
Mixed-Level Freshman Humanities
Evaluation: Year Three
2010-11

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Executive Summary

When the revised model for Freshman Humanities was implemented, the administration directed that the program be evaluated over a three-year period. Based on this directive, an evaluation plan was developed around the overall goals of the revised Freshman Humanities program: 1) to prepare more students, particularly students of color, to take honors level courses; and 2) to improve the achievement of all students in English and History. The plan included the collection of formative and summative information for the purpose of monitoring program implementation, making programmatic improvements, and analyzing overall program effectiveness. This report provides data from all three years under study.

Key Findings

Overall, the data show positive outcomes for the revised mixed-level Freshman Humanities course. The demographic data indicate the program is meeting objectives, and students and faculty generally provided positive feedback with suggestions for improving the course as it transitions to the newly restructured 1 Humanities program in 2011-12 school year. Key findings from the evaluation, organized around ten objectives, are listed below.

Objective 1: Preparing Students for Honors Classes

The percentage of students in mixed-level Freshman Humanities taking the course for honors credit in 2010-11 continues to be almost double compared to the cohorts prior to 2008-09.

The percentage of students in mixed-level Freshman Humanities taking the course for regular credit is double the percentage of cohorts prior to 2008-09. Under the former model, many of these students would have been assigned to a non-mixed-level Humanities class or to a level below regular (Level 1).

The percentage of students in honors-only classes has remained relatively stable.

A higher percentage of students (total and across ethnic groups) from the 2008-09 and 2009-10 cohorts took honors English and History classes as sophomores and juniors compared to prior cohorts.

Two-thirds of students who were in mixed-level honors in Freshman Humanities received a score on the 3 English AP exam of a 3, 4, or 5. One-third of students who were in mixed-level honors in Freshman Humanities received a score of a 3, 4, or 5 on the US

In English, the percentages for honors-only students were significantly higher than mixed-level students with respect to class discussions that are “interesting,” “make me think,” and “provide different points of view.” Honors-only students’ responses to class discussions were significantly lower than mixed-level regular students with respect to “boring.” For History, responses were similar for mixed-level and honors students.

EXPLORE to PLAN to PSAT/ACT score gains were analyzed for the first 2008-09 cohort. Gains for these cohorts were compared with prior cohorts that were comparable in terms of initial test scores but were taught under the old mixed-level Humanities curriculum. Students in the mixed-level honors classes

Recommendations

As we implement the restructured Humanities model

Mixed-Level Freshman Humanities Evaluation: Year Three

Background

In the fall of 2008, a revised mixed-level Humanities course was implemented. Under the model, mixed-level Humanities classes were comprised of students enrolled at the regular level and honors level. This model allowed students to experience an honors curriculum and then easily move up into honors level when they felt confident about doing the work without changing teachers. Elements of the model included:

- x a common honors-level curriculum (which was used in both mixed-level and honors-only classes),
- x a common grading policy and grading scales,
- x common implementation of 5-point rubrics on core assessments,
- x common semester exams,
- x differentiated instruction, and
- x focused student supports.

Prior to 2008, there had been five levels of Humanities courses: Enriched, Regular, Mixed-level Regular, Mixed-level Honors, and Honors-only. With the revision, students formerly qualifying for the regular class were folded into the mixed-level classes resulting in four rather than five levels. The following

identified to serve as comparison groups: the 2006-07 and 2007-08 freshman students in mixed-level and honors Humanities with similar EXPLORE test scores to the 2008-09, 2009-10, and 2010-11 Humanities cohorts enrolled in the revised Humanities program.

Criteria for placement into the Freshman mixed-level and honors-only Humanities courses are based in part on students' EXPLORE Reading and MAP Reading scores. This is different than years past where placement was based on a combined EXPLORE Reading and English score, and a MAP score was not part of the placement criteria. To create comparison groups from past freshman cohorts, we identified students who were in regular level and honors-level courses whose EXPLORE Reading scores meet the placement criteria, listed below:

- x Students with EXPLORE reading scores between 40th and 69th percentile are placed in mixed-level regular classes.
- x Students with EXPLORE reading scores between 70th and 94th percentile are placed in mixed-level honors classes.
- x Students whose EXPLORE reading scores are at the 95th percentile or above are placed in honors-only classes.

