

English/Communications Regional Forum Report

Presented by:

**Sonja Vandermeer, Trillium Lakelands District
School Board**

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Overview of Regional Forum

The one day regional forum was held at Frost Campus, Fleming College on May 28, 2003. The forum brought together college communications faculty and high school English teachers to discuss transitions related issues.

Participants

Seven college representatives attended from Fleming College's Brealey and Frost Campuses and Durham College. Thirty-two participants came from four school boards: Trillium Lakelands District School Board, Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board, Peterborough Victoria Northumberland Clarington Catholic District School Board and Durham Catholic District School Board. The organizing committee was very impressed by the number of participants interested in attending this event. (A complete list of participants is included at the end of this report.)

Conclusions

In general, participants viewed the day as the beginning of a dialogue that needs to be ongoing in order to meet the needs of college bound students. One topic of particular interest is the College exemplars project. The results of this project were shared with all participants and follow up will be beneficial in order to share a common understanding of the various forms of writing required of students in college. The discussion on plagiarism provided a range of practical strategies to ensure that students understand the severity of this academic dishonesty and how teachers can ensure that work submitted by students is original. By discussing assessment and evaluation tools, teachers will be better able to prepare students to be successful at college. One day is not sufficient to understand the needs of college bound students. There is significant interest in future opportunities for dialogue, sharing and common professional development.

Attachments:

Agenda of Day
Next Steps
Summary of Feedback
Budget Breakdown
List of Participants

Agenda for the Day

9:00 Welcome and greetings, overview of the day, key expectations

9:20 – 9:40 Opening Presentation – Doug Stock, Fleming College. Doug has participated in a year long study of the transitions from high school English to college Communications classes. He summarized his key findings and provided some thought provoking questions for the day.

9:40 – 10:40 Session A: Pathways

- Overview of secondary school pathways
- Description of College programs (Fleming and Durham) by Communications leads
- Small breakout groups
- Issues, questions, follow-up were recorded

10:40 – 11:00 Break

11:00 – 12:00

Session B: Reading and Writing

- Overview of secondary school Reading and Writing, including exemplars project
- Description of college Reading and Writing, including new college writing exemplars project (copies of sections of the document were distributed)
- Small breakout groups
- Issues, questions, follow-up were recorded

12:00 – 12:45 Lunch

12:45 – 1:45

Session C: Assessment, Evaluation and Plagerism

- Overview of secondary school assessment and evaluation policies, including use of rubrics, separation of assessment and evaluation
- Description of college assessment and evaluation practices (course breakdown), the handling of assignments submitted late, and strategies to minimize plagiarism (a list of websites was distributed)
- Small breakout groups
- Issues, questions, follow-up were recorded

1:45 – 2:15 Review of key messages

2:15 – 2:30 Next steps

2:30 – 2:45 Evaluation of day

Next Steps:

The following were suggested by participants during the discussion as next steps:

Future Communication

- list serve be created. This will encourage future dialogue.
- buddy system. Linking college faculty with a high school English teacher/department.
- continued communication between the high school and college
- set up a council of high school/college teachers (maybe admin.) to form and meet on a regular basis
- similar annual meetings were requested

Visits

- high school teachers attend a communication lecture or lab
- communication teachers/liaison to visit ENG4U classes (4U also) to discuss expectations (e.g., Homework, presentations, zero's, attendance, etc.)
- high school college grads visits to classes
- have high school students attend a college lecture

Resources

- copy of course overview from college (use of same terms)
- complete copies of exemplars (college) be shared
- develop a student anthology of writing
- assessment and evaluation – writing exemplars
- A written report with a collection of resources and lessons for secondary teachers to follow/implement
- more resources!!
- resources sharing and implementation strategies
- get college hand books for requirements in writing, citations
- more information about plagiarism

Next Steps for Students

- have students communicate to sum up strengths and weaknesses of their high school English experience.
- I would like feed back in a year or two on the changes colleges are seeing in students' skills.

Other

- I am concerned that college Prof. assume critical thinking is something that can be taught successfully to college level students
- I would like to know if college teachers find any difference in the students who have been exposed entirely to the "new curriculum" which is more focused on applied communication writing
- Need to share this information with my department and other staff members

Feedback:

Participants were asked to provide feedback on the session. Below is a summary of their comments. The bolded text indicates the questions for which feedback was gathered.

	Excellent	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not Very Useful
Format of session	4	21	2	
Length of session	8	12	8	
Areas of Focus	9	13	6	

How will what you have learned today benefit students?

