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Mixed-Level Freshman Humanities

Evaluation: Year Two

2009-10

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## **Executive Summary**

When the new model for Freshman Humanities was put into place, 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 new 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 includes 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 year two and should not be considered summative.

### **Key Findings**

Overall, the data indicate encouraging results for the second year of the new mixed-level Freshman Humanities course. The demographic data indicate the program is making progress in meeting the objectives, and students and faculty generally provided positive feedback with suggestions for improving the course as implementation continues into the third 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 2009-10 continues to be almost double compared to the cohorts prior to 2008-09.

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

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

The mixed-level classes are more diverse and the numbers of Hispanic and Black students have doubled, as well as the numbers of low-income students.

#### **Objective 3: Increasing Diversity of Student Views in Freshman Humanities**

Based on student and faculty survey responses, teachers and students believe that the diversity of mixed-level classes exposes students to a wide range of views. These responses were significantly higher for students in mixed-level classes than honors-only classes.

Comparable percentages 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, in English honors-only students contributed more than mixed-level honors and in turn, mixed-level honors contributed more than mixed-level regular students. In History, mixed-level honors and honors-only students reported contributing about the same and more than mixed-level regular students.

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

The same honors-level curriculum is being provided to mixed-level regular, mixed-level honors, and honors-only Freshman Humanities classes. Overall, students in mixed-level classes spent the same amount of time on their work outside of class.

When asked about class discussions, in English a greater percentage of honors-only students gave higher ratings than mixed-level students with respect to “interesting,” “make me think,” and “provide different

points of view.” Honors-only and mixed-level honors students’ responses were significantly higher than mixed-level regular students with respect to “add to my knowledge of the topic.” In History, all of the responses were similar for mixed-level and honors students.

### **Objective 5: Switching Levels Easily**

According to student and teacher feedback students are able to easily switch levels either by request or teacher recommendation.

### **Objective 6: Increasing Intellectual Rigor**

In the 2009-10 survey, four questions were developed to assess rigor. Comparable percentages of mixed-level and honors students found that the Humanities classes challenged them to do their best work, made them think deeply about the content, and taught them to better analyze readings and ideas. Honors-only students found the books and other materials to be more interesting in the Humanities classes than mixed-level students.

More mixed-level regular students felt their Humanities classes helped them improve in reading and research than students in mixed-level honors. In addition, more students in mixed-level honors classes reported improving in reading and research than honors-only Freshman Humanities students.

### **Objective 7: Increasing Student Achievement**

For semester 1 of 2009-10, the percentages of A/B grades increased from 2008-09 and are back to the levels prior to implementing the revised mixed-level curriculum. Similarly, the percentage of D/F/NC grades is lower than 2008-09 and more like the 2006-07 and 2007-08 levels.

For this year two report, EXPLORE to PLAN score gains were analyzed for the first 2008-09 cohort experiencing the new mixed-level Humanities program. Gains for this cohort were compared with prior cohorts that were comparable to 2008-09 in terms of initial test scores but were taught under the old mixed-level Humanities model. Overall, students made gains from EXPLORE to PLAN. In general, 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 down or moved down into mixed-level regular Humanities generally show smaller gains than students qualifying for the mixed-level regular classes.

Gains were similar for students whether they experienced the new revised Humanities program or the former Humanities program. 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.

### **Objective 8: Encouraging and Explicitly Teaching Students to Become Successful**

Students in honors-only Humanities English classes gave significantly higher ratings on motivation than students in mixed-level classes. There were no significant differences between students in honors-only and mixed-level classes for History.

In contrast, faculty responses were lower for mixed-level regular, higher for mixed-level honors and even higher for honors-only students in terms of student motivation. Responses were different for English teachers compared to History teachers, where a greater percentage of English teachers indicated that mixed-level honors and honors-only students were “very motivated” or “extremely motivated” than History teachers. A higher percentage of History teachers rated honors-only students as “very” or “extremely motivated” as compared to mixed-level students.

