Achievement Scale for Reading/Writing Courses

There are six levels of Reading/Writing courses. Students are placed in their Reading/Writing level based on a writing placement exam conducted during orientation week. To satisfactorily complete each course, students must obtain a minimum grade of 75% or higher.

Reading/Writing I (ESL 011) is a low-beginning English as a second language course.
By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- identify the main idea and some key details of a short paragraph on a concrete topic
- identify key words in a paragraph
- answer closed and open-ended questions based on readings appropriate to the low-beginning level
- use visuals to predict content
- use vocabulary lists to help predict content of readings
- predict the meaning of content by reading a title
- show control of basic, high-frequency vocabulary
- demonstrate some knowledge of basic word forms
- produce phrases and some simple sentences
- demonstrate some control over simple tenses and modals such as "can", "must", and "will"
- create some logical connections between ideas at the low-beginning level
- demonstrate basic knowledge of capitalization and punctuation rules
- write basic paragraphs at the low-beginning level with some difficulty differentiating between topic and supporting sentences
- respond with multiple sentences to simple questions on familiar topics (i.e. family, school, weather, food, routines, neighborhood, hobbies) but may lack logical connections and organization
- show emerging use of discourse markers (i.e. first, second, next, last)

Interpretation: Students in this course will demonstrate ability to write multiple sentences on a single topic using new vocabulary and grammar structures. Students will also demonstrate reading comprehension of basic ESL adapted texts.

Reading/Writing II (ESL 021) is a high-beginning English as a second language course.
By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- identify the main idea and some key details of a multi-paragraph reading on a concrete topic
- identify key words in a reading
- discuss or write opinions about ideas in readings
- identify the order of main details of multi-paragraph readings
• answer most closed comprehension questions and some open-ended questions based on multi-paragraph readings
• activate schema with photos and pictures
• predict the meaning of content by reading titles and headings
• use background knowledge of subject to make inferences
• use vocabulary related to concrete concepts about every day topics with details appropriate to the high-beginning level
• use some common idioms and simple phrasal verbs
• show some control over a variety of word forms
• use simple and compound sentences with few errors in word order
• demonstrate some control over simple and progressive verb tenses and modals
• demonstrate ability to write paragraphs with some connected discourse
• demonstrate some control of full stops and commas
• demonstrate some control of subject-verb agreement
• create paragraphs at the high-beginning level with a topic sentence, a few related supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence
• respond with multiple sentences on familiar topics (i.e. school, professions, vacations) which show emerging logical connections and organization
• provide personal examples as support in narrative paragraphs
• show some control of discourse markers (i.e. first, second, next, last, then)
• select from a variety of brainstorming activities (i.e. listing, clustering)

Interpretation: Students in this course will demonstrate ability to write developed paragraphs using new vocabulary and grammar structures. Students will also demonstrate reading comprehension of longer ESL adapted texts.

Reading/Writing III (ESL 031) is a low-intermediate English as a second language course. By the end of the course, students should be able to:

• identify the main idea and most key details of a multi-paragraph fiction or non-fiction reading
• identify new vocabulary words and their functions in a reading
• discuss or write opinions about ideas in the readings
• identify the order of main details from multi-paragraph readings
• read and recognize different text types (i.e. fictional and non-fictional narratives)
• activate schema with pictures, charts, and graphs
• use vocabulary lists to help predict content of readings
• skim readings for thesis, topic sentences, and concluding sentences to infer gist of reading
• use background knowledge of subject to make inferences
- use a wide range of concrete terms and a few abstract terms
- show a range of vocabulary at the low-intermediate level by incorporating idioms and synonyms that may at times be inaccurate
- use a variety of word forms with errors that generally do not impede comprehension
- incorporate complex sentence structures (i.e. adjective, noun, and adverb clauses)
- demonstrate control of simple and progressive tenses while incorporating perfectives
- produce connected discourse most of the time
- use pronoun reference consistently within brief groupings of clauses
- create a basic essay with an introduction, body, and conclusion
- create introductory paragraphs with a simple thesis and some related background information
- write brief body paragraphs with mostly related sentences and discernible topic sentences
- create simple concluding paragraphs
- write body paragraphs that provide some support for thesis
- write essay assignments with some cohesive discourse markers that help connect ideas
- identify some rhetorical styles (i.e. comparison/contrast, classification)
- incorporate freewriting and journaling as brainstorming techniques

**Interpretation:** Students in this course will demonstrate ability to write developed paragraphs and short essays using new vocabulary and grammar structures. Students will also demonstrate reading comprehension of ESL adapted texts in a variety of genres.

