "a climate of anti-immigrant hysteria that began in the 1980s and 1990s. In 1986, California voters passed Proposition 63, which made English the state's official language," which "was followed in 1994 by the openly xenophobic Proposition 187, or 'Save Our State' initiative, which aimed to deprive unauthorized immigrants of education and health care services. Thus, by 1998, the groundwork was in place for California voters to approve Proposition 227, a ballot initiative ending nearly all bilingual education in public schools" (Bucholtz, Casillas, and Lee, "California Latinx Youth as Agents of Sociolinguistic Justice, 166).

- Although Mary Bucholtz, Dolores Ines Casilla, and Jin Sook Lee focalize their conversations on Latine American language, the silencing that these Propositions mandates applies to all minoritized groups. Thus, Latine and Chicano Vernacular Englishes, African American and Black Vernacular Englishes, Asian American Vernacular English, and so many other Vernacular Englishes are not inferior to White Vernacular English but, rather, have been made to seem inferior to White European Vernacular

English not because they are so, but instead to maintain White language supremacy and privilege.

- Novelist and activist Toni Morrison speaks clearly to the cruelty of linguistic oppression. She argues that "It is terrible to think that a child with five different present tenses comes to school to be faced with books that are less than his own language. And then to be told things about his language, which is him, that are sometimes permanently damaging … This is a really cruel fallout with racism. ("Homework: Black Language Education," Black Linguistic Justice).

I REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ACT OF SILENCING, and I want to encourage you to incorporate into your writing your Vernacular Englishes. **As a White European American, my privilege has also handicapped me: my subject expertise and knowledge is limited by language supremacy. Thus, my specialism in the study of English language and literature emerges from White European pedagogy. I can show you what I know and I want you to show you what I know. Thus, I encourage you to learn all that this course has to offer AND where your own linguistic patterns participate in the same conversation through the process of code-meshing:**

- "Code-meshing pedagogies […] look at this divide between the acceptable codes of public and academic discourse versus the marked codes of home and social discourse, and contend that these multiple codes of English can fruitfully co-exist" (Jay Hardee, "Code Meshing and Code Switching," American University Library, 2022).

The most exciting part of learning about reading, writing, and critical thinking strategies, in my opinion, is that it encourages curiosity and wonder about all language and expression. **When you read on and learn about White European composition strategies and tools, think about where your own language has similar or divergent strategies and situations. None is more important than any other and, most importantly, if an aspect of language that is important to you is not on the list, that is because I do not know it, not because it is not worthy of this list. So, I invite you to educate me in the process of your own education** and remember that what follows are just some of the keys to the many castles of writing and spoken word pieces creators use and that students should analyze in their essays this semester.

From "Writing Strong Introduction and Conclusion Paragraphs"

Highlighting Key:

- **While I illustrate the specific skill, I use material that speaks to the class values, about anti-racism, linguistic diversity, and ungrading. Sometimes these materials come from assigned readings, and other times they come from resources I've found in my research that I think will help them think more deeply about the topic. In both cases, they are hearing more voices in the conversation and learning without knowing it.**

B. Rhetorical Analysis (Essay #2)
The American grading system is unethical and inequitable yet remains the most pervasive feature of K-12 education programs. Grades are powerful enough to bar students from entering college, obtaining lucrative jobs, and consequently leading many away from opportunities to create healthy and successful adult lives. **Fortunately, a growing number of academics are fighting to replace conventional grading practices with a system that celebrates individuals instead of privileging arbitrary numbers: they call it ungrading.** Because it is the antithesis of policies

that have existed for hundreds of years, many traditionalists oppose the adoption of this new approach to student assessment. Thus, argumentation tools become essential in the struggle to embed ungrading values in American schools. **Alfie Kohn, in "The Case Against Grades" (2011), Susan Blum, in *Ungrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning (and What to Do Instead)* (2020), and Paul Tough, in *The Inequality Machine: How College Divides Us* (2021)** confront the tension between conventional grades and ungrading, arguing that rejecting conventional assessment is an important step towards giving students the opportunities they need to be successful in school and, ultimately, in life. Researchers invested in changing grading systems use inductive reasoning to validate their argument that ungrading leads to equitable forms of student success, appealing effectively to the reader's logos by showing that, statistically, ungrading inspires students to learn, rather than perform.

Powerful arguments are instruments of change. In the conversation about grading equity and student success, the most assertive perspectives are the ones that build their assertions around sufficient and reliable evidence. When inductive reasoning is used in this way, it appeals to the reader's or audience's sense of logos and the logic of the argument seems indisputable. Herin lies the overwhelming success of **Alfie Kohn's, Susan Blum's, and Paul Tough's individual arguments about not just the flaws in America's academic grading systems,** but about the solutions they propose to establish a moral and fair system of student assessment that prioritizes learning. Because these individuals, and the growing number of ungrading supporters, fight for educational equity through transforming the politics around grading, there is hope that today's and future students can achieve their academic, professional, and personal goals, living a life of successes that, for many, remains a distant dream.

From "Incorporating Evidence in Expository Writing"

Highlighting Key:

- **While I illustrate the specific skill, I use material that speaks to the class values, about anti-racism, linguistic diversity, and ungrading. Sometimes these materials come from assigned readings, and other times they come from resources I've found in my research that I think will help them think more deeply about the topic. In both cases, they are hearing more voices in the conversation and learning without knowing it.**

Blocked Evidence Integration Example:

A number of researchers interested in dismantling existing grading systems use sports analogies in their arguments in favor of ungrading, the practice of intentionally not assignment students letter or numerical grades and instead privileging formative assessment and encouraging growth and development**. In Arthur Chiaravalli's book chapter "Grades Stifle Student Learning Can We Learn to Teach without Grades?"** he explains the reasons why he values feedback over conventional grading, using the figure of a team coach as an important metaphor. **He argues that the**

> **feedback** cycle is not unlike the process used by coaches to prepare players for an upcoming game or meet. Coaches don't put a score on the scoreboard during practices; that only happens during the game. Up until that moment of truth, coaches do everything they can to develop players in the skills and concepts they will need to succeed. To grade or rate them sends the subtle message that their current achievement is fixed . […]. The goal is to keep the conversation going as long as **possible. (Chiaravalli 85)**

From "Essay Revision Strategies"

Highlighting Key:

- **I position existing views about revision as another system that we need to dismantle and explain further how conventional grading does not allow for this, and why that renders grading a dangerously powerful oppressor.**
- **I reiterate that this skill set aligns with the class values outlined in the syllabus and how the class structure is designed strategically to uphold them.**

Once upon a time, there developed a myth and, like most myths, the ideas are pervasive. This myth argues that practice is embarrassing. Thus, **learners are expected to know everything from the beginning and feel shame about returning to past work. Even worse, conventional grading counts early efforts in final grades, discouraging students from seeing the messy and convoluted process of learning as essential and good: final grades that include those early attempts inaccurately measure students' learning capacity or skills, bringing down class averages, overall GPAs, and harming not just students' academic success, but their self-concept as well.**

I REJECT THIS MYTH AND THIS CLASS ACTIVELY WORKS TO REWRITE IT using these principles:

- ✓ You cannot know what you do not know until you know; when you do know, you must evolve with that new knowledge.
- ✓ Practice makes progress and perfection is never the goal; progress is.
- ✓ To grow your skills, you must adopt a beginner's mindset and allow yourself to start fresh.

In order to live the course values above, all essay Best Drafts For Now this semester will be revis as part of final essay, Essay #4. Because each essay is initially written at the end of a specific unit, yc will only have command of the entire course's worth of skills when you write Essay #3. Essays #1 and #2, therefore, will not be the best they can be until after Unit 3 is completed; and, Essay #3 introduces new skills that will still be messy come time for the Best Draft For Now. Thus, Essay #4 i your opportunity to demonstrate all you learn this term in revisions of all 3 essays.

Offering My Vulnerability as a Bridge to Welcome Theirs: Writing Samples to Illustrate Skills and Human/Personal Experiences of Course Themes and Topics

Essay #1: Defining Education Sample

"[…] there is a risk in taking a highly demanding […] course [with] only passable standardized test scores. The risk is that you might try something really hard and fail. But, in this case, we believe the potential reward is worth the risk." (Paul Tough, *The Years that Matter Most: How College Makes or Breaks Us*, 310-311)

When Mitch Daniels, Purdue University President in 2018, tells Yvonne Martinez that she must risk failure in college to achieve her "potential reward," he reminds me of my own decision to disprove the doubts of others and those I carried within myself throughout my education. Despite having a BA, MA, and PhD, my formal learning experiences remind me of the crippling self-doubt I felt throughout my education because of standardized testing. I had no awareness that college

admittance was a game, not a definitive truth. Now, as an English professor with powerful credentials, however, I see education as an unfair opportunity that is not truly open to or equitable for all learners, but I genuinely believe that I will help make it both of these.

As a high school senior, I believed I wasn't smart enough for college. Though devastated by my SAT score—1000/1600—I protested test prep, believing I shouldn't need to study for a test measuring what I learned in school. What I didn't understand was that these tests weren't assessing what they claimed to, and I suffered as a tearful mess in testing centers, unable to make sense of the questions or shake the anxiety making it impossible to breathe. After 3 attempts at the SAT and a 3.4 high school GPA with no AP or Honors course credits, I applied to 3 UCs. I was rejected from UCLA and UC San Diego but UC Santa Barbara offered me a place, and I still remember the surprise and gratitude I felt that they offered me a chance. I so doubtful my own capacity that I carried my acceptance letter with me during the first year of my studies in case I had to prove I was allowed to be there.

After struggling through math and Science courses in my first quarter at UCSB, I found my academic home in the English major. Once officially studying literature, my confidence soared, though my GPA never recovered from that first term's grades and my GRE scores were weak. Still, I resolved attend graduate school and earn a PhD in English Studies. Despite graduating UCSB with Honors, I earned a single acceptance to LMU's terminal Master's program; I could not earn a doctorate, although that was my goal. Yet again, my standardized test scores didn't earn me a place in the program I wanted to be part of. Quickly, though, I grew to love it because all of the professors believed in me, and worked hard to help me do the same; they saw my passion and skill for literature and education and couldn't care less about my test scores. Graduating from LMU with a 3.9 GPA, I started to believe that the college acceptance process shouldn't define my potential and, despite my test scores, I applied for 13 PhD programs across America. I was rejected by all of them in the space of two weeks and began, yet again, to believe that I was not smart enough to succeed in a PhD program.

Fortunately, the professors at LMU refused to let me give up and after a series of tearful meetings and overconsumption of Oreos, I hesitantly applied to 14 PhD programs across England. British graduate school applications only require academic transcripts, a personal essay, and a project proposal from international students. With the confidence of my professors fueling me, I found myself walking to my mailbox with increasing confidence. Over a month, I received 13 acceptance letters. My single rejection came with an apologetic note that the only supervisor appropriate for my project had recently retired. I still remember the feel of that final

letter in my hand; it was the first rejection that didn't reject me. It separated my ability to succeed from the college's needs and showed me that I had valuable ideas considered important to academia. Moreover, they believed in my capacity to succeed even though they could not offer me a place in their program. It was that letter that helped me accept the truth about college admissions. To say I celebrated my success is an understatement and I enjoyed every minute of my 5 years at the University of London; I also didn't carry my acceptance letter with me the entire time.

As a tenured faculty member at Moorpark College, I've done everything in my power to redefine education with the goal of fixing its broken systems. My personal experience of America's college admissions circus validates for me what I didn't understand early on: standardized tests can't accurately predict student success because standard students don't exist. Now, I use my privilege and responsibility as an educator to fight for students whose true ability and potential is dismissed by faulty data and politics out of their control. Education must change, and I know it will with me.

Word Count: 860

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Essay #2: Formal and Informal Educations Letter to Your Younger Self Sample

Dear Katie,

I see you sink into your seat during Yearbook class as Jeff stares through you, talking to Stefanie in a tone of disbelief. He wonders how *you* could have gotten into UC Santa Barbara when he did not. After all, his SAT scores are significantly higher, his GPA significantly stronger. Two sets of numbers—1480 vs. 1030, 4.2 vs. 3.4—support his reasoning that something is wrong for both of us. Despite the faulty reasoning grounding Jeff's sense of admissions injustice that you will so clearly see later, Katie, you will spend most of your next twenty years waiting to be found out, carrying your acceptance letters with you physically and digitally in case the Imposter Police discover you and correct their mistake. Although these feelings will eventually seem silly to you, the fear you have in that moment and the others that follow it are real. Though real, these worries are actually based on the faulty reasoning of persuasive logical fallacies that gatekeep American

education systems, perpetuating the myth that formal education is not for everyone. Katie, I wish I could take the pain of that moment in Yearbook class away from you, but I know that this experience is an important part on your journey to discover that you are not, in fact, the problem. Rather, academic systems work hard and effectively to rank students using logical fallacies, which reinforce oppressive stereotypes and keep learners out of programs they are more than capable of succeeding in.

Katie, you will discover in 2019 that your, and many other students', anxiety about college success hinges on specific fallacies. In your case, because your SAT scores and overall GPA are low for the 1998 graduating high school classes around Southern California, you should not be admitted to college because these numbers seem at first to logically predict your inability to be successful in college-level study. This reasoning uses an either/or fallacy, to draw a conclusion about students' academic performance using problematic evidence. For example, although your standardized testing scores are exceptionally low, they do not account for your debilitating test anxiety, which had it been diagnosed, you would have received accommodations for. But, you defied those early odds and went on to achieve success not just in undergraduate study, but in graduate study as well, becoming one of the 49,562 out of 309 million people in America to earn a doctoral degree ("U.S. Census Bureau Announces 2010 Census Population Counts Apportionment Counts Delivered to President," December 21, 2010) to earn a research PhD in 2009 and graduating from the program in 2010 ("Number of doctorates awarded continued to grow in 2009," *Science Daily* Nov. 22, 2010). It is so easy to accept a logical fallacy as logical truth because the ideas, at first, make sense: low score equates to low success. However, it takes critical thinking to unravel the complexity not just of the context around the numbers and human thought processes, but of standardized beliefs, and is it will be this topic that fascinates you the most when you enter the classroom as an educator determined to shake things up.

One of the most restrictive fallacies for students that you will challenge throughout your career is the genetic fallacy, which argues that a person's race or sex determines their character and potential. This conversation is also taken up by the Walt Disney film company in their Oscar-winning film, *Zootopia* (2016) through the fox, Nick Wilde. When he and Judy begin to make progress in the missing mammal cases, Judy includes Nick in working out why Zootopian citizens are devolving into wild, dangerous animals. Although Nick "was a key witness," Chief Bogo "turns to Nick, but before he can explain" tells Judy that he is not "going to believe a fox" (64). The fact that Nick "witnesses" the transformation of a reasonable jaguar into a primitive one is not powerful enough to outweigh Chief Bogo's belief in the genetic fallacy that foxes cannot be

believed. Until this point in the film, Chief Bogo has no interactions with Nick and, therefore, has no evidence that he cannot be trusted; nonetheless, he rejects Nick as a tool in this case. Moreover, Nick also believes the fallacy that negatively stereotypes him. The next scene flashes back to Nick's childhood when he is preparing for induction into the Junior Ranger's club. When the members instead muzzle him as if he is a wild animal, he decides that "If the world's only gonna see a fox as shifty and untrustworthy, there's no point in trying to be anything else" (Bush and Johnston 68). It is impossible not to feel sadness for young Nick, as his hopes are destroyed by stereotypes, which are built around a genetic fallacy. As a child, Nick does not have the tools to fight his peers' discrimination and he, thus, accepts their belief, reasoning that because "the world's" view of the entire species of foxes is that they are "shifty and untrustworthy" he has no hope of changing his peers' minds about him, let alone that of everyone in the world. Consequently, Nick's adult life confirms the fallacy about him because, like you Katie, he does not know yet how to identify and face faulty reasoning at a young age; fortunately, encouraging mentors will help you both learn to reject logical fallacies and instead believe in yourself.

Even from my seat so many years in the future, I cannot account for the people who believed in me being there when I needed them most. But, found me they did just as Judy Hopps, the film's central character, ultimately finds Nick. In her commencement speech for Nick's graduating class of the Police Academy, she shares what she learns from working with his and how her perspective about animals' differences has changed. She accepts that everyone has "limitations" and "make[s] mistakes," but knows that "the more [everyone tries] to understand each other, the more exceptional each [individual] will be" (Bush and Johnston 107). Judy and most of the other characters in the film learn to identify and ultimately reject the genetic fallacies about predators and prey that divide Zootopia because they gain experiential learning: they see the truth in action in their interactions with Zootopians of all species. Although her claim at first seems like a hasty generalization, her reasoning is supported by the transformations of the other central characters in the film. Thus, the film's message about how important it is to be "exceptional" is enacted, not just spoken. To reinforce this perspective, one of the film's final scenes makes fun of other divisive genetic fallacies. On patrol,

Hopps drives. Nick rides shotgun, eating a Pawpsickle.

Nick

So are all rabbits bad drivers or is it just you?

She slams on the brakes. He lurches forward, accidentally jamming the Pawpsickle into his face.

Judy

Oops. (108-9)

Playing on the genetic fallacy that bunnies are bad drivers, Nick playfully teases Judy as the film concludes. Rather than accept the fallacy as she might have done earlier in the film, Judy pretends to enact it, getting Nick back for his sexist comment. The learning these characters experience across the film is as monumental as their joke is simple and their relationship as partners in the Zootopia Police Department articulates the writers' argument that genetic fallacies are the product of faulty logic rather than actual fact. Just as you emerge into the world as an "exceptional" individual, Katie, Nick graduates from the Police Academy, and you both go on to achieve careers that bring you joy. It is because of mentors that believe in you, Katie, at key moments in each part of your academic journeys that you find your way through self-doubt and to self-actualization, exactly what Judy does for Nick.

Here in your future, I want to hold you close and whisper in your 17-year-old ear to forget Jeff's words and this moment. I know, though, that you will carry that moment with you on your academic journeys and it will not be until you are my age that you start to let go of your Imposter Syndrome. Self-doubt is part of your process through not just your formal education, but your informal education as well. Your Judies will find you in the moments you need them to help you learn to interpret your circumstances differently. In all of your learning experiences, you will discover not just your academic self, but your whole self, by challenging all of the imaginary boundaries the world tries to erect. Watch out world, here you come!

With Love,

You, many years in the future.

Word Count: 1438

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Essay #3: Cultural Educations Photographic Essay Sample

(This sample uses my 1B materials, but the theme of students' cultural experiences of education was similar enough to illustrate the assignment and expose students to another

piece of Latine literature*—In the Heights—*and sets them up to apply this unit to their work in English 1B, if they opt to take this as their next English course)

Thesis: Nina's dramatis persona demonstrates that heroes are born from power-struggles between personal and community sueñitos, and her authentic selfhood emerges when she finds ways to accommodate both in her American Dream.

First-Gen Dreams…and Nightmares

It is no coincidence that Nina's first song emphasizes how lost she feels in familiar spaces of Washington Heights, and how much she must "hide" from her family and community, in turns. Even the very act of "Breath[ing]" is complicated for her. The books symbolize the upsetting topic of education's inequities that she experiences herself due to her financial troubles and her ethnicity. The crumpled dollar bills and quarters around the books evoke how important money is and, equally, how much it is lacking. The computer mouse and calculator symbolize the connection between her school work and her financial obligations..

Nina's character enters the musical with physical and verbal tension, signifying an important component in the musical's rising action. When she reflects on her feelings through the song "Breathe," she admits that although "THIS IS [HER] STREET" and she "SMILE[S] AT THE FACES/ [SHE HAS] KNOWN ALL [HER] LIFE" she laments "THAT WHILE [SHE] WAS AWAY [SHE] HAD SO MUCH TO HIDE" (Miranda and Hudes, Act 1, Scene 2, 17). The tension Nina feels about her time "away" from Washington Heights is an important catalyst in the musical's plot development. While in the setting of her home of origin, Nina's character role introduces a

discrepancy between what she knows and what she has learned, which causes her story and her character's thinking to evolve. Her dramatis persona is essential in the development of a central theme in the musical: the connection between personal and community dreams in immigrant communities.

In Jill Furman's "Introduction" to the *In the Heights* playbook, she explains the importance of distinct and intertwined character storylines to the genre of musical theater and its expansion to accommodate unconventional subjects and stories. She argues that the show's success emerges from its being "moving, exciting, new, and yet somehow familiar" (Furman x) in its "depict[ion of] Latino culture in a positive and realistic light," which enables "Thousands of Latino kids who had never seen a Broadway show before" to see "themselves up on that stage, and realized that their stories [are] meaningful and worthy of being told" (xi-xii). Furman's observations are paradoxical; *In the Heights* is both "new" and "familiar," and this contradiction explains the tension in Nina's dramatis persona, as well as her appeal to the audience. Before *In the Heights*, White Americans were not as familiar with the "positive and realistic" representation of LatinX characters, which challenges Broadway-goers to expand not just their understanding of LatinX identity but who their audience includes, welcoming in "Latino kids" that might never otherwise have experienced a Broadway show, let alone one that celebrates "their stories" as "meaningful" and "worthy" of a place in American popular culture and consciousness.

The realism in the dramatis personae's experiences is also essential in educating the audience about the true experiences that shape immigrants' pursuits of the American Dream in the Unit States. In her article "Heroic Journeys: The Immigrant Experience as the Hero's Journey in *El Norte* and *La misma luna,*" Susan Wiebe Drake argues that the titled films, much as Nina's character role does in *In the Heights*, depict immigrant families "Trying to adapt" to American culture, which ultimately "leaves those who attempt it in a difficult middle position, not fully accepted by their home communities or their adopted communities, and at risk of losing their cultural identities and breaking up families" (97). Nina's dramatis persona manifests that "middle position" Wiebe Drake references because she represents the realization of her parents' American Dream at the same time she lives her own version of it as a first-generation college student. She maneuvers her "home" and "adopted communities" and both come with the "risk" of loss associated with them.

Wandering the Winding Ways of Love

Like real life, the musical does not follow the tidy structure Freytag's Pyramid suggests storylines are. In following so many dramatis personae, the play evolves several autonomous and interrelated moments of rising action and peaks in multiple climactic turning points in the characters' lives, which both isolate and integrate them, demonstrating the conflicting investments in American Dreams. In this image, I use relics from my life's journey with my husband (from our honeymoon, trips, and holiday celebrations) to symbolize the geographical and temporal spaces our life has taken up and evoke a sense that these moments are both fixed in the objects and fluid in the memories.

The climactic confrontation between Benny and Kevin over Nina illustrates how complex her character's role is in balancing personal and community dreams. When Kevin learns of the romantic attachment Nina has to Benny, he tries to differentiate the Rosarios from Benny, the only African American dramatis persona in Washington Heights, in order to argue that Nina is too good for him. Although Benny can "tie the same Windsor knot around [his] collar as" Kevin can, the latter believes Benny can never know enough about his "culture" to "be part of [the Rosario] family" because that connection would constitute "shame" to him (Miranda and Hudes, Act 2, Scene 4, 110-111). The dialogue in this scene is tinged with anger and frustration and the dramatis personae, though considered family when working together, find themselves on opposing sides of a conversation about the American Dream, an important topic in art that represents LatinX immigrant culture in American society and their struggle to merge home and host cultural identities.

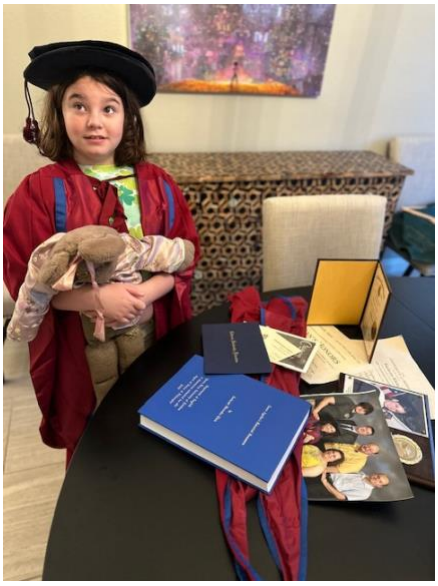
The world of the musical intentionally demonstrates the sometimes-discordant relationship between residents of Washington Heights from LatinX countries outside of American shores and the culture of their host nation. Thus, even the dramatic spectacle of the musical deliberately enacts the culture competition that defines Washington Heights and which Nina's character role highlights. Jill Furman describes the sounds of the scenes as

> kaleidoscopic, representing [Miranda's] desire that it sound like the tapestry of music he would hear walking from 181st to 191st in the neighborhood, the boleros wafting from apartment windows, the rap blaring from boom boxes strapped to bicycles, the merengue coming from bodegas on the corner. ("Introduction" x).

The authenticity of the musical's sound spectacle comes from one of the writers' lived experiences in New York, as a first-generation American of Puerto Rican immigrants. The authenticity of the musical's setting, therefore, becomes a powerful backdrop for every dramatis persona and their individual and intersecting journeys inside and outside of Washington Heights. As Nina's dramatis persona suggests, these journeys are not without conflict.

Susan Wiebe Drake's assessment of the films *El Norte* and *La misma luna* can extend Furman's interpretation of dramatic spectacle of *In the Heights* and help decode the tension between the dramatis personae in this scene. She suggests that "the golden opportunity to escape dire circumstances and realize dreams of safety and economic prosperity" in the two films she analyzes are not achieved because "the characters [do not] completely fulfill these desires" (Wiebe Drake 86). The significant conflict between Kevin and Nina, and between Kevin and Benny over Nina, illustrates what Wiebe Drake argues is a lived experience of immigrants to America represented in LatinX art. Although success in the United States is a "golden opportunity" immigrants pursue by leaving their home nations, that dream has clear boundaries that differentiate between assimilation and acculturation. Merriam-Webster defines assimilation as the "absorption" of the "cultural tradition of a population or group" ("assimilate" 2023) and acculturation as the "cultural modification of an individual, group, or people by adapting to or borrowing traits from another culture" ("acculturation" 2023). Where assimilation implies a cultural takeover, acculturation allows for co-existence of multiple cultural elements through adaptation; where Kevin fears assimilation because it suggests the annihilation of his Puerto Rican cultural values, Nina survives through acculturation because she has evolved her Puerto Rican roots to accommodate alongside them American cultural values, signified by her physical departure from the setting of Washington Heights to study at Stanford and her desire for a romantic relationship with Benny.

Family of Origin, Family of Creation, American Dreams



In the Heights invites a diverse audience into expanded conversations about American identity and the impact of personal ambition and social pressure on it. Because her character role is to illustrate the challenges first-generation college student students face, Nina's dramatis persona becomes the bridge that these LatinX individuals play in real life between their personal and community dreams. In this image, my daughter wears my PhD gown and looks off into her future surrounded by relics from my academic past (graduation certificates, photographs, my dissertation). I wanted to convey the pressure that she is born into just because her mom is so highly educated. Her holding my childhood teddy bear symbolizes her own youthful innocence and how close it is to the adult academic legacy I give her.

The Rosario's family of origin (Kevin, Camilla, and Nina) and emerging family of creation (Nina and Benny) prepare to resolve the falling action of their journeys in the musical and simultaneously begin the rising action of a new one beyond the musical. Having agreed to sell Rosario's to pay for Nina's Stanford tuition, Kevin and Camilla enable their daughter to embark on her new journeys: a long-distance romantic relationship with Benny and an academic pathway to acquiring her Bachelor of Arts degrees. Nina's dramatis persona acknowledges both when she resolves to

> just say this first. Benny's a good person. I hope you can trust me. Mom, I've been thinking all day about what you said, what Dad did. If you two have never quit, there's no way I'm

going to. I want to go back to Stanford and finish what I started [to ultimately become] Nina Rosario, Bachelor of Arts. (Miranda and Hudes, Act 2, Scene 9, 133-134)

Although the main focal actions of the dramatis personae of *In the Heights* begin to resolve, multiple new stories begin for Nina. Her dialogue is marked by a confident, assertive tone in her declarative lines of speech as she works to convince her father to accept Benny as her romantic partner and her mother that she will complete her academic goals. She resolves to follow her desire and achieve her father's dream for her by pursing an undergraduate college degree.

The Rosario family's collective character role offers the audience an important message. It illuminates what Jill Furman describes as "the immigrant experience" of "chasing the American Dream" that centralizes "the notion of home and gentrification" and asks individuals to consider "what happens if the home [they have] always known begins to change before [their] eyes" ("Introduction" x). The journey undertaken to acquire "the American Dream" is a real-life mythic "Road of Trails" where the obstacles do not just threaten to derail individual ambitions, but to displace them and their families entirely. Nina's dramatis persona represents both "home" and "gentrification": she retains her identity from her family of origin and Washington Heights while elevating herself academically and, potentially economically, by completing a degree at Stanford University.

Nina's journey involves her learning to balance both family and community dreams with her personal ones. In this way, her story parallels the immigrant experiences detailed in Wiebe Drake's study. The films Wiebe Drake analyzes "seem to define the goal of the heroic journey […] as embracing […] family relationships as part of the immigrant's cultural identity," specifically warning against "falling into the temptation of assimilating the stereotypical individualistic values of the United States, which put monetary and individual gain ahead of the family" (88). Although achieving the American Dream of financial success has conventionally been depicted as immigrants' ultimate goal, Wiebe Drake suggests the even more important ambition is the ability to achieve "monetary and individual gain" while maintaining a community-minded personal and work ethic. The real American Dream, therefore, is an immigrant's ability to live simultaneously their cultural and their adopted identities.

Conclusion Points: Nina's character role is multidimensional, highlighting her intersectional identities and, by extension, those of the immigrants her dramatis persona symbolizes: she is Puerto Rican and she is American; she is a daughter and a lover; she is a first-generation college

student and a future graduate of an academically prestigious institution. Her character roles require both her LatinX and her American identities to co-exist.

Word Count: 1872

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Assignment Shifts: Moving Low-Stakes Peer Interactions Away from Grammar/Mechanics and TOWARD Anti-Racist, Language Justice, and Assessment Equity Academic Conversation

Discussion Journal General Format (asynchronous course)

Highlighting Key:

- **I emphasize the importance of authentic, personal voice to centralize the course value of language identity and ownership.**
- **I bring in both the course ungrading philosophy policies as well as the course CLOs to focus students on learning outcomes and encourage their participation in identifying the specific concepts that they want to evolve.**
- **I spell out that the focus of "Classmate Conversations" are places for their personal experiences, not conversations about grammar, mechanics, language, or expression in order to ensure the focus is on ideas. This can be a challenging shift for students because they have been trained to see peer interaction in English classes as focused on editing and criticism, rather than conversation.**

Discussion Journal #1

This week, you watched and read a number of materials about learning, writing, and education in general. This discussion is designed to help you understand the core course themes and to **practice exercising your voice in a conversation about them**, which will prepare you to write your first essay.

Rules of the Game:

- You must post your Personal Post before you will be able to see other submissions. **Please do not create a "fake" post to take a sneak peek: instead, be confident in knowing that everyone is doing something new and that there is no single "right way" to do things!**
    - Note: I delete incomplete posts but always explain in a private comment what work still needs to be done.
- Please write your responses directly into the "Reply" boxes rather than upload a Word or PDF document. Unfortunately, not all attachments are accessible to all students and participating in the discussions from within the Canvas program ensures everyone has access to everything we're doing.

Part 1: Personal Post (Due Saturday by 11:59pm)

1. **First, introduce yourself** by writing about something you learned from Disney. This could be an experience with their films, their products, their shows, their theme parks, or anything else "Disney" (no experience of Disney? Do a quick Google search and see what companies, films, products comprise Disney. You'll learn something in the process, or be reminded of a lesson you had—or both!).
2. Second, share 2 quotations from 1 or 2 of this week's readings/media that stood out to you because of their point about education, learning, or another related topic. Make sure to note where the quotations come from and explain your choices in a few sentences.
3. **Because this course uses an Ungrading Philosophy, we are decentering grades as the most important part of the course. Using the Course Learning Outcomes, write out 2 personal goals, one for each CLO, that you hope to achieve by the end of Unit 1.**
    - **The Course Learning Outcomes stipulate that, by the end of this course, I will be able to**
        - **write a thesis-driven essay that is clearly organized, supported by relevant evidence, uses academic prose, and follows up-to-date MLA citation conventions.**
        - **demonstrate critical reading, writing, thinking, and research skills through analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of a variety of material encompassing varying viewpoints.**
4. **BONUS: If you feel comfortable, embed an image that you feel best reflects who you want your classmates and me to see you as.** This could be a conventional photo, a meme, a poster, or anything that you feel embodies the YOU you feel most connected to.

Part 2: Classmate Conversation (Due Sunday by 11:59pm)

Review your classmates' posts and choose 1 to respond to. You must choose a post that has not yet been commented on. In a 1-paragraph written OR spoken (or both!) response, please address the following:

- **Share where you make personal connections to your classmates' Personal Post, whether it be through having a similar experience, being inspired or surprised, and anything else you want to share.** Please comment on each component of the assignment, and use specific details to bring your points to life.

- **NOTE: this response must NOT be a peer review; instead of commenting on quality or grammar, engage with the ideas shared in it and their relationship to those in this unit more generally. Create a conversation!**

Please remember the basic rules of netiquette: be open, be respectful, be thoughtful, be you.

Assessment:

Because this course is ungraded, I hope that you will honor the spirit of this philosophy by committing to completing to this activity thoughtfully and thoroughly, taking into account your attention to instructions and detail and development. Take up your space and let your voice out! Of greater importance is your awareness that the work you do in your Discussion Journal activities can be used in your essays; you're actually doing pre-writing for them now!

Guided Peer Review General Format (asynchronous course)

Highlighting Key:

- **I'm not thrilled with the wording here, but my goal is to remind students that we're adopting specific writing modes unique to the setting we're in.**
- **I'm trying to draw students' attention to the combination of course skills and personal voice/expression. This shift speaks to the "code-meshing" element of the course policies.**

Guided Peer Review Questions and Activities:

1. Essay Overview Questions
    - Is the essay attentive to audience and purpose? In other words, **does the essay write in the style of the assignment and in a way that is true to the writer's own voice** AND focus on rhetorical analysis of the Unit 2 readings/media?
    - Does the essay have a strong 1-sentence, 3-part thesis statement?
    - Does the essay include 3 original photographs relevant to each section they correspond to? Do they have relevant titles and detailed captions?
    - Do the essay include the required quotations? Do you have any suggestions about the source material used, or other source material to consider using?
    - Does each quotation have its own context sentence?
    - **Is each quotation integrated into a sentence of your own?**
    - Does each quotation have a few sentences following it that explain its meaning AND identify and analyze the effect(s) of a specific rhetorical appeal (pathos, ethos, logos, deductive or inductive reasoning)

2. Essay Revision Suggestions
    - **Note 1 skill from Unit 2 that you're proud of, and how you've made it your own.** Directly quote the **Writing Tips and Tools Booklet** when identifying the aspects of the skill:
        - Thesis Statements
        - Evidence Integration and Analysis
        - 1C Key Terms

- Note **1 skill from Unit 2 that you see as a growth area, and how you can evolve your skills to achieve your specific goal**. Directly quote the **Writing Tips and Tools Booklet** when identifying aspects of the skill:
    - Thesis Statements
    - Evidence Integration and Analysis
    - 1C Key Terms

Essay #2: Cinderella Mindset Complete Draft Learning Community[10]
(post-peer review, pre-final draft activity)

Highlighting Key:

- **I'm centralizing students' choice here and emphasizing how important that choice is in the writing process in order to personalize and encourage a sense of ownership rather than just rote skill regurgitation.**
- **I'm asking students to intentionally celebrate ideas and conversation over grammar and mechanics.**
- **I'm shifting the focus of assessment on autonomy and peer learning, showing them that they can learn from each other as much as they can from me and a standardized vision of what is good or bad in student work.**

After submitting your Essay #2 Complete Draft and Self-Peer Review Activity, participate in this discussion forum to celebrate your learning. Note that this assignment has 2 parts, both due Friday, by 11:59pm, and make sure to check out the rubric for the assignment so you understand what I'm looking for to complete this assignment. To access the rubric, click on the vertical 3 dots in the upper right corner of this assignment and click on "Show Rubric."

Personal Post: Individual Learning Celebration (due Friday, by 11:59pm)

1. **Type out the part of your Complete Draft that demonstrates something you are excited to have learned about/to do in this unit and assignment. This can be a specific skill you developed or evolved, or a concept or idea you experienced in a new way.** As a reminder, these are the skills we practiced in this unit, as well as those we evolved from Unit 1:
    - The Golden Rules for English Essays
    - Essay Formatting Guidelines (document and citations)
    - Strong Thesis Statements
    - Strong Body Paragraphs
    - Understanding Rhetorical Analysis
    - 1C Key Terms

2. **Explain your learning evolution: where were you in your learning or thinking before acquiring this skill or learning this concept/idea, and where are you now?**

3. **Articulate how you believe this specific skill/concept/idea will help you achieve a personal/class/academic/work/life goal.**

[10] This is a new style of peer review I trialed during my summer 2024 English M01C classes during the summer stipend project asking instructors to make curricular transformations inspired by reading *Learning That Matters* (Zender, et. al.).

Classmate Conversation: Sharing is Caring (due Friday, by 11:59pm)

1. **Celebrate your classmate's moment of pride with a genuine, formative, constructive comment.**
    - Avoid empty praise (e.g. Great job! Good work! Nice writing! etc.)
    - Aim for detailed insight (e.g. Your idea came alive through your vivid and powerful language.)

2. **Identify 1 skill/concept/idea from your classmate's post that you believe will help you to revise your Complete Draft.** As a reminder, these are the skills we practiced in this unit, as well as those we evolved from Unit 1:
    - The Golden Rules for English Essays
    - Essay Formatting Guidelines (document and citations)
    - Strong Thesis Statements
    - Strong Body Paragraphs
    - Understanding Rhetorical Analysis
    - 1C Key Terms

3. **Identify 1 skill/concept/idea from your classmate's post that you believe will help you achieve a personal/class/academic/work/life goal.**

4. For Funsies: share a visual (image, personal photograph, gif, or original drawing) that illustrates the main point of your Classmate Conversation and/or offers motivation to your classmate (and the rest of us!)