### **Objective 9: Increasing Differentiated Instruction**

A majority of the teachers indicated that they implemented ideas they learned in professional development activities “sometimes,” “often,” or “all the time.” More History teachers indicated “often” compared to English teachers. Overall, teachers responded that they are better able to decide when to differentiate instruction.

### **Objective 10: Increasing Support Structures**

Programs such as Freshman Reading, AVID, STAE, and Project EXCEL were modified in 2008-09 to provide help that was aligned with the Humanities curricula. Eighty percent of students in the Freshman Reading classes reported that these classes help them in their Freshman Humanities class. Less than 50% of AVID and STAE students in mixed-level and honors-only classes indicated that the program helped them with their Freshman Humanities class.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings from this evaluation, several recommendations were developed:

- Review books and materials in Freshman Humanities, both in History and English, to ensure these texts are interesting to students. Consider new texts in English and new topics in History that would draw on student interests. Review assignments and projects to ensure that they are challenging students to do their best.
- Continue to build skills in reading and research as well as in organization, effective effort, group work, writing, and taking responsibility for their learning.
- Review professional development activities to ensure that they are of high quality and address teacher concerns around behavior issues and varied student learning styles.
- Professional development should focus on examining the belief systems and expectations to ensure that all teachers hold and communicate high expectations for all students.
- Review support structures, particularly Project EXCEL and Freshman Reading, to ensure that instruction in these courses is directly aligned with the coursework in Freshman Humanities.
- Utilize the common time set aside during the day as well as time in department meetings, PLC’s, and other professional development activities to discuss the mission/vision of the mixed-level model to ensure that there is a common vision and understanding of purpose.
- Continue to identify ways to ensure that students to seek out help outside of class.
- Improve the connections between English and History in Freshman Humanities by reviewing curriculum and being more explicit about the connections in answering essential questions.

## **Mixed-Level Freshman Humanities Evaluation: Year Two**

### **Background**

Mixed-level Humanities classes are comprised of students enrolled at the regular level and honors level. This model allows students to experience an honors level curriculum and then easily move up into honors level when they feel confident about doing the work without changing teachers. The new Humanities course put into place in the fall of 2008 has the following elements:

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

When the new model for Freshman Humanities was put into place, the administration directed that the course be evaluated over a three-year period. Based on this directive, an evaluation plan was developed around the overall goals of the new 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 includes the collection of formative and summative information for the purpose of monitoring program implementation, making programmatic improvements, and analyzing overall program effectiveness. The evaluation plan calls for:

- collection of feedback from students, teachers, and department chairs using interviews, surveys and focus groups
- analysis of student performance – EXPLORE-PLAN-ACT test data, course grades, common semester exams
- comparison of demographics and performance of students in the new Freshman Humanities program to comparable prior and future cohorts

This report provides data from year two and should not be considered summative. It provides demographics for the first two cohorts experiencing the new Freshman Humanities program compared to previous similar cohort groups. Data from honors-only classes are also provided for comparison purposes. Two surveys were reworked by a representative group of Humanities teachers and volunteer parents from the Mixed-Level Advisory Committee to collect feedback from students and faculty. Response rates were high for these surveys: 94 % for the student survey and 95 % for the faculty survey. Along with demographics and survey data, the report provides data on first semester grades and common semester exams. Two prior cohorts were 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 and 2009-10 Humanities cohorts enrolled in the new 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 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 current placement criteria, listed below:

- Students with EXPLORE reading scores between 40 and 69 percentile are placed in mixed-level regular classes (EN4012 and HS4012).

- Students with EXPLORE reading scores between 70 and 94 percentile are placed in mixed-level honors classes (EN4013 and HS4013).
- Students whose EXPLORE reading scores are at the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or above are placed in honors-only classes (EN0003 and HS5003).

This report is organized around ten objectives, six of which were identified in the Mixed-Level Study conducted in 2005 and updated in discussions with teachers and administrators. These objectives are listed below. A final section focuses on student/faculty satisfaction.