This report is organized around ten objectives, six of which were identified in the Mixed-Level Study h

2009-10 Cohort: Numbers/Percentages in Sophomore English and History Honors Classes

- x Percentage of students progressing to grade 10 honors classes
 - o Table 2 shows grade 10 data for the 2009-10 cohort as well as comparison group data. A higher percentage of students

received a score of a 3, 4, or 5 on the US History AP exam. Typically colleges require a score of 3 or higher for college credit.

- o For all racial subgroups (Table 3), there were a higher percentage of students from 2008-09 cohorts taking honors/AP English classes their junior year than in prior years.
- o The same pattern is evident for History AP (Tables 4-5). A higher percentage of students from the 2008-09 cohort (26%) took honors/AP history classes compared to the comparison cohorts (2006-07=20%; 2007-08=28%) that were not exposed to the revised Freshman Humanities curriculum. This pattern is also evident for Black and White students.

Table 2. Course Progression: Number/Percent of Students Continuing into Honors-Level English Courses

	Mixed Regular English Cohorts								Mixed Honors English Cohorts							
	06-07 (Old Hum. Program)		07-08 (Old Hum. Program)		08-09 (Revised Hum. Program)		09-10 (Revised Hum. Program)		06-07 (Old Hum. Program)		07-08 (Old Hum. Program)		08-09 (Revised Hum. Program)		09-10 (Revised Hum. Program)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Grade 10	N=746		N=685		N=778		N=774		N=746		N=685		N=778		N=774	
EN0203 - 2 Hum Eng H	9	1%	10	1%	12	2%	9	1%	27	4%	13	2%	16	2%	29	4%
EN0253 - 2 Eng H	16	2%	23	3%	18	2%	20	3%	60	8%	67	10%	133	17%	133	17%
Total Students in Honors	25	3%	33	5%	30	4%	29	4%	87	12%	80	12%	149	19%	162	21%
Grade 11	N=704		N=663		N=722				N=704		N=663		N=722			
EN0113 - Amer Stud Eng H	23	3%	9	1%	11	2%			22	3%	2	0.3%	9	1%		
EN0303 - 3 Eng H	33	5%	36	5%	23	3%			63	9%	41	6%	51	7%		
EN0305 - 3 Eng AP			3	0%	11	2%					31	5%	81	11%		
Total Students in Honors/AP	56	8%	48	6%	45	7%			85	12%	74	11%	141	19%		

Table 4. Course Progression: Number and Percent Continuing into Honors-Level History Courses

	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Grade 10	N=746		N=685		N=778		N=774		N=746		N=685		N=778		N=774	

- x More teachers selected “very much” and “a great deal” when asked how much the diversity of students in mixed-level classes contribute to exposure of students to a wide range of views in both 2010-11 (65%) and 2009-10 (70%) compared to 2008-09 (53%).

Several related questions asked students about class discussion. Results are shown below in Table 7.

Table 7. Class Discussion

Student Survey			Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Most of the time	All of the time	Positive Response	Negative Response
How often do you contribute to the class discussion in your English or History class?									
English class									
Mixed-level	(n=420)	2008-09	2%	14%	37%	28%	19%	47%	16%
	(n=371)	2009-10	1%	14%	39%	33%	14%	47%	15%
	(n=327)	2010-11	3%	16%	35%	33%	13%	46%	19%
Honors-only	(n=171)	2008-09	1%	9%	33%	39%	19%	58%	10%
	(n=187)	2009-10	1%	11%	24%	39%	26%	65%	12%
	(n=169)	2010-11	1%	10%	30%	37%	23%	60%	11%
History class									
Mixed-level	(n=416)	2008-09	2%	17%	30%	32%	19%	51%	19%
	(n=367)	2009-10	2%	13%	40%	29%	16%	45%	15%
	(n=325)	2010-11	4%	15%	36%	27%	18%	45%	19%

honors and honors-only students were similar and significantly different than mixed-level regular students $F_{(10,N=506)}=54.20, p=.001$