Shifting "The College Essay": High-Stakes Assignments that Open Up Writing Variety Illustrated in Course Readings/Media, Encourage Writing Autonomy, and Move Away from Privileging SW/AE

Essay #1: Defining Education Assignment Guidelines

Highlighting Key:

- **Attention to autonomous voice**
- **Attention to personalized learning led by their personal goals**

In Essay #1, you are writing a definition/profile essay. **You will *define* "education" by *profiling yourself*.** This essay also acts as the end-goal for Unit 1, so in it you should aim to demonstrate your mastery of the writing skills we've worked on throughout the unit **as well as your interpretation of them through your authentic writer's voice**. And, as this piece is your first essay for the class, it is an opportunity for me to get to know you and your perspectives.

Prompt: Imagine someone unfamiliar with the word "education" wants to know your understanding of the word, and how you came to that understanding. Write an **800-word essay** that ***explains your definition of education based upon your personal experiences and one quotation from one of the Unit 1 readings/media, which you will use as an epigraph.***

Essay #2: Formal and Informal Educations Assignment Guidelines

Highlighting Key:

- **Attention to autonomous voice**
- **Attention to personalized learning led by their personal goals**

In Essay #2, **you are exploring how rhetorical strategies and their impact on you and/or society's views about education.** Whether you take the creative or traditional option, you will *make an argument about class materials*. This piece is your second essay for the class, so it is also an opportunity for you to practice several skills acquired in both Units 1 and 2.

Assignment:
Write a 1200-word rhetorical analysis piece that addresses ONE of the following prompts:

Creative Option:
Write a letter to your younger self or another individual that teaches them about how you used to think a certain way about education, and what you now know because of your understanding of rhetorical strategies. You must use **3 personal examples from your life and 3 quotations** from 1 or 2 Unit 2 reading(s)/media as evidence, remembering to build your body paragraphs around 2 pieces of evidence each (1 personal, one quoted).
Sample Topics:

- How were you persuaded by pathos (emotion), ethos (reputation), or logos (logical reasoning) to believe you were "good" or "bad" at something, and what do you now know?
- Which logical fallacies challenged your academic or personal learning journey, and what would you advise yourself or another individual to do differently?

Essay #3: Cultural Education Assignment Guidelines

Highlighting Key:

- **Attention to autonomous voice**

In Essay #3, you will explore how literature explore how culture affects what and how individuals learn. Whether you write the creative or traditional piece, **you will *make an argument by analyzing the elements of fiction used in Coco*; you will extend your perspective with an additional Unit 3 reading/media and a piece of research.** This third essay for the class is an opportunity for you to practice all the skills acquired in Units 1, 2, and 3.

Prompt: In an **1500-word (1350-1650)** literary analysis research piece, choose one of the prompts to develop an argument about what you believe *Coco* teaches the audience about education and culture. You must use

- **3 different scenes from the "Coco" transcript, 2 quotations from each**
- **3 quotations from 1 Unit 3 reading/media**
- **3 quotations from 1 Guided Research material**

1. **Creative Option: Create a Photographic Essay**
   You must write:
   - a thesis statement that ties the 3 scenes and your analysis of them together
   - context, integrated quotations, and analysis for all quotations
   - **an original image (hand/digital drawing or personal photograph) for each scene; title each image and write a caption for each that includes explanation of the images and their connection to the essay.**

an overall conclusion statement detailing what your images and writing show about "Coco" and cultural educations

Essay #4: English M01A Reflection and Revision Portfolio

Highlighting Key:

- **Attention to autonomous voice**
- **Attention to personalized learning led by their personal goals**
- **Attention to ungrading philosophy policies**

In Essay #4, you are compiling a ***writing portfolio*** to demonstrate your educational journey this semester, in this course. **You will combine all of the writing modes you practiced this term and demonstrate your development as a writer and critical thinker** to **ultimately make an argument for the transcript grade you believe you have earned for this course**.

Prompt: How have you redefined and reimagined your education in this class this semester?

In a single project, you will

1. **Identify the reading, composition, and critical thinking skills you acquired this semester and explain how they have helped you reimagine your education not just in this course but also in your larger academic and personal goals;**
2. **Demonstrates these skills by revising 1-3 skills components in your first 3 essays for the course in light of what you now at the end of the semester about composition and critical thinking;**
3. **Make an argument for your transcript grade for the course, using the course's Ungrading Philosophy and your coursework.**

This project is the course Final: celebrate your hard work and all that you have learned. Use the language of rhetorical and literary analysis and strut your stuff!

My Assessment Evolution

My first attempt at contract grading was fall 2020[11], and I believe the COVID-19 pandemic was instrumental in helping me to overcome my fears about it so I could dive head-first in; the grading injustices and inconsistences that pervaded academia around the world during this time were the final reasons that mobilized me. Because I was still finding my feet with this work, my first contracts were longwinded, complicated, and confusing:

Fall 2020 English M01A Class Grade Contract

[11] The course artifacts I include in this section of the chapter come from my English M01A. Aside from the student comments, assessment measures, and other personalized details, I did the same work with my linked M01A/M91AS and English M01B: Introduction to Literature, Critical Thinking, and Composition classes.

I genuinely believe that you can be as successful in my class as you want to be. One of the challenges to this fact, however, is the conventional grading system that we're all used to. Grades make students to stress about points instead of embracing the learning journey—and we all know that stress distracts us from the things that are truly important in class, in life, in…well…everything! For that reason, this course operates on a grade contract. What this means is that you will not earn grades on individual assignments but will, instead, earn the final course grade that you aspire to earn if you fulfill the requirements of that specific grade category. This means that:

***If you want to earn an A, you must complete at a minimum:**

- ⇒ all 4 Essays and all 4 Essay Reflections; ***2 of the 4 must earn a 3 ("High Pass") and the other 2 must earn at least a 2 ("Pass")***
  - 3/4 of Essays must be turned in On Time
    - "On Time" is defined as within 1 week of the deadline
- ⇒ 9 of 11 Quizzes; these must average a score of 90% or higher
- ⇒ 9 of the 10 Discussion Journals; these must average a score of 2.5 or higher
- ⇒ 3 of the 4 Guided Peer Review Activities, thoughtfully completed
- ⇒ 3 Office Hour OR Course Embedded Writing Tutor OR Writing Center Meetings

***If you want to earn a B, you must complete at a minimum:**

- ⇒ all 4 Essays and all 4 Essay Reflections; ***all 4 must earn a 2 ("Pass")***
  - 3/4 Essays must be turned in On Time
    - "On Time" is defined as within 1 week of the deadline
- ⇒ 8 of 11 Quizzes; these must average a score of 80% or higher
- ⇒ 8 of the 10 Discussion Journals; must average a score of 2 or higher
- ⇒ 3 of the 4 Guided Peer Review Activities, thoughtfully completed
- ⇒ 3 Office Hour OR Course Embedded Writing Tutor OR Writing Center Meetings

***If you want to earn a C, you must complete at a minimum:**

- ⇒ all 4 Essays and all 4 Essay Reflections; ***3 must earn a 2 ("Pass")***
  - 3/4 Essays must be turned in On Time
    - "On Time" is defined as within 1 week of the deadline
- ⇒ 7 of 11 Quizzes; these must average a score of 70% or higher
- ⇒ 7 of the 10 Discussion Journals; these must average a score of 2 or higher
- ⇒ 3 of the 4 Guided Peer Review Activities, thoughtfully completed
- ⇒ 3 Office Hour OR Course Embedded Writing Tutor OR Writing Center Meetings

***You will earn a D or below if you do not complete the required elements of the "C" category:**

Please note that D and F grades are not considered passing grades; if you earn either of these grades, you will not earn credit for the class, and you will not be able to enroll in classes that require this one as a pre-requisite.

This contract evolved only in terms of the number of assignments and grades required for specific grades during fall 2020, spring 2021, and fall 2021. I never landed on a contract I was satisfied with

and I finally understood why during a 2021 leaders of the California Acceleration Project. One shared that because of their experience of contract grading, they felt it was essentially the same as conventional grading because students were still chasing a specific percentage, points, and letter; the fact of grading hadn't changed, students could just understand and experience it differently. My frustrations with contract grading included this perspective, but even more than the points and percentage game I was playing with my students, I was frustrated that I was still determining students' grades based upon standards that were steeped in White supremacy ideology and White language supremacy. It also didn't sit well with me that students in privileged positions of being able to focus on their education without additional responsibilities like holding multiple jobs, parenting, caretaking, and so forth—all common challenges for minoritized community college students in particular—were more frequently able to obtain higher grades because they had more time and support to do the extra work required of them. This is the main place of my departure from Asao B. Inoue's perspectives[12] on labor-based grading practices. It didn't seem to me that effort was a fair or clear or objective grading measurement tool, but it was still a large part of my existing structure.

To mitigate these concerns, I decided to toy with the concept of a class-constructed, standards-based rubric, a concept I learned about from Professor Kristen Kaz, then English Instructor at Pasadena City College and doctoral student focusing on grading equity. Kaz shared her research and practice in the second level of the Gaining Perspectives workshops, which Dean Monica Garcia-Monge and I constructed and facilitated in fall 2020 and spring 2021 to continue to encourage faculty, staff, and administration to evolve culturally responsive pedagogy and cultural intelligence. Inspired by Kaz's research and pedagogy (2021), I spent another year researching the problems with grades and benefits of contract-grading and how educators were implementing

[12] See *Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies: Teaching and Writing for a Socially Just Future* (Fort Collin 2015) and "Classroom Writing Assessment and Antiracist Practice: Confronting White Supremacy in the Judgments of Language" (*Pedagogy* 2019).

collaborative rubric construction in on-campus and online classes. This approach to assessment, I hoped, would turn over control of grade meaning to the highest stakeholders: the students. What follows are the results of that research and implementation from my fall 2022 asynchronous courses:

Class Collaboration: Transcript Grade Rubric Construction

- From the Unit 1, Discussion Forum #1:
    - The Course Learning Outcomes stipulate that, by the end of this course, I will be able to
        - write a thesis-driven essay that is clearly organized, supported by relevant evidence, uses academic prose, and follows up-to-date MLA citation conventions.
        - demonstrate critical reading, writing, thinking, and research skills through analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of a variety of material encompassing varying viewpoints.

        With these goals in mind and because all instructors at MC must record official grades at the end of the semester, I believe that students' final course grade should be determined by the following criteria:
            - [Insert one criterion here]
            - [Insert one criterion here]
            - [Insert one criterion here]

Final Collaborative Transcript Grade Rubric

English 1A Collaborative Transcript Grade Rubric

What follows constitutes the product of the collaborative efforts of this class community and Dr. Bronsten in adherence to the Moorpark College English M01A course objectives.

The English M01A Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) state that by the end of the course, passing grades of C, B, and A mean students can:

1. write a thesis-driven essay that is clearly organized, supported by relevant evidence, uses academic prose, and follows up-to-date MLA citation conventions.
2. demonstrate critical reading, writing, thinking, and research skills through analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of a variety of material encompassing varying viewpoints.

What Determines Students' Final Transcript Grade:

In alignment with the course's official CLOs and the Course Ungrading Philosophy, Dr. Bronsten promises that if students thoughtfully and fully

a) complete all assigned essays, essay reflections, and essay revisions,
b) complete as much of the other assigned coursework as possible,
c) commit to the process of learning, practicing, and revising, the reading, writing, and critical thinking skills that comprise this course

they will have earned *the right to self-assign their final transcript grade for the course, in conversation with herself and the Class Transcript Grade Rubric*, which is as follows

Letter Grade	Conditions	
A **Consistent**	**Completion:** • all required work is submitted and complete **Comprehension & Critical Thinking:** • readings/media interpreted and used accurately, sometimes creatively • writing skills demonstrate mastery of each unit's specific competencies **Growth:** • measurable improvement across assignments • incomplete work is completed **Effort and Participation:** • full and thoughtful engagement with assignments and classmates in collaborative activities (Classmate Conversations, Guided Peer Reviews) • proactive pursuit of support (Course Connections, Writing Center, Email)	
B **Generally Consistent**	**Completion:** • all required work is submitted and complete **Comprehension & Critical Thinking:** • readings/media generally interpreted and used accurately • writing skills generally demonstrate understanding of each unit's specific competencies **Growth:** • measurable improvement across many assignments • incomplete work is generally completed **Effort and Participation:** • mostly full support of classmates in peer interactions (Classmate Conversations, Guided Peer Reviews) • some proactive pursuit of support (Course Connections, Writing Center, Email)	
C **Inconsistent**	**Completion:** • all required work is submitted and completed **Comprehension & Critical Thinking:** • readings/media inconsistently interpreted and used accurately • writing skills demonstrate inconsistent understanding of each unit's specific competencies **Growth:** • inconsistent improvement across semester assignments • inconsistent completion of coursework **Effort and Participation:** • inconsistent support of classmates in peer interactions (Classmate Conversations, Guided Peer Reviews) • inconsistent pursuit of support (Course Connections, Writing Center, Email)	

Disagree or take issue with one or more of the final grade standards?
Make an argument for your case in the Closing Section of Essay #4!
OFFER sufficient and reliable evidence!
APPEAL to my sense of pathos, ethos, and logos!
AVOID both logical fallacies and faulty reasoning!

Class Collaboration: Essay Grade Rubric Construction

From Unit 1, Discussion Forum #2: Essay Grade Rubric

- The Course Learning Outcomes stipulate that, by the end of this course, I will be able to
  - write a thesis-driven essay that is clearly organized, supported by relevant evidence, uses academic prose, and follows up-to-date MLA citation conventions.
  - demonstrate critical reading, writing, thinking, and research skills through analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of a variety of material encompassing varying viewpoints. With these goals in mind and because all instructors at MC must record official grades at the end of the semester, I believe that students' final course grade should be determined by the following criteria:
    - 3/High Pass: [Insert at least one criterion here]
    - 2/Pass: [Insert one criterion here]
    - 1/Not Yet Passing: [Insert one criterion here]

Final Collaborative Essay Grading Rubric

English 1A Collaborative Essay Rubric

All essays this semester will be assessed formatively with the official Course Learning Outcomes in mind and using the following standards and their qualifications.

Course Learning Outcomes (College Expectations):

CLOs are the English Department's measurements of student success in their English courses. They stipulate that *by the end of **English M01A**, students passing the course will earn the C, B, or A when they can:*

1. write a thesis-driven essay that is clearly organized, supported by relevant evidence, uses academic prose, and follows up-to-date MLA citation conventions.

demonstrate critical reading, writing, thinking, and research skills through analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of a variety of material encompassing varying viewpoints.

Standard	Details	CLO
3/High Pass 	**Essay demonstrates** • significant improvement from previous assignments • full assignment understanding with all required elements, sometimes creatively used • logical organization and development of ideas	**1A: 1, 2**

	• adheres to the writing booklet guidelines and skills • unit skills mastered, but still room for growth		
2/Pass 	**Essay demonstrates** • solid improvement from previous assignments • general assignment understanding with all required elements • generally logical organization and development of ideas • generally adheres to the writing booklet guidelines and skills • room for growth	**1A: 1, 2**	
1/Not Yet Passing 	**Essay demonstrates** • no improvement from previous assignments, yet • no assignment understanding, yet, because at least one required element is missing, yet • no logical organization or development of ideas, yet • no understanding of writing booklet guidelines and skills and skills, yet	**1A: 1, 2**	

Constructing classroom spaces within which to construct these rubrics took a great deal of scaffolding. I used my course syllabus, outcomes, and objectives more intentionally and visibly than I ever had before so that students were always aware not just of what the course goals were, but so that they could understand the parameters within which to construct their assessment criterion and measurements. I had to give them a crash course in equitable grading theories and the research justifying dismantling grades, and in more than a few cases I found it surprisingly difficult to convince students that a) they had a right to participate in a conversation about their grades and b) that they could propose measurements that didn't reiterate conventional ones. Don't get me wrong: students were thrilled with the opportunity to have a say in how they were being assessed and what the assessment expectations were. They, however, were highly suspicious of this new autonomy and also, distressingly, more rigid in their expectations than I had ever been. And, ultimately, I found

issues with the collaborative approach to grading student work and assignment final course grades. As well, the amount of work that went into preparing to and executing collaborative rubrics was excessive, and I struggled to keep up with that alongside feedbacking on their other work. But, the reason I ultimately abandoned this method of assessment was because I realized students were still being measured by standards that required conformity; the students with the most privilege had the most success, and for all the same reasons as before.

In spring 2022, I decided to implement my understanding of and vision for an ungraded classroom, but I clung to the contract grading and department rubrics initially, out of fear that I'd be laughed out of my classrooms, department, and college (ahem, anxiety, imposter syndrome, you name it). Although I called what I was doing "ungrading," I wasn't truly executing this assessment style. But, this hesitation allowed me to tweak what I called my Ungrading Grade Contract and gain additional insights from students as I researched more into this topic. Finally, as of fall 2022, I decided to fully embrace the ungraded classrooms. While I am still tweaking my execution of this assessment philosophy and its policies, I believe I have finally found the most equitable style of student assessment and one that sits most comfortably alongside my DEIJ vision (for now):

Dr. Bronsten, English M01B

Class Ungrading Philosophy Policies

Task:

Please initial each statement, and sign and date the contract on page 3. Then, upload the signed document to the assignment as part of your Mandatory Orientation Activities work in Week 1. **This is due by 11:59pm on Friday, August 15th**

Philosophy:

When students learn that our course is ungraded, they're equal measures jubilation and skepticism. Concerns focus on academic transcripts and college credit. I get it! American academia

has indoctrinated us to a system that was designed to maintain power and privilege, not learning and growth. But, grades are made up of so much behavioral noise (late penalties, extra credit, participation, homework) that has nothing to do with course objectives or student abilities so they never accurate measure student learning or potential anyway.

Policy Criteria:

Thus, my Course Ungrading Philosophy Policies declare that students will earn the right to self-assign their final transcript grade for the course if they:

- complete* all UnEssays and all UnEssay Reflections
- use* 4 support resources, one per unit**
- complete* as much of the other assigned coursework as possible, for THEM

NOTE: Students that do not meet the above requirements by the specified fixed deadlines still have every chance of passing the course, providing the requirements are met by the final project deadline. Their final transcript grade, however, will be determined by Dr. Bronsten using specified criteria that aligns with the course and College policies and values.***

Essential Explanations:

*For an assignment to be complete, it must be noted as "Complete" in the Canvas gradebook.

- Incomplete UnEssays must be made Complete as part of UnEssay #4 and *after* learning Units 1, 2, and 3; **do not revise them until Unit 4.**
- Incomplete Discussion Journals don't have to be revised/redone unless doing so helps YOU practice the skills each UnEssay holds you accountable for. Be sure you have clear reasoning to support your decision not to complete incomplete journals.

**Students can fulfill the "support resources" requirement in synchronous and asynchronous ways:

- Synchronous Options:
    - Course Connections with me (Zoom, by appointment, M-F, 11am-12pm (15-minute increments); email me for appointments: kbronsten@vcccd.edu)
    - Writing Center online tutoring (Zoom, by appointment)
    - Writing Center drop-in tutoring (3rd Floor MC Library)

- Asynchronous Option:
    - WC email tutor; email "UnEssay" draft, along with the assignment guidelines and specific questions/areas of focus. Visit the WC website for details: https://www.moorparkcollege.edu/departments/student-services/the-teaching-and-learning-center/writing-center
    - NetTutor: upload "UnEssay" to NT, along with their brief questionnaire. Check out the "Meet NetTutor" page in the "Reading and Writing: Tips, Tools, and Resources" module on Canvas.
    - Allow 48-72hours for all asynchronous feedback, so plan accordingly.

- UnEssays are drafted and submitted in Week 5, Week 9, Week 13, and Week 17.
    - In your Complete Drafts and Best Drafts For Now, you must include a screenshot, or your Support Meeting report, or a brief write-up that details the day and time of your meeting, what you focused on, and how you used what you learned in your

UnEssay.

***Will you automatically fail the class if you don't fulfill the requirements to self-assign your course grade? Should you drop the course?

- **Not necessarily, and I encourage you to do your best to try to complete the course!**
    - The course's fixed deadline for all Units 1-3 coursework is Sunday, November 9th, by 11:59pm, which accommodates the College's drop deadlines. If you are unable to have all off-calendar work submitted by this deadline, you will still have time to drop the course with a "W" on your transcript.

- If you choose to remain in the course—and I hope you do—I will assign your transcript grade in alignment with my course policies and values, and the College's and English Department's requirements for this course. This means that:
    - If you don't complete all UnEssays and UnEssay Reflections, you will not pass the class.
    - If you don't participate in at least 70% of the other course activities (discussions, drafting, peer review, support meetings), you will not pass the class.
        - The course has 11 2-part discussions (Personal Post and Classmate Conversation); 3 guided peer- and self-review activities, and 3 reflection activities, so ***you must complete at least 13 of these 18 activities.***
    - If you meet BOTH of the above requirements, your final course grade will be at least a C.

    - B and A grades are determined by the final course project, in which you will revise UnEssays 1-3 and reflect on your learning journey across the entire semester. Measurements are based on skill development and mastery, and averaged using the following rubric:
        - Assessment Areas: MLA Structure, MLA Style, MLA Format, MLA Audience & Purpose (criteria is explained in assignment rubrics and "Dr. B's English Class Hacks" in the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet).
        - Each Assessment Area uses the following standards:
            - 0/1 = Not Yet/Not Complete = D-F
            - 2 = Generally Solid = B
            - 3 = Ready to Launch = A
        - Averaging the total of the above standards determines the assignment score
            - E.g. 3 + 1 + 2 + 3 = 9; 9 divided by 4 criteria = 2.25
        - Assignment scores are averaged to determine an overall course score:
        - E.g. 2.25 + 3 + 1.7 + 2 = 8.95; 8.95 divided by 4 assignments = 2.23 = B; Generally, 2 = B and 3 = A

- Moorpark College does not assign plus or minus grades (e.g. B+/B-). I will, however, round up scores of .7 and above to the next letter grade (e.g. 2.7, 2.8, 2.9 = 3)

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Ungrading Philosophy Policies Contract

Please initial each statement, and sign and date this contract. Then, upload the signed document to the assignment as part of your Mandatory Orientation Activities work in Week 1.

Initials	Policy
	I understand that I will earn the right to self-assign my final transcript grade for the course if I thoughtfully and fully • complete all assigned UnEssays (1-4) and UnEssay reflections (UnEssays 1, 2, & 3) • complete 4 support resources, one per unit • complete as much of the other assigned coursework as possible, for ME
	I understand that assignments are only complete when they are noted as "Complete" in the Canvas gradebook.
	I understand that assignments marked as Incomplete can be revised as many times as necessary to earn the Complete distinction. I also understand that it is my responsibility to inform Dr. Bronsten when I have revised my work.
	I understand that it is my responsibility to schedule and participate in the mandatory 4 support resources for the semester (1 per unit) and can be completed • synchronously by appointment with Dr. Bronsten (Zoom) or the Writing Center (online or in person). • asynchronously using the Writing Center email tutor or NetTutor
	I understand that credit for support resources requires me to submit • a screenshot of the session report or my own write-up of the date/time of the meeting and a brief summary of what was discussed and my plan to use what I learned going forward. • that this evidence must be included in the relevant UnEssay Best Draft For Now document.
	I understand that there are no points or grades for class assignments, but that they *do* count for credit. Therefore, it is my responsibility to • Read Dr. Bronsten's feedback on my assignments in a timely manner and reach out with questions as soon as possible. • Review the assignment rubrics (in Canvas and Turnitin's Canvas integration)

	I understand that per the course Off-Calendar Policy late work is accepted at any time; however, there are some caveats to this policy
	• I must communicate with Dr. Bronsten so she knows when I'm working off-calendar (email, assignment comment, etc.)—I do not need to tell her why (unless I want to do so).
	• I may be dropped from the course if I do not participate in discussion and UnEssay-drafting activities for a week or more *even if I have notified Dr. Bronsten*.
	• There are 2 fixed, non-negotiable deadlines for the semester:
	  o All Units 1-3 work must be submitted by the end of Week 13.
	  o The Final Project must be submitted by 11:59pm on Thursday, December 7, 2025.

	I understand that if I do not meet the requirements to self-assign my transcript grade, I can choose to drop the class, or work toward passing it. I may still pass if I • complete all UnEssays and UnEssay Reflections • participate in 70% or more of the other course activities (discussions, drafting, peer review, support meetings) • average a passing score on my revised essays in UnEssay #4 (Generally Solid/2 or Ready to Launch/3)

Signature	Printed Name	Date

In order to ensure that my philosophy policies were clear, I worked hard to carry the expectations and values into all engagement I had with students and their work.

Assignment Feedback: Decentralizing SW/AE to Amplify Anti-Racist, Language Justice, and Assessment Equity Academic Conversation

Sample Discussion Journal Feedback (low-stakes activities, asynchronous course)

Highlighting Key:

- **I focus all activities on students' perspectives and experiences so that they always have their authentic selves at the core of the work they do.**
- **Each activity has at least one specific connection to voice autonomy so that students are always reminded that this course is about amplifying, not silencing, their voices.**
- **I make it as clear as I can that the discipline of English uses MLA rules and that these are not universal standards but, rather, subject-specific jargon. I find this helps to both establish the sense that there are guidelines here, but that these are not universal and do not have the power to designate their work—or themselves—as right or wrong.**

Wow! XXX, this is a developed, articulate, and thoughtful journal, and **I appreciate that you are letting yourself engage with the material personally and through your curiosity and openness.** Bear all of this in mind with regard to your thoughts about assessment.

Here are some suggestions about how you can use your DJ strategically to jump-start your essays:
--Ask yourself: **What made me choose the "strong line" I did?** Did I use it to simply complete the assignment, or did it evoke a feeling, a memory, or something else in me when I experienced it? If it reminded me of my experiences, how would I explain some of these to someone that wasn't there in a way that makes them feel what I feel about "education" now?
--Ask yourself: **How have I written about the "strong line" I selected?** Did I explain the quotation, or did I present it and then move straight to my point about it? Could it help me define "education" in some way? If yes, how? If no, is there a better line from the same or different reading/media?
--Ask yourself: **Did a classmate work with a "strong line" that I connect with?** Does that material make me as excited to think about defining "education" as the one I chose? How does that material change or evolve my own thinking about "education" and what I think it is?

****

XXX, this discussion is great! **I am hearing your unique writing voice in the response because you are being open about how you're experiencing the material;** this work is excellent practice for our first essay of the semester, which we'll be drafting in Week 5, but which you've already potentially started with your discussion journals!

-- Thesis Statements:
As you work towards refining an argument statement for this essay, remember that your thesis statement should: be a single sentence, not use metaphorical language or cliched sayings, and directly respond to the assignment prompt (your definition of education, and why)—**you are not analyzing the perspective of the reading/media you have decided to engage with because this essay is about you and your experiences, which means you should include a reference to the reading/media you will work with in the thesis sentence: free yourself to centralize your perspective.** Don't forget to offer a "so what?", too, so that your audience (your classmates and I) know the larger message you want to convey. This means your thesis statement should move beyond declaring an argument and identifying your evidence for it; it should also detail what you see as the importance of your perspective and how it affects you and your world, as you see it.

-- Body Paragraph:
Remember to always organize your body paragraphs using the steps in our writing resources to ensure you are setting up and developing a strong argument to develop the essay. **Make sure, too, that your voice and experience are centralized—any quotations you use are your backup dancers and their job is to amplify your voice and perspective, not theirs.** The paragraph's topic sentence should introduce the part of your story about your experiences that you are writing about and why/how you are going to use it to explain your perspective on education. Play with the organization of the paragraphs but remember to use the organization guidelines so that every necessary component is included in each body paragraph (there's plenty of time to loosen up and stylize your work once you've got a strong foundation in the basics). When it comes to the evidence sections, **make sure to always explain the evidence you present in your paragraphs, whether they are narrative descriptions of your experiences, or textual evidence (aka quotations) before moving on to the task of exploring their significance to your essay's larger purpose**.

--Golden Rules:
Don't forget that English essays have specific MLA-devised components that make them what they are. Review the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet and Unit 1 Key Terms and Skills Packet for details about these sometimes-surprising rules of the English class writing game, paying particular attention to MLA Essay Structure and Style, MLA Essay Register, and MLA Expectations when Using Source Material (aka readings/media). And, use the various readings and media we've experienced throughout this unit to explore all the ways you can explain your own definition of education and the experiences you've had that lead you to your conclusions.

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Using with secondary material (Unit 3 media except "Coco" and guided research) when analyzing primary material ("Coco"):

- The use of critical essays, TED Talks, research studies, and more offer **various ways to engage a critical assessment of literary devices at work in texts. While conventional literary "lenses," as they are sometimes called, give us new eyes through which to**

see, it's important that you don't lose sight of your authentic and autonomous analytical voice, especially as we are moving from this material into the drafting process for Essay #3. In particular, remember that your voice should be dominant: **do not feel obligated to treat the secondary material (anything not "Coco" in this unit) as offering a core fact.** As was the case in our rhetorical analysis unit, all of the course readings and media present arguments and create rhetorical situations; likewise, they can fall prey to fallacy. **Rather than decide which way of analyzing "Coco" is correct, focus instead on what you see the film conveying about society and human beings through specific literary devices (character, setting, plot, theme, etc.) and how the ideas of others (Zarretta Hammond, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Claudia Puig) can help you to position yourself in a dialogue about the film that participates in a conversation with the literature, the criticism, and your own original insights.** Remember, too, that your job in Essay #3 is not to analyze the secondary material as you do the material from the "Coco" transcript: don't introduce them in your essay's introduction paragraph and don't look for literary devices in that work. Instead, use their ideas to develop your own about the film. **And, remember to contextualize, integrate, and explain evidence you use from the secondary material—don't assume that the reader of your work sees it in the same way that you do!**

Sample Essay Feedback (high-stakes activities, asynchronous course)

Essay Rubrics focus on completion and specific skills that are identified as discipline-specific. There is no reference to grammar or mechanics, and the points that focus on expression are phrased strategically in order to suggestion discipline-specific expectations, rather than language supremacy.

	3: Ready to Launch	2: Generally Solid	1: Not Yet	0: No Evidence
MLA Structure MLA Essay Structure: Writing demonstrates awareness of MLA standards for thesis statements, body paragraphs, and expectations surrounding source-material usage. Writing Tips and Tools Booklet pages 9-11, "Golden Rules for English Essays"	You've mastered these elements and are ready to level them up. Take risks! Adapt the components to your unique voice and style! Play with what you know and raise your goals!	You have presented the skills of the unit accurately for the most part, though there may be some aspects that need more practice. Practice makes progress so commit to that part of your learning!	The material in this essay doesn't demonstrate a confident understanding of the concepts of MLA structure we're working on this semester. Return to the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet, spend some time with a Writing Center tutor, and focus your learning on these foundational elements.	The material in this essay doesn't demonstrate awareness of the rules governing MLA structure. Return to the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet, spend some time with a Writing Center tutor, and focus your learning on these foundational elements.
MLA Style MLA Essay Structure and Style: Writing demonstrates awareness of MLA standards for rhetorical elements of language and style, literary and historical tenses, formal register. Writing Tips and Tools Booklet pages --5-8, "1C Key Terms" --9-11, "Golden Rules for English Essays"	You've mastered these elements and are ready to level them up. Take risks! Adapt the components to your unique voice and style! Play with what you know and raise your goals!	You have presented the skills of the unit accurately for the most part, though there may be some aspects that need more practice. Practice makes progress so commit to that part of your learning!	The style of this essay doesn't demonstrate a confident understanding of the concepts of MLA style we're working on this semester. Return to the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet, spend some time with a Writing Center tutor, and focus your learning on these foundational elements.	The material in this essay doesn't demonstrate awareness of the rules governing MLA style. Return to the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet, spend some time with a Writing Center tutor, and focus your learning on these foundational elements.
MLA Format 1. 5-Paragraph Essay Myth: Writing demonstrates ability to evolve HS essay constructs into rhetorical analysis writing style. 2. Formatting: Document adheres to current layout rules and content expectations. Style rules adhered to.	You've mastered these elements! Keep playing attention to the detailed nuances of MLA, as an accurately formatted document always increases your ethos as a content creator.	You have presented the elements of MLA generally accurately, but without consistency. Build more time into your revision process to catch these small issues, which can have a massive impact on	The style of this essay doesn't demonstrate a confident understanding of the concepts of MLA format we're working on this semester. Return to the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet, spend some time with a Writing Center tutor,	The material in this essay doesn't demonstrate awareness of the rules governing MLA format. Return to the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet, spend some time with a Writing Center tutor, and focus your learning

Writing Tips and Tools Booklet pages 12-13, "Essay Formatting Guidelines" Writing Tips and Tools Booklet pages 3-4, "Understanding English M01C Essays"		your ethos as a content creator.	and focus your learning on these formatting elements.	on these formatting elements.
MLA Audience & Purpose 1. Audience: Writing demonstrates a sense of awareness of the target audience (instructor, classmates, college-level readers) 2. Purpose: Writing demonstrates awareness of assignment purpose (narrative essay) and remains on topic. Writing Tips and Tools Booklet page 4, "Understanding English M01C Essays"	You've mastered these elements and are ready to level them up. Take risks! As you learn more about rhetorical tools and strategies, and acquire more of the language of the rhetorical analysis, adapt the components to your unique voice and style! Play with what you know and raise your goals!	You demonstrate a solid awareness of your audience and purpose, but don't always adapt the piece and content to speak to these. Build more time into your revision process to focus on these elements and review the guidance in the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet about the audience and purpose of rhetorical analysis readings and media.	The essay doesn't demonstrate a confident understanding of our audience and purpose for the course. Return to the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet, spend some time with a Writing Center tutor, and focus your learning on these formatting elements.	The essay doesn't speak to our audience and purpose for the course. Return to the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet, spend some time with a Writing Center tutor, and focus your learning on these formatting elements.

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Sample Strengths and Growth Areas Essay Feedback

Essay feedback is constructive and growth-oriented, asking students to use tools to amplify their voice and expression; conventional grammar guidance is replaced by suggestions about author-audience relationship and clear, effective argumentation rather than SW/AE.

- **Growth Opportunity Comments (I never call these weaknesses or flaws):**
  - I aim to disconnect the writing from the individual as much as possible by using phrases like “The points” instead of “Your point encourage students’ writing confidence by disconnecting self from work.
  - When students use language in a unique way, even if not entirely successful, I call that moment out to celebrate their voice in action.
  - I always try to direct students to resources that will help them understand what I’m looking for in their work so that it is always attainable.
  - Expression issues focuses on writer-audience connection, not SW/AE.
  - Where possible, I try to identify strengths within growth areas so that students can be encouraged to take the next steps to development.

- I ground feedback in reasons that focus on argument assertion and effectiveness

Don't Praise

Remember that you are analyzing the work under investigation. Praising it reduces your argument to a book review and does not help in the development of an argument.

Vary Your Expression

Rather than using the same terms and sentence patterns throughout your essay, vary your expression. This helps you to sound sophisticated and in complete control of the essay, the topic, and your ideas so that you can connect engagingly with your audience.

I don't understand the idea expressed here as there is something awkward or unclear about the expression. Review the sentence structure and word choice to ensure the language precisely expresses the point being made.

Remember that authors are posing arguments; they are not the final word on anything. When integrating quotations, therefore, do so using signal phrases that imply an awareness of this. For example, the author suggests/posits/believes/argues/and so on.

More Analysis Needed

The points you raise here are really interesting but there isn't enough engagement with the well-chosen evidence to fully develop the points you are making. Return to the language and context of the evidence: can you comment on a an aspect of language, style, rhetoric, or something else? Review the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet Key Terms to see some of the many elements you can explore in your evidence analysis.

Awk Integration

When quotations are integrated, the final product should be a coherent and sensical sentence that does not create a "they said" conversation-type experience. Remember, too, that quotations can be modified as long as the meaning of the quotation remains the same and changes are accounted for in square brackets or with ellipses, as necessary. Some useful and argumentative signal words I recommend uses are: argues, suggests, claims, asserts, believes, and other similar synonyms. Sometimes, too, all you need to include is a transitional "that" to make the sentence more effective. Review

Expression Issue

How you choose to express your point should directly relate to both your awareness of the assignment's audience and your larger purpose in reaching them. Both of these elements of writing should influence how you decide to express the points you are making in terms of language choices, formal or informal writing styles, grammatical tools, and so on. Review this section of the work: is this point making as much of an impact on its audience and is it clearly connected to the assignment's purpose?

Review the Golden Rules

As with all academic disciplines, English is full of nuanced subject-specific terminology, rules, and expectations. Review the Golden Rules for English Essays in the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet, which will help you keep track of these and elevate the level of sophistication of your work. Here, many of these "rules" are broken, which diminishes the impact and success of your work in this assignment.

MLA says no to bolding....boring, I know.

- **Strength-Orientated Comments**

This quotation is a great opportunity to discuss tone and delivery of the dialogue--the ellipses here, which take the space of unspoken feelings and stories, help to inform the seriousness of the scene and its conflict.

Good Evidence Analysis

I appreciate the attention that you pay to the language and ideas in this example. Because of this, your analysis is fully supported and interesting.

I love that you found a way to put yourself into this piece!

Good Conclusion Points

The points here are both summative and expansive: I like how they reiterate the larger points of the essay in new ways, leaving the reader of the essay with thoughtful and insightful points.

Write with confidence about your ideas here! They're strong ones!

Good Conclusion Summary

You've nicely reminded the reader of the essay about the main points in your essay, and this is a powerful way to end an essay that a reader will remember.

Conclusions

As I wrote this section and dug through my last 4 years of student work, Canvas shells, outlines, plans, hopes, and dreams, I found so many things that I want to change and feel excited to do so. I can't express enough the importance of embracing humility, flexibility, and growth in the process of creating classroom spaces governed by language and assessment equity. Biases emerge, words are misused, new research unfolds. It's essential that we flow with these tides, rather than struggle to swim against them. Easier said that done, I know, but true nonetheless.

Works Cited

Kaz, Kristin. "Equity-Minded Grading," Gaining Perspectives Level 2 Workshop Series, Division 128, co-facilitated by Dr. Monica Garcia-Monge and Dr. Katie Bronsten, Moorpark College. April 19, 2021.