- Objective 1: exposing more students to Humanities honors level classes;
- Objective 2: increasing the numbers of under-represented students in Humanities honors level classes;
- Objective 3: increasing the diversity of views in Humanities classes;
- Objective 4: providing the same learning experience for Humanities students enrolled for regular or honors credit;
- Objective 5: switching levels easily from regular level to honors level credit within mixed-level Humanities classes;
- Objective 6: increasing intellectual rigor in Humanities classes;
- Objective 7: improving student achievement in Humanities classes;
- Objective 8: encouraging and explicitly teaching students how to become successful in English and History classes;
- Objective 9: increasing teachers' understanding and use of differentiated instruction; and
- Objective 10: increasing support structures to help students achieve.

When summarizing the student survey data, students in mixed-level classes (whether enrolled for regular or honors level credit) are reported as a combined group since they generally responded similarly. Where differences occurred among students in mixed-level and honors-only classes, they are noted. Statistical tests of significance were used to evaluate differences among groups. Statistically significant results are reported in the text. Appendix A includes the detailed tables for items in which differences among the groups were significant. In the faculty survey, data are disaggregated for some items by mixed-level regular, mixed-level honors and honors-only classes to highlight important differences.

**Objective 1: Are we exposing more students to the Humanities honors level classes and preparing more students to take honors level classes in the future?**

Overall, we are exposing and preparing more students for honors level classes since we introduced the revised mixed-level Humanities program. For year two, we looked at numbers/percentages of students taking honors courses in English/History Humanities in freshman year over time (Table 1). We also looked at subsequent honors coursework that these students took as sophomores in English and History (Tables 2-5).

***2009-10 Cohort: Numbers/Percentages in Freshman Humanities Honors Classes:***

- The number of students in mixed-level classes who are taking the course for honors credit has increased from 119 (14%) and 123 (16%) in 2006-07 and 2007-08, respectively, to 229 (26%) and 231 (28%), respectively in 2008-09 and 2009-10. (Numbers for English and History are slightly different but reflect the same overall picture.)
- The number of students in mixed-level Freshman Humanities enrolled for regular credit has more than doubled from 77 (9%) and 106 (13%) in 2006-07 and 2007-08, respectively, to 213 (25%) and 199 (24%) respectively, in 2008-09 and 2009-10. The students are exposed to an honors curriculum, and it is anticipated that many of these students will enroll in honors

courses in subsequent school years. Under the old model, many of these students would have been assigned to a lower level Humanities course.

- The number of students in honors-only classes has remained relatively stable with slight fluctuations from year to year. Enrollments have ranged from 190 (22%) in 2006-07 to 155 (20%) in 2007-08 to 177 (20%) students in 2008-09 and 199 (24%) students in 2009-10.

Table 1. Freshman Humanities Demographic Summary

	2006-07 (Old Hum. Program)		2007-08 (Old Hum. Program)		2008-09 (New Hum. Program)		2009-10 (New Hum. Program)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<b>Mixed-level regular</b>								
Black	31	40%	36	34%	112	53%	112	56%
Hispanic	7	9%	15	14%	38	18%	33	17%
Low-income	23	30%	27	26%	134	64%	128	64%
<i>Total # students</i>	77		106		213		199	
<b>Mixed-level honors</b>								
Black	16	13%	33	27%	52	23%	54	23%
Hispanic	9	8%	12	10%	22	10%	25	11%
Low-income	17	14%	31	25%	57	25%	61	26%
<i>Total # students</i>	119		123		229		231	
<b>Honors-only</b>								
Black	13	7%	11	7%	11	6%	15	8%
Hispanic	4	2%	4	3%	6	3%	5	3%
Low-income	11	6%	9	6%	14	8%	17	9%
<i>Total # students</i>	190		155		177		199	
<b>Total # Honors in Humanities</b>								
Black	29	9%	44	16%	63	16%	69	16%
Hispanic	13	4%	16	6%	28	7%	30	7%
Low-income	28	9%	40	14%	71	17%	78	18%

**2008-09 Cohort: Numbers/Percentages in Sophomore English and History Honors Classes**

- Table 2 shows sophomore data for the 2008-09 cohort as well as comparison group data. A higher percentage of students from the 2008-09 cohort (23%<sup>1</sup>) took honors English classes compared to the comparison cohorts (2006-07=15%; 2007-08=16%) that were not exposed to the new Humanities curriculum. Table 3 also shows these percentages by ethnicity; for all subgroups, more students from the 2008-09 cohort took honors English classes than in prior years.
- The same pattern is evident for History (Tables 4-5). A higher percentage of students from the 2008-09 cohort (21%) took honors history classes compared to the comparison cohorts (2006-07=15%; 2007-08=17%) that were not exposed to the new Freshman Humanities curriculum. This pattern is also evident for all ethnic groups.