- x Students were also asked for feedback on the attributes of class discussions on a 5-point scale where 1 represented “strongly disagree” and 5 represented “strongly agree.” For History, responses were similar for mixed-level and honors students. However, for English, the percentages for honors-only students were significantly higher than mixed-level honors students, and in turn, mixed-level honors students were significantly higher than mixed-level regular

Table 8. Amount of Work

			No time at all	Very little time	Some amount of time	A lot of time	Positive Response	Negative Response
How much time do you spend outside of class on the following activities for your English class?								
Doing homework								
Mixed-level	(n=375)	2009-10	2%	15%	63%	19%	82%	17%
	(n=330)	2010-11	3%	20%	57%	19%	76%	23%
	(n=189)	2009-10	1%	21%	64%	15%	79%	22%
	(n=172)	2010-11	4%	28%	51%	18%	69%	32%
Studying for tests								
Mixed-level	(n=374)	2009-10	13%	44%	36%	8%	44%	57%
	(n=330)	2010-11	10.9(13.4)	15.8(15.5)	9.6(9.4)	129.4(129.5)	9.2289	-1.3105

For 2010-11:

- x Overall, students in mixed-level classes spend the same amount of time on their work outside of class (e.g., doing homework, studying for tests, completing projects/essays, completing assigned readings, and studying for a semester exam) as honors-only students. On a scale from “no time at all,” “very little time,” “some amount of time,” and “a lot of time,” generally 70 percent or more of students chose “some amount of time” or “a lot of time” except “studying for tests.” For this item, between 50 and 60 percent selected “very little time” or “no time at all.”

Objective 5: Are students able to switch between mixed-level regular and mixed-level honors level credit?

Students can request a level change, and teachers recommend level changes. English and History teachers reported that between 10 and 16 (6%) of students requested a change from mixed-level regular to mixed-level honors. Three students requested a move from honors credit to regular credit in mixed-level classes in English. In all, including student and teacher requests, English teachers reported that they recommended 32 students (18%) from mixed-level regular to mixed-level honors credit; these teachers reported recommending 4 students move from honors to regular credit. History teachers reported that they recommended 9 students (5%) from mixed-level regular to mixed-level honors credit; they did not recommend any students to move from honors to regular credit. Since no teacher change is necessary, these changes are easily accomplished.

Objective 6: Are we increasing the intellectual rigor of the course experience?

The year one study on Freshman Humanities reported that the following changes in the Freshman Humanities course (as documented in the curriculum) suggest an increase in intellectual rigor. For example,

- x a common honors curriculum provided to all students whether enrolled in mixed-level or honors-only classes;
- x common grading criteria and common scales for regular and honors levels; and
- x administration of common semester exams for the Humanities courses.

For the 2008-09 survey, students were asked to which extent to which the Freshman Humanities course challenged them. Results from this question were difficult to interpret. The question was reworked for the 2009-10 survey using the definitions about rigor provided in the February 22, 2010 report to the ETHS Board of Education entitled “Defining Rigor.” These same questions were asked of students in the 2010-11 survey. Students were asked four questions using a 5-point scale where 1 represented “strongly disagree” and 5 represented “strongly agree” as shown in Table 9.

Grades

When the revised Humanities program was implemented, the following changes were put into place that may have directly or indirectly affected grades:

- x With the revised curriculum in 2008-09, students in the regular-level classes are taught the same curriculum that students in the honors level classes receive. This adds to the rigor of the course.
- x Since 2008-09, the Freshman Humanities classes have a common semester exam, which is reflected in the semester grade.
- x In addition, there are common grading scales for Humanities classes.
- x The number of students in the mixed-level class has doubled. More students are now exposed to the honors curriculum, and more students have the option of moving up from a regular-level course to an honors-level course. In the past, some of these students were placed in a course called Freshman Humanities Level 1 (regular level) or Level 1.