Kohn, Alfie. "The Case Against Grades." *Counterpoints*, 2013, Vol. 45, pp. 143-153. https://www.jstor.org/stable/42982088

Chapter 5: Conclusions

> "With my revision project submitted, I wanted to express my gratitude for your teachings throughout this class. It is not often I can say that a class has fundamentally changed my outlook on life. In fact, I believe this is the first time I can say that. Whether or not it was your intention, your class proved to be rather therapeutic for me, and I'm sure I'm not the only one who shares that sentiment. For all that happened to me this summer, I ultimately feel a genuine, new found sense of confidence in myself and my ability to learn. All thanks to your celebration of growth and, of course, your 'ungrading philosophy'" (Nicky Ambrose, Email "Thank You!" 8/3/2024).

I want to end this sabbatical project with the voices that matter most: students'. They have been silenced throughout their education experiences in harmful ways for far too long, and I am aware that my participation in this abuse should have ended long before it did. Anne E. Curzan, et. al., argue that

> Students get silenced because they are told they talk 'incorrectly.' As students experience the dissonance between home and school ways of speaking, they must navigate complex emotional terrain as they decide how to present themselves. This cascade of events and circumstances can undermine students' confidence as well as their identity and can result in attrition: students drop out of school because they don't see themselves as belonging there or are told, with or without words, they don't belong there. All of this runs counter to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives that are making their way across the United States. Yet not nearly enough attention has been given to countering SLI [Standard Language Ideology] as part of DEI initiatives. ("Language Standardization and Linguistic Subordination," 29)

A wealth of funding has been poured into finding ways to connect with minoritized students, to increase minoritized student engagement, to build a sense of community for minoritized students on campus. No amount of social space, curricular diversification, or

free food will achieve these goals because they do not root out and treat the disease at the heart of the problem: White language supremacy ideology. We cannot expect students to trust a system that tells them they belong and then penalizes them when they show up. It hurts to hear this, but this is exactly what classrooms and campus interactions are doing when they uphold Standard Language Ideology and conventional grading standards.

Countless members of the conversation around language and assessment equity detail their most transformative lesson being their ability to trust students to know what they know and what they need to know. Putting trust in students isn't a surrender, isn't a battle lost, but is a curricular transformation relevant to learners now, in this moment, that is more invested in social and emotional well-being, mental health, learning processes, and persistence. Trusting students doesn't undermine an academic's training and skill set, and it doesn't threaten to destroy education completely. It humanizes education, both the learners and the leaders. Without empathy, I don't believe that students will ever get what is needed from academic peoples and systems; without these and in our increasingly digital and option-filled world, I don't believe institutionalized education will survive.

Student Voices

Although my sabbatical project ran from 2024-2025, I wanted to have the opportunity to see, at least in a small way, the impact of the shifts I was exploring in the project while I was still teaching. Thus, the following comments come from students taking my fall 2023 and spring 2024 courses (English M01A, linked M01A/91AS, and M01B), and my summer 2024 courses (English M01C). All of the student comments that follow comes from my students'

final course project, a reflection and revision portfolio that asks students to do a lot. They must:

- Share their reflections on their learning journey throughout the semester, cite key skills, readings and media, and experiences that have helped them to think about education and their role in it;
- Revise their earlier work, focusing on tools and skills that are important to them and chosen at their discretion;
- Argue for their course transcript grade based upon their commitment to the Course Ungrading Philosophy Policies and anything else that they believe should be a factor in determining their having earned this right.

The students included here are linguistically, racially, sexually, and cognitively diverse, and I am grateful to have had so many gems to choose from that this section was, arguably, one of the most challenging for me to whittle down because I wanted all of their voices to be included. I think it will be very clear to you not just why these projects are so poignant and powerful, but also why the work of language and assessment equity is so important. I hope that these missives will inspire your work just as they continue to inspire my own.

A. Privileging Autonomous Voice

- “Mistakes are a crucial part of learning. […] Having the weight of grades lifted off my shoulders taught me more joys of writing besides being creative and a more rewarding experience through the course. Being in the English MO1B class I felt I was able to have a voice without judgment which gives me confidence to write. I'm still in my academic journey, but by being in supportive surroundings I was given an outlet to express what I

want to share which redefined my “Cinderella Hero's Journey” so I have a healthier outlook when it comes to challenges” (Talyn Farbenbloom, Essay #4, 1B, May 5, 2024).

- “Although this u[n]grading philosophy is new to me, it gave me a nice challenge as someone who seeks academic validation from a grade. I deserve this grade not because of perfection but because of progress. I think if these essays did count for an actual letter grade at the time of turn in they would look very different and it would be the bare minimum and the assignment would be just another mark off the checklist. The no grading policy has caused me to think outside the box and truly look within myself to find my own voice in the essays that I was writing, especially in parts where I had to put personal anecdotes” (Josie Ocegueda, “Essay #4: Once Upon a Reflection and Revision Project,” English M01C, August 2, 2024).
- “This course has been a rollercoaster of emotions and learning. As an ESL individual, I have always felt challenged by the standard academics of written English. But it all changed when I was introduced to Dr. Bronsten’s policies, and I learned to embrace and appreciate dialect and linguistic diversity. It taught me that regardless of my writing and composition skills, with practice and active learning, I will achieve my academic goals. I learned to embrace challenging educational situations to ameliorate and enhance my knowledge. I now understand that practice makes progress, and that perseverance is key to overcome any challenge” (Maria Cuberos, “Essay #4: Once Upon a Reflection and Revision Project,” English M01C, August 2, 2024).

B. Privileging Mental Health

- “Throughout this class I learned many things about myself, about writing and English as a whole. I learned how to extract my fear, and anxiety from doing my work. This was all because of the course's un-grading policy. I was able to relieve some of the stress that comes with constantly getting a letter grade on an assignment. In part I believe I was able to focus on my writing rather than worrying about a grade” (Nate Navarro, Essay #4, 1B, May 7, 2024).
- “I found myself unnerved upon realizing that this course had no sense of a traditional grading system. I felt I had no way to measure my progress, no definitive goal to move towards. I have since realized that learning is not a quantifiable process. Throughout the duration of the class, despite personal life struggles impeding my progress, I felt a great sense of ease knowing that I did not have to worry about tirelessly struggling to maintain some percentage to ensure that I could improve my overall GPA. Instead, I found myself actually learning new skills and refining old ones. As the course draws to a close, I find myself genuinely wondering why this is not the standard across every course” (Nicky Ambrose, Essay #4: Once Upon a Reflection and Revision Project,” English M01C, August 2, 2024).
- “While first starting this class, I didn’t realize the effect the “normal” school grading system had on me. The stress I had trying to maintain my grades, feeling like I was only defined by the “A” I was given at the end of each semester, even if it meant I had to do the impossible for it. […] Although English was my favorite subject, this class really opened my eyes on how I can love something without being burnt out and being able to learn from my mistakes. The concept of the grading system in schools may have worked in the 19th century, but is outdated in today’s standards. Modern day students believe making

mistakes in schools causes them to look unintelligent and unworthy. Not only do they feel like they are in constant competition with their peers, but adults around them only identify them from a type of score or grade letter they receive. […] School officials have tried being reasonable with their students by "understanding" their mental health and postponing school by half an hour, giving work permits to not "over work" their students and "allowing" students time with counselors to determine what classes would be best for them, academically. The three things I have listed above do not accommodate any of the students mental or physical health unlike using an ungraded philosophy would. […]. Without having a graded system, it seems so much more free, causing students to be themselves and work towards their happily ever after, such that I had felt" (Jillian Riddle-Jansen, Essay #4 1B May 4, 2024).

- "In high school, I viewed English as my worst subject, as my writing was not polished, and I was usually unable to meet the standards set for me, such as following MLA guidelines and addressing prompts fully. The grading system made large assignments, such as essays and projects, very stressful to complete and the variation of teacher preferences made it difficult for me to fulfill all requirements on those assignments. When I first started this course, I was worried that it would be impossible for me to pass with a good grade, given my previous experience in high school English. I believed that the massive anxiety from grading would always be a part of my education, and was most concerned about college English courses because of my past experiences with the subject. However, as I learned about the ungrading philosophy used by this course and how it emphasizes learning instead of perfection, I was able to focus on the learning portion of education and view grades as secondary, through this course, my writing has

improved drastically and I feel that I can now reliably follow MLA guidelines, along with meeting, and possibly exceeding, the standards on large assignments" (William Yang, Essay #4, 1A, May 5, 2024).

C. Privileging Learning and Growth

- "Growth is an uncomfortable process. This is something I have learned within this course. […] I've always struggled to get my thoughts on paper in an organized manner. I have dyslexia and this has discouraged me quite a lot throughout my academic experience. Concepts are not easy for me to pick up, I feel as if I have to re-read material way more than the average student may. Just so my brain can understand. I've always been hard on myself because of this but I went back to college last stemster [sic.] and took Dr. Bronsten's class. Which has helped me with a new perspective towards learning. (Bailey Hembre, "Essay #4: Once Upon a Reflection and Revision Project," English M01C, August 2, 2024)
- "One thing that Dr. Bronsten did differently than any of my other professors or teachers in the past was focus on making sure we, as students, come out of this course better students, better writers, and more educated than we were before we started this course over giving us a grade based on our performance from start to finish. As I advanced in this course, I understood that I was writing my best that I could at the moment and was not focused on trying to get a grade that my skills didn't reflect. This not only helped me keep my focus on improving rather than earning a good grade, but also eased my stress and allowed me to truly present my skills as the student I was at the moment. With this system, I have been able to value change and improvement and seek to become a better

writer with more skills and more of a drive to keep improving because Dr. Bronsten preaches that “no essay is ever truly finished” (Victoria Luna, “Essay #4: Once Upon a Reflection and Revision Project,” English M01C, August 2, 2024).

- “Previous English classes penalized me for taking the time to reevaluate my writing. I had no time to take a step back and critique my work when every paragraph needed to be what the professor wanted. There was no room for mistakes when the essay had to be perfect. However, with M01C, I learned that I become a better writer when I am free to write without worry. This class challenged the way I thought about English essays, and for that, I will be forever grateful” (Alexander Sherbrooke, ““Essay #4: Once Upon a Reflection and Revision Project,” English M01C, August 2, 2024).
- “To say my journey in this class was exactly what I expected is the furthest from the truth. I never imagined that the most valuable skills I would discover I am now capable of would be acquired through the mistakes I made along the way or that through holding myself accountable for my own measure of success by the non-traditional “Class Ungrading Philosophy,” I would push myself above and beyond my own expectations, and out of my comfort zone to really understand my own learning potential. (Erin Wadkowski, Essay #4, 1A May 4, 2024)
- “The ability to be able to focus on your learning rather than what grade you’re going to get creates a huge lift off your stress and anxiety. […] One way this ungrading policy truly helped me was by allowing me to receive feedback on my work and my growth versus whether I'm passing the standards or not. This allowed my mindset to change tremendously. It caused one less class for me to feel pressured to meet standard requirements. This method allowed me to switch my focus from my grade to learning

more deeply in the material. The idea of ungrading and not being afraid to fail the standards has also allowed me to have a growth mindset throughout my learning experience" (Karissa Bauman, Essay #4 1A December 4, 2023).

- "Growing up I was always taught if it's not perfect it's not right or is not of value. Life isn't perfect, education isn't perfect but if we are putting in our best effort progress will be made and that is all that matters. When students are put in an environment where grades are present but not so intensely focused on, students can really enjoy learning. The pressure to strive for that perfect "A" isn't there and the lessons really get learned. Dr. Bronsten allows her students to learn from their mistakes without feeling intimidated by grades" (Rebecca Cabezas, Essay #4 1A December 3, 2023).
- "I have come to recognize that I have a weakness in the subject of English, but through that realization, I have been encouraged to work even harder so I can strengthen my weakness of writing. In Professor Bronsten's class where the ultimate grade is left up to me, I have felt a weight lifted off my shoulders. By no means is her self-grading scale a free pass to an A, but it has enabled me to shift my focus from the pressure of perfection to the joy of learning" (Noah Cronquist, 1B Essay #4, December 3, 2023).

Works Cited

Curzan, Anne, Robin M. Queen, Kristin VanEyk, and Rachel Elizabeth Weissler. "Language Standardization and Linguistic Subordination," Language and Social Justice in the United States, vol. 153, no. 3 (Summer 2023). pp. 18-35. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48739979.

McWhorter, John. *Words on the Move: Why English Won't—and Can't—Sit Still (Like, Literally)*. Henry Holt, 2016.

Von Bergen, Megan. "Defining Ungrading: Alternative Writing Assessment as Jeremiad," *Composition Studies*, 51.2, 2023. pp. 137–142.

Chapter 6: Literature Review

The following is a list of key resources consulted directly for this project as well as to give a contextual sense of the academic conversations taking place about language and assessment equity since 2015. Though some resources were published before this date, I wanted to focus on material emerging from 2015, leading up to, and during the COVID-19 pandemic, and since. These years have been marked by revolutionary transformations in K-college academic systems, and even the earliest seminal pieces have been evolved and reimagined in light of significant socio-political challenges and changes. This literature review is by no means exhaustive, but it is designed to give anyone interested a crash-course in language justice and grading equity conversations and best practices.

Equity Gaps

Colman, Patty and Patty Colman and Core Members of Teaching Women and Men of Color Advocates (TWMOCAs) at Moorpark College, "Moorpark College Academic Senate Resolution in Support of Black Lives Matter," Moorpark College Fall 2020. https://www.moorparkcollege.edu/sites/moorparkcollege/files/media/pdf_document/2021/resolution_support_blm_draft.v5.pdf.
In this statement, the Academic Senate declares its support of the Black Lives Matter movement and, in line with the Moorpark College vision, resolves to stand with BIPOC individuals and declares its responsibility to fight against racism and actively practice antiracism on campus and in the community.

Emdin, Christopher. *For White Folks Who Teaching in the Hood…and the Rest of Y'all Too: Reality Pedagogy and Urban Education*. Beacon Press, 2016.
Emdin's work identifies the ways that existing pedagogy, particularly in urban schools, perpetuates racial inequity in American classrooms through the White student identity and experience. Sharing his classroom experiences as an educator, he calls for teaching reform that celebrates students' cultural assets and reimagines education from teacher education, training, and hiring through to classroom practice.

hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. Routledge, 1994.
hooks writes to inspire the complete destruction of existing academic systems, arguing that they are rooted in racial, sexual, and economic oppression. The work focuses on building new, equitable systems that foster opportunity for all learners.

Pollock, Mica, ed. *Everyday Antiracism: Getting Real About Race in School*. The New Press, 2008.
This is a collection of essays written by equity warriors and is a useful introduction to the ways that racism affects learners across all levels of education. These essays identify specific inequities in education initiatives and legislation that negatively impact minoritized students as well as creating perceptions of these learners that perpetuate stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. After establishing the foundation of discussions about racism in schools, there are sections that offer

suggestions for educators and administrators about using conversations about race to create equitable learning experiences for all students.

Rios, Victor. *Human Targets: Schools, Police, and the Criminalization of Latino Youth*. The University of Chicago Press, 2017.
Rios explores the ways that Latino youth are too often understood through a good/bad binary which, he argues, emerges from social construction and prejudice rather than fact. Using his personal experience growing up as a gang member on the road to prison or death, as well as interviews with members of the Latine community in parts of California, Rios attempts to demonstrate the discrimination this population faces and the ways that schools are obligated to change the narrative that rejects and disparages this minoritized community.

—. *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys*. New York University Press, 2011.
Rios writes about the ways that school-aged Black and Latino boys are written off as problems before they have a chance to show the world who they are. Using his personal experiences of growing up at risk as well as extensive research about and interviews with boys and educators in Oakland, California, Rios demonstrates how social prejudice about these individuals criminalizes young men simply for being born into Black and Latino families.

Rios, Victor, Rebeca Mireles-Rios, and Audrey Lee. *From Risk to Promise: A School Leader's Guide to Professional Learning in Prosperity-Based Education*. Independently Published, 2022.
This is a year-long training manual that supports Rios's Scholar System, a professional development program designed to identify and establish the pedagogy necessary to see minoritized students as "at promise" rather than "at risk" so they can thrive in what the writers call Prosperity-Based Classrooms. It asks participants to use self-reflection to position themselves on the path to transformation alongside research into establishing best practices for establishing equitable classrooms and build "classrooms of cariño" (care) with a host of resources, lessons, tools, and activities that inform the language and practice the Scholar System.

Singleton, Glenn E. *Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools*. Corwin, 2015.
This resource is a professional development program designed to help schools and districts close the racial achievement gap in their classrooms. The program traces the history of racism in schools to colonial America, using personal experiences from educators, administrators, and students across grade levels to illustrate the experiences of racism in schools and its impact on learning. Each section offers a wide variety of activities, lessons, and engagement experiences that can help close equity gaps for minoritized students. There is a condensed instructor's guide workbook that accompanies this resource.

Tough, Paul. *The Inequality Machine: How College Divides Us.* Mariner Books, 2021. (This edition revises and expands the 2019 publication, titled *The Years that Matter Most: How College Makes or Breaks Us*)

Tough's work focuses on exposing the racial and economic inequities that inform everything from college admissions to college classrooms. Using personal narratives and interviews with students, educators, and administrators, Tough's research demonstrates the ways that racism pervades curricular systems and how college, ultimately, is a business that is set up to support the success of student populations with the most racial and financial privilege: White. His work offers an inside view of standardized testing, the admissions process, and classroom pedagogy designed to exclude minoritized students.

Wagner, Tony and Ted Dintersmith: *Most Likely to Succeed: Preparing Our Kids for the New Innovation Era*. Scribner, 2015.

This is a powerful study rooted in decades of research into American K-12 educational spaces. Arguing that existing academic systems are rooted in an agricultural and manufacturing America that no longer exists, Wager and Dintersmith identify gaps in contemporary curricula and make proposals for more effective and relevant learning experiences for children. Interspersed with narratives and anecdotes from college graduates, this book is an important read for those seeking more information about education's general lack of evolution in America and the ways that some revolutionary educators and schools are challenging systemic failures.

Zhang, Ray and the Academic Senate at Moorpark College. "Moorpark College Academic Senate Resolution in Solidarity with the Asian American and Pacific Islander Community," Moorpark College Spring 2021. https://www.moorparkcollege.edu/sites/moorparkcollege/files/media/pdf_document/2021/resolution_aapi_solidarity_final.pdf.

In response to the influx of anti-Asian American and Pacific Islander hate crimes and violence due to misplaced beliefs about the origins of COVID-19, this statement from the Academic Senate condemns these practices and declares its support of the AAPI community and its responsibility to fight against racist misrepresentation of AAPI individuals to actively practice antiracism on campus and in the community.

Language Justice

Allport, Gordon. "The Language of Prejudice," *Language Awareness: Readings for College Writers*, 12th edition. Paul Eschholz, Alfred Rosa, and Virginia Clark, eds. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2016, pp. 364-375.

Allport's work, though initially published in 1954 as part of his book *The Nature of Prejudice*, remains relevant today because it helps to explain how language shifts from being a collection of benign letters to words that divide society. His focus in this argument is on speaker intention and language usage, suggesting that language shapes and perpetuates prejudice when the speaker intends for it to be thus.

Baker-Bell, April and Carmen Kynard, "Black Language Education," *Black Language Syllabus,* 30 Jan. 2021, http://www.blacklanguagesyllabus.com/black-language-education.html
This material is a professional development treasure trove that offers "praxis, and histories where Black Language has shaped classroom and community learning for Black children and youth." There are a number of resources that are both useful learning tools for educators and administrators, and materials that can be deployed in the classroom to help instructors and students understand the origins of Black linguistic patterns, and amplify and center Black language. Resources include a wealth of videos, interviews, articles, recommended readings, a wide variety of literature by Black writers, and a new magazine that started in September 2024.

Baker-Bell, April. *Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy*. Routledge, 2020.
Baker-Bell, a foundational scholar in Black Language justice focuses her work on "Anti-Black Linguistic Racism" and "white linguistic supremacy," what she argues is doing deep harm to Black students. Although her work focuses on Black learners, Baker-Bell is clear that her argument can be applied to all marginalized linguistic groups. Her research demonstrates that Black and African American Vernacular English have grammatical patterns and rules, just as White language does, and that it is actually an even more sophisticated language because of its historical roots and evolution from African origins through the institution of slavery. Her work ultimately calls for a complete dismantling of White language supremacy in education.

Baker-Bell, April, Bonnie J. Williams-Farrier, Davena Jackson, Lamar Johnson, Carmen Kynard, Teaira McMurtry, "This Ain't Another Statement! This is a DEMAND for Black Linguistic Justice!" Conference on College Composition and Communication. July 2020. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/demand-for-black-linguistic-justice.
This powerful "demand" emerges from the immediate context of America's racial reckoning in 2020. The writers set their context as the contemporaneous Black Lives Matter protests and anti-Black racist murders of several Black men and women. The call-to-arms lays out 5 specific demands that they believe the academy needs to comply with in order to dismantle the language and writing constructs that oppress, violate, and murder Black lives.

Brownlee, Yavanna, et. al. "Statement on Language, Power, and Action," Conference on College Composition and Communication, November 2022. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/language-power-and-action.
This statement focuses on identifying and explaining the power dynamics at play in academic composition settings, drawing on the Black Lives Matter Movement and Eric Garner's and George Floyd's murders in 2020 to demonstrate the unjust and inequitable power dynamic at play in advocacy for language justice. The statement also emphasizes the ways that language is an intrinsic part of identity and culture and, thus, linguistic injustice is inherently violent. The statement also presents

suggestions for dismantling existing pedagogic systems that emphasize standardized English and what to ask of learners instead, including suggestions about course design and pedagogy, program and institutional development, and research activities and uses.

Bucholtz, Mary, Dolores Ines Casillas, and Jin sook Lee. "California Latinx Youth as Agents of Sociolinguistic Justice," *Language and Social Justice in Practice*. Routledge, 2019. pp. 166-175.
These UC Santa Barbara Professors explain the importance of understanding that language privilege emerges from standardization and minoritization—the deliberate act of one group to make their language and race superior to others. They build their work upon the 20th-century legislation that created a particularly oppressive period for minoritized speech communities from which academic systems are still recovering to help reimagine Latine learners as helping to challenge and rewrite experiences of language equity in academia.

"CCCC Statement on Globalization in Writing Studies Pedagogy and Research," Conference on College Composition and Communication, November 2017. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/globalization.
This statement is addressed to writing program administrators (WPAs), scholars, and composition instructors and offers reasons for and suggestions about how to approach the teaching and learning of composition styles through the lens of globalization. Although much of this material speaks to international and learning exchange programs, there are several relevant conversations about ways to destandardize existing writing and language privilege in composition classrooms and settings.

"CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Multilingual Writers," Conference on College Composition and Communication, May 2020. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/secondlangwriting.
This statement asks for the renaming of ESL/ELL/LEP students as multilingual learners and encourages educators and colleges to view these students' experience of language as an asset, rather than a detriment because of their imperfect command of standardized English. Writers of the resolution ask campus communities to embrace the ethos of DEIJ to shift attitudes about multilingual students, and makes suggestions for best practices including: class size, writing assignment design and assessment, professional learning, Writing Center work with multilingual students, and other related aspects of the college-going experience for students.

Coclanis, Peter A., "Campus Politics and the English Language," *Inside Higher Ed*, June 5, 2018. https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2018/06/05/often-unspoken-privilege-speaking-english-academe-opinion.
Coclanis explores the concept of unearned privilege in an opinion piece. This type of privilege is what individuals are born into without having earned them, including race, gender, sexuality, and so forth. He argues that an overlooked unearned privilege is English language privilege and that it is important to consider this when navigating work with students in academic spaces.

Condon, Frankie and Vershawn Ashanti Young, eds. *Performing Antiracist Pedagogy in Rhetoric, Writing, and Communication*. University Press of Colorado, 2017.
This anthology of essays explores language assessment and grading as antiracist practices in several areas of the academy. With the introductory arguments of Asao B. Inoue, Frankie Condon, and Vershawn Ashanti Young, this book attempts to show that classroom racism has deep and dangerous connections to the perpetuation of racism outside of school. By focusing on how language is used and assessed in schools, contributors demonstrate both how racist practices undermine the spirit and practice of antiracism when existing systems of language supremacy and grading are used. Thus, contributors explore historical and contemporary origins of American academic racism as well as suggest ways to establish antiracist ethos and practice in contemporary classrooms that ask students to speak and write.

Curzan, Anne, Robin M. Queen, Kristin VanEyk, and Rachel Elizabeth Weissler. "Language Standardization and Linguistic Subordination," *Language and Social Justice in the United States*, vol. 153, no. 3, Summer 2023, pp. 18-35. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48739979.
Starting from the premise that instructor and social language "peeves" have long been written off as harmless, Curzan, et. al., use this conversation to suggest that rather than innocuous, these often physical responses (sickness, laughter) to language varieties outside of standardized English reveal the depths of bias individuals carry. The writers explain that standardized English, though a construct not a norm, is mistaken as the latter, which simultaneously perpetuates prejudice and discrimination against other Englishes.

Davila, Bethany A. and Cristyn L. Elder, "Welcoming Linguistic Diversity and Saying Adios to Remediation: Stretch and Studio Composition at a Hispanic-Serving Institution" University of New Mexico. *Composition Forum*, Spring 2017. https://compositionforum.com/issue/35/new-mexico.php.
This article details the way that the University of New Mexico is building embedded support into writing classes as a solution to course remediation placement inequities. The most valuable part of this piece is the assignments devised as alternatives to the traditional "college essay" and the ways that the instructors shift their and student perspectives toward a more inclusive perspective of language diversity in the college composition classroom.

De Katzew, Lilia. "Interlingualism: The Language of Chicanos/as." *National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies Annual Conference Proceedings*, 2002-2004: *Chican@: Critical Perspectives and Praxis at the Turn of the 21st Century, Selected Papers from the 2002, 2003, and 2004 NACCS Conference Proceedings*, San Jose State University Scholarworks, April 1, 2004, pp. 61-76 https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/naccs/2002-2004/Proceedings/6.
De Katzew argues that Chicano/a is an interlingual language. This article explores the history of Chicano/a language formation from social, historical, geographical, racial, economic, and political contexts which, De Katzew argues, are essential to

understanding both the language, the ways that it has been discriminated against, and how it is used to discriminate against Chicano/a individuals. This prejudice, De Katzew argues, is perpetuated in academic spaces because the language is rejected as autonomous due to its convergence of English and Spanish. De Katzew suggests that this is a misrepresentation of the language, which should be considered interlingual, a fluid space creating new language from existing languages, not a combination to two languages.

Dennihy, Melissa, "Beyond English: Linguistic Diversity in the College English Classroom," *Teaching Multi-Ethnic Literatures of the United States: Pedagogy in Anxious Times,* vol. 42, no. 4, Winter 2017, Oxford University Press, pp. 192-212. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26566095
Taking the perspective that standard English is actually standardized, Dennihy explores the way that racist values inform perspectives about language superiority and inferiority. The work emerges from Dennihy's experiences in teaching multi-ethnic US literature courses in English and the perspective that diversifying course materials and challenging language supremacy views creates more equitable learning experiences for students and calls for a reimagining of existing writing course pedagogy.

FYS at Wes, "Anti-Racist Writing Pedagogy," A Collective Working Towards Innovative and Just Writing Pedagogy. Wesleyan University, 2024. https://fysatwes.site.wesleyan.edu/make-room-for-differences-in-langauge/.
This resource offers useful and user-friendly suggestions to educators seeking advice on constructing anti-racist writing pedagogy, curriculum, discussion, assignments, and assessment. The article ends with several suggested readings for instructors to explore more the concepts of social justice in writing classrooms

Guerrero, Jr., Armando, "'You Speak Good English for Being Mexican': East Los Angeles Chicano/a English: Language and Identity," *Voices*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2014. pp. 53-62. https://escholarship.org/uc/item/94v4c08k.
Guerrero's article argues that East Los Angeles Chicano/a English is an important language to probe more deeply into using linguistic ideologies that analyzes its use in human interactions. Using this theoretical framework, Guerrero explores the ways that ChE is not just a language, but a manifestation of assumptions about the socioeconomics of a minoritized population, perpetuating negative and positive stereotypes about it. Guerrero explores common assumptions and biases and either invalidates or validates them, based upon research.

Hammond, Zaretta, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students*, Corwin, 2015.
Springboarding from her personal experiences of racial prejudice and discrimination in education, Hammond provides the neuroscience behind learning and shows how racism triggers minoritized learners' primal threat detection and prevention system. Arguing that no one can learn when their fight-flight-freeze

response is triggered, Hammond suggests for leveraging students' diverse cultures as assets to their learning, and how to shape pedagogy around the spirit and practice of cultural intelligence.

Hardee, Jay. "Code Meshing and Code Switching," Antiracist Praxis. American University Washington Library, 2022. https://subjectguides.library.american.edu/c.php?g=1025915&p=7749939. This article disentangles the practices of code-meshing and code-switching, both of which are common in academic and professional spaces for speakers of non-standardized English. Hardee explains how code-switching codifies linguistic racism by designating non-standardized English as incorrect or improper, and how code-meshing can empower speakers of diverse English dialects to shift the centrality of standardized English and include their own vernacular Englishes in the academic and professional worlds.

Hudley, Anne H. Charity. "Liberatory Linguistics," *Language & Social Justice in the United States*, vol. 152, no. 3, Summer 2023, pp. 212-226 https://www.jstor.org/stable/48739991. Focusing on experiences with Black undergraduates, graduates, postgraduates, and faculty members, Hudley argues that "liberatory linguistics" is a way to achieve language justice, which she suggests is essential to the establishment of campuswide equity. Hudley shares the conceptualization and evolution of Black Linguistics and the ways that it is being used by students and teachers to challenge standard language ideology.

Johnson, David M. and Lewis VanBrackle. "Linguistic Discrimination in Writing Assessment: How Raters React to African American "Errors," ESL Errors, and Standard English Errors on a State- Mandated Writing Exam," Assessing Writing vol. 17, no.1, 2012, pp. 35-54. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S107529351100047X. Johnson and VanBrackle explore the ways that internalized prejudice and discrimination inform assessment of standardized writing tests, focusing particularly on African American test takers and mechanical errors, according to standardized English language ideals. Johnson and VanBrackle argue that African American students' grammar errors are viewed differently from those made by multilingual students, with the view that African American writers are considered native English writers. What is most striking about this article and what sets it apart from other linguistic studies, except for Curzan, et. al., is the focus on the way perceived errors affect the attitude of the testers, and the way that their negative reactions iterate the linguistic discrimination students experience in these tests and explain at least some equity gaps in the test.

Kem, Pratna, Sara Boxell, and Peter Nien-chu Kiang. "Asian American Studies and AANAPISI Writing Initiatives," *Transformative Practices for Minority Student Success: Accomplishments of Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Servicing Institutions,* eds. Dina C. Maramba and Timothy P. Fong. Stylus, 2020. pp. 116-130.

In this book chapter, Kem, Boxell, and Nien-chu Kiang share their experience of deploying AANAPISI grant funding to improve outcomes and success rates for these student populations at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. From their curricular construction and deployment experiences, they find that culturally responsive pedagogy, as well as the connection of students with "culturally competent faculty members with whom they [can] identity" creates the foundation for these students' ultimate success in their mandatory writing courses, and college educations more generally. They also emphasize the ways that turning writing into a collaborative, collective effort is powerfully helpful to these students.

"Language Matters: Adios, LatinX!" Tzedek: Social Justice Fund, October 17, 2022. https://tzedeksocialjusticefund.org/language-matters-adios-latinx/.
In this brief article is a discussion around representations of gender in the term "Latino." The article explores how this term has shifted from the conventional gendering "Latino/Latina" to the more recent "LatinX" as a gender-neutral and, thus, more inclusive way to reference members of the community. It explains some of the pushback against this term, and proposes that the most inclusive non-gendered variation of the term is actually "Latine", which informs my use of the term throughout this project.

Larson, Richard L. and Richard Lloyd-Jones. "Students' Right to Their Own Language," Conference on College Composition and Communication, *CCC*, Fall 1974, vol XXV. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/srtolsummary.
This is the resolution adopted by the CCCC in 1974 that stipulates "how [English teachers should] respond to the variety in their students' dialects." Along with the position statement, the resource includes a background statement that introduces the conversations from which the resolution emerged, particularly the sociopolitical conditions of academia in America. Thus, the context is informed a great deal by connections made to the concept that language privilege has been constructed and, thus, that educators need to examine their linguistic biases to see the ways that they and students have been conditioned to see Edited American English as superior to other dialects of American English. There is extensive conversation about the harm that White language supremacy causes minoritized students by linking dialect to cultural identity, and readers can see in the contextual material a call for the foundations of what we now refer to as culturally responsive pedagogy and practices.

McWhorter, John. *Words on the Move: Why English Won't—and Can't—Sit Still (Like, Literally)*. Henry Holt, 2016.
Offering a sociopolitical and historical exploration of the evolution of the English language, McWhorter demonstrates how English cannot be expected not to change. His book focuses on why it is so challenging for people to accept this fact and explores several social and literary expressions and shifts, demonstrating how the changes in the English language are both important and inevitable.

Richardson, Elaine, et. al. "CCCC Statement on White Language Supremacy," Conference on

College Composition and Communication, June 2021. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/white-language-supremacy.
This statement defines White Language Supremacy (WLS) as a tool of racial oppression, offering some sociohistorical, political, and economic context for the ongoing use of WLS to disparage and disadvantage BIPOC. The writers argue that designations such as English Language Learners and others "points to the raciolinguistic othering of" minoritized groups in the U.S and suggest that only complete dismantling of standardized English practices in educational spaces can allow for the destruction of "linguistic imperialism."

Roberts, Paul. "Speech Communities," *Language Awareness: Readings for College Writers*, 12th edition. Paul Eschholz, Alfred Rosa, and Virginia Clark, eds. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2016, pp. 148-158.
Roberts' work explores the ways in which individual language and dialect across America has been informed by several of what he calls "speech communities": the people and places individuals engage with throughout their life that directly impact their verbal and written expression. The conversation here offers an interesting perspective to explain away White language privilege and supremacy by showing that all languages evolve through social, emotional, political, and academic environments, and that favoritism is generally a political rather than a biological perspective.

Rosa, Jonathan and Nelson Flores. "Rethinking Language Barriers & Social Justice from a Raciolinguistic Perspective," *Language and Social Justice in the United States,* vol. 153, no. 3, Summer 2023, pp. 99-114. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48739984.
Rosa and Flores initiate a discussion of language discrimination with reflections on recent technologies designed to transform accent variations into standardized English. These technologies, primarily used in work spaces (call centers, for example) promote themselves through the desire to universalize communication and, thus, improve it, Rosa and Flores show that they, instead, perpetuate "linguistic marginalization" (102). To subvert language discrimination, Rosa and Flores promote a raciolinguistic approach to teaching language that draws on the history and politics of colonialism and its impact on language supremacy ideology in order to dismantle it.

Sanders, Nick, Floyd Pouncil, Stephanie Aguilar-Smith, Trixie G. Smith, and Grace Pregent. "Making Good on Our Promises to Language Justice: Spheres of Coalitional Possibilities across the Discipline." CCC, vol. 75, no. 2, December 2023. pp. 360-388. https://doi.org/10.58680/ccc2023752360.
Sanders, et. al., argue that Writing Centers—including Writing Across the Curriculum/Discipline Centers—are important language justice warriors now, just as they were language oppression reinforcers in previous times. Grounding their argument in the 1974 "Students Right to Their Own Language" resolution and other socio-historical and socio-political contexts, Sanders, et. al., suggest that efforts to truly implement the values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access are undermined

by Writing Centers that continue to support students' acquisition of standardized English writing expectations.

Savini, Catherine, "10 Ways to Tackle Linguistic Bias in Our Classrooms," *Inside Higher Ed*, January 27, 2021. https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2021/01/27/how-professors-can-and-should-combat-linguistic-prejudice-their-classes-opinion.
Savini's article offers a very brief introduction to the reasons why language bias is problematic in academia and the ways in which suggestions that students code-switch is both harmful and inappropriate. Following a brief account of 2 seminal researchers on this topic, Stanley Fish and Vershawn Ashanti Young, Savini offers 10 ways to shift classrooms into the world of language equity, tackling suggestions not just for specific activities that can be introduced into a language equity-based classroom, but also language shifts educators can adopt to make their conversation with students and their work inclusive.

Warner, Gregory, Rhaina Cohen, and Luis Trelles, "How to Speak Bad English," *Rough Translation*, National Public Radio, Season 5, Episode 7. https://www.npr.org/2021/04/21/989477444/how-to-speak-bad-english
Heather Hanson, a global communication specialist, uses her work with English Language Learners around the world to explain why she no longer believes that standardized English is better than any other form of spoken English, and she proposes the theory that what White language supremacy deems as superior is actually inferior in terms of universal understanding.

Watson, Missy. "Contesting Standardized English: What harms are caused when we insist on a common dialect?" American Association of University Professors, May-June 2018: "But Let Us Cultivate Our Garden." https://www.aaup.org/article/contesting-standardized-english.
Watson's article covers briefly the history of English language standardization and offers empathy from personal experience about the challenges English instructors face despite the understanding and/or acceptance that continuing to privilege standardized English is harmful. Watson uses self-reflection to call English educators to the cause of challenging these perspectives not just in their classrooms, but in academic institutions and systems more widely.

Williams, Charitianne. ""Even Though I Am Speaking Chinglish, I can Still Write A Good Essay": Building a Learning Community Through Critical Pedagogy," *Transformative Practices for Minority Student Success: Accomplishments of Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Servicing Institutions,* eds. Dina C. Maramba and Timothy P. Fong. Stylus, 2020. pp. 101-115.
In this book chapter, Williams details the experience of tackling achievement gaps for AANAPI through curricular transformation with the support of AANAPISI grant money. Similar to California community colleges with AB 705 and 1705, the University of Illinois, Chicago was tasked with finding ways to reimagine ineffectual courses, particularly for multilingual students. Through extensive faculty research and professional learning, courses were devised that homed in on this specific

population's unique needs, experiences, language, and literature. Through student-instructor collaboration, courses were redesigned to put students in the position of dismantling oppressive academic systems with the support and scaffolding of their instructors. The goal of creating courses that "represent[ed] plurality as the normal human experience and provide students an entry point into university life" over 11 semesters was considered to be successful (109).