<sup>1</sup> This figure represents the combined percentage of students taking honors sophomore classes from both mixed-level regular and mixed-level honors Freshman Humanities.

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 (New Hum. Program)		06-07 (Old Hum. Program)		07-08 (Old Hum. Program)		08-09 (New Hum. Program)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<b>Grade 10</b>	N=746		N=685		N=778		N=746		N=685		N=778	
EN0203 - 2 Hum Eng H	9	1%	10	1%	12	2%	27	4%	13	2%	16	2%
EN0253 - 2 Eng H	16	2%	23	3%	18	2%	60	8%	67	10%	133	17%
Total Students in Honors	25	3%	33	5%	30	4%	87	12%	80	12%	149	19%

\*N represents the total number of students at each grade level during each school year

Table 3. Course Progression: Number/Percent of Students Continuing into Honors-Level Courses by Ethnicity

	Mixed Regular English Cohorts						Mixed Honors English Cohorts					
	06-07 (Old Hum. Program)		07-08 (Old Hum. Program)		08-09 (New Hum. Program)		06-07 (Old Hum. Program)		07-08 (Old Hum. Program)		08-09 (New Hum. Program)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<b>Grade 10</b>												
Black (N=271, N=253, N=272)												
EN0203 - 2 Hum Eng H	6	2%	6	2%	7	3%	6	2%	9	4%	4	1%
EN0253 - 2 Eng H	9	3%	8	3%	11	4%	4	1%	8	3%	23	8%
Hispanic (N=86, N=89, N=107)												
EN0203 - 2 Hum Eng H	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%	0	0%	2	2%	3	3%
EN0253 - 2 Eng H	1	1%	2	2%	2	2%	4	5%	3	3%	12	11%
White (N=347, N=286, N=351)												
EN0203 - 2 Hum Eng H	2	1%	0	0%	4	1%	20	6%	2	1%	9	3%
EN0253 - 2 Eng H	6	2%	13	5%	4	1%	49	14%	51	18%	92	26%

\*N represents the total number of students at each grade level during each school year

\*N = (06-07 cohort, 07-08 cohort, 08-09 cohort)

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

	06-07 (Old Hum. Program)		07-08 (Old Hum. Program)		08-09 (New Hum. Program)		06-07 (Old Hum. Program)		07-08 (Old Hum. Program)		08-09 (New Hum. Program)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
	<b>Grade 10</b>	N=746		N=685		N=778		N=746		N=685		N=778
HS5203 - 2 Hum HSS H	8	1%	7	1%	12	2%	26	3%	13	2%	18	2%
HS3253 - Afr Hist H	16	2%	10	1%	5	1%	13	2%	7	1%	15	2%
HS3353 - Asian Stud H	3	0.4%	5	1%	5	1%	12	2%	13	2%	24	3%
HS3403 - Lat Amer Stud H	4	1%	3	0.4%	6	1%	14	2%	10	1%	25	3%
HS3453 - Middle East H	3	0.4%	8	1%	1	0%	10	1%	18	3%	25	3%
HS3503 - Russia H	1	0.1%	3	0.4%	1	0%	6	1%	11	2%	23	3%
HS0063 - Pacific Rim H			4	1%					3	0.4%		
Total Students in Honors	35	4%	40	6%	30	4%	81	11%	75	11%	130	17%

\*N represents the total number of students at each grade level during each school year



Table 5. Course Progression: Number and Percent Continuing into Honors-Level Courses by Ethnicity