Tables 10 and 11 show first semester grades for the three recent Freshman Humanities mixed-level cohorts that experienced the revised program along with the 2006-07 and 2007-08 comparison cohort groups.

Table 10. Semester Grades - English

	2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10		2010-11	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Mixed-level Regular (EN4012/EN0002)										
A/B	62	47%	60	45%	32	27%	50	40%	35	41%
C	45	34%	38	28%	41	34%	45	36%	35	41%
D/F/NC	25	19%	36	27%	47	40%	30	24%	15	18%
Total	132		134		120		125		85	
Mixed-Level Honors (EN4013)										
A/B	81	88%	72	85%	125	76%	150	86%	157	80%
C	7	8%	9	11%	22	13%	16	9%	24	12%
D/F/NC	4	4%	4	5%	17	11%	8	5%	15	8%
Total	92		85		164		174		196	

Table 11. Semester Grades – History

	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Mixed-level Regular (HS4012/HS5002)										
A/B	59	44%	64	48%	43	35%	49	40%	40	47%
C	43	32%	47	35%	37	30%	46	37%	32	38%
D/F/NC	31	23%	22	17%	44	35%	29	23%	13	15%
Total	133		133		124		124		85	
Mixed-Level Honors (HS4013)										
A/B	78	86%	72	87%	118	72%	142	82%	156	81%
C	11	12%	9	11%	34	21%	25	15%	23	12%

before the revised Humanities program. It was suggested that this decline was in part due to the implementation of a new program. Similar to the first semester of 2009-10, the 2010-11 first semester percentages of A/B grades were higher for English and History than in 2008-09 and were back to the levels prior to implementing the revised mixed-level curriculum. Likewise, the percentage of D/F/NC grades were lower than 2008-09.

Common Exam

The 2010-11 school year was the third year that common semester exams were administered to students in Freshman Humanities English and History classes. These exams included both a multiple-choice test and an essay test. For the multiple choice portion, the departments utilized a software program which allowed teachers to scan and grade the multiple choice exam and analyze the scores in a variety of ways, including using general item analyses and item analyses by concepts/skill areas. The teachers in both the English and History departments were able to use the item analyses to determine areas of strength and weakness, as well as to review item statistics (distribution of scores, reliability coefficients, etc.). The item analyses provided a means for teachers to look at incorrect responses to understand students' misconceptions. The overall average score for the multiple-choice portion of the English common exam was 77.5% compared to 81.5% in 2009-10 and 75.0% in 2008-09. The overall average score for the multiple-choice portion of the History common exam was 70.9% compared to 71.5% in 2009-10 and 70% in 2008-09.

EXPLORE to PLAN Analysis of Gains

Table 12b. Mixed-level Honors Students' Adjusted PLAN (Grade 10) Reading Score

School Year	Avg. Scale Score	Adjusted Avg. Scale Score
2006-2007 (N=88)	20.8	20.7
2007-2008 (N=80)	20.4	20.3
2008-2009 (N=161)	20.0	20.1
2009-2010 (N=165)	20.5	20.6

Furthermore, there were no significant differences in the gain scores among the placement groups for each cohort. In other words, gains were similar for students whether they experienced the revised Humanities program or the former Humanities programs. It is important to point out that with the revised program beginning in 2008-09, the number of regular level students in mixed-level classes was greater because of the more inclusive criteria. Even so, the gains of mixed-level honors students remained strong and similar to prior cohorts.

It was pointed out in last year's evaluation that the 2008-09 mixed-level regular cohort did not show stronger gains than the prior comparison groups. In the report, it was stated that one might anticipate greater gains for the mixed-level regular students in upcoming cohorts. The gain data for the 2009-10 cohort bears this out. There were larger gains for students at the mixed-level regular level and honors level than in the previous year.