Wolfram, Walt. "Addressing Linguistic Inequality in Higher Education: A Proactive Model," Language and Social Justice in the United States, vol. 153, no. 3, Summer 2023, pp. 36-51. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/48739980.
Wolfram argues that current DEIJ work in academia fails to include linguistic justice into its conversations, advocacy, and practice. Grounding the argument in research probing student and faculty experiences, Wolfram reveals how the experiences and attitudes of standard language ideology and language gatekeeping result in experiences that threaten DEIJ work. Wolfram shares the program developed and deployed by the Linguistics Department at his University for students, faculty, student support staff, and administrators to learn how to understand and ultimately challenge language discrimination using materials (videos, workshops, etc.) comprised of student and professional voices. The success of the program seems to come down to the way that the values of language inclusion and justice are institutionalized through a "Campus Infusion Model" (44); no single department or program takes charge of these values but, rather, the entire campus community participates in establishing and perpetuating them.

Young, Vershawn Ashanti, Rusty Barret, Y'Shanda Young-Rivera, and Kim Brian Lovejoy, *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*. New City Community Press, 2018.
This book brings together some of the most powerful voices and advocates in conversations about language justice. The authors offer a socio-historical foundation upon which to build an understand of American linguistic prejudice and the ways that is has manifested in academia, particularly through the trend that asked students to code-switch—adopt Standardized Written/Academic English in the classroom and professional worlds and use Vernacular Englishes in private and home spaces. Calling this suggestion out as racist, the writers propose that code-meshing, a blending of Vernacular and SW/AE, is a way to decentralize standardized English and amplify other Englishes.

Zanuttini, Raffaella, Jim Wood, Jason Zentz & Laurence Horn. "FAQ," *The Yale Grammatical Diversity Project*. https://ygdp.yale.edu/faq.
This is a collection of frequently asked questions about the YGDP work on English in North America and understanding the project's approach to the English language and its dialects in this region. Of interest are the insistences on decentering the concept of a standard English dialect and the equation of dialect and intelligence.

—. *The Yale Grammatical Diversity Project*. https://ygdp.yale.edu/.

This is a linguistic research project that analyzes the dialects of English found across North America. Researchers are interested in collecting and understanding these English language variations at the linguistic level, and to make their findings available as widely as possible. Of particular interest to my project is the material that contextualizes language-based racism.

Assessment Equity

Alex, Patricia. "Time to Pull the Plug on Traditional Grading?" Education Next, 22.4, Fall 2022.
https://moorparkcollege.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/time-pull-plug-on-traditional-grading/docview/2761037167/se-2?accountid=44974
In this article, Alex explores equitable grading research and early practice, focusing on Joe Feldman's seminal work on the topic. Alex explains that equitable grading, as Feldman iterates it, is essentially master- or standards-based grading in practice, and that this approach to assessment is especially important to equitizing grading practices post-pandemic. The rest of the article explores attitudes toward equitable grading in school districts across CA, both the pushback and the pedagogical transformation.

Blum, Susan, *Ungrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning (and What to Do Instead)*: West Virginia U Press, 2020.
Blum's work is a collection of articles detailing instructors' pedagogical approaches to ungrading in the K-college classroom. After providing a historical overview of shifts in academic the assessment practices, Blum introduces ungrading as way to restore learning to the central focus of education. Like many writing about assessment equity, Blum argues that grades are harmful to students because they do not accurately assess what they claim to. She then turns the rest of the book over to individual practitioners from a wide range of subjects and grades who share their individual approaches to ungrading in their classrooms. Although K-12 takes up the most space, there are a number of entries from college instructors' courses.

Carillo, Ellen. C. "Ungrading: Where We Are and Where We Might Go," *Composition Studies,* Vol. 51, no. 2, 2023. pp. 131–136.
http://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A781251615/AONE?u=anon~3d685af1&sid=sitemap&xid=dec62546/.
Carillo explains the way ungrading speaks to the call for reform triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly due to the disproportionately negative impact of the pandemic on communities of color. One of the biggest impacts, Carillo argues, is on the shifts writing instruction and assessment takes when racial inequities and White language supremacy is removed from grades. Carillo also emphasizes ungrading as a benefit to students' mental health and, therefore, improvements in both academic success and student retention, and that it might also create opportunities to see AI as a tool, rather than threat to academic integrity.

Feldman, Joe, *Grading for Equity: What It Is, Why It Matters, and How It Can Transform Schools and Classrooms*. Corwin, 2019.
Although it focuses on K-12 education, Feldman's work has become the foundational work in conversations about equitable grading practices. His research offers a history of grades and existing grading systems in education around the world and then works through the many ways in which existing systems harm to students, before proposing several different approaches to skills mastery assessment that offer students and educators far more information from grades than they currently receive, and also cut out the noise that obscures grades, making it a completely inaccurate view of student achievement and capacity.

Gibbs, Laura. "(Un)Grading: It Can Be Done in College," *Education Week*. March 31, 2016. https://www.edweek.org/education/opinion-ungrading-it-can-be-done-in-college/2016/03.
As a guest writer, Gibbs takes over Starr Sackstien's *Education Week* spot and neatly outlines how ungrading fits into her teaching ethos at the University of Oklahoma. Gibbs details how her course assignments centralize learning over grades, her pedagogy emerging from the perspective that diverse students need diverse forms of assessment and, thus, ungrading serves this purpose. She also makes the point that ungrading allows for much more substantial and transformative feedback and, therefore, student growth.

Gibbs, Molly. "No D's and F's? No extra credit? Will these schools' switch to equity grading help or harm students?" NCA News Service, 2 May 2024. https://moorparkcollege.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/wire-feeds/no-d-s-f-extra-credit-will-these-schools-switch/docview/3049591721/se-2?accountid=44974
This brief article highlights assessment practices in some California K-12 schools following the pandemic, noting that there has been significant pushback from students and parents out of fear that standards are being lowered to accommodated equitable grading practices. I believe this article helps illustrate the small amount of knowledge learners and their families have about grading equity, but that there is immense power in their pushback against it, as many districts respond to by returning to conventional, inequitable practices. Gibbs also raises the point that with CSUs and UCs focusing exclusively on grades for their admissions process, more weight than ever is on them and, thus, learners and their families are more reluctant than ever to embrace something new that could threaten college admissions.

Hasinoff, Amy A., Wendy Bolyard, Dennis DeBay, Joanna C. Dunlap, Annika C. Mosier, and Elizabeth Pugliano. 2024. '"Success was Actually Having Learned:' University Student Perceptions of Ungrading." Teaching & Learning Inquiry 12, https://doi.org/10.20343/teachlearninqu.12.5.
This article focuses on student's voice, taking their feedback about equitable grading practices to help shape pedagogical transformation. Hasinoff, et. al., provide a brief literature review of the main voices in conversations about ungrading and their

varied practices, creating a clear trajectory of the ungrading movement from the 2010s in academia. This article is particularly interesting because it is one of a few that focalize ungrading at the college-level; much of the existing work on ungrading puts it in the context of K-12 educational spaces. The feedback from students emerges from 10 instructors and 14 courses at the University of Colorado, Denver, and 70% of respondents appreciated the shift to ungrading in their classes.

Hensley, Anna, et. al. "Writing Assessment: A Position Statement," Conference on College Composition and Communication, November 2006, rev. April 2022. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/writingassessment.
This resolution offers suggests for thinking about the purpose and uses of classroom writing assessments in the context of fairness and justice. Hensley, et. al., offer 6 principals that they recommend guide instructor construction and assessment practices, and all emphasize the importance of empowering writers, inclusive assignments and assessment of them, and awareness of the labor students pour into this kind of work. Each of the 6 principals is expounded upon in a best-practices section with detailed suggestions of how and why these components are important. There is also emphasis in a section of its own on language inclusivity and justice.

Inoue, Asao B. "Classroom Writing Assessment and Antiracist Practice: Confronting White Supremacy in the Judgments of Language," *Pedagogy*, vol. 19, no. 3, October 2019, pp. 373-404. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/733095.
Inoue argues in this article that composition assignments are social justice projects and, thus, writing classrooms are active sites of antiracist practice. Inoue suggests that classrooms must be considered ecologies within which it is the instructor's responsibility to guide students through conversations about racism and the ways in which prejudice and discrimination manifest in all aspects of human experience and interaction, both within the classroom and outside of it, particularly in the context of the socioeconomics of race in society. It is only through doing this work that writing classrooms, according to Inoue, become "antiracist writing ecologies" (376).

—. *Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies: Teaching and Assessing Writing for a Socially Just Future*. Fort Collin, 2015.
In this book, Inoue argues that all writing assessment in the college classroom is built upon racist values and that these need complete dismantling in order to create assessment that is equitable not just racially, but in all minoritized systems. Inoue's purpose is to propose anti-racist writing assessment practices to replace those that continue to undermine minoritized student success, using Frierian, Buddhist, and Marxist philosophies.

Kohn, Alfie. "The Case Against Grades." *Counterpoints*, 2013, Vol. 45, pp. 143-153. https://www.jstor.org/stable/42982088
In this article, Kohn argues that conventional grading practices do not tell us anything relevant about student competency or capacity. He suggests that letter and number grades harm students by making grades, rather than learning and growing, the most important part of education; thus, he argues, students will do as little as

possible to achieve a certain grade rather than engage with and evolve their thinking about the material. He offers an overview of pervasive arguments for and against ungrading from the 1980s through the early 2000s and proposes that even the most revolutionary "de-grading" systems are meaningless unless grades are completely removed from learning assessment.

Lall, Sumita. "Sabbatical Report: Targeting Equity Using Inquiry-based Learning and Contract Grading." Ventura College, Fall 2022. https://www.vcccd.edu/sites/default/files/media/pdf_document/2023/S. Lall-Ventura College- Sabbatical Report.pdf
Profesor Lall's sabbatical project explored ways to improve student success through a perspective shift in post-AB 705 and post-COVID classrooms. Her research considers the ways that inquiry-/problem-based learning, contract grading, and greater instructor awareness of and empathy with students' commitments outside of their education can facilitate a greater commitment in students to the process of learning and, ultimately, to their success in and beyond English classrooms.

Price-Dennis, Detra, and Steven Alvaraez, "Expanding Opportunities: Academic Success for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students," Position Statements, NCTE, November 14, 2018. https://ncte.org/statement/expandingopportun/.
This resource details the revisions to the 1986 position statement presented by the Task Force on Racism and Bias in the Teaching of English, "Expanding Opportunities: Academic Success for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students." Revisions are grounded in contemporary research and shifts in education since 1986. These include suggestions about how best to prepare English instructors to meet the needs of linguistically diverse students, emphasizing the importance of viewing students' language dialects outside of standardized English as aspects of cultural wealth and assets to their learning, rather than detriments. The argument acknowledges the need for specialized training for educators to gain fluency in linguistic diversity, and also suggests attitudinal shifts in assessment of written work that is asset-minded and growth-oriented in both summative and formative feedback. Focal points are in "Literacy Pedagogy and Curriculum Development," "Teacher Preparation and Professional Development," and "Assessment."

Sackstein, Starr. *Hacking Assessment*: *10 Ways to Go Gradeless In A Traditional Grades School.* Times 10 Publications, 2015.
This is a brief, direct, and useful resource that explores the moral necessity of recentering growth in education by rejecting traditional grading practices with the goal of empowering students in their learning journeys. Each section details a different way to centralize learning through activities, discussion, assignments, and assessments and these speak to many of the wide variety of ways that ungrading is practiced throughout education by individual practitioners (self-reflection, contract grading, self-grading, etc.).

Santos, Lori, host. "Making the Grade," *The Happiness Project Podcast*. Pushkin Industries. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AeBHvSPL6bk, 18 June 2022.

In this podcast, Santos explores the history of grading through conversations with librarians and historians in Yale and shares the ways in which conventional grading—which emerged from the 16th-century at Yale—is no longer fit for purpose, yet is universally used across academia worldwide. Her overall argument is that grading harms students and undermines learning so they should opt to be graded "Pass/Not Passed" whenever possible so as to shed the stress of grades and focus, instead, on acquiring knowledge.

Stommel, Jesse. *Undoing the Grade: Why We Grade, and How to Stop*. Hybrid Pedagogy, 2023.
Stommel's book synthesizes more than 20 years of work on grading equity, including previously published articles and research as well as new pieces written specifically for this publication. Stommel is a seminal voice in conversations about rejecting conventional grading systems. His work primarily promotes social justice and anti-capitalist views about learning and Stommel's approach to ungrading allows for students to centralize learning and growth through self-reflection and self-grading. Stommel also suggests that learning outcomes should be shaped in collaboration with students and should emerge organically from their courses as reflections of the learning goals and values they have that are unique to them as individuals.

Von Bergen, Megan. "Defining Ungrading: Alternative Writing Assessment as Jeremiad," *Composition Studies*, 51.2, 2023. pp. 137–142. https://compstudiesjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/vonbergen.pdf.
Von Bergen reflects on the ways that ungrading practices rise to the surface during periods of social and political unrest, suggesting that this form of assessment is generally most pronounced during calls for social justice. In the past, calls for grading reform emerged as a way to challenge war drafts, whereas in 2023, these have been tied to budget and faculty cuts, college admissions inequities, and school shootings. Above all, Von Bergen suggests that because ungrading is tied to social justice, it is less important that educators categorize ways to approach this assessment method than it is to use its flexibility creatively to mitigate academic social justice issues.

Revise to Equitize: Language and Assessment Equity Best Practices

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Moorpark College English Faculty, English Transitions Program Coordinator

Equitizing the Syllabus Checklist:

- ✓ Ensure the document is ADA-compliant.
- ✓ Ensure images and decorations illustrate diverse peoples and cultures; White representations are shifted to later pages.
- ✓ Use accent marks in author names, titles, words, etc., where relevant.
- ✓ Include:
  - Land Acknowledgement Statement
  - Antiracism Statement
  - Language Justice Statement
  - Equitable Grading Policies

Equitizing Instructor-Led Lessons (lectures, seminars, discussions, etc.) Checklist:

- ✓ Ensure images and examples reflect a wide range of individuals and subject matter experts.
- ✓ Minimize White American and European perspectives and shift out into middle and end places in conversations where possible.
- ✓ Teach learners to view personal culture as an asset to support their learning; model this with regular celebration of your own culture.

Equitizing Readings and Media (books, articles, resources, references) Checklist:

- ✓ Diversify core texts (e.g. textbooks) with a wide range of English speakers; you may need to create your own textbook.
- ✓ Minimize White American and European perspectives; shift into middle and end places in conversations (or shift out completely when possible).
- ✓ Welcome personal culture into learning space as worthy of academic study; model this with regularly with your own culture.

Equitizing Low-Stakes Activities Checklist:

- ✓ Restructure instructor-learner relationship to promote students' learning ownership and responsibility
- ✓ Assign work that celebrates, honors, and/or emerges from learners' individual cultures.
- ✓ Centralize personal culture as site of skill-building; model this regularly with your own culture.

Equitizing High-Stakes Assignments Checklist:

- ✓ Maintain transparency in activity expectations and how you will assess learner success; don't penalize or reward learners for skills/qualities that are not identified as assessment targets (e.g. don't measure grammar if you didn't teach it!).
- ✓ Offer learners opportunities to choose assignments used to measure their skill fluency (topic and assessment options). *Disclaimer: I have done this by offering students the "conventional" (aka traditional English essay) and a creative version of the assignment. Since AI has become increasingly accessible, I find more plagiarism and fraud issues than*

ever in the conventional assignments and, thus, am focusing on devising more creative options.

- ✓ Encourage cultural practices and preferences in demonstration of skills; model this with regularly with your own culture.
- ✓ Along with student samples, I provide students with my version of the assignment in which I intentionally share aspects of my cultures relevant to the specific topics of conversation from across the unit.

Equitizing Assessments Checklist:

- ✓ Ensure assignment and course expectations are 100% transparent in assignment guidelines, rubrics, and any other tool used to articulate expectations of students.
- ✓ Ensure students fully comprehend how you measure success on their work.
- ✓ Don't factor minoritized English expression into measurement; consider educating students about code-meshing.
- ✓ Do not factor into assessment anything not explicitly taught in your student interactions. You can still point these out, however, in growth-oriented language!
- ✓ Invite students to participate in assessment processes, e.g. student-devised rubrics, students' personal goals, etc.

Equitizing Feedback Checklist:

- ✓ Use students' preferred name(s) and pronoun(s) wherever possible; make your own clear to them.
- ✓ Ensure feedback is formative and detailed; direct students to where they learned/can learn more about the skill(s) you're assessing (class resources, campus support, etc.)
- ✓ Use language consistent with the course's ethos of antiracism, language justice, and assessment equity, and remind learners that these policies inform all course frameworks and activities.
- ✓ Celebrate successes and clearly identify growth areas (notice the language here!) and, where possible, tailor feedback to the learner's articulated personal goals.

Language and Assessment Equity Ongoing-Learning Checklist:

- ✓ Keep an open mind! This work is challenging and often existential—slow and steady wins the race.
- ✓ Find support from all the spaces: faculty, department, division, service, other institutions, other spaces. Let's build a Community of Practice!
- ✓ Be humble and accept that mistakes are inevitable; regroup and persist!

Additional Best Practices

Inspiration from Conference on College Composition and Communication's "Student's Right to Their Own Language"

- **On Bias/Microaggression as the Problem, Not Dialect Difference**

- "If we name the essential functions of writing as expressing oneself, communicating information and attitudes, and discovering meaning through both logic and metaphor, then we view variety of dialects as an advantage. In self-expression, not only one's dialect but one's idiolect is basic. In communication one may choose roles which imply certain dialects, but the decision is a social one, for the dialect itself does not limit the information which can be carried, and the attitudes may be most clearly conveyed in the dialect the writer finds most congenial. Dialects are all equally serviceable in logic and metaphor" (SRTOL 11).

- "The confusion between usage and grammar grows out of the prescriptive attitude taken by most school handbooks since the 18th Century. Modern linguists see grammar not as prescriptive but as descriptive, and teachers who approach the study of grammar as a fascinating analysis of an intensely important human activity, rather than as a series of do's and don'ts, can often rid their students of the fear and guilt that accompanied their earlier experiences with "grammar." Perhaps such teachers can even help their students to find the study of grammar fun" (SRTOL 21).

- **Suggestions for Writing Activities**
  - "Classroom assignments should be structured to help students make shifts in tone, style, sentence structure and length, vocabulary, diction, and order; in short, to do what they are already doing, better. Since dialects are patterns of choice among linguistic options, assignments which require variety will also open issues of dialect" (SRTOL 15).

  - "Listening for whole contexts" […] "Recognizing contradictions and failures in logic can help students concentrate on the "sense" of their communication rather than on its form. […] Practice in exercising options can make students realize that vividness, precision, and accuracy can e achieved in any dialect, and can help them see that sloppiness and imprecision are irresponsible choices in any dialect—that good speech and good writing ultimately have little to do with traditional notions of surface "correctness."" (SRTOL 16).

  - "Knowing that words are only arbitrary symbols fror the things they refer to, teachers will realize that dictionaries cannot supply the "real" meaning of any word. Knowing that language changes, they will realize that expressions labeled "non-standard" or "colloquial" by the dictionaries of fifty years ago may be listed without pejorative labels in an up-to-date dictionary" (SRTOL 21).

  - "We should begin our work in composition with them by making them feel confident that their writing, in whatever dialect, makes sense and is important to us, that we read it and are interest in the ideas and person that the writing reveals. Then students will be in a much stronger position to consider the rhetorical choices that lead to statements written in EAE" (SRTOL 23).

Conference on College Composition and Communication's "Statement on Language, Power, and Action"

I. Goals, Outcomes, and Expectations

A. Make explicit links between language, (in)justice, and access. Recognize the role of language in antiracism and other anti-oppression work. Model these links in the classroom and discuss how they affect power/privilege dynamics, especially classroom dynamics.
B. Promote a critical social and rhetorical view of language (as opposed to a prescriptivist, privileged, bigoted, and/or standard view) that recognizes how language varies according to the rhetorical situation, including audience/community, purpose, genre, etc. Avoid "one-size-fits-all" conceptions of "good writing."
C. Create classroom structures and norms that promote inclusion and support practices that work toward equity and that recognize power/privilege dynamics (e.g., transparency around what we do and why, community agreements for interaction in the classroom, assessment models that value labor and growth).

II. Content (topics, materials, assignments)

A. Include representation of diverse linguistic identities, communities, and everyday experiences in course materials and assignments.
B. Promote a critical view of language and power (i.e., Critical Language Awareness), including a deep understanding of the harmful role that prescriptivism/standard language ideology can play at school and in society.
C. Adopt a broad view of literacy that includes visual, multimodal, embodied, and other non-alphabetic ways of knowing.
D. Teach and encourage use of rhetorical text/social (reading/listening) engagement skills, with close attention to inclusion/exclusion and other power dynamics.
E. Create and sustain opportunities for students to draw on their full linguistic repertoires, including a range of varieties/dialects, codes, styles, and modalities, including those that have historically been stigmatized/marginalized in the academy. This includes opportunities for code-meshing/translanguaging.
F. Design assignments that encourage students to make informed linguistic choices and to take rhetorical risks. Pair these assignments with evaluative practices that privilege these decisions.
G. Be transparent about the assumptions and expectations for course activities and assignments, using accessible language and examples.

III. Feedback, Grading, and Assessment

A. Align feedback/grading practices with a commitment to linguistic and social justice (i.e., recognize that simply changing course content is not enough).
B. Prioritize equity through transparency in rubrics, labor-based grading, and other similar assessment tools and practices.
C. Recognize that feedback is relational and not (just) transactional, and use feedback to strengthen relationships with and among students, and to promote peer engagement and self-assessment among writers.

D. Orient feedback/assessment practices in a commitment to student agency, cultural rhetorical sovereignty, and growth, rather than a deficiency model—especially when it comes to students from linguistically marginalized backgrounds.
E. Advocate for valuing a variety of publication types in review and promotion, including creative writing, public genres, multimodal work, etc.
F. Recognize and reward multilingual and multidialectal scholarship.
G. Promote linguistic equity in scholarly editing and peer review practices (see, for example, section 5 of the antiracism guidelines by Cagle, Eble, Gonzales and others).

REVISE TO EQUITIZE

Language & Assessment Equity

Professional Development Handbook

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Land Acknowledgement:
We acknowledge Moorpark College occupies the unceded traditional land of the Chumash people who have stewarded it throughout generations. As we honor the Chumash people with gratitude, we commit to learning how we may be better stewards of this land we inhabit as well. We seek to build relationships with the Chumash community through academic pursuits, partnerships, historical recognitions and community service as these relationships are foundational for inclusive and equitable education and community engagement (Moorpark College Multicultural Day).

Social Justice & Equity Statement:
We embrace and value the varied experiences that each member of our community brings to the college and respect the intersecting identity of each individual. We actively work to ensure that all learners can access and participate in a safe, meaningful, engaging, and challenging learning environment (Moorpark College Mission, Values and Vision).

Antiracism Statement:
We affirm our commitment to recognizing, addressing, and eradicating all forms of institutional and systemic racism and ethnic oppression. We are committed to creating and maintaining an environment of anti-racism and identifying resources and opportunities to advance this work (Moorpark College Mission, Values and Vision).

Language Diversity Statement:
Diverse languages and dialects are welcome in this course! There is no inclusive Standard Written/Academic English. Here, I value your personal linguistic expression, and those of others in the course. This course expects students to honor this policy, seek out clarification as necessary, and not assert a "correct" grammar (Katie Bronsten, English M01A, M01B, M01C Syllabi).

I REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ACT OF SILENCING, and I want to encourage you to incorporate into your writing your Vernacular Englishes. As a White American, my privilege has handicapped me: my subject expertise and knowledge is limited by language supremacy. Thus, my specialism in the study of English language and literature emerges from White European pedagogy. I can show you what I know and I want you to show you what I know. Thus, I encourage you to learn all that this course has to offer AND where your own linguistic patterns participate in the same conversation through the process of code-meshing:

- "Code-meshing pedagogies […] look at this divide between the acceptable codes of public and academic discourse versus the marked codes of home and social discourse, and contend that these multiple codes of English can fruitfully co-exist" (Jay Hardee, "Code Meshing and Code Switching," American University Library, 2022).

The most exciting part of learning about reading, writing, and critical thinking strategies, in my opinion, is that it encourages curiosity and wonder about all language and expression. When you read on and learn about White European composition strategies and tools, think about where your own language has similar or divergent strategies and situations. *None is more important than any other* and, most importantly, if an aspect of language that is important to you is not on the list, that is because *I do not know it, not because it is not worthy of this list*. So, I invite you to educate me in the process of your own education and remember that what follows are just some of the keys to the many castles of writing and spoken word pieces creators use and that students should analyze in their essays this semester (Katie Bronsten, "English M01A Writing Tips and Tools Booklet," Spring 2024).

What's Inside?

Language Justice and Grading Equity

> "the Moorpark College Academic Senate condemn any behavior or practice that denigrates Black, Indigenous, and people of color and reject individual and institutional racism on campus and in our community; and Resolved, That the Moorpark College Academic Senate support behavior and practice that promote anti-racism, freedom, equity, and justice on campus and in our community"(Patty Colman and Core Members of Teaching Women and Men of Color Advocates (TWMOCAs) at Moorpark College "3.01 F20: Moorpark College Academic Senate Resolution in Support of Black Lives Matter Fall 2020).
>
> "Resolved, That the Moorpark College Academic Senate act consciously to create a safe and inclusive working and learning environment where diversity and multiculturalism are treasured and respected fundamentally and institutionally. The embedded long history of cultural bias and implicit racism do exist and part of our mission is to exterminate those origins from our institution, endeavoring to eradicate barriers to equity" (Ray Zhang, "3.01 S21: Moorpark College Academic Senate Resolution in Solidarity with the Asian American and Pacific Islander Community" Spring 2021).

These statements, written by campus social justice warriors in response to the tremendous horrors that our communities faced in recent years—and, regretfully continue to face—inspired gargantuan efforts toward equity in education. Diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice work has always been part of academia, but a new wave of calls-to-arms in 2020 mobilized a renewed fight for human rights, and revealed the significant blind spots in the efforts to achieve these thus far. My sabbatical project took on conversations about institutional racism that were becoming uncomfortably loud in my classroom practice and philosophies. Thus, my project became an opportunity to make the major shifts I felt were needed to live authentically and truthfully in my antiracist mission. I know that I will make mistakes and the work I create in this moment will become outdated. I also know that when I know better, I can do better; I recommit my life to continuing to grow as a social justice warrior.

One of the goals of my sabbatical project was to produce a best-practices handbook that would provide the campus community with resources, examples, and inspiration that could initiate their own journey toward achieving language and assessment equity in the work they do with students; I wanted to make something that I wish I had at the start of my own journey. While my experience emerges from the English Department and 19 years of teaching composition and literature courses, writing pervades all areas of the academy; not all faculty, staff, and administrators require students to write for course credit, but most student interactions require writing in some capacity: emails and other correspondence; transfer, scholarship, and job applications; short- and long-answer written assignments and assessments; projects, proposals, and plans; and, so much more. My hope is that the material in this booklet, far from being exhaustive, will be a starting reference in anyone's journey toward achieving language and assessment equity across our campus community, for students, faculty, staff, and administrators alike.

Key Terms

This is a sampling of the core complex and ever-changing terms I became best friends with as I worked through (and continue to!) the process of establishing my pedagogy as antiracist and equitable. I've gathered these definitions with growth and learning as my primary goal: the resources linked offer further reading, resources, research, and perspectives far beyond the scope of my sabbatical project.

Antiracism: "Being anti-racist is an active pursuit. It involves:

- Recognizing and working to eliminate racist practices, structures, policies, and beliefs in all levels of society and its institutions.
- Identifying the ways in which the white race benefits from said systems and institutions and working to change them.
- Raising awareness of how racism impacts people of color and limits our country's ability to become a better place for all of its citizens.
- Recognizing how racism is more than a personal belief system, but rather an indoctrination system and an essential part of American history.
- Acknowledging how it shapes society in both obvious and subtle ways.
- Working to dismantle racist systems and institutions" (Fair Fight Initiative).

Code Meshing: "Code-meshing pedagogies […], instead of matching code to context, [asks] that students use all of their linguistic resources within a single rhetorical context. […] Instead of placing the codes of English side-by-side and learning to recode prose to make it acceptable for publication, code-meshing looks at the various rhetorics of World Englishes as resources from a common language, an English that is rich, flexible, and adaptive to other linguistic and cultural traditions" (Jay Hardee "Code Meshing and Code Switching").

Code-Switching: "[…] when speakers of nonstandard English chose to speak and write in Standard English in, say, the academy or the business world, they are said to be "code switching. […] Vershawn Ashanti Young, however, […]argues that code-switching instills a separate-but-equal idea of Englishes when pedagogies teach students that they must take pains to match the correct code of English to the appropriate context, and that nonstandard Englishes, despite lip-service to their validity, are incorrect in academic, professional, and public discourse. Young and others argue that code-switching pedagogies, also known as contrastive pedagogies because students contrast Standard English with the codes of other dialects (2), naturally suggest the inferiority of nonstandard dialects and so reify the inferior social status of nonstandard English speakers" (Jay Hardee "Code Meshing and Code Switching").

Contract Grading: "Labor-based grading (also known as contract grading or a labor-based grading contract) is a type of alternative grading style where grades are based on the amount of labor that is agreed upon between students of the course and the course's instructor. Labor-based grading involves the co-creation of a course contract at the start of the semester that is utilized to grade all members of the course. Faculty and students also return to the contract at midterm to review and make possible changes. This co-created

contract only focuses on the labor required for learning, such as the amount of time spent on an assignment, rather than the "quality" of the work that is produced while learning. In labor-based grading contracts, the course typically has a default grade, which indicates that if a student does all of the labor that is agreed upon in the contract, a student will receive said default grade, no matter what. In this framework, a student can earn an "A" by engaging in more than the baseline amount of labor for the course. The course contract establishes what kinds of labor that further supports student learning can be asked of, but not required, by an assignment or activity to result in a higher grade" ("Labor-Based Grading")

Dialect: "Dialects are linguistically distinct variations of a main language that have arisen because they are used within specific regional, economic, social, industrial, and cultural communities. Both the spoken and written parts of the dialect are governed by a particular grammar and syntax" (Marissa Gamache, "An Exploration of "Standard" English").

Formative Feedback: "Formative feedback helps students recognize gaps in their knowledge, areas to improve, what support resources they may need, and learning strategies they might change or adapt to meet the course outcomes. Without formative feedback, students may not be aware of their own misunderstandings. This can later lead to confusion and cause students to lose motivation" ("Formative Assessment and Feedback").

Hidden Curriculum: "Hidden curriculum refers to the unwritten, unofficial, and often unintended lessons, values, and perspectives that students learn in school. While the "formal" **curriculum** consists of the courses, lessons, and learning activities students participate in, as well as the knowledge and skills educators intentionally teach to students, the hidden curriculum consists of the unspoken or implicit academic, social, and cultural messages that are communicated to students while they are in school. The hidden-curriculum concept is based on the recognition that students absorb lessons in school that may or may not be part of the formal course of study—for example, how they should interact with peers, teachers, and other adults; how they should perceive different races, groups, or classes of people; or what ideas and behaviors are considered acceptable or unacceptable. The hidden curriculum is described as "hidden" because it is usually unacknowledged or unexamined by students, educators, and the wider community. And because the values and lessons reinforced by the hidden curriculum are often the accepted status quo, it may be assumed that these "hidden" practices and messages don't need to change—even if they are contributing to undesirable behaviors and results, whether it's bullying, conflicts, or low graduation and college-enrollment rates, for example" (The Glossary of Education Reform)

Interlingualism/Interlinguality: "Interlingualism means the differing degrees of relations between two languages, or among three or more languages. At the individual level, interlingualism denotes a person's knowledge and use of linguistic, pragmatic and sociolinguistic features of two, three or more languages" (Frank Deiby Giraldo Aristizábal, "Interlingualism: Beyond bilingualism and onto the knowledge and use of languages").

Linguistic Racism/White Language Supremacy and Privilege: "Linguistic racism is defined as the mistreatment, devaluation, and acts of discrimination towards people based on their language use or perceptions about their ethnicities" (Nooshan Ashtari and Stephen Krashen, "Confronting linguistic racism").

Mastery-Based Grading: "The key underlying principle of mastery grading is that all students can learn, but different students will learn at different rates and need different strategies and supports to assist them in their learning. […] Three defining traits of mastery grading are providing students with learning objectives for course content, allowing students opportunities to show mastery on assessments that are aligned to the learning objectives, and giving students multiple ways to demonstrate mastery of each learning objective" ("What is Mastery Grading?"). Standards-Based Grading is another form of this type of grading.

Multilingualism/Multilinguality: "(of people or groups) able to use more than two languages for communication, or (of a thing) written or spoken in more than two different languages" ("multilingual," Cambridge Dictionary). Some language justice advocates promote changing the designation of English as a Second Language (ESL)/English Language Learner (ELL) students to Multilingual Students, which is felt to be less pejorative than the former.

Next Level English: "NLE is a series of theories and lessons that aim to engage and center minoritized students and the cultural wealth they bring to academia. NLE teaching invites cultivation of identity in writing through positionality and code meshing" (Michelle Gonzales and Kisha Linguistic Justice Community of Practice, CCCO and Puente Project, December 1, 2023).

Rhetoric: "Rhetoric is the way in which you communicate in everyday life. These communications can be persuasive in nature and can be made of text, images, video, or any other type of media. Rhetoric requires an understanding and control of language and knowledge of culture; the rhetorical situation which includes the purpose, audience, topic, writer, and context, genre; and other aspects to achieve an intended purpose. In many cases, rhetorical appeals (ethos, pathos, logos) can also contribute to this intended purpose" ("What is Rhetoric?")

Sociolect: "a dialect created by social rather than regional boundaries"; "a variety of language used by a particular social group" ("What People Get Wrong About African-American English").

Standard Written/Academic/American/Edited English: "the "proper" way to communicate in "formal" settings, including in the workplace, in school, and in government, sociolinguists and language experts have long called attention to how the idea of Standard English works to strengthen the racial inequalities of our society. This is because, as sociolinguists have shown, the grammar and word preferences of Standard English are based on the style of speaking and the language habits most familiar to white, college educated, upper middle-class people. Since Standard English is preferred in schools and the

workplace, students who are more comfortable with SE conventions are viewed as more academically prepared to achieve, while students who are more familiar with other varieties of English, say Black English for example, are erroneously seen as linguistically inadequate ands underprepared. These assumptions can lead to discrimination" (Ana Milena Ribero, "What IS (AND ISN'T) Standard Written English").

Students Right to Their Own Language (SRTOL): This resolution was declared by the Conference on College Composition and Communication, and was published in 1974: "We affirm the students' right to their own patterns and varieties of language -- the dialects of their nurture or whatever dialects in which they find their own identity and style. Language scholars long ago denied that the myth of a standard American dialect has any validity. The claim that any one dialect is unacceptable amounts to an attempt of one social group to exert its dominance over another. Such a claim leads to false advice for speakers and writers, and immoral advice for humans. A nation proud of its diverse heritage and its cultural and racial variety will preserve its heritage of dialects. We affirm strongly that teachers must have the experiences and training that will enable them to respect diversity and uphold the right of students to their own language" ("SRTOL").

Translingualism/Translinguality/Translanguaging: "see[ing] difference in language not as a barrier to overcome or as a problem to manage, but as a resource for producing meaning in writing, speaking, reading, and listening" ("Language and Culture: Translingualism").

Ungrading: "Ungrading, broadly defined, is an assessment practice that moves beyond the conventional grading practices and intentionally focuses more on learning and less on grades (Blum & Kohn, 2020). It critically views grades as a systemic practice and offers alternative ways to reimagine how student learning can be assessed more equitably" ("Ungrading: Reimagining Assessment of Student Learning").

Professional Learning

> "[C]ourses which limit themselves to a narrow view of language in hopes of pleasing other departments will not offer a view of dialect adequate to encourage students to grow more competent to handle a fuller range of the language, and thus will defeat their own purpose. What is needed in the English classroom and in all departments is a better understanding of the nature of dialect and a shift in attitudes toward it" (Richard Lloyd-Jones, "SRTOL" 18).

> **"**Writing programs should create professional development opportunities that include the study of relevant developments in applied linguistics, English as a lingua franca, foreign language pedagogies, rhetoric and composition, second-language writing, translingual approaches to composition, and related approaches, disciplines, and fields. Writing programs should also prepare teachers to address linguistic and multicultural issues through both graduate seminars and workshops that include interactions with culturally and linguistically diverse students" ("CCCC Statement on Globalization in Writing Studies Pedagogy and Research").

Research[13] and personal experience show that antiracist academics require specialized and ongoing professional learning opportunities to support the transformational shifts needed to dismantle systemic racism in the academy; because we are products of Whitewashed academic experiences, the gaps in our own learning perpetuate harm to our students. This section offers my vision for a professional learning series that will support collegewide faculty and staff in their learning about the call for language and assessment equity and how to participate in perpetuating a culture of linguistic and grading justice in student interactions across academia. I include suggested workshop organization and resources to guide sessions and participants, examples and models for student interaction. These comprise the following topics and organization structure:

1. **Workshop 1: Unearthing Personal Prejudice and Opening Up to Learning**
   This workshop establishes a research-based foundation in conversations about language and assessment equity. Beginning with personal reflection activities, the goal is to position participants in the conversation, support them in uncovering complicated emotions and perspectives about their role in the work, and initiate the deep learning necessary to prepare practitioners to shift perspectives and pedagogy.

2. **Workshop 2: Language Identity and Understanding Multilingual Learners**
   This workshop asks practitioners to understand language as identity and the ways that language marginalization emerges from racist values and beliefs. Beginning with personal reflection activities, the goal is to enable participants to gain empathy for marginalized student populations through the development of a greater understanding of linguistic identity and multilingual learning experiences.

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[13] "Students' Right to Their Own Language" (1974), "CCCC Statement on Globalization in Writing Studies Pedagogy and Research" (2017), Charitianne Williams, " 'Even Though I Am Speaking Chinglish, I can Still Write A Good Essay': Building a Learning Community Through Critical Pedagogy" (2020), "CCCC Statement on Language, Power, and Action" (2022), Walt Wolfram, "Addressing Linguistic Inequality in Higher Education: A Proactive Model" (2023).