Better understanding of content:

- help teachers outline expectations for the future and not just the present
- now able to fine tune from an informed perspective. *This comment was made by many participants.*
- now I am able to make students aware of specific expectations at the college level should help focus their attention on the present high school tasks.
- Am more aware of college focus and will use this when planning for applied level courses.
- For the applied college level course, we can gear our curriculum more appropriately to college expectations (more applied communication rather than so much emphasis on literature)
- I have learned that my Grade 12 College classes need more practice in informational text reading summary writing and report writing
- Loved the writing exemplars
- will help to develop more confident writers
- stress to students that reading, writing and speaking skills are essential for all college programs as well as jobs.
- I found talking with Fleming teachers was extremely helpful in determining what types of assignments 4C's should be doing
- spelling might cost you your job
- I will do more rewriting

Better understanding of how colleges function:

- plagiarism matters! Being clear and concise matters! Grammar matters! Following exact format matters! Attendance for lectures and test matters!
- Everyone in college has to take English

- I will have a “real life” link to refer to. Plagiarism workshop
- the discussion of plagiarism will benefit my students by forcing them to be original and think for themselves

Sharing of ideas with others

- we can go back and bring the relevant issues up at our next department meeting, then integrate our ideas

Assessment and Evaluation

- simplify language. On rubrics - YES

How will what you have learned today change your teaching practice?

Content of Courses

- Will stress literature less in a 4C class and more emphasis on skills
- remind me to utilize practical and pragmatic reading
- very little, there is already quite a bit of “applied communications” writing in our high school – for example, look at the grade 10 literacy test. We spend most of grade 9 preparing for these applied writing tasks.
- more comparison/contrast/summary
- more research report formats
- maintain high standards – too many students are getting through doing sub standard work. Continue to stress technical writing
- I need to teach APA style rather than MLA style for college level students; I need to provide more exemplars for my students for a successful outcome

Better Understanding

- I have a clearer vision of what college English is, how it is approached, evaluated etc. The discussion of web sites was most useful. As far as direct practices go, change is unlikely.
- factual certainties about college expectations will help to avoid the challenge of “I won’t need this after high school”

Assessment and Evaluation, Use of Exemplars

- I will have assignments based on the exemplars, which are more practical for college
- the availability of some exemplars and tasks will help to establish guideline expectations

Other

- It won't; has the curriculum changed?
- I will use the web sites given out and the exemplars
- use of computer labs
- greater networking ability
- I will adhere to rigid due dates in the future – no more excuses from students
- my style will remain, in fact I found re-enforcement of what I am doing right.

Next steps:

What follow up would you like to see from this session?

- I don't think anything is necessary beyond the materials (exemplars etc.) to be sent. I'm not sure a buddy system is viable
- I would like 2 or 3 days free from teaching duties to sit in on a variety of college lectures/small group seminars

- opportunity for continued discussions
- high school class visits by college communication instructors and college students

- New information being sent to us
- some P.D. for my staff related to assignment approaches for college bound students will be beneficial

Participants

Name	School and Board/College
Joyce McGuire	Fleming College
Brenda Liston-Hanley	Fleming College
Doug Stock	Fleming College
Joyce Wade	Fleming College
Lynda Harries	Fleming College
Shirley Norman	Fleming College
Suzanne Hooke	Fleming College
Andy Butler	St. Stephen's SS
Christian Conway	St. Stephen's SS
Colleen Crawley	St. Peters
Darren Danylyshen	St. Stephen's SS
Gerard Sullivan	St. Peters
John McDougall	St. Mary's
Margie Hickey	Holy Cross SS
Mark Buzminski	St. Mary's
Robynn MacFadden	St. Thomas Aquinas
Shelley Cooke	St. Peters
Tara Harnden	St. Mary's
Tom Robinson	St. Thomas Aquinas
Andy Milner	Lakefield DSS
Curtis Bryan	Adam Scott CVI
Ellen Day	Lakefield DSS
Fiona White	KPRDSB
Jennifer Brady	OISE/UT
Kerrie Crockower	Crestwood SS
Kevin Robinson	Thomas A Stewart
Kim Driscoll	Thomas A Stewart
Toni Rutland	PCVS
Pat Calder	Kenner CVI
Catherine Widjedal	Adult Education and Training Centre
Colin Matthew	I.E. Weldon
Joy Muir	Lindsay Collegiate and Vocational Institute
Kathleen Gaulin	I.E. Weldon
Laura Goltz	Fenelon Falls SS
Oona Durkin	LCVI TLDSB
Sonja Vandermeer	Trillium Lakelands DSB
April Pettersone	Norwood DHS
Kathy Rhodes	Durham College
Lorraine Ruscitti	Durham Catholic DSB
Tim Jackson	Fenelon Falls SS