EXPLORE to PLAN to ACT Analysis of Gains

Students in the 2008-09 cohort are the first ones to have gone experienced the revised 1 Humanities model and taken the PSAT/ACT. Similar to the EXPLORE to PLAN analysis, students in the mixed-level honors classes demonstrated greater gains in reading achievement between the EXPLORE and ACT tests than students in the mixed-level regular classes. Furthermore, students in the mi

Students who were placed up or moved up into mixed-level honors showed greater average gains than students qualifying for mixed-level honors classes, as well as greater average gains than students placed in the honors only level. (See Table 16 below.) Students who were placed or moved down into mixed-level regular Humanities generally showed smaller gains than students qualifying for the mixed-level regular classes.

Table 16. Mixed-level Students' Gain Between Grade 8 (EXPLORE) and Grade 11 (PSAE/ACT) Reading Achievement by Placement Group

Placement Group	Grade 8 Av. Scale Score	Grade 10 Avg. Scale Score	Grade 11 Avg. Scale Score	EXP (Gr. 8) to PLAN (Gr. 10) Gain	EXP (Gr. 8) to PSAE/ACT (Gr. 11) Gain
Mixed Regular Level					
2006-2007 (N=104)	13.2	15.2	18.8	2.0	5.6
2007-2008 (N=108)	13.0	15.7	18.5	2.7	5.52.7

507-900

members described students in mixed-level regular classes as “extremely motivated.” In contrast, 59 percent of faculty described students in mixed-level honors students as “very motivated,” 64 percent described students in honors-only classes as “very motivated,” and another 27 percent described students in honors-only classes as “extremely motivated.” This has been the general faculty pattern over the three year evaluation period. Although in prior years there have been some differences in responses between English and History teachers, this was not the case for 2010-11.

- x In 2010-11, students and faculty were again asked to respond to an item about effort. In general, the response pattern was similar to prior years between half and two thirds of students in all classes responding “very much” or “a great deal” and about 10 percent or less of students responding “None at all” or “Not too much.” There were significant differences among groups. In English, there were higher ratings for effort for students in honors-only classes and mixed-level honors classes compared to students in the mixed-level regular classes, $F_{(10,N=506)} = 19.26, p = .037$. However, for History, there were no significant differences among groups. Teachers’ responses, on the other hand, showed a pattern where the amount of effort as represented by “very much” or “a great deal” increased from students in mixed-level regular classes (47%) to mixed-level honors classes (60%) to honors-only classes (80%).
- x For the 2008-09 and 2009-10 surveys, teachers were asked about student preparedness. These questions were reworked for the 2010-11 survey to specifically ask about student preparedness with respect to completed homework, class participation, and class activities. A pattern similar to that seen in motivation and effort was also evident for faculty items relating to student preparedness.
 - x Twenty-four percent described students in mixed-level regular classes as “usually prepared” for class with their homework completed. In contrast, 71 percent of faculty described students in mixed-level honors students as “usually prepared” with completed homework, and 100 percent described students in honors-only classes as “usually” or “always prepared” with completed homework.
 - x Seventy-seven percent described students in mixed-level regular classes as “usually prepared” or “always prepared” to participate in class. Eighty-eight percent of faculty described students in mixed-level honors classes as “usually prepared” or “always prepared” to participate, and 100 percent described students in honors-only classes as “usually” or “always prepared” to participate in class.
 - x Sixty-five percent described students in mixed-level regular classes as “usually prepared” or “always prepared” for class activities. Eighty-two percent of faculty described students in mixed-level honors students as “usually prepared” or “always prepared” for class activities, and 90 percent described students in honors-only classes as “usually” or “always prepared” for class activities.

Objective 9: Are we increasing teacher understanding and use of differentiated instruction?

During the 2009-10 year, teachers participated in 13 of 16 workshops on differentiated instruction with Jessica Hockett, a consultant on this topic. In 2011, the major focus of professional development related to the development of new curricula for English and History in order to implement the restructured English and History Humanities program approved by the Board of Education in winter of

⁴ Beginning in 2011-12, the restructured program is another step in improving Humanities so that more students perform better and ultimately take Honors and Advanced Placement courses in subsequent years. The restructured program requires Humanities students to earn honors by demonstrating proficiency on a series of benchmark

Objective 10: Are we increasing support structures to help students achieve?