3. **Workshops 3-6: Revise to Equitize**
   These workshops tackle core aspects of faculty and staff work with students in hands-on revision activities, implementing participant's new and/or greater awareness of language and assessment equity theories and practices. Through engagement with models and examples from LJAE experts, participants will "revise to equitize" aspects of their classes, services, and engagements with students, focusing on:

   - Session 1: Policies and Curriculum
     - Equitizing Course and Service Policies
     - Curriculum Diversification Strategies

   - Session 2: Coursework
     - Amplifying Personal Englishes in Low-Stakes Assignments and Activities
     - Equitizing High-Stakes Assignments

   - Session 3: Assessment (formerly known as grading)
     - Equitable Measurements
     - Inclusive and Feedback and Communication

   - Session 4: Life-Long Learning (and homework)
     - Long-Term Commitment to Ongoing Learning
     - Personal and Institutional Accountability Practices

Foundational Research and Resources

The materials listed here represent some of the foundational explorations of language and assessment equity conversations. I recommend these as a the reading list for the proposed workshops and for self-guided research and learning.

All-In-One

The Puente Project, "Puente Anthology," Center for Educational Partnerships, University of California, Berkeley, http://www.thepuenteproject.org/anthology.
Research, readings, lesson ideas, and more include the topics of: "Racial Justice"," Linguistic Justice", "Trusting Indigenous Knowledge", "Mind, Body, and Spirit", "Environmental Justice", "Liberated Students", "Histories of Migration" "Counternarratives", "Dreaming of Gender, Sexuality, and Freedom", and "Puente Comunidad"

Anti-Racism

Hammond, Zaretta, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students*, Corwin, 2015.

Kendi, Ibram X. *How To Be An Antiracist*. One World, 2023.

Pollock, Mica, ed. *Everyday Antiracism: Getting Real About Race in School*. The New Press, 2008.

Rios, Victor, Rebeca Mireles-Rios, and Audrey Lee. *From Risk to Promise: A School Leader's Guide to Professional Learning in Prosperity-Based Education*. Independently Published, 2022.

Singleton, Glenn E. *Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools*. Corwin, 2015.

Language Equity

Baker-Bell, April. "Black Language Education." *Black Language Syllabus,* 30 Jan. 2021, http://www.blacklanguagesyllabus.com/black-language-education.html

—. *Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy*. Routledge, 2020.

Inoue, Asao B. "Classroom Writing Assessment and Antiracist Practice: Confronting White Supremacy in the Judgments of Language," *Pedagogy*, vol. 19, no. 3, October 2019, pp. 373-404.

Larson, Richard L. and Richard Lloyd-Jones. “Students’ Right to Their Own Language,” Conference on College Composition and Communication, *CCC*, Fall 1974, vol XXV. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/srtolsummary.

Young, Vershawn Ashanti, Rusty Barret, Y’Shanda Young-Rivera, and Kim Brian Lovejoy, *Other People’s English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*. New City Community Press, 2018.

Assessment Equity

Blum, Susan, *Ungrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning (and What to Do Instead)*: West Virginia U Press, 2020.

Feldman, Joe, *Grading for Equity: What It Is, Why It Matters, and How It Can Transform Schools and Classrooms*. Corwin, 2019.

Sackstein, Starr. *Hacking Assessment*: *10 Ways to Go Gradeless In A Traditional Grades School.* Times 1, 2015.

Stommel, Jesse. *Undoing the Grade: Why We Grade, and How to Stop*. Hybrid Pedagogy, 2023.

Revise to Equitize Workshop 1:
Unearthing Personal Prejudice and Opening Up to Learning

It is essential that learners expose and explore their conscious and unconscious biases to open up to their role in the important change work of language justice and assessment equity. To prepare for this first workshop, participants will be asked to reflect critically on their experiences of and interactions with student writing and how they grade (Faculty) or measure its success (Student Support Practitioners), before diving into a foundational resource in this discussion and one university's approach to implementing a linguistic justice and equitable assessment framework on their campus.

Participant Pre-Work:

1. ***Personal Application and Reflection:***
   Write, draw, speak, etc. responses to the following:
   - What views do you hold about language? How do you talk about Englishes other than Standardized English?
   - Reflect on your experience of student writing: What attitudes, assumptions, preferences do you bring with you to your engagement with student work? How do you feel these influence your judgement of students' written work? In other words, how do your recommendations about revision, improvement, etc. reflect your attitudes, assumptions, and preferences about writing)?

2. ***Readings and Media:***
   Read and identify 1-2 "Golden Lines" (anything that seems to you inspiring, revelatory, important, etc.) from each:
   - Hammond, Zaretta, "What's Culture Got to Do With It? Understanding the Deep Roots of Culture," *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students*, Corwin, 2015. pp. 21-35.
   - Inoue, Asao B. "Classroom Writing Assessment and Antiracist Practice: Confronting White Supremacy in the Judgments of Language," *Pedagogy*, vol. 19, no. 3, October 2019, pp. 373-404.

Workshop Outline:

1. ***Exploring Linguistic Bias in Popular Culture***
   - "Bad" Grammar memes, imagery, jokes, and more

2. ***Pre-Work Reflection Sharing***
   - Language views and impact on attitude toward student writing
   - Golden Lines and additional foundational resources

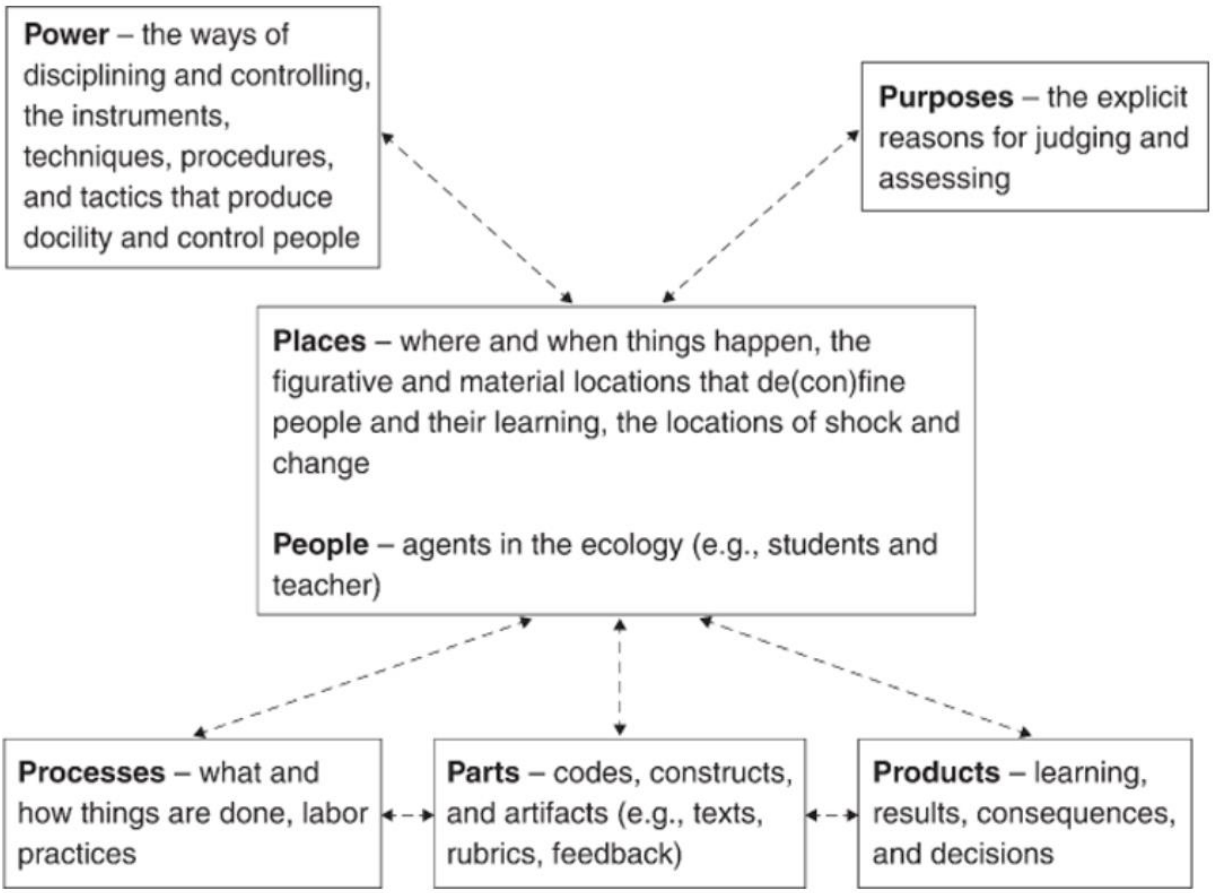
3. ***Entering the Language Justice and Assessment Equity Conversation***
   - Equitable Writing and Assessment Framework Examples (Inoue and Poe, Wolfram)
   - New Vision and Mission Statements in support of language and assessment equity

Equitable Writing and Assessment Framework Examples

1. Asao B. Inoue and Mya Poe, "How to Stop Harming Students: An Ecological Guide to Antiracist Writing Assessment," compstudiesjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/poeinoue_full.pdf

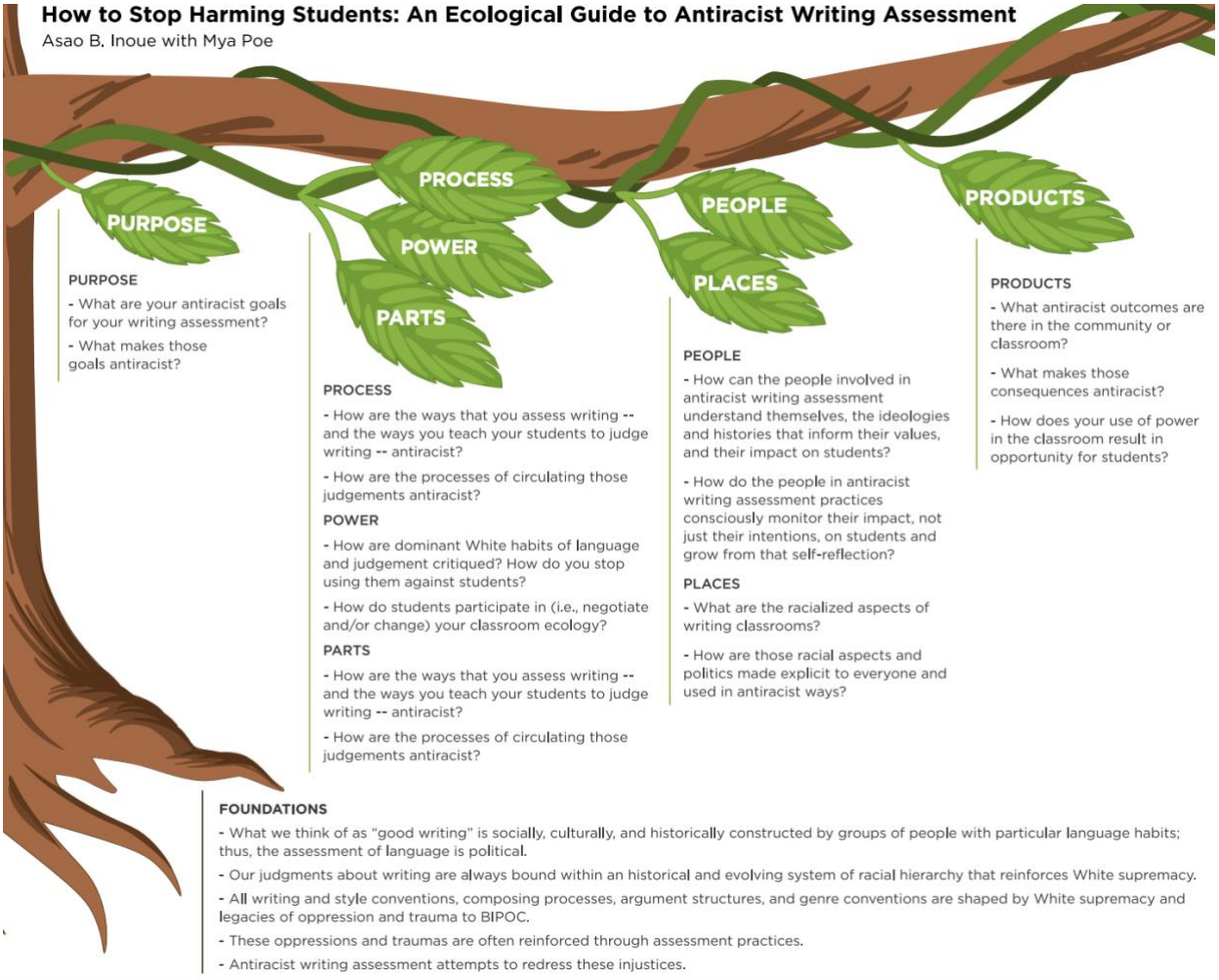
   In *Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies: Teaching and Assessing Writing for A Socially Just Future* (2015), Inoue defines "ecology" as "a complex system made up of several interconnected elements" and uses this metaphor "to see classroom writing assessment as an ecology with explicit features, namely a quality of more than, interconnectedness among everything and everyone in the ecology, and an explicit racial politics that students must engage with" (9). Inoue's metaphor makes classroom ecologies intersectional spaces comprised of intersectional identities and writing assignments, students' completion of them, and instructor assessment must account for the intersection of race, gender, economics, history, sociology, and all other aspects of the human experience.

   Part 1: Understanding Inoue's "Writing Ecology":



Part II: Implementing the Writing Ecology Principles

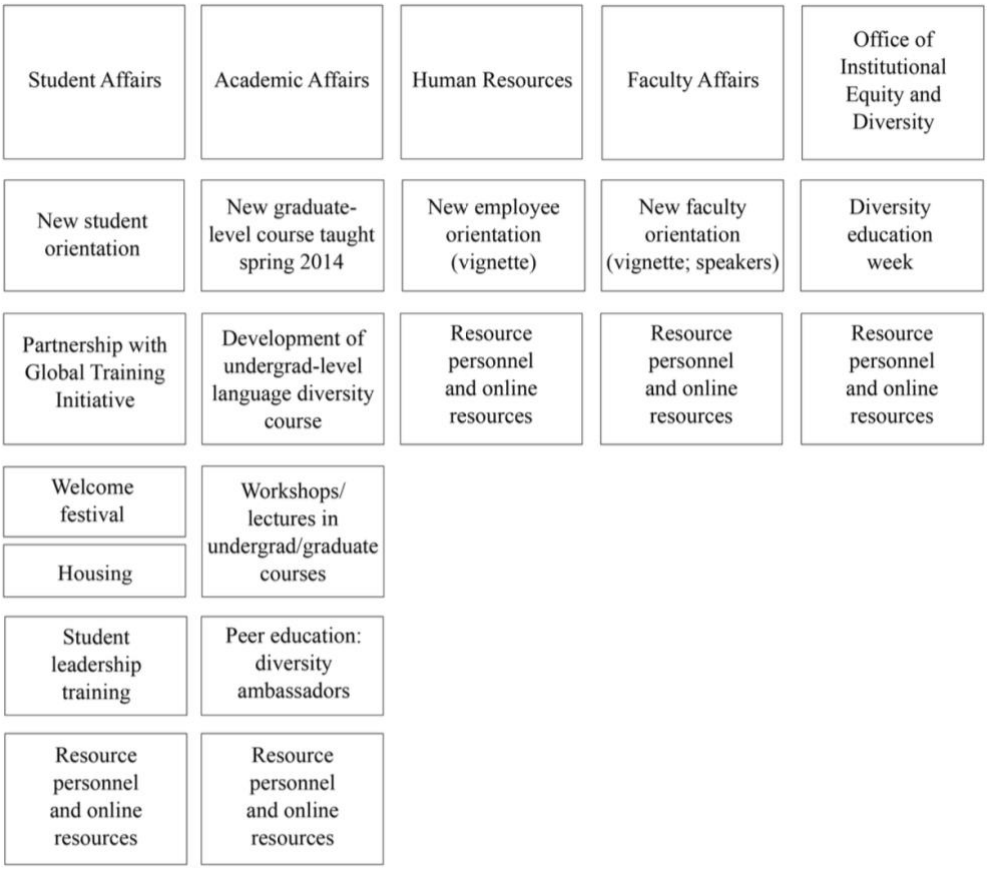
The image below is a visualization of how Inoue and Mya Poe suggest learning about and implementing an ecology of antiracist writing classroom. The link above will take you to additional pages that detail the components illustrated here more fully and also provide additional resources to continue learning about antiracist writing practice and assessment.



2. North Carolina State University's Language Diversity Ambassadors and Educating the Educated Program, www.linguistics.chass.ncsu.edu/thinkanddo/ete.php

Walt Wolfram's "Addressing Linguistic Inequality in Higher Education: A Proactive Model" (2023) is detailed a way to extend DEIJ work to include language justice advocacy and work. Emerging from the Linguistics Department at North Carolina State University, the Educating the Educated program institutionalizes the work of undermining linguistic subordination and is a collaborate and ongoing learning program for the institution. Wolfram argues that "It is not just the student body that needs vital information about dialect diversity; faculty and administrators are equally in need of such substantive information" because "This knowledge influences how faculty interact with and assess students, how they interact as colleagues, and how they view themselves as members of the academic community" (Wolfram 42). The screenshots below illustrate the NCSU language justice program components, and I believe they are something that could be implemented under the College's DEIJ mission and values and through many existing campus disciplines, programs, and support services.

Part I: The Campus-Infusion Model in Implementation



Source: Stephany Brett Dunstan, Walt Wolfram, Audrey J. Jaeger, and Rebecca E. Crandall, "Educating the Educated: Language Diversity in the University Backyard," *American Speech* 90 (2) (2015): 274, https://doi.org/10.1215/00031283-3130368.

Part II: Implementation in Action

Recognizing that institutionalizing a culture of language and assessment equity at NCSU meant embedding the education and value system across all areas of the university. The following flyer and button images were distributed by the Linguistics Department across NCSU to promote their message to students and also introduce their Language Diversity Ambassadors program, detailed below.

"Howl with an Accent" Campus Poster and Button

"A substantive function of the LDA [Language Diversity Ambassadors] is a monthly meeting for students and others that highlights a language issue of relevance to the campus community. For example, in the last couple of years, meetings have included:

- A presentation and discussion of language issues in the University's Book of Common Reading for 2019–2020, Born a Crime by Trevor Noah. This activity is a recognized campus seminar event in connection with the Book of Common Reading.
- A screening and discussion of the documentary Talking Black in America as an event celebrating Black History Month on campus. This event was cohosted by the NC State Union Activities Black Student Board.
- A student presentation on "Queer Language" that presented the state of current ideology and research about the notion of speech in queer communities.
- A presentation and discussion of American Sign Language, including diversity in ASL that is featured in a Language and Life Project documentary, Signing Black in America. This event was cohosted with a university sorority that requested that LDA give a presentation on the topic.

- A demonstration and discussion of language misogyny in classic Disney films over time." (Wolfram, "Addressing Linguistic Inequality in Higher Education" 46-48)

Revise to Equitize Workshop 2:
Language Identity and Understanding Multilingual Learners

This section explores the origins of language privilege and prejudice through investigation of marginalized Englishes, the process of their marginalization, and the core knowledge practitioners need to understand about multilingual learners. As with the first workshop, this learning session asks participants to reflect on their conscious and unconscious biases so that they can evolve an inclusive perspective about spoken and written Englishes other than Standardized Academic/Written English.

Participant Pre-Work:

1. ***Personal Application and Reflection:***
   Write, draw, speak, etc. responses to the following:
   - Linguistic Biography: what language patterns and flourishes do you use, and in which settings? What cultural elements are expressed in your English(es), how and when? What elements of your identities are expressed in your English(es), how and when (e.g. loves and passions, spiritual belief, professional work, family values, etc.)? Share all the examples you feel comfortable sharing.
   - Reflect on your experience of student writing: What elements of students' linguistic biographies emerge in the interactions you have with their writing? How have you engaged with these (e.g. editing, revision, reflection, etc.). Share all the examples you feel comfortable sharing.

2. ***Readings and Media:***
   Read and identify 1-2 "Golden Lines" (anything that seems to you inspiring, revelatory, important, etc.) from each:
   - Larson, Richard L. and Richard Lloyd-Jones. "Students' Right to Their Own Language," Conference on College Composition and Communication, *CCC*, Fall 1974, vol XXV. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/srtolsummary.
   - "What People Get Wrong About African-American English," *Otherwords*, PBS, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1YxH43Cw6tI&t=339s.

Workshop Outline:

1. ***Language Biographies and Cultural Assets***
   - Moving from Deficit to Asset Attitudes and Celebrating all the Englishes

2. ***Pre-Work Reflection Sharing***
   - Unpacking and contemporizing SRTOL and reimagining AAE
   - Golden Lines and additional foundational resources

3. ***Entering the Language Justice and Assessment Equity Conversation***
   - "Black Language Education" and Englishes and Rhetorics (Baker-Bell and Kynard, Bronsten)
   - New Personal Checklist for engaging with student writing

Rethinking English and Multilingual Learners Resources

1. "Homework: Black Language Education," www.blacklanguagesyllabus.com/

   This is April-Baker Bell's and Carmen Kynard's seminal work in linguistic justice, and her production of "Homework: Black Language Education." In this project, Baker-Bell and Kynard "highlight teachers, praxis, and histories where Black Language has shaped classroom and community learning for Black children and youth." The screenshots details just a few of a virtual cornucopia of resources that explore and educate learners about the socio-historical and political origins of anti-Black language racism, through to contemporary pedagogy designed to empower and amplify these voices. In the conferences, webinars, and workshops I have been fortunate to be part of with Dr. Baker-Bell, I can attest to the transformative power of this program, which is a veritable cornucopia of sights and sounds.

2. "Multilingual Rhetorics," produced by Katie Bronsten

This is a resource I prepared through my sabbatical research that introduces significant rhetorical strategies in marginalized Englishes. The goals is to offer the beginnings of a conversation about rhetoric as a universal aspect of all Englishes, and help practitioners to shift language privilege and stigma to, instead, view cultural aspects of English as assets. I introduce the foundational White English rhetorics taught in the transfer-level English courses at Moorpark College as a foundation for understanding the role of rhetorical analysis and practice we are most familiar with, and then introduce rhetorical moves in Black and African American, Asian American and Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and Indigenous Englishes. This material is far from exhaustive.

Multilingual Rhetorics

> **Rhetoric:** "Rhetoric is the way in which you communicate in everyday life. These communications can be persuasive in nature and can be made of text, images, video, or any other type of media. Rhetoric requires an understanding and control of language and knowledge of culture; the rhetorical situation which includes the purpose, audience, topic, writer, and context, genre; and other aspects to achieve an intended purpose. In many cases, rhetorical appeals (ethos, pathos, logos) can also contribute to this intended purpose" ("What is Rhetoric?")

When thinking about rhetorical moves in the context of composition pedagogy and practice, much of the conversation centralizes White American language patterns, style, and modes. When I first started as an adjunct at Moorpark College in 2013, I had to teach myself about rhetorical situations, rhetorical appeals, deductive and inductive reasoning, and logical fallacies. I knew what some of these elements of argument were, but I had never been formally taught them: their origins, their purpose, their racial identity. In the official Course Outlines of Record, Course Objectives for

- English M01A emphasize "Creating an arguable thesis, logical organization, full development including use of appropriate rhetorical strategies, and control of diction" and the ability to write an "in-class essay exam that demonstrates at least one rhetorical method, such as compare/contrast, process analysis, or division/classification."
- English M01B requires as a pre-requisite the ability to develop ideas through inclusion of "appropriate rhetorical strategies" and to "identify rhetorical strategies and recognize formal and informal logical fallacies."
- English M01C focuses on learning to "identify rhetorical elements in a specific work -- assumptions, argumentation, evidence, situation, appeals, etc.—and explain their significance to the work," "analyze […] underlying assumptions, valid arguments, logical structure, clear reasoning patterns, sound evidence, and rhetorical appeals (ethos, logos, and pathos), the aim being not only to identify

these points in general occurrence but also to practice them effectively in his/her own work."[14]

In the language used to explain the purpose and competencies of these transfer-level and often mandatory courses, none of it specifies the ethnic and cultural origins of the argumentation strategies of focus. It is assumed, instead, that this information is obvious and universal: White American English. And, herein lies the problem: English is not universal, even in an English-speaking country, but many assumptions about speakers of it have become so.

When I truly diversified my curriculum, particularly in my literature courses, I at first whitewashed Black African poetry and Latine musical theater instead of teaching the material through rhetorical strategies relative to the cultural and ethnic origins of the authors. It wasn't until I participated in the second annual Linguistic Justice Practice in Community College and Beyond[15] conference in 2023, that I was horrified by my pedagogy and energized to equitize it. In order to centerer the appropriate rhetorical moves, I needed to decenter my learning and welcome into the conversation a world of language and literature that I knew nothing about.

This section of the handbook focalizes a limited number of language and dialectical; it shares the resources I rooted out to centralize conversations about rhetorical moves in diverse literature. All 3 English courses used to fulfill the General Education (GE)[16] and Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC)[17] composition and critical thinking requirements engage students in learning about rhetorical strategies and situations, and how to use these in their own work. Rather than focalize White American and European rhetorical situations, I call in from the margins and the rhetorical strategies of and relevant to the language dialects and the cultural origins of the material I teach. Here is a starting point for diverse and inclusive conversations about rhetorical strategies.

White American English Rhetorical Strategies:

In Moorpark College's composition and critical thinking courses—English M01A, M01B, and M01C—instructors generally focus on teaching students about rhetorical situations in written and spoken work rooted in the ancient Greek views of effective argumentation strategies and devices. These generally focus on discussions of:

- Rhetorical Situations:

[14] Moorpark College 2024-2025 Course Catalog, https://catalog.vcccd.edu/moorpark/, accessed October 2, 2024.

[15] Hosted by Glendale Community College, Las Positas College, and 3CSN.

[16] GE Requirements: Area A - English Language Communications & Critical Thinking: 9 semester (or 12 quarter) units with one course from each subarea A1, A2, and A3. A2 is fulfilled with English M01A/M01AH only. Area A3 includes English M01B/1BH and M01C/CH as optional course choices amongst those from other disciplines.

[17] GE Requirements: Area 1 - English Communication: UC: 2 courses required, one each from Group 1A and 1B.
CSU: 3 courses required, one each from Group 1A, 1B, and 1C. Area 1A is fulfilled with English M01A/M01AH only. Area 1B includes English M01B/1BH and M01C/CH as optional course choices amongst those from other disciplines. Area 3 - Arts and Humanities, Area 3B (Humanities) includes English M01B/1BH as optional course choices amongst those from other disciplines.

    - Audience and Purpose Awareness:
        - Who is reading/listening? (level, skills, knowledge)
        - What is being read/spoken? (literature, speech, blog, etc.)
    - Appeals:
        - To Ethos (credibility)
        - To Pathos (emotion)
        - To Logos (logic)
    - Reasoning:
        - Deductive (external generalizations)
        - Inductive (internal generalizations)
    - Evidence:
        - Artistic Proofs (created)
        - Inartistic Proofs (quantifiable)
    - Logical Fallacies:
        - Hasty Generalization (all or nothing)
        - Either/Or (this or that)
        - Slippery Slope (if this, then that)
        - Red Herring (squirrel!)
        - And so many more there isn't room for here.

- Language Elements:
    - Figurative Language: imagery, metaphor, symbolism, etc.
    - Literal Language: accurate, direct, factual

- Style Elements:
    - Semantics: diction, style, tone, mood
    - Syntax: sentence structure, grammar

While rhetorical situations appear in all languages, it's easy for instructors to focus on conventional White American English rhetorical features to the exclusion of other American Englishes, something I am guilty of this myself. Afterall, White Americans wrote language and composition curricula long before parts of the country started to be woke. Thus, composition studies of literature from cultures outside of White American and European culture has whitewashed the English discipline. And, this unilateral thinking reaches far beyond the walls of the college English classroom, establishing and perpetuating a "Linguistic snobbery" that denigrates, disparages, and discriminates against minoritized English so that "many of our 'rules,' much of the 'grammar' we still teach, reflects [a] history of social climbing and homogenizing" (Richard Lloyd-Jones, "Students Right to Their Own Language" 13).

What follows is a very basic introduction to rhetorical strategies used in Black, African American, Asian American, Pacific Islander, Hispanic, ChicanX, and Latine Englishes. I cannot pretend that what is here does justice to the depth, complexity, and beauty of these languages. Instead, I hope these resources and points will be the start of conversations with students and colleagues about linguistic cultures other than the standardized White American English. Countless resources that I explored for this

sabbatical project declared the importance of trusting our students to know their language, culture, and selves, and to allow them to teach us about these. My hope is that the resources here can offer a starting point, if one is needed, for student-led conversations about language topics of which they are the experts. As inhabitants of academic spaces, it makes sense to me that modeling of life-long learning can be the most important message we convey to our students: that we, too, are learners and that we value what *they* have to teach us.

Black and African American Rhetorical Strategies:
According to Toya Mary Okonkwo, "Black Language is strategic and deliberate-- that's why we see it works rhetorically. Black Language is also a form of building culture where attempts to erase and degrade Black history have unwittingly failed. It's vitally important to note that Black Language is about layering meaning, infusing a legacy, and embodying a civilization and history that was torn from a myriad of peoples, who then banded together to build something anew" ("Black Rhetoric," *Black Language Syllabus* 30 Jan. 2021). Okonkwo lists the following as key characteristics of Black rhetoric:

- *Layering Meaning and Infusing Legacy; Embodying a Neglected Past; Storytelling to Pass on History; Building Anew a Future of Freedom and Liberation:*
    - "Storytelling is a major part of Black Rhetoric--- the structure and origins of Black Language tell and re-inscribe the story of American slavery every time we use it to speak with each other. […] authors use Black Language in their writing to move and persuade their audiences to understanding the power of Black Language and the politics of codifying a skillset without the restrictions of white grammar and the mechanics of White Mainstream English framing and clouding their works" (Okonkwo).
- *Themes of Protection:*
    - "Black rhetoric, especially from Black women, focuses on protection: the dearth of institutional protection and the lack of our representation as a group who is deserving of respect and dignity within the societal confines of our own national democracy" (Okonkwo).

Asian/Pacific Islander American Rhetorical Strategies:
LuMing Mao and Morris Young explain that they "define Asian American rhetoric as the systematic, effective use and development by Asian Americans of symbolic resources" and "such rhetoric creates a space for Asian Americans where they can resist social and economic injustice and reassert their discursive agency and authority." Thus, "Asian American rhetoric is intimately tied to, and indeed constituted by, particularizing speech settings, specific communicative purposes, and situated discursive acts" (LuMing Mao and Morris Young, "Introduction: Performing Asian American Rhetoric into the American Imaginary," *Representations: Doing Asian American Rhetoric* 3).
Mao and Young detail the following as key characteristics of AAPI rhetoric:

- *Intertextuality*: "Asian American rhetoric draws upon discursive practices both from the European American tradition and from Asian, as well as other ethnic and worldly, traditions. Its emergence and its identity are therefore very much tied to

our present-day social-cultural, transnational tendencies marked in part by various forms of cultural and linguistic intertextuality" (5).

- *Use of Symbolism*: "The emphasis we place on the use of symbolic recourses to reclaim discursive agency and authority" (8-9).
- *Translation, Transformation, and Ambivalence*: the "desire to belong, to be part of America, is consistently tempered by a countervailing desire to cling to what sets them apart and what makes them singularly distinct. Such ambivalence becomes another important signifier for Asian Americans as they use their rhetoric to rewrite history, to reclaim their agency, and to reimagine the future for themselves and for their America" (10-11). Translation and transformation, thus, are "important tropes in the project of Asian Americans who […] become the agents of translation and transformation as they make their claim on America through their […] discursive practices, involving both the present and the past" (11).
- *Rhetorical Memory*: AAPI rhetoric "calls for remembering and restoring—another form of performance—Asian American experiences in the American imaginary" (12): "To remember rhetorically, for Asian Americans, is to investigate histories that are formed through the transnational ties among Asia and the United States, and to trace and stitch together memories of seemingly disparate moments and cultural sites. Doing so enables Asian Americans to control cultural production of memories and thus to claim agency and identity in the mainstream construction of who they are" (13).

Hispanic Rhetorical Strategies (inclusive—but not exhaustive—of Chicano, Mexican American, and Latine):

According to Virgil Suarez, "The central point of unity among Hispanic American writers is language. While they may speak with different accents and use different expressions, they all share the experience of bilingualism. […] Hispanic American writers and readers of Hispanic American literature assert that the intermingling of the two languages is an effective means of communicating what otherwise could not be expressed" ("Hispanic American Literature: Divergence and Commonality," *US Society and Values*, February 2000, 33).

Suarez details the following as key characteristics of Hispanic rhetoric:

- *Personal, Familial, National, and Cultural Histories:* "Ancestral voices are very much a part of Hispanic American literature today" and "the Hispanic experience in the United States […]confront[s] issues of identity, assimilation, cultural heritage and artistic expression (32). "Mexican Americans are distinguished from Chicanos in that the former feel more of a national identity with Mexico; Chicanos, on the other hand, are more culturally allied with the United States and particularly with Native Americans" (33).
- *Musicality and Lyricism:* "To a great extent, their literary tradition owes a debt to the corridos, the popular ballads of the mid-19th century that recounted heroic exploits. These corridos were also precursors to Chicano poetry of the 20th century, laying the foundation for a poetics that fuses the oral and the written, music and word. In the corrido we begin to see the mixing of the Spanish with the English, thus creating a new language with which to express a new reality" (33).

- *Religion and Spirituality:* "To a degree, the differences in religion enter the literature, from the Catholicism unique to various Latin American countries to the African santeria influence in Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico" (34).

Sophia Ell notes the above rhetorical moves and adds to them in "Introduction to Chicano Literature," *Rudolpho Anaya Digital Library*, University of New Mexico College of University Libraries and Learning Sciences, October 5, 2017.
Ell details the following as key characteristics of Chicana/o rhetoric:

- *Bilingualism:* "written with a bilingual awareness, intermingling Spanish and English, and utilizing colloquial 'Spanglish.' Bilingualism, then, is arguably the most pronounced facet of Chicano identity, and of the struggle for recognition in an English-speaking society that looks down on any other languages, especially those that originate south of the border. The use of bilingual writing in published literature, then, was an effective way to legitimize and make room for a culture that straddles two worlds."
- *Searching for Home:* "Another major theme that unites many Chicana/o literary works is the search for a sense of belonging that would be rooted in connection with the land, the history of the Southwest, and the *mestisaje* heritage. The concept of Aztlán, a mythical homeland based in ancient Aztec belief, has evolved first as part of the political consciousness of the Chicano movement."
- *Genre and Style:* "the use of magical realism, and innovative integration of fiction and autobiography have made Chicano literature distinct not only in its subject matters but also in its form and style."
- *Gender:* "The place of women, for example, and of gay, lesbian, or queer individuals within a traditionally masculinist, patriarchic society, has been at the forefront of innovative novels, stories, plays, and poems" as well as "Exploring problems related to gender roles, family structures, and nonconformist kinships."

Indigenous/First Nations Rhetorical Strategies:
Ernest Stromberg argues that for Indigenous communities, "rhetoric is both an art of persuasion and epistemic—epistemic inasmuch as Native Americans use language to alter our understanding of the world we inhabit" (4-5); moreover, because there are hundreds of "tribally specific rhetorical traditions," Stromberg names his work and that from the collaborators of this book, a study of "Pan-Indian rhetorical traditions developed over five hundred years of ongoing struggle" (6). ("Rhetoric and American Indians: An Introduction," *American Indian Rhetorics of* Survivance, 2006).
Stromberg details the following as key characteristics of Indigenous/First Nations rhetoric:

- *Contexts of Colonialism and Anti-Colonialist Sentiment:* "appropriations of elements of Christian discourse, sentimentalism, democratic discourse, and an emerging nationalism in the service of sophisticated arguments made on behalf of Native rights and identity (8).
- *Social Criticism:* use of "irony in order to critique assimilation educational policies. […] irony provides a means to level serious criticisms of white policies and even white culture without thoroughly offending and alienating a mainly white

audience" (9). Thus, "There are also elements that illustrate techniques of cultural appropriation and code-switching" (10).

- *Elements of Oral Tradition:* "Native newspapers perform a rhetorical function that is similar to the function of the oral storyteller" (10).
- *Mythological Tropes:* trickster stories (10).

Revise to Equitize Workshop 3:
Equitizing Course/Service Policies

By Workshop 3, participants will have a clear sense not just that language and culture is important, but that words and the meanings that comprise them need careful attention. I know that my understanding and use of language has been shaped by my privilege as a White American. Thus, I see my responsibility as an academic to use my linguistic privilege to empower historically marginalized learners and dismantle harmful, inequitable language and assessment practices through my use of language and policy construction.

Participant Pre-Work:

1. ***Personal Application and Reflection:***
   Write, draw, speak, etc. responses to the following:
   - Syllabus Forensics: investigate the policies you expect students to adhere to in your syllabi, CLOs, and CORs. With your newly acquired knowledge about linguistic and cultural assets, note the policies, language use, and anything else that you now see doesn't uphold views and practices that support language and assessment justice. Share all the examples you feel comfortable sharing.
     - Bring your course or service syllabus or policies to our meeting.
     - For academic courses, do not include your curriculum (readings, assignments, etc.) in this reflection.

2. ***Readings and Media:***
   Read and identify 1-2 "Golden Lines" (anything that seems to you inspiring, revelatory, important, etc.) from each:
   - Singleton, Glenn E. "Why Race?*" Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools*. Corwin, 2015. pp. 35-57.
   - Feldman, Joe, "Chapter 4: Traditional Grading Hides Information, Invites Biases, and Provides Misleading Information" and "Chapter 5: Traditional Grading Demotivates and Disempowers," *Grading for Equity: What It Is, Why It Matters, and How It Can Transform Schools and Classrooms*. Corwin, 2019. pp. 39-64.

Workshop Outline:

1. ***Language and Assessment Equity Blindspots***
   - Identifying what we didn't know we didn't know

2. ***Pre-Work Reflection Sharing***
   - Golden Lines and additional foundational resources

3. ***Constructing a Language and Assessment Equity Statement of Purpose***
   - Creating our own Language and Assessment Equity Statement of Purpose
   - Composing, adapting, and inheriting Syllabus Equity Statements (Land Acknowledgement, Anti-Racism Statement, Language Diversity Statement, Assessment Equity Statement, etc.)