**Reading/Writing IV (ESL 041) is a high-intermediate English as a second language course.**

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- read and respond to authentic nonfiction and fiction texts of various lengths
- identify main idea or theme and key supporting details of authentic texts
- identify new vocabulary and idiomatic expressions from readings
- read and recognize different purposes of readings (i.e. persuasion, cause/effect, compare/contrast)
- recognize basic properties of literature (i.e. character, plot, theme, conflict)
- activate schema with charts and graphs
- identify key words within texts to predict content of readings
- skim the text for thesis, topic sentences, and concluding sentences to infer gist
- identify the purpose in a variety of texts
- demonstrate ability to use a wide range of general vocabulary and a limited but effective range of specialized vocabulary
- demonstrate ability to use idiomatic expressions and synonyms appropriately
- use a variety of word forms at the high-intermediate level with infrequent errors
- create complex and compound-complex sentences
- use a variety of complex verb tenses
• incorporate complex grammar structures (i.e. gerunds, infinitives, passive voice, complex modals)
• use a variety of discourse markers to show connections between ideas
• show some emerging use and control of semicolons, colons, and quotation marks
• create a multi-paragraph essay with an introduction, body, and conclusion
• create introductory paragraphs with a relevant hook and background information; thesis is present
• write developed body paragraphs which have topic sentences with clear topics and controlling ideas
• create cohesive concluding paragraphs which effectively summarize main points
• write developed essays with some cohesion
• provide specific evidence
• demonstrate control of rhetorical styles (i.e. persuasion, argument, comparison/contrast, reason/result)
• show control of discourse markers related to rhetorical styles
• summarize and paraphrase from course novel or textbook
• use quotes or reported speech to relay information from a class reading

Interpretation: Students in this course will demonstrate ability to write essays incorporating a greater variety and complexity of vocabulary and grammar. Students will also demonstrate reading comprehension of authentic texts.

Reading/Writing V (ESL 051) is a low-advanced English as a second language course. By the end of the course, students should be able to:

• read and respond to abstract and complex texts with some guidance
• identify main idea or theme and key supporting details in literary and academic texts
• use context clues to assist comprehension of linguistically complex texts
• recognize properties of literature (i.e. metaphor, simile, irony, foreshadowing) with some assistance
• identify key words and synonyms within texts to predict content of readings
• skim and scan to infer gist
• identify the purpose and author’s tone in a variety of texts (i.e. literary, academic, social)
• choose appropriate vocabulary to express some shades of meaning
• use figurative language appropriately
• use a wide variety of word forms and synonyms
• use advanced grammatical structures (i.e. real vs. unreal conditionals, clause structures, active vs. passive voice, complex verb tenses)
• demonstrate some ability to move between time frames using appropriate verb tenses
• use a wide variety of discourse markers to show connections
• show some control of semicolons, colons, and quotation marks
• use direct and indirect speech in writing
• create a sophisticated essay with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion while still relying on the traditional five-paragraph format
• create introductory paragraphs with an inventive hook and sufficient background information; thesis is clear
• write developed body paragraphs; topic sentences have clear topics and controlling ideas
• create cohesive concluding paragraphs that effectively summarize main points and contain a memorable final thought
• adhere to academic essay format (i.e. double spacing, indenting)
• write a well-developed, cohesive five-paragraph essay
• provide evidence that is specific and relevant
• demonstrate ability to write in a wide variety of rhetorical styles
• show control of discourse markers related to various rhetorical styles
• summarize, paraphrase, or quote from course materials (i.e. article, textbook, novel)
• cite sources with in-text citation and use basic reporting verbs

Interpretation: Students in this course will demonstrate ability to write multi-paragraph essays which incorporate outside sources and include complex vocabulary and grammar structures. Students will also demonstrate reading comprehension using authentic texts of a variety of genres.

Reading/Writing VI (ESL 061) is a high-advanced English as a second language course. By the end of the course, students should be able to:

• read and respond to abstract and complex texts that focus on academic subjects
• use context clues to aid in discussion of linguistically complex texts
• recognize properties of literature (i.e. metaphor, simile, irony, foreshadowing)
• predict tone, purpose, and meaning from content in a linguistically complex text
• infer gist of a text
• choose appropriate vocabulary to express precise shades of meaning
• use specialized field specific terms by providing extended definitions
• use wide variety of word forms and synonyms
• incorporate abstract vocabulary in writing
• use advanced grammatical structures to add sophistication to writing
• demonstrate ability to move between time frames using appropriate verb tenses
• use a wide variety of discourse markers effectively to show sophisticated connections between ideas
• show control of semicolons, colons, and quotation marks
• create an expository multi-paragraph essay longer than five paragraphs
• create multi-paragraph introductions with an inventive hook and relevant background information
• incorporate a sophisticated thesis
• create cohesive concluding paragraphs which effectively summarize main points and contain a memorable final thought
• adhere to academic essay format (i.e. double spacing, indenting)
• write well-developed, cohesive essays
• provide evidence that is specific and relevant
• demonstrate ability to incorporate more than one rhetorical style in an essay
• show sophisticated use of discourse markers related to rhetorical styles
• summarize, paraphrase, or quote from outside sources (i.e. surveys, interviews, journals, written and online media)
• cite sources with appropriate in-text citation and use a variety of sophisticated reporting verbs
• synthesize ideas from multiple source materials
• identify plagiarism

Interpretation: Students in this course will demonstrate ability to write longer essays which approach native-like fluency and include outside sources and research. Students will also demonstrate reading comprehension of complex authentic texts of a variety of genres.