With the implementation of the revised mixed-level Humanities program, several support structures were modified to help assist students. Table 20 shows survey results for students in AVID and STAE.

In particular, these supports focused on explicit teach strategies, lessons on effective effort, and other skills (time management) need to be successful in school.

Table 20. Support Structures

Student Survey			Not at all	Not too much	Somewhat	Very much	A great deal	Positive Response	Negative Response
How much does AVID help you do well in your Humanities class?									
Mixed-level	(n=116)	2009-10	41%	17%	29%	6%	6%	12%	58%
	(n=77)	2010-11	19%	17%	38%	21%	5%	26%	36%
Honors-only	(n=2)	2009-10	50%	0%	50%	0%	0%	0%	50%
	(n=5)	2010-11	40%	20%	0%	0%	40%	40%	60%
How much does STAE help you do well in your Humanities class?									
Mixed-level	(n=110)	2009-10	42%	18%	21%	16%	3%	19%	60%
	(n=84)	2010-11	39%	19%	25%	13%	5%	18%	58%
Honors-only	(n=34)	2009-10	44%	18%	21%	12%	6%	18%	62%
	(n=29)	2010-11	52%	10%	21%	17%	0%	17%	62%
Student Survey			I only came in when I needed						
How often did you see your Humanities teachers outside of class for extra help?			I never came in for extra help.	I came in something explained or clarified.	I came in once every couple of weeks.	I came in for help 1-2 times a week.	I came in almost every day.		
Mixed-level	(n=377)	2009-10	16%	52%	23%	7%	2%		
	(n=331)	2010-11	19%	60%	15%	5%	2%		
Honors-only	(n=187)	2009-10	17%	70%	9%	4%	0%		
	(n=173)	2010-11	19%	72%	8%	2%	0%		

Table 21. Satisfaction

Student Survey		1 - Very dissatisfied	2	3	4	5 - Very Satisfied	Avg.	Positive Response	Negative Response
Rate your satisfaction with this course.									
Mixed-level (n=409)	2008-09	8%	13%	34%	29%	16%	3.3	45%	21%
(n=368)	2009-10	3%	12%	30%	42%	13%	3.5	55%	15%
(n=324)	2010-11	5%	11%	36%	32%	16%	3.5	48%	16%
Honors-only (n=164)	2008-09	2%	11%	26%	51%	10%	3.5	61%	13%
(n=190)	2009-10	2%	8%	27%	39%	25%	3.8	64%	10%
(n=171)	2010-11	5%	15%	15%	41%	25%	3.7	66%	20%
Faculty Survey		Not at all effective	Not too effective	Somewhat effective	Very Effective	Extremely effective			
After one year of implementation, how effective do you think this mixed-level Humanities course is for meeting your students' instructional needs? (n=18) 2008-09									
		0%	6%	72%	22%	0%		22%	6%
After two years of implementation, how effective do you think this mixed-level Humanities course is for meeting your students' instructional needs? (n=21) 2009-10									
		5%	14%	48%	33%	0%		33%	19%
English (n=10)		0%	0%	60%	40%	0%		40%	0%
History (n=11)		9%	27%	36%	27%	0%		27%	36%
After three years of implementation, how effective do you think this mixed-level Humanities course is for meeting your students' instructional needs? (n=17) 2010-11									
		0%	0%	77%	24%	0%		24%	0%
English (n=10)		0%	0%	90%	10%	0%		10%	0%
History (n=6)		0%	0%	50%	50%	0%		50%	0%

Students

- x A chi-square test applied to the percentages found significant differences among groups. A higher percentage of students in honors-only classes than students in mixed-level honors classes were satisfied, and in turn, a higher percentage of students in mixed-level honors classes were satisfied compared to than those in mixed-regular classes. $\chi^2(8, N = 495) = 32.52, p = .001$
- x It should be noted that for both honors-only students and mixed-level students, 80 percent or more of these students selected a rating of 3, 4 or 5.
- x When asked an open-ended question about the strengths of the mixed-level classes, the following themes and comments were typical responses:

Group work

- x The strengths of the Humanities classes are getting to know different people because we always work in groups and in class discussions.
- x We work in groups and we help each other out. We make sure everyone understands the material before moving on.