Professional Learning: Language and Assessment Equity Statement of Purpose

Research is overwhelmingly unified in the perspective that language and assessment equity work must begin with socio-historical education. In order to dismantle oppressive practices, they argue, it is essential that both learners and professionals understand the origins of linguistic discrimination and language gate-keeping. As Anne E. Curzan, et. al., argue in the epigraph to this booklet, it is "Critical Language Awareness" that will help students and professionals step back from standardized ideals by questioning their origins and (nefarious) purposes, in order to ultimately dismantle them and establish equitable ones.

Equitizing the Syllabus Checklist:

- ✓ Ensure the document is ADA-compliant.
- ✓ Ensure images and decorations illustrate diverse peoples and cultures; White representations are shifted to later pages.
- ✓ Use accent marks in author names, titles, words, etc., where relevant.
- ✓ Include:
  - Land Acknowledgement Statement
  - Antiracism Statement
  - Language Justice Statement
  - Equitable Grading Policies

Below are examples of ways I have embedded my responsibility to equitable classroom policies:

Land Acknowledgement Statement:

- ✓ *From the Moorpark College Multicultural Day website:* We acknowledge Moorpark College occupies the unceded traditional land of the Chumash people who have stewarded it throughout generations. As we honor the Chumash people with gratitude, we commit to learning how we may be better stewards of this land we inhabit as well. We seek to build relationships with the Chumash community through academic pursuits, partnerships, historical recognitions and community service as these relationships are foundational for inclusive and equitable education and community engagement.

Anti-Racism Statement

- ✓ *From the Moorpark College Value Statement:* Anti-racism: We affirm our commitment to recognizing, addressing, and eradicating all forms of institutional and systemic racism and ethnic oppression. We are committed to creating and maintaining an environment of anti-racism and identifying resources and opportunities to advance this work.

- ✓ *My Syllabus Statement:* I work hard to acknowledge and strive to eradicate all forms of racism and ethnic oppression. This course aims to create a brave space that enables everyone to engage openly, safely, and honorably with their education. In taking this course, I expect that we will all do our best to embrace these values; though we might make mistakes, we must all work to practice thoughtful respect of everyone and their individual truths.
- ✓ *My Writing Handbook Statement:* The most exciting part of learning about reading, writing, and critical thinking strategies, in my opinion, is that it encourages curiosity and wonder about all language and expression. When you read on and learn about White American and European composition strategies and tools, think about where your own language has similar or divergent strategies and situations. None is more important than any other and, most importantly, if an aspect of language that is important to you is not on the list, that is because I do not know it, not because it is not worthy of this list. So, I invite you to educate me in the process of your own education and remember that what follows are just some of the keys to the many castles of writing and spoken word pieces creators use and that students should analyze in their essays this semester.

Language Diversity Statement

- ✓ *My Syllabus Statement:* Diverse languages and dialects are welcome in this course! There is no inclusive Standard Written/Academic English. Here, I value your personal linguistic expression, and those of others in the course. This course expects students to honor this policy, seek out clarification as necessary, and not assert a "correct" grammar.

- ✓ *My Writing Handbook Statement:* I REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ACT OF SILENCING, and I want to encourage you to incorporate into your writing your Vernacular Englishes. As a White American, my privilege has also handicapped me: my subject expertise and knowledge is limited by language supremacy. Thus, my specialism in the study of English language and literature emerges from White American pedagogy. I can show you what I know and I want you to show you what I know. Thus, I encourage you to learn all that this course has to offer AND where your own linguistic patterns participate in the same conversation through the process of code-meshing: "Code-meshing pedagogies […] look at this divide between the acceptable codes of public and academic discourse versus the marked codes of home and social discourse, and contend that these multiple codes of English can fruitfully co-exist" (Jay Hardee, "Code Meshing and Code Switching," American University Library, 2022).

Assessment Equity Statement

- ✓ *My Syllabus Statement:* I ungrade all work for this course to focalize learning and growth through practice. If you honor the philosophy policies (detailed on Canvas), you will earn the right to self-assign your end-of-term course grade.

- ✓ *My Course Ungrading Philosophy Policies:* When I tell my students that I ungrade all coursework, I am regularly met with equal measures jubilation and skepticism. The most common concern is academic transcripts, particularly if a student's goal is to transfer after their time at Moorpark College. I get it! American academia has done a very good job of indoctrinating us all to a system that was designed and continues to maintain systems more concerned with power and privilege than with learning and growth. Yet, grades constitute so much behavioral noise that has nothing to do with course objectives (late penalties, extra credit, participation, homework) that they are never truly accurate measures of student learning anyway. So, as the Sharks on "Shark Tank" say, I'm out.

- ✓ Additional inspiration for approaching assessment equity can be found in the Conference on College Composition and Communication's Foundational Principles of Writing Assessment, which "identifies six principles that form the ethical foundation of writing assessment.
  1. Writing assessments are important means for guiding teaching and learning. Writing assessments—and assignments to which they correlate—should be designed and implemented in pursuit of clearly articulated learning goals.
  2. The methods and criteria used to assess writing shape student perceptions of writing and of themselves as writers.
  3. Assessment practices should be solidly grounded in the latest research on learning, literacies, language, writing, equitable pedagogy, and ethical assessment.
  4. Writing is by definition social. In turn, assessing writing is social. Teaching writing and learning to write entail exploring a range of purposes, audiences, social and cultural contexts and positions, and mediums.
  5. Writers approach their writing with different attitudes, experiences, and language practices. Writers deserve the opportunity to think through and respond to numerous rhetorical situations that allow them to incorporate their knowledges, to explore the perspectives of others, and to set goals for their writing and their ongoing development as writers.
  6. Writing and writing assessment are labor-intensive practices. Labor conditions and outcomes must be designed and implemented in pursuit of both the short-term and long-term health and welfare of all participants."

Other Policies:

Extended Language and Assessment Equity Policy Statement

- *The following is my extended Language Justice statement, in which I expand upon my simplified syllabus statement in my self-devised "Writing Tips and Tools Booklet," which serves as my course's writing "textbook".*

I, like you, have been schooled in an academic system that emerges from a rich national and cultural history. Part of that history claims that White American English is superior to Black and African American, Latine and Chicano American, and Asian American

Englishes. If you are taking this class, you have navigated both the student and professional experience of White American English privilege since entering the classroom, being taught and expected to master the grammar of this English and see deviance from it as incorrect, imprecise, wrong, or worse, unsophisticated, broken, and bad. Practices like code-switching reinforce the racism that underlies White language supremacy because it continues to position White American English as the gatekeeper of academic spaces.

To do the work of language and assessment equity,
we must reject these racist, exclusionary beliefs.

Here's some conversation around linguistic justice that can help you to see this perspective more clearly:

- In their book, *Language and Social Justice in Practice* (2018), UC Santa Barbara Professors Mary Bucholtz, Dolores Ines Casilla, and Jin Sook Lee explain the importance of understanding that language privilege emerges from standardization and minoritization—the deliberate act of one group to make their language and race superior to others. This work began with colonialism and the American Slave Trade and persists in political spaces to this day. Bucholtz, Casilla, and Lee focus on the last 20th-century as a particularly oppressive period for minoritized speech communities because Californian voters navigated "a climate of anti-immigrant hysteria that began in the 1980s and 1990s. In 1986, California voters passed Proposition 63, which made English the state's official language," which "was followed in 1994 by the openly xenophobic Proposition 187, or 'Save Our State' initiative, which aimed to deprive unauthorized immigrants of education and health care services. Thus, by 1998, the groundwork was in place for California voters to approve Proposition 227, a ballot initiative ending nearly all bilingual education in public schools." the silencing that these Propositions mandates applies to all minoritized groups. Thus, Latine and Chicano Vernacular Englishes, Black and African American and Black Vernacular Englishes, Asian American Vernacular English, and so many other Vernacular Englishes are not inferior to White Vernacular English but, rather, have been made to seem inferior to White European Vernacular English not because they are so, but because that value system helps to maintain White language supremacy and privilege (Bucholtz, Casillas, and Lee, "California Latinx Youth as Agents of Sociolinguistic Justice, 166).

The goal of language and assessment equity, as I see it, is about unsilencing the voices that have been silenced**.** Just as legislation has been used to construct a narrative of exclusion, anti-racism can be used to construct a narratives of inclusion. Part of the trust building we need to do with students who have every reason to be wary of our words of what we're doing is looking within through the lens of honesty so that we can self-identify the experiences, knowledge, and privilege that has also handicapped us. For me, that is acknowledging that my subject expertise and knowledge is limited by language

supremacy. What is that for you? The rest of this booklet will share the research-based reimagined policies, curriculum, and classroom that participate in the reconstruction of academic language and assessment in the spirit of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access. Anything in this booklet is free to adapt in your own work with students and you do not require my permission to use, modify, or develop the material here.

Revise to Equitize Workshop 4:
Equitizing the Curriculum

In Workshop 4, participants engage the conversation and work of curriculum diversification. As I explain throughout my sabbatical project, adding a select number of non-White voices to course reading lists or service work isn't enough because those actions tokenize marginalized voices and experiences. This workshop focuses on bigger shift-making projects and strategies to truly decenter White Language Supremacy and the belief in its superiority through biased perspectives of its value.

Participant Pre-Work:

1. ***Personal Application and Reflection:***
   Write, draw, speak, etc. responses to the following:
   - Curriculum Forensics: investigate your curriculum with a lens toward diversification. In the first instance, classify the current material you ask students to engage with, or which you use to engage with your students. Ask yourself:
     - Where did I obtain these materials and views? What predominant language and assessment values are promoted or implied in these resources?
     - What Englishes and cultures outside of standardized and White American and European are represented, and how much so? Are there any obvious gaps? Are there any less obvious gaps?
     - What would it take to diversify your curriculum: what work do you need to do? What support do you need from your teams and leaders?
     - Share all the examples you feel comfortable sharing.
     - Bring your curriculum documents (e.g. syllabus, go-to resources list, etc.) to our meeting.

2. ***Readings and Media:***
   Read and identify 1-2 "Golden Lines" (anything that seems to you inspiring, revelatory, important, etc.) from each:
   - Brian Lovejoy, Kim. "Code-Meshing: Teachers and Students Creating Community," *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*, ed. Vershawn Ashanti Young, et. al., New City Community Press, 2018 pp. 121-129.
   - Choose one of the sections of *Everyday Antiracism* Part XIII that speaks to you:
     - "Arab Visibility and Invisibility" (Thea Abu El-Haj 174-179)
     - "Evaluating Images in Groups in Your Curriculum" (Teresa L. McCarty 181-185)
     - "Teaching Representations of Cultural Difference Through Film" (Sanjay Sharma 186-190)
     - "What Is on Your Classroom Wall? Problematic Posters" (Donna Deyhle 191-194)
     - "Teaching Racially Sensitive Literature" (Jocelyn Chadwick 195-198)

Workshop Outline:

1. ***Language and Assessment Equity Blindspots***

- Identifying what we didn't know we didn't know

2. ***Pre-Work Reflection Sharing***
   - Golden Lines and additional foundational resources

3. ***Equitizing Our Curriculum***
   - Rethinking instructor/specialist-led learning
   - Reimagining curricular diversification

Professional Learning: Equitizing the Curriculum

Post-COVID K-college classrooms have done a lot of work to diversity their curriculum. In conversations with regional high school English faculty, I am regularly met with excitement about sharing new electives, revised units, and innovative activities that show off the hard work of diversification. Authors, images, exemplars have become much more inclusive and reflective of the world and experiences of learners.

Equitizing Instructor-Led Lessons (lectures, seminars, discussions, etc.) Checklist:
- ✓ Ensure images and examples reflect a wide range of individuals and subject matter experts.
- ✓ Minimize White American and European perspectives and shift out into middle and end places in conversations where possible.
- ✓ Teach learners to view personal culture as an asset to support their learning; model this with regular celebration of your own culture.

Equitizing Readings and Media (books, articles, resources, references) Checklist:
- ✓ Diversify core texts (e.g. textbooks) with a wide range of English speakers; you may need to create your own textbook.
- ✓ Minimize White American and European perspectives; shift into middle and end places in conversations (or shift out completely when possible).
- ✓ Welcome personal culture into learning space as worthy of academic study; model this with regularly with your own culture.

Here are examples of how I equitize the readings/media I ask students to engage with:

In my English M01A: English Composition class, students are presented with a number of materials each week that speak to the topic and skills we're exploring, as well as the course policies. They have the flexibility to choose 1-2 of these to engage with, and I offer them materials from diverse subject-matter experts that are presented in a variety of Englishes and modes. For example:
- ✓ Unit 1: Learning Experiences, Language Privilege, and Grading Systems:
  - ➢ "The power of believing that you can improve" (Carol Dweck November 2014); TEDTalk
  - ➢ "How to Speak Bad English" (Gregory Warner, Rhaina Cohen, Luis Trelles 2021); Radio Broadcast

- "Making the Grade" (Laurie Santos 2022); Podcast
- *Monsters University* (Disney/Pixar 2013); Film Transcript and Clips
- *When they call you a terrorist: a black lives matter memoir* (Patrisse Khan-Cullors & Asha Bandele 2017); Black American; Memoir
- *Educated* (Tara Westover 2018); White American; Memoir
- *Sigh, Gone* (Phúc Trần, 2020); Vietnamese American; Memoir
- "How High-Functioning Autism Works" (Hanna Gadsby 2020); Neurodivergence, Comedy Sketch Memoir
- *Earth Keeper* (N. Scott Momaday 2020); Indigenous; Poetry Memoir

✓ Unit 2: Identifying and Challenging Fallacies About Learning
- "I got through college the hard way" (Salvador Rojas 2019); LA Times Op-Ed
- "Valedictorian Unleashes Searing Rebuke" (Amy Russo 2019); Pop-Culture Article
- "Liberty (Education) and Justice for All" (Patty Coleman 2020); Curated lecture by Moorpark College Historian
- "Help for kids the education system ignores" (Victor Rios 2016); TEDTalk
- "A Personal, Passionate Case for Education" (Michelle Obama 2019); Lecture
- *Walt Disney: An American Original* (Bob Thomas 1960); Biography
- "Undocumented, and Riding Shotgun" (Janine Joseph 2015); Filipino-American narrative essay
- "My Shot (Rise Up Remix)" from *The Hamilton Mixtape* (The Roots, featuring Nate Ruess, Joell Oritz, Busta Rhymes 2016)
- "High Hopes" (Panic! At the Disco 2018)

✓ Unit 3: How We're Educated By the Stories From Our Culture
- "What's Culture Got to Do with It?" (Zaretta Hammond 2015); Academic Research
- "The danger of a single story" (Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche 2019); TEDTalk
- "Latino artists and cultural leaders weigh in on how 'Coco' got it right" (Claudia Puig 2018); News Article
- *Coco* (Disney/Pixar 2017); entire film transcript

In my English M01B: Introduction to Literature, Composition, and Critical Thinking class, students are presented with a number of materials each week that speak to the topic and skills we're exploring, as well as the course's language justice and grading equity policies. I give students the flexibility to choose 1-2 readings in Unit 1 because there are so many; in Units 2 and 3, they are required to read the literature and then can choose 1-2 of the secondary materials to engage with. For example:

✓ Unit 1: Fiction, "Cinderella" Stories, and Hero Journeys
- "A Girl, A Shoe, A Prince: The Endlessly Evolving Cinderella" (Linda Holmes March 2015).
- "Dan Harmon, The Hero's Journey, and the Circle of Story Theory" (Scott Myers 2018)
- "Multicultural Cinderella Stories" (Mary Northrup August 2000).

- "Rhodopis" (Strabo, 7 B.C., Greece)
- "Ye Shen" (Duan Chengsh, 850 A.D., China)
- "Cinderella; or, the Little Glass Slipper" (Charles Perrault, 1697, France)
- "Chinye; A West African Folk Tale" (Obi Onyefulu 1994, West Africa)
- "Little Gold Star" (Joe Hayes 2001, Mexico)
- "Seeing White: Children of Color and the Disney Fairy Tale Princess" (Dorothy L. Hurley 2005)
- "Cracks in the Glass Slipper" (Erika Cizek 2014)
- "The Greatest Cinderella Story Ever Told" (Brandon Anderson 2016)
- "War Cinderella Photo" (Zaman Al Wasl 2019)
- "How to get better at the things you care about" (Eduardo Briceno, 2016).

✓ Unit 2: Poetry, Upile Chisala, African "Cinderella" Stories and Hero Journeys
- "Wound" in *a fire like you*
- *The Hero With An African Face* (Clyde W. Ford 1999)
- "What Happens When Verse Goes Viral?" (Maya C. Poppa 2019)
- "Hunger" in *a fire like you*
- "How Upile Chisala became a voice for young, black women around the world" (Rupert Hawksley 2019)
- "Book Review: A Fire Like You" (Lethabo Mailula 2020)
- "Swoon" and "Sister" in *a fire like you*
- "Women and Black Lives Matter: An interview with Marcia Chatelain" (Marcia Chatelain and Kaavya Asoka 2015)
- "Critical Race Theory" (Nasrullah Mambrol 2018)

✓ Unit 3: Latine Drama and Musical Theater
- "Introduction by Jill Furman," "Original Broadway Cast and Credits", "Characters and Setting," and "Musical Numbers" (ix-xviii)
- Act 1, Scenes 1-8 (pages1-64) in *ITH*
- "*In the Heights*, by Lin-Manuel Miranda" (Sara Ann Thackam 2012)
- Act 1, Scenes 9-12 and Act 2, Scenes 1-2 (pages 64-104) in *ITH*
- "Introduction" to *Contemporary Latina/o Theater: Wrighting Ethnicity* (Jon D. Rossini 2008)
- Act 2, Scenes 3-14 (pages 104-153) in *ITH*
- "Heroes and Villains: is hip hop a cancer or a cure?" (Lecrae 2016)

In my English M01C: Composition and Critical Thinking class, students are presented with a number of materials each week that speak to the topic and skills we're exploring, as well as the course's language justice and grading equity policies. Like 1B, this course is themed around "Cinderella" stories, but springboards from the fiction to focalize non-fiction. I give students the flexibility to choose 1-2 readings in Unit 1 because there are so many; in Units 2 and 3, they are required to read certain of the listed texts, and then can choose 1-2 of the secondary materials to engage with. For example:
For example:
✓ Unit 1: Conversation Awareness, "Cinderella" Stories, and Social Commentary

- "Making the Grade" (Laurie Santos June 18, 2022).
- "A Girl, A Shoe, A Prince: The Endlessly Evolving Cinderella" (Linda Holmes March 2015).

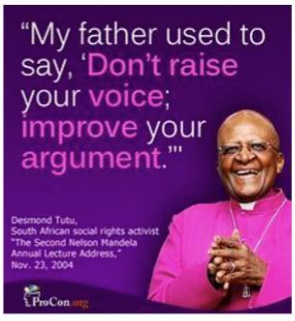
✓ Unit 2: "Cinderella" Mindset (Fixed vs. Growth Mindset in Personal "Cinderella" Stories)
- "A Story Capable of Enchanting the World: Cinderella and Its Many Variations" (University of Rochester).
- *Mindset Works:* "Why Mindset Matters" and "Changing Mindsets"
- "Dreams Deferred: The Patterns of Punishment in Oakland" (Victor Rios, *Punished* 1-24, 2011)
- "My Identity Is My Superpower, Not An Obstacle" (America Ferrara June 2019)
- *Untamed*, pages 81-117 (Glennon Doyle March 2020)

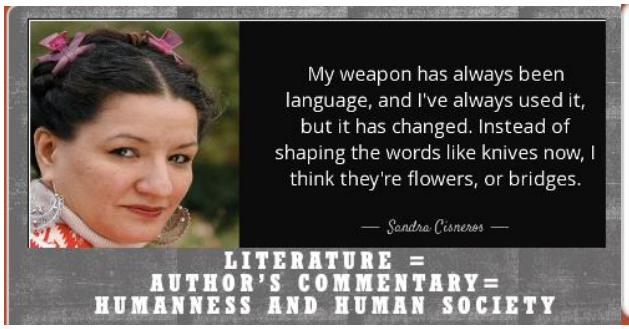
✓ Unit 3: "Cinderella" Structures (Structuralism, Social Structures of Identities)
- "Structuralism and Semiotics" (Purdue OWL)
- "The Production of Meaning Through Peer Interaction: Children and Walt Disney's *Cinderella*" (Lori Baker-Sperry 2007)
- "Postfeminist Masculinity: The New Disney Norm?" (Michael Macaluso 2018)
- "Toxic Femininity Holds All of Us Back" (Devon Price December 2018)
- "Why This Charming Gay Fairy Tale Has Been Lost For 200 Years" (Jamie Wareham 2020)

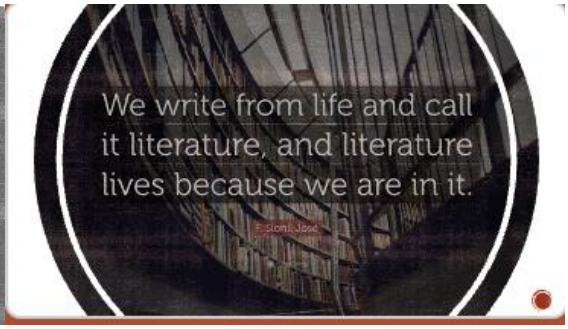
Here are some examples of how I diversify visuals to support the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion in my courses:

English M01A: English Composition

- Images primarily come from the anchor text (Disney film)in Units 1 and 2. Unit 1 Lectures end with emphasis on the value I place on students experiences and voices. Units 2 and 3 Lectures end with a thematically inspiring quotation from members of diverse cultures.




My weapon has always been language, and I've always used it, but it has changed. Instead of shaping the words like knives now, I think they're flowers, or bridges.
— Sandra Cisneros —
LITERATURE =
AUTHOR'S COMMENTARY=
HUMANNESS AND HUMAN SOCIETY


We write from life and call it literature, and literature lives because we are in it.

English M01B: Introduction to Literature—Critical Thinking and Composition

- The curriculum has been completely diversified, including the material I used to learn more about non-White literatures, writing devices, and rhetorical strategies.

English M01C: Critical Thinking and Composition

- The curriculum has been completely diversified, including the material I used to learn more about non-White non-fiction, writing devices, and rhetorical strategies.


AND NEW...
No Such Thing As Late Work
On Calendar = following the course schedule
Off Calendar = no following the course schedule
Caveats:
Calendar = MC calendar
Semester vs. Personal Deadlines
No Such Thing As Extra Credit
Grade Goals = Coursework
Writing Center = Excuses
Discussion Journal & Classmate Conversation
Complete Draft & Guided Peer Review
THE PATH IS WINDING...
Unit 1: Contexts & Critical Thinking
Week 1: Becoming Aware of the Conversation
Week 2: Finding My Voice for the Conversation
Unit 2: Cinderella Mindset
Week 3: Entering the Conversation
Week 4: Positioning Myself in the Conversation
Unit 3: Cinderella Structures
Week 5: Participating in the Conversation
Week 6: Extending the Conversation
Unit 4: Cinderella Reflections and Revisions
Week 7: Refining My Voice in the Conversation
Week 8: Commanding the Conversation
APPEALS TO ETHOS
Using language and ideas to demonstrate credibility and/or morality in support of a perspective.
"You only have what you give. It's by spending yourself that you become rich."
-Isabel Allende
www.embracingdiversity.us

Revise to Equitize Workshop 5:
Equitizing Low-Stakes Activities

Workshop 5 takes curriculum diversification into student activities. Whether your work with students aims to teach them a specific disciplines tools or prepare them to apply for jobs and scholarships, language and assessment justice emerges from equitable practice spaces constructed with low-stakes activities that prepare students for larger and more high-stakes activities. This workshop focuses on equitizing low-stakes activities.

Participant Pre-Work:

1. ***Personal Application and Reflection:***
   Write, draw, speak, etc. responses to the following:
   - Activities Audit: investigate the activities you ask students to participate in with a lens toward identifying the specific learning, tools, skills, etc. Classify the components of your learning outcomes by asking yourself:
     - What is the largest goal of this activity?
     - Where do language expectations and assessment measurements come into play?
     - What skills, tools, etc., are privileged, and what culture do they emerge from?
     - Where are there gaps in inclusivity (cultural, rhetorical, assessment)?
     - Share all the examples you feel comfortable sharing.
     - Bring your activities documents (e.g. assignments, notes to guide activities, etc.) to our meeting.

2. ***Readings and Media:***
   Read and identify 1-2 "Golden Lines" (anything that seems to you inspiring, revelatory, important, etc.) from each:
   - Brian Lovejoy, Kim. "Code-Meshing Through Self-Directed Writing" and "Composing Code-Meshing: Thoughts on What do Do and How to Do it," *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*, ed. Vershawn Ashanti Young, et. al., New City Community Press, 2018 pp. 130-152.

Workshop Outline:

1. ***Language and Assessment Equity Blindspots***
   - Identifying what we didn't know we didn't know

2. ***Pre-Work Reflection Sharing***
   - Golden Lines and additional foundational resources

3. ***Equitizing Low-Stakes Activities***
   - Explore Next Level English Activities
   - Rethinking and reimagining skill-building activities in classrooms and services

Professional Learning: Equitizing Low-Stakes Activities

Equitizing Low-Stakes Activities Checklist:

- ✓ Restructure instructor-learner relationship to promote students' learning ownership and responsibility
- ✓ Assign work that celebrates, honors, and/or emerges from learners' individual cultures.
- ✓ Centralize personal culture as site of skill-building; model this regularly with your own culture.

Here are examples of how I equitize activities and assignments in my English M01A: English Composition course:

Next Level English Assignments and Activities, Linguistic Justice Community of Practice 2023-2024, CCCO+Puente Project, facilitators Michelle Gonzalez and Kisha Turner (Las Positas College), laspositascollege.edu/puente/index.php: The Language Justice Community of Practice, hosted annually, is a 7-month experience through which faculty across the state of California come together to learn about and learn to apply the pedagogy of language justice in English and math classrooms. This ComP is born out of the Puente Project, which was established in 1981 at Chabot College by Felix Galaviz and Patricia McGrath to increase mitigate high attrition rates in the Mexican American student population.

Next Level English **(NLE) Practicum Exercises**

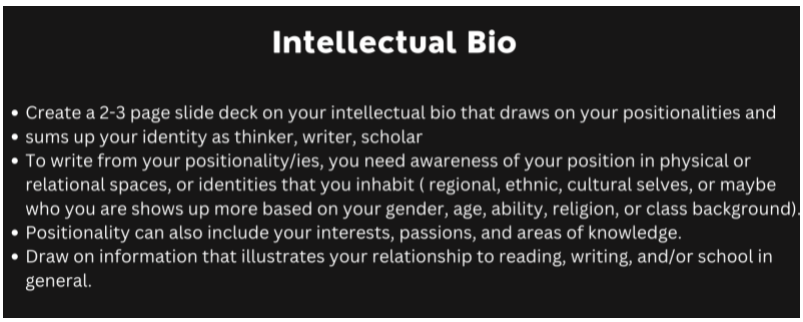
"NLE is a series of theories and lessons that aim to engage and center minoritized students and the cultural wealth they bring to academia. NLE teaching invites cultivation of identity in writing through positionality and code meshing" (Michelle Gonzales and Kisha Linguistic Justice Community of Practice, CCCO and Puente Project, December 1, 2023).

Below are 5 assignments that help students understand how to shift White Language Supremacy and experience Linguistic Justice.

A. **LJ Conscientization:**
In your group watch the LJ Conscientization video (7:22 mins) created by Michelle Gonzales (for use in an upcoming online class). The link to the video and the slide deck have been provided below. Follow the quickwrite (8 mins) instructions at the end of the video. Once the quickwrite time is up, share (as comfortable) what you wrote with your group and discuss the assignment. (15 mins).
   - Link to "LJ Conscientization" slideshow + activity by Michelle Gonzales.
   - Alternately, link to "LJ Conscientization" video (7:22) and activity by Michelle Gonzales.

B. **Positionality: Intellectual Bio**
Share your intellectual bio slide deck and share with students as a model. Then assign

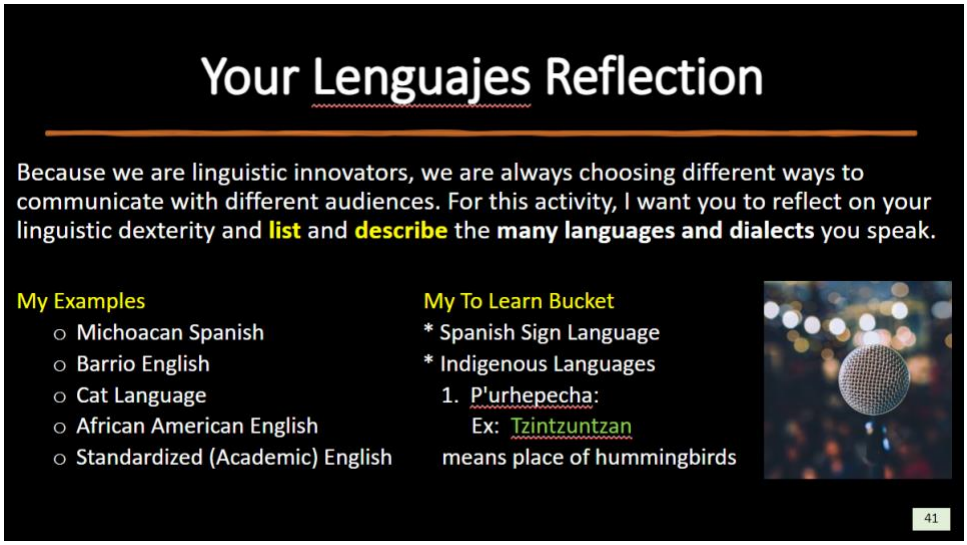
the intellectual bio assignment to them. Here is a model intellectual bio created by Michelle Gonzales 3-4mins).



C. **Audience:**
Write a paragraph about what you've learned about linguistic bias and linguistic justice so far. Determine who your audience is by considering the points below (created by Michelle Gonzales for an upcoming class):
We already know this stuff, eh?
- So choose an audience that you want to address
- Who in your life needs to know this info? Your friends? A particular community? Your parents? Your grandma? New York Times readers? Fox News viewers?

When you write to an audience don't make yourself invisible tho.
- Put yourself in there too through one of your positionalities, or idiolect features, dialect features, words from other language for emphasis or when there's no better word/translation, etc.

D. **Students' Idiolects & Dialects: Your Lenguajes Reflection (activity courtesy of Hilda Fernandez, Foothill College)**



E. **Code-Meshing**
Read excerpts from bell hooks' *talkin back,* Gloria Anzaldua's "How to Tame a Wild Tongue," and Lee Tonouchi's "They Say If You Talk Pidgin, You No Can"
   a. Then, reflect on and discuss the level of code meshing. Is it a sprinkle, a dousing? What is the ratio of code meshing to Standardized English? How did these authors make it work?
   b. What moves did you find rhetorically effective and why?
   c. Which moves are rhetorically risky and why?

Revise to Equitize Workshop 6:
Equitizing High-Stakes Assignments

Workshop 6 takes builds upon the curriculum diversification of student activities to focus on high-stakes assignments that are used to measure student success and, ultimately, grade students. Using the ideology behind equitable language and assessment practices of low-stakes assignments, we can reimagine benchmark assignments and how we gauge students' strengths and growth areas without resorting to the harmful racist values that underline conventional composition and grading practices. This workshop focuses on equitizing high-stakes activities.

Participant Pre-Work:

1. ***Personal Application and Reflection:***
   Write, draw, speak, etc. responses to the following:
   - Assignment Audit: investigate the high-stakes assignments you ask students to participate in with a lens toward identifying the specific learning, tools, skills, etc. Classify the components of your learning outcomes by asking yourself:
     - What is the largest goal of this activity?
     - Where do language expectations and assessment measurements come into play?
     - What skills, tools, etc., are privileged, and what culture do they emerge from?
     - Where are there gaps in inclusivity (cultural, rhetorical, assessment)?
     - Share all the examples you feel comfortable sharing.
     - Bring your high-stakes assignment documents (e.g. handout, tip sheet, notes, etc.).

2. ***Readings and Media:***
   Read and identify 1-2 "Golden Lines" (anything that seems to you inspiring, revelatory, important, etc.) from each:
   - Christopher Riesbeck, "Critique-Driven Learning and Assessment," *Ungrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning (and What to Do Instead)*, ed. Susan Blum, West Virginia U Press, 2020. pp. 123-139.
   - Charitianne Williams. ""Even Though I Am Speaking Chinglish, I can Still Write A Good Essay": Building a Learning Community Through Critical Pedagogy," *Transformative Practices for Minority Student Success: Accomplishments of Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Servicing Institutions,* eds. Dina C. Maramba and Timothy P. Fong. Stylus, 2020. pp. 101-115.

Workshop Outline:

1. ***Language and Assessment Equity Blindspots***
   - Identifying what we didn't know we didn't know

2. ***Pre-Work Reflection Sharing***
   - Golden Lines and additional foundational resources

3. ***Equitizing High-Stakes Activities***

- Explore unconventional composition assessments and alternatives

Professional Learning: Equitable High-Stakes Assignments

Equitizing High-Stakes Assignments Checklist:

- ✓ Maintain transparency in activity expectations and how you will assess learner success; don't penalize or reward learners for skills/qualities that are not identified as assessment targets (e.g. don't measure grammar if you didn't teach it!).
- ✓ Offer learners opportunities to choose assignments used to measure their skill fluency (topic and assessment options). *Disclaimer: I have done this by offering students the "conventional" (aka traditional English essay) and a creative version of the assignment. Since AI has become increasingly accessible, I find more plagiarism and fraud issues than ever in the conventional assignments and, thus, am focusing on devising more creative options.*
- ✓ Encourage cultural practices and preferences in demonstration of skills; model this with regularly with your own culture.
- ✓ Along with student samples, I provide students with my version of the assignment in which I intentionally share aspects of my cultures relevant to the specific topics of conversation from across the unit.

Katie Bronsten's Non-English Essay High-Stakes Assignments

In my English classes, I have been trying out alternatives to the conventional essay, 5-paragraph or otherwise, and have found not only that these alternative writing modes are not only more enjoyable to read, students demonstrate a higher-level of coherence and achievement when they complete them.

English M01A:

1. **Essay #1 Prompt: Narrative Essay.** Imagine someone unfamiliar with the word "education" wants to know your understanding of the word, and how you came to that understanding. Write an 800-word essay that explains your definition of education based upon your personal experiences and one quotation from one of the Unit 1 readings/media, which you will use as an epigraph.

2. **Essay #2 Prompt: Rhetorical Analysis.** Write a letter to your younger self or another individual that teaches them about how you used to think a certain way about education, and what you now know because of your understanding of rhetorical strategies. You must use 3 personal examples from your life and 3 quotations from 1 or 2 Unit 2 reading(s)/media as evidence, remembering to build your body paragraphs around 2 pieces of evidence each (1 personal, one quoted).

3. **Essay #3 Prompt: Literary Analysis.** Construct a Photographic Essay that analyzes 1-2 ways that stories and story-telling techniques educate people about culture, including your own. Use 3 scenes from the film transcript for *Coco* and explore them alongside 3 personal experiences. Take or create 3 original pictures/images that help bring your points to life and include 1 for each example

from the film and your life (e.g. 1 per scene/experience).

English M01B:

1. **Essay #1 Prompt: Narrative Essay.** Write an 800-word essay that explains your personal "Cinderella Hero Journey" story based upon your personal experiences and one quotation from one of the Unit 1 readings/media, which you will use as an epigraph.

2. **Essay #2 Prompt: Poetry Explication.** Write a letter to your younger self in which you explain how figurative language in Chisala's poems can help you view your personal "Cinderella" hero journey story in a new way. You must use 4 personal examples from your life and 4 poems, remembering to build your body paragraphs around 2 pieces of evidence each (1 personal, one quoted).

3. **Essay #3 Prompt: Drama Explication and Research Essay.** In a Photographic Essay, explore how a central theme in *In the Heights* illustrates the many conversations about "Cinderella hero-journey" stories. You must use 3 different scenes from the musical (playbook only), 2 quotations from each; an original image for each scene, hand/digital drawing or personal photograph (you must create these!); title each image and write a caption for each that includes explanation of the images and their connection to the essay.

English M01C:

I teach 1C in summer sessions and, thus, these classes always benefit the most from my research and tweaking. These assignments are the most language- and grading equity-minded and I will use their refinement as a starting point for the revision of my fall and spring class assignments.

1. **Essay #1 Prompt: Narrative Essay.** Write an 800-word essay that explains your personal "Cinderella Hero Journey" story based upon your personal experiences and one quotation from one of the Unit 1 readings/media, which you will use as an epigraph.

2. **Essay #2: Rhetorical Analysis Photographic Essay.** Create a Photographic Essay that illustrates and explains how rhetorical strategies impact conversations and arguments about a specific "Cinderella Mindset". This project centralizes the skills needed to navigate multiple voices in academic conversations, whilst retaining control of your own argument: knowledge, creativity, and command of argument. Therefore, the project must include: a creative title for the project that signposts your argument for the reader; a thesis statement that presents your original argument and organizes the artistic and textual evidence in the project (just one sentence, not an introduction paragraph!); 3 original image(s) with title and caption (1 per analysis section; hand/digital drawings or personal photographs only) that illustrate a specific aspect of the project's argument and analyze for rhetorical appeals in line with the argument you are developing; Quoted Evidence comprising 1 quotation each from the "Cinderella Bibliography" and "Mindset Works" and 3 quotations from one (just one!) of the other Unit 2 readings/media (Victor Rios, America Ferrara, OR Glennon Doyle); context, integrated and cited quotations, and analysis for the quoted materials, following the guidance in the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet about these components; and, an overall conclusion statement detailing what your image and writing show about rhetorical strategies in conversations about

"Cinderella Mindset(s)." (1-2 sentences)

3. **Essay #3: Rhetorical Analysis and Research Letter-To-Self.** Write a letter to your younger self in which you identify, confront, and/or challenge logical fallacies about gender popularized in "Cinderella" social structures and relevant to you and your personal experiences. You must write about 3 specific personal experiences, and you must use 1 reading or media from Unit 3 (2 quotations) and 1 guided research material (listed below; 2 quotations).