	Mixed Regular English Cohorts						Mixed Honors English Cohorts					
	06-07 (Old Hum. Program)		07-08 (Old Hum. Program)		08-09 (New Hum. Program)		06-07 (Old Hum. Program)		07-08 (Old Hum. Program)		08-09 (New Hum. Program)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<b>Grade 10</b>												
<b>Black (N=271, N=253, N=272)</b>												
HS5203 - 2 Hum HSS H	5	2%	5	2%	8	3%	6	2%	9	4%	4	1%
HS3253 - Afr Hist H	8	3%	5	2%	4	1%	1	0.4%	2	1%	5	2%
HS3353 - Asian Stud H	1	0.4%	1	0%	1	0.4%	1	0.4%	1	0%	4	1%
HS3403 - Lat Amer Stud H	2	1%	1	0%	2	1%	0	0%	2	1%	4	1%
HS3453 - Middle East H	1	0.4%	2	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	1%
HS3503 - Russia H	0	0%	1	0%	1	0.4%	0	0%	1	0%	1	0.4%
HS0063 - Pacific Rim H			1	0.4%					0	0%		
<b>Hispanic (N=86, N=89, N=107)</b>												
HS5203 - 2 Hum HSS H	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	2	2%	3	3%
HS3253 - Afr Hist H	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	2%
HS3353 - Asian Stud H	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%	1	1%	1	1%	1	1%
HS3403 - Lat Amer Stud H	1	1%	0	0%	2	2%	3	3%	0	0%	6	6%
HS3453 - Middle East H	1	1%	0	0%	1	1%	1	1%	1	1%	2	2%
HS3503 - Russia H	0	0%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
HS0063 - Pacific Rim H			1	1%					1	1%		
<b>White (N=347, N=286, N=351)</b>												
HS5203 - 2 Hum HSS H	2	1%	0	0%	4	1%	19	5%	2	1%	9	3%
HS3253 - Afr Hist H	7	2%	5	2%	1	0.3%	12	3%	4	1%	8	2%
HS3353 - Asian Stud H	2	1%	3	1%	2	1%	9	3%	10	3%	18	5%
HS3403 - Lat Amer Stud H	1	0.3%	2	1%	2	1%	11	3%	7	2%	14	4%
HS3453 - Middle East H	1	0.3%	6	2%	0	0%	9	3%	17	6%	20	6%
HS3503 - Russia H	1	0.3%	1	0%	0	0%	4	1%	9	3%	18	5%
HS0063 - Pacific Rim H			2	1%					2	1%		
*N represents the total number of students at each grade level during each school year												
*N = (06-07 cohort, 07-08 cohort, 08-09 cohort)												

**Objective 2: Are we increasing the numbers of under-represented students in honors Humanities classes?**

We have increased the number of under-represented Black, Hispanic, and low-income students in honors Humanities classes.

- Using first semester enrollments, Table 1 (provided under Objective 1) shows that the total number of Black students at the honors level increased from 29 students (9%) in 2006-07 to 69 (16%) students in 2009-10.
- The total number of Hispanic students at the honors level increased from 13 students (4%) in 2006-07 to 30 students (7%) in 2009-10.
- The total number of low-income students at the honors level increased from 28 students (9%) in 2006-07 to 78 students (18%) in 2009-10.

**Objective 3: Are we increasing the diversity of student views in the Freshman Humanities course?**

Several items on the faculty and student surveys were used to examine this objective. The items and percentages of student/faculty responses relating to diversity of students' views are shown below in Table 6.