Connection between English and History classes

- x For me, it is easier to relate to both classes because they are entwined. It's helpful and beneficial to have what I'm learning in History reflected in what I'm reading in English
- x I get to be with a lot of different kinds of people and we do groupings, and the classes are connected so it's cool to be reading a book in English and then at the same time we are

- x Students were also asked about what they would change in the Humanities classes. The following themes and comments were typical responses from students. While some of the themes are similar to the ones regarding the strengths of fixed-level classes, it should be noted that a greater number of students commented that their English and History classes are connected than those felt they were not connected. In addition, a greater number of students felt the mixed-level classes were interesting than those who felt it was boring. Students in the honors-only Humanities class felt that there should be more diversity in their classes.

Boring/Make more interesting

- x A lot of the materials and texts were boring to me. I would have liked to have read more modern literature that contained modern problems that are more connected to me as a 21st century teen. I would have liked to have more multimedia in the classes. For me, there was too much lecturing and talking, and I felt like I got bored and zoned out often.
- x Make class more engaging, exciting.
- x Read more interesting books.

English and History classes not very connected

- x I know that other people's classes are, but history and English classes do not overlap that much, so our history and English work are not connected. It would be nice if we did more connected things.
- x I would make the assignments a little more connected for both classes so students are not completely changing focus between classes.
- x The history curriculum doesn't really

Year Three Findings

Overall, the data show positive outcomes for the revised mixed-level Freshman Humanities course. The demographic data indicate the program is meeting objectives, and students and faculty generally provided positive feedback with suggestions for improving the course as it transitions to the newly restructured 1 Humanities program in 2011-12 school year.

Objective 1: Preparing Students for Honors Classes

- x The percentage of students in mixed-level Freshman Humanities taking the course for honors credit in 2010-11 continues to be almost double compared to the cohorts prior to 2008-09.
- x The percentage of students in mixed-level Freshman Humanities taking the course for regular credit is double the percentage of cohorts prior to 2008-09. Under the former model, many of these students would have been assigned to an ~~mixed~~ level Humanities class or to a level below regular (Level 1).
- x The percentage of students in honors-only classes has remained relatively stable.
- x A higher percentage of students (total ~~and~~ across ethnic groups) from the 2008-09 and 2009-10 cohorts took honors English and History classes as sophomores and juniors compared to prior cohorts.
- x Two-thirds of students who were in mixed-level honors in Freshman Humanities received a score on the 3 English AP exam of a 3, 4, or 5. ~~One~~ of students who were in mixed-level honors in Freshman Humanities received a score of a 3, 4, or 5 on the US History AP exam. Typically colleges require a score of 3 or higher for college credit.

Objective 2: Increasing the Numbers of Under-represented Students in Honors Freshman Humanities

- x The mixed-level honors classes are more diverse compared to 2006-07 and 2007-08. The numbers of Hispanic and Black students have ~~doubled~~; the number of low-income students has more than doubled.

Objective 3: Increasing Diversity of Student Views in Freshman Humanities

- x Students and faculty survey responses indicated that teachers and students believe that the diversity of mixed-level classes exposes students to a wide range of views. More teachers report “very much” and “a great deal” in 2010-11 than 2008-09 (65% vs. 53%). Responses were significantly higher for students in ~~mixed~~ level classes than honors-only classes.
- x Over 80 percent of students in mixed-level ~~and~~ honors-only classes indicated that their teachers expect them to participate in small and large group discussions. When it comes to how often they contribute to discussion, there were significant differences among the groups in English with honors and mixed-level honors contributing more than mixed-regular students. In History, responses for mixed-level honors and honors-only students were similar and significantly different than mixed-level regular students.
- x In English, the percentages for honors-only students are significantly higher than mixed-level students with respect to class discussions that are

Objective 4: Providing Same Learning Experience in Mixed-Level and Honors Level Freshman Humanities Classes

- x The same honors-level curriculum is being provided in mixed-level regular, mixed-level honors, and honors-only Freshman Humanities classes. All students in mixed-level classes spent the same amount of time on their work outside of class (e.g., doing homework, studying for tests, completing projects/essays, completing assigned readings, and studying for a semester exam) as honors-only students.