English M01A, M01B, and M01C Final Project:
All three of my classes end with a final that asks students to reflect on their learning journey throughout the semester and then choose 1-2 skills to revise in each of the 3 high-stakes assignments. They close the project with their argument about how they have met the Course Ungrading Philosophy Policies and, therefore, what transcript grade they believe I should record for them.

"Alternatives to Traditional Exams and Papers" from the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning at Indiana University, Bloomington.

In designing assessments or assignments for a course, instructors often think of exams or term papers, but there are many other types of assessments that may be appropriate for your course. If you are willing to think creatively about assignments that go beyond traditional exams or research papers, you may be able to design assignments that are more accurate reflections of the kind of thinking and problem-solving you want your students to engage in. In addition, these types of nontraditional assignments are also useful if you are trying to design more motivating and engaging assessments that may discourage the use of generative AI.

In developing creative assessments of your students' learning, it is helpful to think about exactly what you want to assess. The questions below will help you focus on exactly what skills and knowledge your assessment should include.

- Do you want to assess your students' acquisition of specific content knowledge, or their ability to apply that knowledge to new situations (or both)?
- Do you want to assess a product that students produce, or the process they went through to produce it, or both?
- Do you want to assess any of the following?
    - writing ability
    - speaking skills
    - creativity
    - use of information technology
    - Is a visual component to the assessment necessary or desirable?
    - Is the ability for students to work in a group an important component of the assessment?
- Is it important that the assessment be time-constrained?

To help you think outside the box in developing assessments of your students' learning, here are some alternatives to multiple-choice exams that can be used in many disciplines and contexts. They are organized based on what kinds of cognitive processes or skills they require.

Alternatives that draw on students' creativity:

- Advertisements
- Development of a product or proposal (perhaps to be judged by external judges)
- Diary entry for a real or fictional character
- Letter to a friend explaining a problem or concept
- Brochure from a real/imaginary business or organization
- Performance: e.g., a presentation to the class or a debate
- Poem, play, or dialogue
- Web page or video
- Work of art, music, architecture, sculpture, etc.
- Newspaper article or editorial

Alternatives that require analysis or evaluation:

- Analysis and response to a case study
- Analysis of data or a graph
- Analysis of an event, performance, or work of art
- Chart, graph, or diagram with explanation
- Debate
- Legal brief
- Review of a book, play, performance, etc.
- Literature review
- Policy memo or executive summary
- Diagram, table, chart, or visual aid

Alternatives that require work similar to what is required for a term paper, but that result in shorter documents:

- Annotated bibliography
- Introduction to a research paper or essay (rather than the full paper)
- Literature review
- Executive summary
- Research proposal addressed to a granting agency
- Scientific abstract
- Policy memo or executive summary
- Start of a term paper (the thesis statement and a detailed outline)

Alternatives that require only that students understand course material:

- Explanation of a multiple-choice answer (students must explain why the answer they chose to a multiple-choice question is correct, or why the alternative answers are wrong)

- Meaningful paragraph (given a list of specific terms, students must use the terms in a paragraph that demonstrates that they understand the terms and their interconnections) (see Modiano & Bonanome, 2019)
- Short-answer exam (rather than asking multiple-choice questions, make some questions short-answer, to require students to show their understanding of key concepts)

Alternatives that require integration of many skills and types of knowledge:

- Poster (which could be presented to the class or a larger audience in a poster session)
- Portfolio to demonstrate improvement or evolution of work and thinking over time
- Powerpoint presentation
- Reflection by students on what they have learned from an experience

Who Is Doing This at IUB

Ben Motz, in the department of Psychological and Brain Sciences, assesses his students' understanding of concepts in his cognitive psychology course by asking them to produce 60-second public service announcements about the concepts. He describes the project in this CITL faculty spotlight. He has also created a course in which students apply concepts of probability and techniques of statistical analysis to managing fantasy football leagues. His course is described in this news release.

Professor Leah Shopkow, in the department of History, has her students create posters to demonstrate their understanding of concepts in her medieval history class. The students present the posters in a poster session that is open to the public.

Adapted from Yosefa Modiano and Marianna Bonanome, "Writing to reduce anxiety and improve outcomes in introduction to statistics for psychology majors." *Psychology Teaching Review*, 2019, vol. 25, no. 2, pp. 55-63

Revise to Equitize Workshop 7:
Equitizing Assessment

Workshop 7 focuses on reimagining conventional grading language and practice to increase equity measuring student success. Using the ideology of equitable language and assessment practices, we can reimagine benchmark assignments and how we gauge students' strengths and growth areas. This workshop focuses on equitizing grading.

Participant Pre-Work:

1. ***Personal Application and Reflection:***
   Write, draw, speak, etc. responses to the following:
   - Grading Audit: investigate your course/service assessment policies and practices with a lens toward identifying expectations, values, and policies you use to measure student success. Classify the components of your current grading procedure by asking yourself:
     - What grading system do you use to calculate grades? (points, weighted, etc.). How do you convey to students their strengths and growth areas?
     - How are individual assignments graded? (department or personal rubrics, points systems, etc.). If you don't grade, how do you measure student success?
     - What expectations do you bring to assessment practice that might not be explicit to students? *E.g. I learned that I assessed grammatical principles without actually teaching them.*
     - Share all the examples you feel comfortable sharing.
     - Bring examples of your assessment practices (e.g. rubrics, assignment breakdowns, Canvas gradebook, etc.).

2. ***Readings and Media:***
   Read and identify 1-2 "Golden Lines" (anything that seems to you inspiring, revelatory, important, etc.) from each:
   - Susan Blum, "Just One Change (Just Kidding): Ungrading and its Necessary Accompaniments," *Ungrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning (and What to Do Instead)*, ed. Susan Blum, West Virginia U Press, 2020. pp. 53-73.
   - Rusty Barrett, "Rewarding Language: Language Ideology and Prescriptive Grammar," *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*, eds. Vershawn Ashanti Young, Rusty Barret, Y'Shanda Young-Rivera, and Kim Brian Lovejoy. New City Community Press, 2018, pp. 15-23.

Workshop Outline:

1. ***Language and Assessment Equity Blindspots***
   - Identifying what we didn't know we didn't know

2. ***Pre-Work Reflection Sharing***
   - Golden Lines and additional foundational resources

3. ***Equitizing Grading and Assessment***

- Rethinking and reimagining assessment that consciously and unconsciously enacts White Language Supremacy ideology.

Professional Learning: Equitizing Assessment

Equitizing Assessments Checklist:

- ✓ Ensure assignment and course expectations are 100% transparent in assignment guidelines, rubrics, and any other tool used to articulate expectations of students.
- ✓ Ensure students fully comprehend how you measure success on their work.
- ✓ Don't factor minoritized English expression into measurement; consider educating students about code-meshing.
- ✓ Do not factor into assessment anything not explicitly taught in your student interactions. You can still point these out, however, in growth-oriented language!
- ✓ Invite students to participate in assessment processes, e.g. student-devised rubrics, students' personal goals, etc.

Boston University's Teaching Writing project, "Equity in Writing Assessment: Alternative Grading Approaches," http://www.bu.edu/teaching-writing/resources/inclusive-practice-for-writing-assessment/: this resource, and the entirety of BU's Teaching Writing work, provides researched suggestions to faculty looking to equitize their approach to grading with user-friendly, easy-to implement strategies that inform equitable grading practices.

Contract Grading

This approach replaces the act of grading and evaluating with a contract in which the instructor guarantees a specific grade (usually a B or B+) if students complete the required assignments. Within this approach, no assignment should receive a grade (whether letter, number, or check/check plus). Students should be able to clearly state which additional assignments or tasks (sometimes called "community contributions" or "labor points") they need to do in order to raise their grade above the base contract grade. Refer to this sample grading contract and list of community contributions (note that some of the community contributions are specific to the topic of this particular class and should be adapted for your course; note also that your syllabus should specify how many and which missing assignments would result in grades lower than a B/B+).

How does it work?

- Instructor: sets clear expectations on all the work required to achieve a base grade (usually B or B+), then provides a menu of options of activities students can complete to work toward a higher grade.
- Students: take greater risks on all assignments, rely on feedback from peers and instructors instead of grades to determine the value of their work, and, if working towards a higher grade, have the opportunity to choose their own pathway to the grade that they would like to earn.

Why do it?

- The goal of the grading contract is to reward behaviors which are within the student's control (expenditure of time and effort) rather than those outside of their control (mastery of generic conventions, previous exposure to academic English, etc.); the contract usually includes attendance, preparation, and completion of assignments on time.
- In order to earn a grade higher than the minimum grade stipulated in the contract, students may choose to complete additional tasks and assignments, which often focus on enriching the class community or extending students' learning beyond the classroom. While contract grading often lessens instructors' work of recording and calculating grades, instructors still read and comment on drafts and revisions; offer students frequent formal and informal feedback; and monitor students' overall progress in the course.

Tips for instructors:

- Craft one contract, with the requirements very clearly laid out.
- Give up judging your students' work for quality. What makes this kind of grading more equitable is precisely that you don't base a grade on quality. You coach students and offer plenty of feedback on quality, and you expect substantial revisions, but the A is there for everyone. Students get credit for putting in the work, no matter where they start.
- Make sure students know where they stand: Check in with students mid-semester to make sure you all are on the same page. Have them add up their points/units (or whatever you call them) periodically. Students should always know how they are doing in the class.

Sample Grading Contract

Conventional grading often leads students to think more about grades than about writing; to be reluctant to take risks in their research and writing; to worry about pleasing the professor instead of figuring out what they really want to say or how they want to say it. For these reasons, I am using a method of evaluation known as "contract grading." This method will keep you accountable for completing and handing in assignments on time, and will also provide an atmosphere conducive to growing as writers and citizens. You are guaranteed a final grade of B+ if you:

- Complete the tasks described on major assignments sheets by the due dates
- Attend class and arrive on time, including scheduled evening events and required conferences with your instructor (no more than 2 absences)
- Participate in in-class exercises and activities
- Complete all informal, low-stakes assignments (e.g., reading, homework exercises)
- Give thoughtful written and spoken peer feedback and work faithfully with your group on other collaborative tasks
- Sustain effort and investment on each draft of all major assignments.

- Make substantive revisions when the assignment is to revise—not just editing or touching up
- Copyedit all minor and major assignments (spell-check, check for grammatical errors and consistency, etc.)

In sum, you can earn a B+ for your final course grade based entirely on what you do—on your conscientious effort and participation. The grade of B+ does not derive from my judgment about the quality of your work. I will provide feedback on all major assignments to help you improve your work. Lower or higher final course grades will also be based entirely on what you do. To raise your grades, you can choose to perform community contributions (examples will be discussed in class). For grades lower than B+, refer to the chart on our syllabus.

Student signature: Date: Instructor signature: Date:

Ungrading

In this approach (also known as dialogic grading), instructors assign no grades at all during the course, providing only descriptive feedback to students. This approach emphasizes intrinsic motivation through reflection and self-assessment.

How does it work?

- Instructor: provides rubrics for assignment and course grades, then integrates occasions for formal (written and/or oral) self-assessment in dialogue with the instructor at particular points in the semester to determine the final grade.
- Students: take ownership of their learning, practice reflection regularly, and hold themselves accountable for completion and evaluation of coursework.

Why do it?

- Ungrading promotes student autonomy and a mutually respectful relationship between students and teachers; it gives us the opportunity to trust students to be "experts in their own learning." Since students determine their own final grades in strategically-placed self-assessment(s), students and instructors remain in dialogue throughout the semester about the student's performance and development. This dialogue occurs not only through feedback on formal and informal assignments but also through periodic self-assessment exercises (for example, cover letters for essays, conferences, or mid-semester self-evaluations) on which the instructor provides generous feedback.
- For instructors, ungrading, like contract grading, allows us to enjoy reading our students' writing and to write feedback that truly engages with the student's writing rather than feedback that simply justifies the assigned grade; it also removes much of the busywork around keeping track of and calculating grades.

Sample Ungrading Course Policies

This class uses an approach to grading called ungrading, in which I do not assign grades to your work. Research has decisively demonstrated that grades are terrible gauges of students' learning. It has also shown that traditional grades decrease students' intrinsic motivation and enjoyment of learning, and increase their anxiety and fear of failure. Conversely, my goal is to create a classroom space that maximizes freedom and growth, where we function as allies rather than adversaries and where you cooperate with classmates rather than compete with them. This approach is rooted in the following feminist and antiracist pedagogical principles:

- Constructing a community characterized by trust, respect, collaboration, and care;
- Producing a democratic space by reducing the hierarchy between students and teachers;
- Empowering students to think critically and take control of their learning;
- Honoring a diversity of experiences;
- Challenging typical learning ideals.

Instead of simply evaluating your ideas, then, I will be making comments and asking questions that meaningfully engage with them. Of course, BU asks that I submit a final grade for each enrolled student. Therefore, you will be asked to regularly evaluate your own work. At the end of the semester, you will grade yourself based on your semester's reading, speaking, listening, writing, interacting, growth/progress – all the elements of your learning, including those outlined in the course requirements section above – in a final essay and conference with me. Although I reserve the right to change your grade, I intend to use that right sparingly, and usually in an upward direction. If you have any questions, or this approach produces anxiety for you, please don't hesitate to talk to me about it!

Katie Bronsten's Contract-Style Ungrading Philosophy Policies

In my sabbatical report, I detail my evolution from conventional to contract to contract-ungrading to ungrading practices. Where I've landed is predominantly ungrading-focused, through there are elements of Contract Grading, as well. I use this Philosophy Policy document in all of my English classes.

Dr. Bronsten, English M01A/B/C

Class Ungrading Philosophy

When I tell my students that I ungrade all coursework, I am regularly met with equal measures jubilation and skepticism. The most common concern is academic transcripts, particularly if a student's goal is to transfer after their time at Moorpark College. I get it! American academia has done a very good job indoctrinating us all to a system that was designed and continues to maintain systems more concerned with power and privilege than with learning and growth. Yet, grades constitute so much behavioral noise that has nothing to do with course objectives (late penalties, extra credit, participation, homework) that they are never truly accurate measures of student learning anyway. So, as the investors on "Shark Tank" say, I'm out.

Thus, my Course Ungrading Philosophy declares that:

You will earn the right to self-assign your final transcript grade for the course if you

d) earn a Complete on all assigned essays, essay reflections, and essay revisions,
e) earn a Complete for as much of the other assigned coursework as possible,
f) commit to the process of learning, practicing, and revising by attending a support session for each essay and/or unit (4 in total)

Important Notes:
There are certain qualifiers in this Ungrading Philosophy that are important for you to understand:

- **There are 3 fixed deadlines this semester:**
  - **All students must take and pass with 70% or higher the Mandatory Attendance Quiz by 11:59pm on January 12.** Students that do not do so will be dropped from the course.
  - **All work for Units 1-3 must be submitted by 11:59pm on April 14.** This is to ensure I have time to feedback on Essays 1-3 so you can revise them in Essay #4.
  - **Essay #4 must be submitted by 11:59pm on May 5.** This is to ensure I have time to assess these and record final grades in accordance with the College grade deadlines.

- **An assignment is complete when it is noted as "Complete" in the Canvas gradebook:**
  - If a Best Draft For Now is Incomplete, you must ensure that the essay is made Complete in the Essay #4 revisions. There is no additional resubmission for these essays beyond that final project, but I am always happy to help you with your revisions.

- **Students can meet the Support Meeting requirement synchronously or asynchronously:**
  - Synchronously: working with me through Zoom Course Connections and/or meeting with a Writing Center tutor online or in the Writing Center
  - Asynchronously: submitting work to the MC email tutor, or to NetTutor through our Canvas page.
  - Plan ahead! Essays are drafted and submitted in in Week 5, Week 9, Week 13, and Week 16.

- **Students must submit proof of their participation in a support meeting in the body of every Essay Best Draft For Now:**

- You can briefly detail the date, time, and tutor name of your meeting along with what you worked on and how you plan to use what you learned.
- You can put a screenshot of the session report (from WC tutors and NetTutors) in the body of your Essay Best Draft For Now.

How to Measure Your Success on Essays:

Without traditional grades and points, you may at first feel adrift. BUT, you will know far more clearly where you are in terms of your strengths and growth areas without these. There are essay rubrics that will also give you an overview of these elements and they work thusly:

- 3 = Ready to Launch: the assignment demonstrates consistency and confidence with the targeted course skills and you are ready to level these up.

- 2 = Generally Solid: the assignment demonstrates a mostly consistent, confident ability with the targeted course skills, and more practice would strengthen these.

- 1 = Not Yet: the assignment does not demonstrate consistent, confident ability with the targeted course skills. Return to the Writing Tips and Tools Booklet and arrange time to work with me and the college tutors.

- 0 = No Evidence: the assignment does not demonstrate the targeted course skills. It might be off topic, missing required components, or just not have been submitted.

Other Important FAQs:

- **Individual assignments are not graded.**
  Instead, you will receive detailed feedback on everything you submit that will guide you in your learning and growth. You MUST commit to reviewing my feedback to learn from it and evolve your skills!
  - ***Why do anything except the required essays/reflections/revisions if you aren't rewarded with a grade for completing them?***
    These activities are NOT busy work but are, rather, intentionally designed to give you practice in all the skills you need to demonstrate proficiency in for the required activities (essays, reflections, revisions) and more important life activities (transfer personal statements, job application letters, work promotion arguments, and so on).
  - ***Only Essay Reflection Activities will not have comments from me, as this is an activity designed for you to self-assess.*** If you having trouble accessing my feedback, please review the guidance sheets located in the "Course Workings" module on our Canvas homepage.
  - ***Note on Discussion Board conversations (Personal Posts and Classmate Conversations):***
    - I believe it is important for students to have a space to discuss our course materials with each other and without the instructor lurking in the shadows; I want you to take charge of the conversation without fear that I am looking at the posts for errors or to "catch you out". Thus, my presence in weekly discussion forums will be minimal: I will pop in with reminders, samples, celebrations, and so forth as necessary, but generally keep my

presence silent. **Please know, however, that I do read every post to ensure that each forum is a safe space for all.**

- Because much of your discussion work is skill practice, I will feedback extensively on your posts in the privacy of the "Comments" feature, which you can access from the Canvas gradebook or individual assignment. If your post is incomplete, it will be deleted from the public discussion and I will explain what is missing in a detailed comment on the assignment; thus, if your work suddenly disappears, please make sure to review the message I left for you.

- **There is no such thing as too late, just off-calendar.**
  This course is organized around the Moorpark College calendar. I know there will be times when you or I are derailed—such is life!—and I NEVER want you to sacrifice your physical and emotional well-being, the safety or needs of yourself or your family, or other non-negotiable commitments for the sake of coursework. Thus, you will NEVER be penalized or required to explain the need to submit work off-calendar; there is no such thing as "late work" or being "behind," only working "off-calendar." **HOWEVER, there are certain conditions to working off-calendar:**
  - ***You must let me know you are working off-calendar*** by emailing me or writing a note in the Comment box of the assignment you are off-calendar on (e.g. Discussion Journal, Essay Reflection, etc.)
  - ***Even if you let me know, you may still be dropped from the course if you do not participate in discussion or essay-drafting activities for a week or more.***
    Letting me know you are working off-calendar does not constitute participation in the discussions or essay-drafting activities.
  - ***When will I receive feedback on off-calendar work?***
    I always work on-calendar, but I will do my best to ensure off-calendar work is assessed and feedbacked on in a timeframe that helps you grow your skills. If you submit essays in Week 16 of the semester, I am only able to offer summative feedback on it.
  - ***REMINDER:***
    there are 3 non-negotiable deadlines this semester:
    - ***All students must take and pass with 70% or higher the Mandatory Attendance Quiz by 11:59pm on January 12.***
    - ***All work for Units 1-3 must be submitted by 11:59pm on April 14. This is to ensure I have time to feedback on Essays 1-3 so you can revise them in Essay #4.***
    - ***Essay #4 must be submitted by 11:59pm on May 5 to ensure I have time to assess these and record final grades in accordance with the College grade deadlines.***

- **Nothing is ever beyond growth.**
  You will never be told that work you produce is "bad," "weak," "needs fixing," "contains errors," or "has mistakes"; all work will be celebrated for its strengths and supported in its growth areas. Please practice modifying your own expression, particularly in activities like Classmate Conversations and Guided Peer Review: rather than tell your classmate they need to "fix" an "error," suggest ideas to help them develop their "growth areas".
  - ***But if everything is essentially good, why are we doing this work at all?***
    Ungrading doesn't equate to standard-free; on the contrary, you are very likely to be even more successful in mastering the course's learning outcomes *because* I am ungrading you, freeing you to focus on learning rather than points and

percentages. And, this course requires that, in order to earn a passing transcript grade, you demonstrate your ability to execute specific writing and critical thinking skills. You aren't playing a grade game, but you are cultivating measurable skills.

- **Couldn't you just do nothing and award yourself an A at the end of the semester?** No. The purpose of ungrading is to restore learning to education, not to cheat the system. So, if you do nothing you also learn nothing, which is an immense waste of the privilege you have that enables you to learn in the first place. Moreover, the ungrading philosophy specifically stipulates that students must do coursework to earn the right to self-assess (see above).

Revise to Equitize Workshop 8:
Equitizing Feedback and Communication

Workshop 8 shifts the focus on reflection about student language practices to an evaluation of our own when we engage with them. Using the principles of inclusive language, we can revise the language we use to put into action the practice of language and assessment equity. This workshop focuses on equitizing the feedback we give to and the communication we have with students.

Participant Pre-Work:

1. ***Personal Application and Reflection:***
   Write, draw, speak, etc. responses to the following:
   - Feedback Audit: investigate the type of feedback you give students with a lens toward identifying the types of language you use to engage with student work. Classify the components of your current feedback language by asking yourself:
     - What words/phrases do you find yourself using frequently, and what do these mean to you? To your students? system do you use to calculate grades?
     - When students do well, what language do you use? When students don't do well, what language do you use?
     - Share all the examples you feel comfortable sharing.
     - Bring examples of your assessment practices (e.g. rubrics, assignment breakdowns, Canvas gradebook, etc.).

2. ***Readings and Media:***
   Read and identify 1-2 "Golden Lines" (anything that seems to you inspiring, revelatory, important, etc.) from each:
   - Victor Rios, "Dreams Deferred: The Patterns of Punishment in Oakland," *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys*. New York University Press, 2011, pp. 3-23.
   - Laura Gibbs, "Let's Talk About Grading," *Ungrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning (and What to Do Instead)*, ed. Susan Blum, West Virginia U Press, 2020. pp. 91-104.

Workshop Outline:

1. ***Language and Assessment Equity Blindspots***
   - Identifying what we didn't know we didn't know

2. ***Pre-Work Reflection Sharing***
   - Golden Lines and additional foundational resources

3. ***Equitizing Feedback and Communication***
   - Rethinking the language we use to guide and interact with students in the spirit of equity.

Professional Learning: Equitizing Assessment

Equitizing Feedback Checklist:

- ✓ Use students' preferred name(s) and pronoun(s) wherever possible; make your own clear to them.
- ✓ Ensure feedback is formative and detailed; direct students to where they learned/can learn more about the skill(s) you're assessing (class resources, campus support, etc.)
- ✓ Use language consistent with the course's ethos of antiracism, language justice, and assessment equity, and remind learners that these policies inform all course frameworks and activities.
- ✓ Celebrate successes and clearly identify growth areas (notice the language here!) and, where possible, tailor feedback to the learner's articulated personal goals.

General Language Shifts
Here are some intentional language shifts I've adapted to make my feedback more inclusive and equitable: • Weakness → Growth Area • Late (work) → Off-Calendar • Grading → Ungrading • Grade → Assessment (as in, constructive criticism) • Standard → Standardized • Institutional → Institutionalized • Minority/Marginal → Minoritized/Marginalized • Standard Written/Academic English → Standardized White English • Correct Grammar → Standardized White English Grammar • Canonical Literature → White Literature • Wrong/Incorrect → Can you help me understand what you mean?
Language of Course Policies and Procedures
Names and Pronouns Here is an example of how I encourage students to rethink how they have been named and how they wish to be named. I post this announcement in the first or second week of the semester in all of my courses: One of my favorite poems by African poet and activist Upile Chisala has been on my mind a lot as I begin this semester. In her second collection of poetry (2019), Chisala writes that "There is danger in letting people misname you. If you are a fire, do not answer when they call you a spark" (*Nectar* 2). I used to think it was silly of me to want to correct people if they pronounced or spelled my name incorrectly; I internally bristled at being called Mrs. Bronsten but never wanted to unsettle a speaker by asking them to call me Dr. Bronsten instead. I no longer allow others to choose my name because I, too, believe that allowing

others to "misname" me is dangerous. Identity--personal, chosen identity--is important and I value each of your own demands that outsiders recognize the identity that you live by. There are, of course, many way to respectfully insist on receiving what we need.

To that effect, here is some important information about names and naming:

- Pronouns on Canvas: Canvas now has the option for students to identify their pronouns on Canvas. This is a handy tool because if you do not directly ask students to divulge their pronouns in class (which would also be a good idea), it allows you (and other students in class) to address them in the way they want to be addressed. Here is the link with more info.
- Official and/or Canvas-Only Name Changes: you can change record your name via the district website. An ID is not required to change one's name legally. Here is a link with more info.
  Additional Resources for Students: check out this website, which offers resources for students to get help with changing gender markers or names on identity documents.

Originality of Thought and Work Policies
(Plagiarism and Fraud)

Here is my policy on plagiarism and fraud in which I use the opportunity to expand upon my antiracism and language diversity policies:

Although this policy is included in my course syllabus, I want to isolate it here as well because it is incredibly important that you are very clear on what constitutes "originality of thought and work" in a world with rapidly changing technology designed to make your life easier. Along with being an ungrader, I believe that all work (school, professional, life) should be meaningful and useful, hence why I see learning and growth as more important than grades. Likewise, I believe that creative, personal expression and ideas are more important than standardized language, and I want students to celebrate and build on their uniquely individual strengths.
AI software, however--much like all the other tools across the years (essay-writing services, literature guides, individual assignments completed collaboratively, borrowing from a classmates' discussion post or essay drafts, and so on)--supports uniformity, standardization, and conformity. Why oh WHY would you spend money going to college to learn to be just like everyone else?!

So, here is my official position on AI and all other learning tools and resources:

- AI software is a useful resource: use it to get started! use it to explore deeper! use it to think creatively! if you want to do so, use it to initiate your writing process!
- AI software is a source similar to dictionaries, encyclopedias, databases, and search engines; if you use it in submitted work, you must account for your use of it by putting quotation marks around directly quoted material (e.g. copy-

paste-submit) and include parenthetical citations for these quotations as well as summaries and paraphrases of AI-generated content; a Works Cited page citation is required, too (here's a link to guidance on how to cite AI).
- AI software does not generate original thought but, rather, collects the very basic foundations of understanding: do not allow it to speak *for* you; you cannot check out as the main voice in any of our conversations!
- When students do not acknowledge their sources, be they publications, books, journals, or reference guides, their work is the product of plagiarism or academic fraud.
- When students submit material written by AI resources, even if the material was originally their own but rephrased, they are committing academic fraud.
- Additional Fun Facts:
    - Did you know that when students adopt and adapt other students' work as their own through summary or paraphrasing, that constitutes plagiarism?
    - Did you know that when students submit work written by tutors, friends, family, or other human resources, they have committed plagiarism?

What happens if Dr. Bronsten sees that I have plagiarized or committed academic fraud?

- In the first instance, I will ALWAYS give you the benefit of the doubt and reach out to you on a social and emotional level. In my 18 years as an academic, I know that students turn to shortcut methods out of desperation: they fear lack of success, they are overwhelmed by all they have to do, or they have some combination of both. My goal in these cases is to get to the issue, not simply bandage it and, thus, I will reach out to you, we will have a Zoom conversation, and we will make a plan to get you the support and confidence you need.
- In the next instance, I will go through the process above, in addition to filing a report with the Behavioral Intervention Team, which also goes onto your official academic transcript. At that point, the Dean and other administrators will take over working with you. Behavior Intervention & Care Team. Their job is not to penalize you, but to go deeper into the reasons you may have made the choice to shortcut your learning in an effort to find the best means to support your academic success through the maintenance of integrity.
- In the 3rd or subsequent instance, I will no longer accept coursework submissions from you.

Please remind yourself of my Originality of Thought and Work Policy in the Course Syllabus and check out all the ways in which material can be plagiarized or fraudulent--you'll be surprised in some cases! And, remind yourself of the College's position in this conversation:

- "Moorpark College takes academic honesty very seriously. Instructors, accordingly, have the responsibility and authority for dealing with instances of cheating or plagiarism that may occur in their classes. Such activities could

include stealing tests, using “cheat sheets,” using unauthorized technology, copying off another’s test, or turning in someone else’s work as his/her own. Instructors have the responsibility to report instances of plagiarism or cheating to the Dean of Student Life. Academic dishonesty, in any form, is a violation of the Moorpark College Student Code of Conduct. as outlined in the Student Rights and Responsibilities section and, as such, is subject to investigation, charges of misconduct, and disciplinary consequences" ("Academic Dishonesty").

- For more information about the College's position in this conversation, one I fully support, check out these resources:
  - Updated Plagiarism/Academic Dishonesty Library Guide
  - Link to Academic Dishonesty page of 2023-24 MC Catalog

Course Off-Calendar Policies

Here is my explanation of how late-work is treated in my courses:

My main goal in this class is for you to learn how to engage fully with the ideas circulating in our world, to position yourself within increasingly powerful discussions and debates, and to construct a powerful writing voice and, therefore, power, through which to participate in important dialogues about culture, society, and humanity. BUT, we all need flexibility at times (and not just once!). Here, therefore, is what you need to know about my off-calendar policy:

- The Course Calendar and its deadlines are constructed with the course interests in mind. In order to keep the course on track, I have devised due dates with the College's semester calendar, course objectives, and course learning outcomes in mind.
- Please do your best to follow the course calendar as much as you are able to do so. I understand, though, that this isn't always possible.
- You NEVER need my permission to work off-calendar, but you MUST let me know when you are doing so. Please email me and/or write a note in the assignment comment that you are off-calendar for. You are welcome to share your reasons, but you do not need to do this.
  - NOTE: Students who do not participate in the course (submitting discussion journal assignments) for a week or more may be dropped. This policy is in accordance with College policies on attendance.
- Even though you might work off-calendar, I always work on-calendar, which ensures that my students receive feedback on their work in a timeframe that enables them to make use of it. If you turn your work in on or within a week of a calendar deadline, you will receive feedback and grades in time to use my feedback on your next activities; if you turn your work significantly off-calendar, I will give it as much attention as I would a piece submitted by the deadline, but I cannot guarantee when you will receive my comments.
  - NOTE:

- Units 1-3 MUST BE COMPLETE by November 12. No work from these units will be accepted after this deadline.
- The absolute final deadline to submit Essay #4 and receive a transcript grade *this* semester is Sunday, December 3, 2023 by 11:59pm due to college deadlines.

Please communicate with me if you are struggling, experiencing difficulties, or need help in some other capacity. I want you to succeed and I will do everything in my power to support you in doing so. I need you to be transparent so that I can be useful.

Sample Assignment Feedback

Here are examples of how I equitize assessment feedback with examples from my English M01A course:

Example 1: Discussion Forum Practicing Evidence Incorporation (low-stakes)
Wasn't it a nice treat to do such close, brief work?! Trust me, I know I ask a lot of you in these activities and I appreciate you rising to the challenge; and, we can both admit when a bit of a reprieve is welcome. Great work on making the most of this activity. Evidence selection is a challenging skill, and adding sophisticated engagement with textual material in the form of integration and analysis brings a level of challenge to this work that can't be underestimated. The directly integrated quotation follows the MLA guidelines and reads like it comes naturally from your unique voice. When you're using punctuation, it can help you to read the sentence out loud to make sure that those pesky marks are impacting your ideas in the best way. Don't be afraid to get creative: make them work for you so that they represent your unique way of speaking! The blocked quotation is a powerful resource that can strengthen the argument you're making. Remember that you want to lead your reader into this outside conversation without suggesting that it is superior to your voice. We're in the business of conversations here, and the language you use to introduce it is important. For example, when you write that Author X "correctly states…." you imply that their idea is almost like a universal fact, which it isn't. This choice can also suggest that you see their perspective as more important or "correct" than your own, which is never the case. Instead, try something like this: "I agree with Author X that "[quotation]," and also believe….." In this styling, you position yourself as an equal partner in the conversation, and one who has confidence in their argument (which you should!).

Example 2: Drafting Thesis Statements (low-stakes)
You are doing some really great close reading work of the film transcript when you are able to isolate specific ideas and apply them in creative ways. Because Hammond's work predates "Coco" and does not specifically explore the topic of our course, it is up to you to draw out the connections between the materials through the ideas they share. This engagement and interaction is the heart of academic conversation, which is what we've been working on, but not through the use of literary elements, which we are doing in Unit 3. So, when you're thinking about how you can use Hammond's (or any other) material to analyze "Coco" it's OK to emphasize that you are the

original creator of the connection that you see. And, this is where it is sometimes OK to use "I" in formal academic writing. For example, you could suggest that, while Hammond's study focuses on how understanding their students' cultural values and systems enables teachers to engage with them in more productive ways, you see that stories are used to convey the importance of culture in education systems. The shift you are making is connected to and drawn out from Hammond's work to your own. Above all else, it's important to show your reader your thoughts: if you don't make your points visible, you're likely to confuse—and ultimately lose—your reader, which never bodes well for an argument. I'm sure this feels messy and hard to do right now, but remember that practice makes progress. Take those risks, try something new, and watch where your ideas take you!

Example 3: Essay Best Draft For Now (high-stakes)

There is a lot to be proud of in this essay: the writing opens up thoughtful conversations about the education individuals receive through their culture and cultural experiences and how storytelling elements animate these. As with all writing, there is some work to do. Your biggest growth areas include:

- Putting more of yourself into the conversation you're having: the experience you use an example of cultural education is a powerful one, and I think you can personalize it even more. Is there any language that your abuela used in that moment that stands out to you? Did your young self want to say something back to her? Put it in there, even if it's not in English! English essays really focus on "showing" instead of "telling". Try out different ways to animate your experience using your unique iterations of language, whatever they are. You can also play with the punctuation you use to animate the language and find ways to creatively add more of your voice to the experience.

This is just one reason why what you submitted here is called the Best Draft For Now: there is still a great deal to learn! Fortunately, you will be revising this essay during Unit 4, which focuses specifically on reflection and revision. Return to the assignment guidelines and see where the growth areas are. I would love to have the opportunity to speak with you about my comments here and ensure you achieve the success I know you are capable of. Above all, please remember that the writing process is, well, a sometimes-messy journey and it takes time to learn and effectively use new skills and practices.

Revise to Equitize Workshop 9:
Ongoing Learning (aka life-long homework)

Workshop 9 celebrates the learning journey we've been on while making clear that the work of language and assessment equity is ongoing. This

Participant Pre-Work:

1. ***Personal Application and Reflection:***
   Write, draw, speak, etc. responses to the following:
   - Learning Journey Audit: review and reflect on all you've learned across the 8 workshops, how you will use your learning, and where you would like more support in your ongoing learning. Classify the components of your experience by asking yourself:
     - What are 2-3 of the biggest takeaways for you from the 8 workshops?
     - What are 2-3 aspects of your work with students that you are going to begin your work to equitize your language and assessment practices?
     - Where do you see a need for deeper personal work, and how can you do this work? What is needed for you to be able to do this work from your department, division, college, etc.?
     - Share all the examples you feel comfortable sharing.
     - Bring 2-3 of your course/service interactions with students (assignment, feedback, call for applicant, syllabus, etc.) that you would like to workshop in Workshop 9.

2. ***Readings and Media:***
   Read and identify 1-2 "Golden Lines" (anything that seems to you inspiring, revelatory, important, etc.) from each:
   - Christopher Emdin, "Introduction: Commencement," *For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood…and the Rest of Y'all Too: Reality Pedagogy and Urban Education*, Beacon Press, 2016, pp. 1-16.
   - Susan D. Blum, "Not Simple But Essential," *Ungrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning (and What to Do Instead)*, ed. Susan D. Blum, West Virginia U Press, 2020. pp. 219-228.

Workshop Outline:

1. ***Language and Assessment Equity Journey Celebrations***
   - We made it! What are we going to work on?

2. ***Pre-Work Reflection Sharing***
   - Golden Lines and additional foundational resources

3. ***Looking Beyond these Workshops***
   - Making plans to embed language and assessment equity work into our practice now, and going forward.

Professional Learning: Ongoing Learning

Language and Assessment Equity Ongoing-Learning Checklist:

- ✓ Keep an open mind! This work is challenging and often existential; slow and steady wins the race.
- ✓ Find support from all the spaces: faculty, department, division, service, other institutions, other spaces. Let's build a Community of Practice!
- ✓ Be humble and accept that mistakes are inevitable; regroup and persist!

Language and Assessment Equity Literature Review

The following is a list of key resources consulted directly for this project as well as to give a contextual sense of the academic conversations taking place about language and assessment equity since 2015. Though some resources were published before this date, I wanted to focus on material emerging from 2015, leading up to, and during the COVID-19 pandemic, and since. These years have been marked by revolutionary transformations in K-college academic systems, and even the earliest seminal pieces have been evolved and reimagined in light of significant socio-political challenges and changes. This literature review is by no means exhaustive, but it is designed to give anyone interested a crash-course in language justice and grading equity conversations and best practices.

Equity Gaps

Colman, Patty and Patty Colman and Core Members of Teaching Women and Men of Color Advocates (TWMOCAs) at Moorpark College, "Moorpark College Academic Senate Resolution in Support of Black Lives Matter," Moorpark College Fall 2020. https://www.moorparkcollege.edu/sites/moorparkcollege/files/media/pdf_document/2021/resolution_support_blm_draft.v5.pdf.
In this statement, the Academic Senate declares its support of the Black Lives Matter movement and, in line with the Moorpark College vision, resolves to stand with BIPOC individuals and declares its responsibility to fight against racism and actively practice antiracism on campus and in the community.