Objective 5: Switching Levels Easily

- x All in all, including student and teacher requests, English teachers reported that they recommended 32 students (18%) move from mixed-level regular to mixed-level honors credit. History teachers reported that they recommended 9 students (5%) move from mixed-level regular to mixed-level honors credit. Teachers reported that less than five students requested a move from honors credit to regular credit in mixed-level classes. Since no teacher change is necessary, these changes are easily accomplished.

Objective 6: Increasing Intellectual Rigor

- x In the 2009-10 survey, questions were asked for this objective. These questions were administered again in the 2010-11 survey. Four questions were developed to assess rigor using a 5-point scale where 1 represented "strongly disagree" and 5 represented "strongly agree:"
 - o My Humanities classes challenge me to do my best work.
 - o My Humanities classes have taught me to better analyze readings and ideas.
 - o The work in my Humanities classes makes me think deeply about the content.
 - o The books and other materials in my Humanities classes are interesting to me.
- x There were no significant differences between honors-only and mixed-level responses for the first two items relating to rigor. Comparable percentages of mixed-level and honors students found the class to challenge them to do their best work, taught them to better analyze readings and ideas. A significantly greater percent of honors-only and mixed-level honors students found the Humanities work makes them think deeply about content than mixed-level regular students. Honors-only students found the books/materials to be more interesting.

Objective 7: Increasing Student Achievement

- x Grades: Similar to the first semester of 2009-10, 2010-11 first semester percentages of A/B grades were higher for English and History than 2008-09 and were back to the levels prior to implementing the revised mixed-level curriculum. Likewise, the percentage of D/F/NC grades were lower than 2008-09.
- x EXPLORE to PLAN Analysis of Gains: One of the long-term objectives of the Freshman Humanities evaluation is to look at test score gains for each cohort from the EXPLORE test taken in grade 8 by students prior to entering freshman year to the PLAN test taken at the beginning of sophomore year to the ACT test taken at the end of students' junior year. For this year three report, we analyzed EXPLORE to PLAN score gains for the 2008-09 and 2009-10 cohorts experiencing the revised mixed-level Humanities program. We compared the gains for this cohort with prior cohorts who were comparable to 2008-09 in terms of initial test scores but were taught under the old mixed-level Humanities program.
- x Overall, students made gains from EXPLORE to PLAN. Students in the mixed-level honors classes demonstrated greater gains in reading achievement between the EXPLORE and PLAN tests than students in the mixed-level regular classes. Students who were placed up or moved up

into mixed-level honors showed greater average gains than students qualifying for mixed-level honors classes. Students who were placed or moved into mixed-level regular Humanities generally showed smaller gains than students qualifying for the mixed-level regular classes. A repeated measures analysis of variance was applied to the data to determine if there were significant differences from pretest to post-test between placement groups. For each group of

research). In 2010-11 there were significant differences between honors-only, mixed-level honors and mixed-level regular students in the area of ~~life~~ effort. More mixed-level regular students

Appendix A

Objective 3: Class Discussion

	Level		
	ML - Regular	ML - Honors	Straight Honors
			Total

Objective 3: Class Discussion

			Level			Total
			ML - Regular	ML - Honors	Straight Honors	
Q6_MakeMeThink_Eng	Strongly disagree	Count	4	18	4	26
		% within Level	3.3%	8.6%	2.3%	5.2%
	Disagree	Count	15	17	15	47
		% within Level	12.4%	8.1%	8.7%	9.3%
	Neutral	Count	37	55	41	133
		% within Level	30.6%	26.2%	23.8%	26.4%

Objective 6: Rigor		
	Level	Total