Emdin, Christopher. *For White Folks Who Teaching in the Hood…and the Rest of Y'all Too: Reality Pedagogy and Urban Education*. Beacon Press, 2016.
Emdin's work identifies the ways that existing pedagogy, particularly in urban schools, perpetuates racial inequity in American classrooms through the White student identity and experience. Sharing his classroom experiences as an educator, he calls for teaching reform that celebrates students' cultural assets and reimagines education from teacher education, training, and hiring through to classroom practice.

hooks, bell. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. Routledge, 1994.
hooks writes to inspire the complete destruction of existing academic systems, arguing that they are rooted in racial, sexual, and economic oppression. The work focuses on building new, equitable systems that foster opportunity for all learners.

Pollock, Mica, ed. *Everyday Antiracism: Getting Real About Race in School*. The New Press, 2008.
This is a collection of essays written by equity warriors and is a useful introduction to the ways that racism affects learners across all levels of education. These essays identify specific inequities in education initiatives and legislation that negatively impact minoritized students as well as creating perceptions of these learners that perpetuate stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. After establishing the foundation of discussions about racism in schools, there are sections that offer suggestions for educators and administrators about using conversations about race to create equitable learning experiences for all students.

Rios, Victor. *Human Targets: Schools, Police, and the Criminalization of Latino Youth*. The University of Chicago Press, 2017.
Rios explores the ways that Latino youth are too often understood through a good/bad binary which, he argues, emerges from social construction and prejudice rather than fact. Using his personal experience growing up as a gang member on the road to prison or death, as well as interviews with members of the Latine community in parts of California, Rios attempts to demonstrate the discrimination this population faces and the ways that schools are obligated to change the narrative that rejects and disparages this minoritized community.

—. *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys*. New York University Press, 2011.
Rios writes about the ways that school-aged Black and Latino boys are written off as problems before they have a chance to show the world who they are. Using his personal experiences of growing up at risk as well as extensive research about and interviews with boys and educators in Oakland, California, Rios demonstrates how social prejudice about these individuals criminalizes young men simply for being born into Black and Latino families.

Rios, Victor, Rebeca Mireles-Rios, and Audrey Lee. *From Risk to Promise: A School Leader's Guide to Professional Learning in Prosperity-Based Education*. Independently Published, 2022.
This is a year-long training manual that supports Rios's Scholar System, a professional development program designed to identify and establish the pedagogy necessary to see minoritized students as "at promise" rather than "at risk" so they can thrive in what the writers call Prosperity-Based Classrooms. It asks participants to use self-reflection to position themselves on the path to transformation alongside research into establishing best practices for establishing equitable classrooms and build "classrooms of cariño" (care) with a host of resources, lessons, tools, and activities that inform the language and practice the Scholar System.

Singleton, Glenn E. *Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools*. Corwin, 2015.
This resource is a professional development program designed to help schools and districts close the racial achievement gap in their classrooms. The program traces

the history of racism in schools to colonial America, using personal experiences from educators, administrators, and students across grade levels to illustrate the experiences of racism in schools and its impact on learning. Each section offers a wide variety of activities, lessons, and engagement experiences that can help close equity gaps for minoritized students. There is a condensed instructor's guide workbook that accompanies this resource.

Tough, Paul. *The Inequality Machine: How College Divides Us.* Mariner Books, 2021. (This edition revises and expands the 2019 publication, titled *The Years that Matter Most: How College Makes or Breaks Us*)

Tough's work focuses on exposing the racial and economic inequities that inform everything from college admissions to college classrooms. Using personal narratives and interviews with students, educators, and administrators, Tough's research demonstrates the ways that racism pervades curricular systems and how college, ultimately, is a business that is set up to support the success of student populations with the most racial and financial privilege: White. His work offers an inside view of standardized testing, the admissions process, and classroom pedagogy designed to exclude minoritized students.

Wagner, Tony and Ted Dintersmith: *Most Likely to Succeed: Preparing Our Kids for the New Innovation Era*. Scribner, 2015.

This is a powerful study rooted in decades of research into American K-12 educational spaces. Arguing that existing academic systems are rooted in an agricultural and manufacturing America that no longer exists, Wager and Dintersmith identify gaps in contemporary curricula and make proposals for more effective and relevant learning experiences for children. Interspersed with narratives and anecdotes from college graduates, this book is an important read for those seeking more information about education's general lack of evolution in America and the ways that some revolutionary educators and schools are challenging systemic failures.

Zhang, Ray and the Academic Senate at Moorpark College. "Moorpark College Academic Senate Resolution in Solidarity with the Asian American and Pacific Islander Community," Moorpark College Spring 2021. https://www.moorparkcollege.edu/sites/moorparkcollege/files/media/pdf_document/2021/resolution_aapi_solidarity_final.pdf.

In response to the influx of anti-Asian American and Pacific Islander hate crimes and violence due to misplaced beliefs about the origins of COVID-19, this statement from the Academic Senate condemns these practices and declares its support of the AAPI community and its responsibility to fight against racist misrepresentation of AAPI individuals to actively practice antiracism on campus and in the community.

Language Justice

Allport, Gordon. "The Language of Prejudice," *Language Awareness: Readings for College*

Writers, 12th edition. Paul Eschholz, Alfred Rosa, and Virginia Clark, eds. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2016, pp. 364-375.
Allport's work, though initially published in 1954 as part of his book *The Nature of Prejudice*, remains relevant today because it helps to explain how language shifts from being a collection of benign letters to words that divide society. His focus in this argument is on speaker intention and language usage, suggesting that language shapes and perpetuates prejudice when the speaker intends for it to be thus.

Baker-Bell, April and Carmen Kynard, "Black Language Education," *Black Language Syllabus,* 30 Jan. 2021, http://www.blacklanguagesyllabus.com/black-language-education.html
This material is aprofessional development treasure trove that offers "praxis, and histories where Black Language has shaped classroom and community learning for Black children and youth." There are a number of resources that are both useful learning tools for educators and administrators, and materials that can be deployed in the classroom to help instructors and students understand the origins of Black linguistic patterns, and amplify and center Black language. Resources include a wealth of videos, interviews, articles, recommended readings, a wide variety of literature by Black writers, and a new magazine that started in September 2024.

Baker-Bell, April. *Linguistic Justice: Black Language, Literacy, Identity, and Pedagogy*. Routledge, 2020.
Baker-Bell, a foundational scholar in Black Language justice focuses her work on "Anti-Black Linguistic Racism" and "white linguistic supremacy," what she argues is doing deep harm to Black students. Although her work focuses on Black learners, Baker-Bell is clear that her argument can be applied to all marginalized linguistic groups. Her research demonstrates that Black and African American Vernacular English have grammatical patterns and rules, just as White language does, and that it is actually an even more sophisticated language because of its historical roots and evolution from African origins through the institution of slavery. Her work ultimately calls for a complete dismantling of White language supremacy in education.

Baker-Bell, April, Bonnie J. Williams-Farrier, Davena Jackson, Lamar Johnson, Carmen Kynard, Teaira McMurtry, "This Ain't Another Statement! This is a DEMAND for Black Linguistic Justice!" Conference on College Composition and Communication. July 2020. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/demand-for-black-linguistic-justice.
This powerful "demand" emerges from the immediate context of America's racial reckoning in 2020. The writers set their context as the contemporaneous Black Lives Matter protests and anti-Black racist murders of several Black men and women. The call-to-arms lays out 5 specific demands that they believe the academy needs to comply with in order to dismantle the language and writing constructs that oppress, violate, and murder Black lives.

Brownlee, Yavanna, et. al. "Statement on Language, Power, and Action," Conference on College Composition and Communication, November 2022.

https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/language-power-and-action.
This statement focuses on identifying and explaining the power dynamics at play in academic composition settings, drawing on the Black Lives Matter Movement and Eric Garner's and George Floyd's murders in 2020 to demonstrate the unjust and inequitable power dynamic at play in advocacy for language justice. The statement also emphasizes the ways that language is an intrinsic part of identity and culture and, thus, linguistic injustice is inherently violent. The statement also presents suggestions for dismantling existing pedagogic systems that emphasize standardized English and what to ask of learners instead, including suggestions about course design and pedagogy, program and institutional development, and research activities and uses.

Bucholtz, Mary, Dolores Ines Casillas, and Jin sook Lee. "California Latinx Youth as Agents of Sociolinguistic Justice," *Language and Social Justice in Practice*. Routledge, 2019. pp. 166-175.
These UC Santa Barbara Professors explain the importance of understanding that language privilege emerges from standardization and minoritization—the deliberate act of one group to make their language and race superior to others. They build their work upon the 20th-century legislation that created a particularly oppressive period for minoritized speech communities from which academic systems are still recovering to help reimagine Latine learners as helping to challenge and rewrite experiences of language equity in academia.

"CCCC Statement on Globalization in Writing Studies Pedagogy and Research," Conference on College Composition and Communication, November 2017. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/globalization.
This statement is addressed to writing program administrators (WPAs), scholars, and composition instructors and offers reasons for and suggestions about how to approach the teaching and learning of composition styles through the lens of globalization. Although much of this material speaks to international and learning exchange programs, there are several relevant conversations about ways to destandardize existing writing and language privilege in composition classrooms and settings.

"CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Multilingual Writers," Conference on College Composition and Communication, May 2020. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/secondlangwriting.
This statement asks for the renaming of ESL/ELL/LEP students as multilingual learners and encourages educators and colleges to view these students' experience of language as an asset, rather than a detriment because of their imperfect command of standardized English. Writers of the resolution ask campus communities to embrace the ethos of DEIJ to shift attitudes about multilingual students, and makes suggestions for best practices including: class size, writing assignment design and assessment, professional learning, Writing Center work with multilingual students, and other related aspects of the college-going experience for students.

Coclanis, Peter A., "Campus Politics and the English Language," *Inside Higher Ed*, June 5,

2018. https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2018/06/05/often-unspoken-privilege-speaking-english-academe-opinion.
Coclanis explores the concept of unearned privilege in an opinion piece. This type of privilege is what individuals are born into without having earned them, including race, gender, sexuality, and so forth. He argues that an overlooked unearned privilege is English language privilege and that it is important to consider this when navigating work with students in academic spaces.

Condon, Frankie and Vershawn Ashanti Young, eds. *Performing Antiracist Pedagogy in Rhetoric, Writing, and Communication*. University Press of Colorado, 2017.
This anthology of essays explores language assessment and grading as antiracist practices in several areas of the academy. With the introductory arguments of Asao B. Inoue, Frankie Condon, and Vershawn Ashanti Young, this book attempts to show that classroom racism has deep and dangerous connections to the perpetuation of racism outside of school. By focusing on how language is used and assessed in schools, contributors demonstrate both how racist practices undermine the spirit and practice of antiracism when existing systems of language supremacy and grading are used. Thus, contributors explore historical and contemporary origins of American academic racism as well as suggest ways to establish antiracist ethos and practice in contemporary classrooms that ask students to speak and write.

Curzan, Anne, Robin M. Queen, Kristin VanEyk, and Rachel Elizabeth Weissler. "Language Standardization and Linguistic Subordination," *Language and Social Justice in the United States*, vol. 153, no. 3, Summer 2023, pp. 18-35. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48739979.
Starting from the premise that instructor and social language "peeves" have long been written off as harmless, Curzan, et. al., use this conversation to suggest that rather than innocuous, these often physical responses (sickness, laughter) to language varieties outside of standardized English reveal the depths of bias individuals carry. The writers explain that standardized English, though a construct not a norm, is mistaken as the latter, which simultaneously perpetuates prejudice and discrimination against other Englishes.

Davila, Bethany A. and Cristyn L. Elder, "Welcoming Linguistic Diversity and Saying Adios to Remediation: Stretch and Studio Composition at a Hispanic-Serving Institution" University of New Mexico. *Composition Forum*, Spring 2017. https://compositionforum.com/issue/35/new-mexico.php.
This article details the way that the University of New Mexico is building embedded support into writing classes as a solution to course remediation placement inequities. The most valuable part of this piece is the assignments devised as alternatives to the traditional "college essay" and the ways that the instructors shift their and student perspectives toward a more inclusive perspective of language diversity in the college composition classroom.

De Katzew, Lilia. "Interlingualism: The Language of Chicanos/as." *National Association for*

Chicana and Chicano Studies Annual Conference Proceedings, 2002-2004: *Chican@: Critical Perspectives and Praxis at the Turn of the 21st Century, Selected Papers from the 2002, 2003, and 2004 NACCS Conference Proceedings*, San Jose State University Scholarworks, April 1, 2004, pp. 61-76 https://scholarworks.sjsu.edu/naccs/2002-2004/Proceedings/6.

De Katzew argues that Chicano/a is an interlingual language. This article explores the history of Chicano/a language formation from social, historical, geographical, racial, economic, and political contexts which, De Katzew argues, are essential to understanding both the language, the ways that it has been discriminated against, and how it is used to discriminate against Chicano/a individuals. This prejudice, De Katzew argues, is perpetuated in academic spaces because the language is rejected as autonomous due to its convergence of English and Spanish. De Katzew suggests that this is a misrepresentation of the language, which should be considered interlingual, a fluid space creating new language from existing languages, not a combination to two languages.

Dennihy, Melissa, "Beyond English: Linguistic Diversity in the College English Classroom," *Teaching Multi-Ethnic Literatures of the United States: Pedagogy in Anxious Times,* vol. 42, no. 4, Winter 2017, Oxford University Press, pp. 192-212. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/26566095

Taking the perspective that standard English is actually standardized, Dennihy explores the way that racist values inform perspectives about language superiority and inferiority. The work emerges from Dennihy's experiences in teaching multi-ethnic US literature courses in English and the perspective that diversifying course materials and challenging language supremacy views creates more equitable learning experiences for students and calls for a reimagining of existing writing course pedagogy.

FYS at Wes, "Anti-Racist Writing Pedagogy," A Collective Working Towards Innovative and Just Writing Pedagogy. Wesleyan University, 2024. https://fysatwes.site.wesleyan.edu/make-room-for-differences-in-langauge/.

This resource offers useful and user-friendly suggestions to educators seeking advice on constructing anti-racist writing pedagogy, curriculum, discussion, assignments, and assessment. The article ends with several suggested readings for instructors to explore more the concepts of social justice in writing classrooms

Guerrero, Jr., Armando, "'You Speak Good English for Being Mexican': East Los Angeles Chicano/a English: Language and Identity," *Voices*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2014. pp. 53-62. https://escholarship.org/uc/item/94v4c08k.

Guerrero's article argues that East Los Angeles Chicano/a English is an important language to probe more deeply into using linguistic ideologies that analyzes its use in human interactions. Using this theoretical framework, Guerrero explores the ways that ChE is not just a language, but a manifestation of assumptions about the socioeconomics of a minoritized population, perpetuating negative and positive stereotypes about it. Guerrero explores common assumptions and biases and either invalidates or validates them, based upon research.

Hammond, Zaretta, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students*, Corwin, 2015.
Springboarding from her personal experiences of racial prejudice and discrimination in education, Hammond provides the neuroscience behind learning and shows how racism triggers minoritized learners' primal threat detection and prevention system. Arguing that no one can learn when their fight-flight-freeze response is triggered, Hammond suggests for leveraging students' diverse cultures as assets to their learning, and how to shape pedagogy around the spirit and practice of cultural intelligence.

Hardee, Jay. "Code Meshing and Code Switching," Antiracist Praxis. American University Washington Library, 2022.
https://subjectguides.library.american.edu/c.php?g=1025915&p=7749939.
This article disentangles the practices of code-meshing and code-switching, both of which are common in academic and professional spaces for speakers of non-standardized English. Hardee explains how code-switching codifies linguistic racism by designating non-standardized English as incorrect or improper, and how code-meshing can empower speakers of diverse English dialects to shift the centrality of standardized English and include their own vernacular Englishes in the academic and professional worlds.

Hudley, Anne H. Charity. "Liberatory Linguistics," *Language & Social Justice in the United States*, vol. 152, no. 3, Summer 2023, pp. 212-226
https://www.jstor.org/stable/48739991.
Focusing on experiences with Black undergraduates, graduates, postgraduates, and faculty members, Hudley argues that "liberatory linguistics" is a way to achieve language justice, which she suggests is essential to the establishment of campuswide equity. Hudley shares the conceptualization and evolution of Black Linguistics and the ways that it is being used by students and teachers to challenge standard language ideology.

Johnson, David M. and Lewis VanBrackle. "Linguistic Discrimination in Writing Assessment: How Raters React to African American "Errors," ESL Errors, and Standard English Errors on a State- Mandated Writing Exam," Assessing Writing vol. 17, no.1, 2012, pp. 35-54.
https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S107529351100047X.
Johnson and VanBrackle explore the ways that internalized prejudice and discrimination inform assessment of standardized writing tests, focusing particularly on African American test takers and mechanical errors, according to standardized English language ideals. Johnson and VanBrackle argue that African American students' grammar errors are viewed differently from those made by multilingual students, with the view that African American writers are considered native English writers. What is most striking about this article and what sets it apart from other linguistic studies, except for Curzan, et. al., is the focus on the way

perceived errors affect the attitude of the testers, and the way that their negative reactions iterate the linguistic discrimination students experience in these tests and explain at least some equity gaps in the test.

Kem, Pratna, Sara Boxell, and Peter Nien-chu Kiang. "Asian American Studies and AANAPISI Writing Initiatives," *Transformative Practices for Minority Student Success: Accomplishments of Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Servicing Institutions,* eds. Dina C. Maramba and Timothy P. Fong. Stylus, 2020. pp. 116-130.
In this book chapter, Kem, Boxell, and Nien-chu Kiang share their experience of deploying AANAPISI grant funding to improve outcomes and success rates for these student populations at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. From their curricular construction and deployment experiences, they find that culturally responsive pedagogy, as well as the connection of students with "culturally competent faculty members with whom they [can] identity" creates the foundation for these students' ultimate success in their mandatory writing courses, and college educations more generally. They also emphasize the ways that turning writing into a collaborative, collective effort is powerfully helpful to these students.

"Language Matters: Adios, LatinX!" Tzedek: Social Justice Fund, October 17, 2022. https://tzedeksocialjusticefund.org/language-matters-adios-latinx/.
In this brief article is a discussion around representations of gender in the term "Latino." The article explores how this term has shifted from the conventional gendering "Latino/Latina" to the more recent "LatinX" as a gender-neutral and, thus, more inclusive way to reference members of the community. It explains some of the pushback against this term, and proposes that the most inclusive non-gendered variation of the term is actually "Latine", which informs my use of the term throughout this project.

Larson, Richard L. and Richard Lloyd-Jones. "Students' Right to Their Own Language," Conference on College Composition and Communication, *CCC*, Fall 1974, vol XXV. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/srtolsummary.
This is the resolution adopted by the CCCC in 1974 that stipulates "how [English teachers should] respond to the variety in their students' dialects." Along with the position statement, the resource includes a background statement that introduces the conversations from which the resolution emerged, particularly the sociopolitical conditions of academia in America. Thus, the context is informed a great deal by connections made to the concept that language privilege has been constructed and, thus, that educators need to examine their linguistic biases to see the ways that they and students have been conditioned to see Edited American English as superior to other dialects of American English. There is extensive conversation about the harm that White language supremacy causes minoritized students by linking dialect to cultural identity, and readers can see in the contextual material a call for the foundations of what we now refer to as culturally responsive pedagogy and practices.

McWhorter, John. *Words on the Move: Why English Won't—and Can't—Sit Still (Like,*

Literally). Henry Holt, 2016.
Offering a sociopolitical and historical exploration of the evolution of the English language, McWhorter demonstrates how English cannot be expected not to change. His book focuses on why it is so challenging for people to accept this fact and explores several social and literary expressions and shifts, demonstrating how the changes in the English language are both important and inevitable.

Richardson, Elaine, et. al. "CCCC Statement on White Language Supremacy," Conference on College Composition and Communication, June 2021. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/white-language-supremacy.
This statement defines White Language Supremacy (WLS) as a tool of racial oppression, offering some sociohistorical, political, and economic context for the ongoing use of WLS to disparage and disadvantage BIPOC. The writers argue that designations such as English Language Learners and others "points to the raciolinguistic othering of" minoritized groups in the U.S and suggest that only complete dismantling of standardized English practices in educational spaces can allow for the destruction of "linguistic imperialism."

Roberts, Paul. "Speech Communities," *Language Awareness: Readings for College Writers*, 12th edition. Paul Eschholz, Alfred Rosa, and Virginia Clark, eds. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2016, pp. 148-158.
Roberts' work explores the ways in which individual language and dialect across America has been informed by several of what he calls "speech communities": the people and places individuals engage with throughout their life that directly impact their verbal and written expression. The conversation here offers an interesting perspective to explain away White language privilege and supremacy by showing that all languages evolve through social, emotional, political, and academic environments, and that favoritism is generally a political rather than a biological perspective.

Rosa, Jonathan and Nelson Flores. "Rethinking Language Barriers & Social Justice from a Raciolinguistic Perspective," *Language and Social Justice in the United States,* vol. 153, no. 3, Summer 2023, pp. 99-114. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48739984.
Rosa and Flores initiate a discussion of language discrimination with reflections on recent technologies designed to transform accent variations into standardized English. These technologies, primarily used in work spaces (call centers, for example) promote themselves through the desire to universalize communication and, thus, improve it, Rosa and Flores show that they, instead, perpetuate "linguistic marginalization" (102). To subvert language discrimination, Rosa and Flores promote a raciolinguistic approach to teaching language that draws on the history and politics of colonialism and its impact on language supremacy ideology in order to dismantle it.

Sanders, Nick, Floyd Pouncil, Stephanie Aguilar-Smith, Trixie G. Smith, and Grace Pregent.

"Making Good on Our Promises to Language Justice: Spheres of Coalitional Possibilities across the Discipline." CCC, vol. 75, no. 2, December 2023. pp. 360-388. https://doi.org/10.58680/ccc2023752360.
Sanders, et. al., argue that Writing Centers—including Writing Across the Curriculum/Discipline Centers—are important language justice warriors now, just as they were language oppression reinforcers in previous times. Grounding their argument in the 1974 "Students Right to Their Own Language" resolution and other socio-historical and socio-political contexts, Sanders, et. al., suggest that efforts to truly implement the values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access are undermined by Writing Centers that continue to support students' acquisition of standardized English writing expectations.

Savini, Catherine, "10 Ways to Tackle Linguistic Bias in Our Classrooms," *Inside Higher Ed*, January 27, 2021. https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2021/01/27/how-professors-can-and-should-combat-linguistic-prejudice-their-classes-opinion.
Savini's article offers a very brief introduction to the reasons why language bias is problematic in academia and the ways in which suggestions that students code-switch is both harmful and inappropriate. Following a brief account of 2 seminal researchers on this topic, Stanley Fish and Vershawn Ashanti Young, Savini offers 10 ways to shift classrooms into the world of language equity, tackling suggestions not just for specific activities that can be introduced into a language equity-based classroom, but also language shifts educators can adopt to make their conversation with students and their work inclusive.

Warner, Gregory, Rhaina Cohen, and Luis Trelles, "How to Speak Bad English," *Rough Translation*, National Public Radio, Season 5, Episode 7. https://www.npr.org/2021/04/21/989477444/how-to-speak-bad-english
Heather Hanson, a global communication specialist, uses her work with English Language Learners around the world to explain why she no longer believes that standardized English is better than any other form of spoken English, and she proposes the theory that what White language supremacy deems as superior is actually inferior in terms of universal understanding.

Watson, Missy. "Contesting Standardized English: What harms are caused when we insist on a common dialect?" American Association of University Professors, May-June 2018: "But Let Us Cultivate Our Garden." https://www.aaup.org/article/contesting-standardized-english.
Watson's article covers briefly the history of English language standardization and offers empathy from personal experience about the challenges English instructors face despite the understanding and/or acceptance that continuing to privilege standardized English is harmful. Watson uses self-reflection to call English educators to the cause of challenging these perspectives not just in their classrooms, but in academic institutions and systems more widely.

Williams, Charitianne. ""Even Though I Am Speaking Chinglish, I can Still Write A Good

Essay": Building a Learning Community Through Critical Pedagogy," *Transformative Practices for Minority Student Success: Accomplishments of Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Servicing Institutions,* eds. Dina C. Maramba and Timothy P. Fong. Stylus, 2020. pp. 101-115.
In this book chapter, Williams details the experience of tackling achievement gaps for AANAPI through curricular transformation with the support of AANAPISI grant money. Similar to California community colleges with AB 705 and 1705, the University of Illinois, Chicago was tasked with finding ways to reimagine ineffectual courses, particularly for multilingual students. Through extensive faculty research and professional learning, courses were devised that homed in on this specific population's unique needs, experiences, language, and literature. Through student-instructor collaboration, courses were redesigned to put students in the position of dismantling oppressive academic systems with the support and scaffolding of their instructors. The goal of creating courses that "represent[ed] plurality as the normal human experience and provide students an entry point into university life" over 11 semesters was considered to be successful (109).

Wolfram, Walt. "Addressing Linguistic Inequality in Higher Education: A Proactive Model," Language and Social Justice in the United States, vol. 153, no. 3, Summer 2023, pp. 36-51. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/48739980.
Wolfram argues that current DEIJ work in academia fails to include linguistic justice into its conversations, advocacy, and practice. Grounding the argument in research probing student and faculty experiences, Wolfram reveals how the experiences and attitudes of standard language ideology and language gatekeeping result in experiences that threaten DEIJ work. Wolfram shares the program developed and deployed by the Linguistics Department at his University for students, faculty, student support staff, and administrators to learn how to understand and ultimately challenge language discrimination using materials (videos, workshops, etc.) comprised of student and professional voices. The success of the program seems to come down to the way that the values of language inclusion and justice are institutionalized through a "Campus Infusion Model" (44); no single department or program takes charge of these values but, rather, the entire campus community participates in establishing and perpetuating them.

Young, Vershawn Ashanti, Rusty Barret, Y'Shanda Young-Rivera, and Kim Brian Lovejoy, *Other People's English: Code-Meshing, Code-Switching, and African American Literacy*. New City Community Press, 2018.
This book brings together some of the most powerful voices and advocates in conversations about language justice. The authors offer a socio-historical foundation upon which to build an understand of American linguistic prejudice and the ways that is has manifested in academia, particularly through the trend that asked students to code-switch—adopt Standardized Written/Academic English in the classroom and professional worlds and use Vernacular Englishes in private and home spaces. Calling this suggestion out as racist, the writers propose that code-meshing, a blending of Vernacular and SW/AE, is a way to decentralize standardized English and amplify other Englishes.

Zanuttini, Raffaella, Jim Wood, Jason Zentz & Laurence Horn. "FAQ," *The Yale Grammatical Diversity Project*. https://ygdp.yale.edu/faq.
This is a collection of frequently asked questions about the YGDP work on English in North America and understanding the project's approach to the English language and its dialects in this region. Of interest are the insistences on decentering the concept of a standard English dialect and the equation of dialect and intelligence.

—. *The Yale Grammatical Diversity Project*. https://ygdp.yale.edu/.
This is a linguistic research project that analyzes the dialects of English found across North America. Researchers are interested in collecting and understanding these English language variations at the linguistic level, and to make their findings available as widely as possible. Of particular interest to my project is the material that contextualizes language-based racism.

Assessment Equity

Alex, Patricia. "Time to Pull the Plug on Traditional Grading?" Education Next, 22.4, Fall 2022.
https://moorparkcollege.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/time-pull-plug-on-traditional-grading/docview/2761037167/se-2?accountid=44974
In this article, Alex explores equitable grading research and early practice, focusing on Joe Feldman's seminal work on the topic. Alex explains that equitable grading, as Feldman iterates it, is essentially master- or standards-based grading in practice, and that this approach to assessment is especially important to equitizing grading practices post-pandemic. The rest of the article explores attitudes toward equitable grading in school districts across CA, both the pushback and the pedagogical transformation.

Blum, Susan, *Ungrading: Why Rating Students Undermines Learning (and What to Do Instead)*: West Virginia U Press, 2020.
Blum's work is a collection of articles detailing instructors' pedagogical approaches to ungrading in the K-college classroom. After providing a historical overview of shifts in academic the assessment practices, Blum introduces ungrading as way to restore learning to the central focus of education. Like many writing about assessment equity, Blum argues that grades are harmful to students because they do not accurately assess what they claim to. She then turns the rest of the book over to individual practitioners from a wide range of subjects and grades who share their individual approaches to ungrading in their classrooms. Although K-12 takes up the most space, there are a number of entries from college instructors' courses.

Carillo, Ellen. C. "Ungrading: Where We Are and Where We Might Go," *Composition Studies,*

Vol. 51, no. 2, 2023. pp. 131–136. http://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A781251615/AONE?u=anon~3d685af1&sid=sitemap&xid=dec62546/.
Carillo explains the way ungrading speaks to the call for reform triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly due to the disproportionately negative impact of the pandemic on communities of color. One of the biggest impacts, Carillo argues, is on the shifts writing instruction and assessment takes when racial inequities and White language supremacy is removed from grades. Carillo also emphasizes ungrading as a benefit to students' mental health and, therefore, improvements in both academic success and student retention, and that it might also create opportunities to see AI as a tool, rather than threat to academic integrity.

Feldman, Joe, *Grading for Equity: What It Is, Why It Matters, and How It Can Transform Schools and Classrooms*. Corwin, 2019.
Although it focuses on K-12 education, Feldman's work has become the foundational work in conversations about equitable grading practices. His research offers a history of grades and existing grading systems in education around the world and then works through the many ways in which existing systems harm to students, before proposing several different approaches to skills mastery assessment that offer students and educators far more information from grades than they currently receive, and also cut out the noise that obscures grades, making it a completely inaccurate view of student achievement and capacity.

Gibbs, Laura. "(Un)Grading: It Can Be Done in College," *Education Week*. March 31, 2016. https://www.edweek.org/education/opinion-ungrading-it-can-be-done-in-college/2016/03.
As a guest writer, Gibbs takes over Starr Sackstien's *Education Week* spot and neatly outlines how ungrading fits into her teaching ethos at the University of Oklahoma. Gibbs details how her course assignments centralize learning over grades, her pedagogy emerging from the perspective that diverse students need diverse forms of assessment and, thus, ungrading serves this purpose. She also makes the point that ungrading allows for much more substantial and transformative feedback and, therefore, student growth.

Gibbs, Molly. "No D's and F's? No extra credit? Will these schools' switch to equity grading help or harm students?" NCA News Service, 2 May 2024. https://moorparkcollege.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/wire-feeds/no-d-s-f-extra-credit-will-these-schools-switch/docview/3049591721/se-2?accountid=44974
This brief article highlights assessment practices in some California K-12 schools following the pandemic, noting that there has been significant pushback from students and parents out of fear that standards are being lowered to accommodated equitable grading practices. I believe this article helps illustrate the small amount of knowledge learners and their families have about grading equity, but that there is immense power in their pushback against it, as many districts respond to by returning to conventional, inequitable practices. Gibbs also raises the point that with

CSUs and UCs focusing exclusively on grades for their admissions process, more weight than ever is on them and, thus, learners and their families are more reluctant than ever to embrace something new that could threaten college admissions.

Hasinoff, Amy A., Wendy Bolyard, Dennis DeBay, Joanna C. Dunlap, Annika C. Mosier, and Elizabeth Pugliano. 2024. '"Success was Actually Having Learned:' University Student Perceptions of Ungrading." Teaching & Learning Inquiry 12, https://doi.org/10.20343/teachlearninqu.12.5.
This article focuses on student's voice, taking their feedback about equitable grading practices to help shape pedagogical transformation. Hasinoff, et. al., provide a brief literature review of the main voices in conversations about ungrading and their varied practices, creating a clear trajectory of the ungrading movement from the 2010s in academia. This article is particularly interesting because it is one of a few that focalize ungrading at the college-level; much of the existing work on ungrading puts it in the context of K-12 educational spaces. The feedback from students emerges from 10 instructors and 14 courses at the University of Colorado, Denver, and 70% of respondents appreciated the shift to ungrading in their classes.

Hensley, Anna, et. al. "Writing Assessment: A Position Statement," Conference on College Composition and Communication, November 2006, rev. April 2022. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/writingassessment.
This resolution offers suggests for thinking about the purpose and uses of classroom writing assessments in the context of fairness and justice. Hensley, et. al., offer 6 principals that they recommend guide instructor construction and assessment practices, and all emphasize the importance of empowering writers, inclusive assignments and assessment of them, and awareness of the labor students pour into this kind of work. Each of the 6 principals is expounded upon in a best-practices section with detailed suggestions of how and why these components are important. There is also emphasis in a section of its own on language inclusivity and justice.

Inoue, Asao B. "Classroom Writing Assessment and Antiracist Practice: Confronting White Supremacy in the Judgments of Language," *Pedagogy*, vol. 19, no. 3, October 2019, pp. 373-404. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/733095.
Inoue argues in this article that composition assignments are social justice projects and, thus, writing classrooms are active sites of antiracist practice. Inoue suggests that classrooms must be considered ecologies within which it is the instructor's responsibility to guide students through conversations about racism and the ways in which prejudice and discrimination manifest in all aspects of human experience and interaction, both within the classroom and outside of it, particularly in the context of the socioeconomics of race in society. It is only through doing this work that writing classrooms, according to Inoue, become "antiracist writing ecologies" (376).

—. *Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies: Teaching and Assessing Writing for a Socially Just Future*. Fort Collin, 2015.
In this book, Inoue argues that all writing assessment in the college classroom is built upon racist values and that these need complete dismantling in order to create

assessment that is equitable not just racially, but in all minoritized systems. Inoue's purpose is to propose anti-racist writing assessment practices to replace those that continue to undermine minoritized student success, using Frierian, Buddhist, and Marxist philosophies.

Kohn, Alfie. "The Case Against Grades." *Counterpoints*, 2013, Vol. 45, pp. 143-153. https://www.jstor.org/stable/42982088
In this article, Kohn argues that conventional grading practices do not tell us anything relevant about student competency or capacity. He suggests that letter and number grades harm students by making grades, rather than learning and growing, the most important part of education; thus, he argues, students will do as little as possible to achieve a certain grade rather than engage with and evolve their thinking about the material. He offers an overview of pervasive arguments for and against ungrading from the 1980s through the early 2000s and proposes that even the most revolutionary "de-grading" systems are meaningless unless grades are completely removed from learning assessment.

Lall, Sumita. "Sabbatical Report: Targeting Equity Using Inquiry-based Learning and Contract Grading." Ventura College, Fall 2022. https://www.vcccd.edu/sites/default/files/media/pdf_document/2023/S. Lall-Ventura College- Sabbatical Report.pdf
Profesor Lall's sabbatical project explored ways to improve student success through a perspective shift in post-AB 705 and post-COVID classrooms. Her research considers the ways that inquiry-/problem-based learning, contract grading, and greater instructor awareness of and empathy with students' commitments outside of their education can facilitate a greater commitment in students to the process of learning and, ultimately, to their success in and beyond English classrooms.

Price-Dennis, Detra, and Steven Alvaraez, "Expanding Opportunities: Academic Success for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students," Position Statements, NCTE, November 14, 2018. https://ncte.org/statement/expandingopportun/.
This resource details the revisions to the 1986 position statement presented by the Task Force on Racism and Bias in the Teaching of English, "Expanding Opportunities: Academic Success for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students." Revisions are grounded in contemporary research and shifts in education since 1986. These include suggestions about how best to prepare English instructors to meet the needs of linguistically diverse students, emphasizing the importance of viewing students' language dialects outside of standardized English as aspects of cultural wealth and assets to their learning, rather than detriments. The argument acknowledges the need for specialized training for educators to gain fluency in linguistic diversity, and also suggests attitudinal shifts in assessment of written work that is asset-minded and growth-oriented in both summative and formative feedback. Focal points are in "Literacy Pedagogy and Curriculum Development," "Teacher Preparation and Professional Development," and "Assessment."

Sackstein, Starr. *Hacking Assessment*: *10 Ways to Go Gradeless In A Traditional Grades School.*

Times 10 Publications, 2015.
This is a brief, direct, and useful resource that explores the moral necessity of recentering growth in education by rejecting traditional grading practices with the goal of empowering students in their learning journeys. Each section details a different way to centralize learning through activities, discussion, assignments, and assessments and these speak to many of the wide variety of ways that ungrading is practiced throughout education by individual practitioners (self-reflection, contract grading, self-grading, etc.).

Santos, Lori, host. "Making the Grade," *The Happiness Project Podcast*. Pushkin Industries. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AeBHvSPL6bk, 18 June 2022.
In this podcast, Santos explores the history of grading through conversations with librarians and historians in Yale and shares the ways in which conventional grading—which emerged from the 16th-century at Yale—is no longer fit for purpose, yet is universally used across academia worldwide. Her overall argument is that grading harms students and undermines learning so they should opt to be graded "Pass/Not Passed" whenever possible so as to shed the stress of grades and focus, instead, on acquiring knowledge.

Stommel, Jesse. *Undoing the Grade: Why We Grade, and How to Stop*. Hybrid Pedagogy, 2023.
Stommel's book synthesizes more than 20 years of work on grading equity, including previously published articles and research as well as new pieces written specifically for this publication. Stommel is a seminal voice in conversations about rejecting conventional grading systems. His work primarily promotes social justice and anti-capitalist views about learning and Stommel's approach to ungrading allows for students to centralize learning and growth through self-reflection and self-grading. Stommel also suggests that learning outcomes should be shaped in collaboration with students and should emerge organically from their courses as reflections of the learning goals and values they have that are unique to them as individuals.

Von Bergen, Megan. "Defining Ungrading: Alternative Writing Assessment as Jeremiad," *Composition Studies*, 51.2, 2023. pp. 137–142. https://compstudiesjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/vonbergen.pdf.
Von Bergen reflects on the ways that ungrading practices rise to the surface during periods of social and political unrest, suggesting that this form of assessment is generally most pronounced during calls for social justice. In the past, calls for grading reform emerged as a way to challenge war drafts, whereas in 2023, these have been tied to budget and faculty cuts, college admissions inequities, and school shootings. Above all, Von Bergen suggests that because ungrading is tied to social justice, it is less important that educators categorize ways to approach this assessment method than it is to use its flexibility creatively to mitigate academic social justice issues.

Additional Materials

1. Destandardizing Standardized English & its Assessment project PowerPoint presentation

2. Destandardizing Standardized English & its Assessment website:
   - https://writingoutloud.my.canva.site/