Table 6. Diversity of Student Views

<b>Student Survey item</b>			<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Not too much</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>Very much</b>	<b>A great deal</b>
<b>How much does the diversity of students in your Humanities class expose you to a wide range of views?</b>							
Mixed-level	(n=412)	2008-09	9%	17%	39%	24%	11%
	(n=369)	2009-10	8%	15%	38%	29%	10%
Honors-only	(n=169)	2008-09	27%	40%	25%	6%	2%
	(n=189)	2009-10	18%	30%	37%	12%	4%
<b>Faculty Survey Item</b>			<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Not too much</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>Very much</b>	<b>A great deal</b>
<b>How much does the diversity of students in mixed-level classes contribute to exposing students to a wide range of views?</b>							
	(n=17)	2008-09	0%	0%	47%	47%	6%
	(n=20)	2009-10	0%	10%	20%	40%	30%

For 2009-10:

- The data suggest that more students in mixed-level classes than honors-only classes feel that the diversity of the students in the class exposes them to a wide range of views. Responses were significantly higher for students in mixed-level than honors-only classes as measured by a chi-square test of significance,  $\chi^2(10, N = 567) = 54.93, p < .000$ .
- More teachers selected “very much” and “a great deal” in 2009-10 than 2008-09 (70% vs. 53%).

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

Table 7. Class Discussion

<b>Student Survey</b>		<b>Never</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Most of the time</b>	<b>All of the time</b>	
<b>How often do you contribute to the class discussion in your English or History class?</b>							
English class							
Mixed-level (n=420)	2008-09	2%	14%	37%	28%	19%	
(n=371)	2009-10	1%	14%	39%	33%	14%	
Honors-only (n=171)	2008-09	1%	9%	33%	39%	19%	
(n=187)	2009-10	1%	11%	24%	39%	26%	
History class							
Mixed-level (n=416)	2008-09	2%	17%	30%	32%	19%	
(n=367)	2009-10	2%	13%	40%	29%	16%	
Honors-only (n=169)	2008-09	1%	9%	31%	36%	23%	
(n=186)	2009-10	4%	15%	30%	32%	19%	
<b>Student Survey</b>		<b>1 - Strongly disagree</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5 - Strongly agree</b>	<b>Avg.</b>
<b>My Humanities classes expect me to participate in small and large group discussions.</b>							
Mixed-level (n=372)	2009-10	2%	5%	13%	25%	56%	4.29
Honors-only (n=189)	2009-10	0%	2%	10%	29%	60%	4.46
<b>Student Survey</b>		<b>Mixed-level</b>		<b>Honors-only</b>			
<i>On a scale where 1 represents "strongly disagree" and 5 represents "strongly agree"</i>		<b>2008-09 (n=420)</b>	<b>2009-10 (n=375)</b>	<b>2008-09 (n=158)</b>	<b>2009-10 (n=190)</b>		
English discussions are...		Avg.	Avg.	Avg.	Avg.		
Interesting		3.39	3.33	3.45	3.96		
Make me think		3.53	3.54	3.47	3.93		
Provide different points of view		3.85	3.81	3.98	4.19		
Boring		2.75	2.82	2.68	2.31		
Add to my knowledge of the topic		2.17	3.76	2.16	3.85		
History discussions are...							
Interesting		3.38	3.44	3.71	3.45		
Make me think		3.56	3.64	3.62	3.54		
Provide different points of view		3.77	3.68	3.83	3.61		
Boring		2.79	3.02	2.43	2.86		
Add to my knowledge of the topic		2.30	3.81	1.96	3.83		

For 2009-10:

- Comparable percentages 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 students contributed to discussion, there were significant differences among the groups for English with honors contributing more than mixed-level honors and in turn, mixed-level honors contributing more than mixed-level regular students,  $\chi^2(10, N = 567) = 32.30, p < .000$ . In History, responses for mixed-level honors and honors-only students were similar and significantly different than mixed-level regular students,  $\chi^2(10, N = 567) = 25.75, p = .004$ .
- Students were also asked for feedback on the attributes of discussion 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 students with respect to “interesting,” “make me think,” and “provide different points of view.”<sup>2</sup> Honors-only and mixed-level honors

<sup>2</sup> Interesting:  $\chi^2(8, N = 565) = 55.87, p < .000$ ; Makes me think:  $\chi^2(8, N = 564) = 22.01, p = .005$ ; Provides different points of view:  $\chi^2(8, N = 561) = 20.92, p = .007$ .

students' responses were significantly higher than mixed-level regular students with respect to "add to my knowledge of the topic"  $\chi^2(8, N = 564) = 15.76, p = .046$ . Honors-only students responses were significantly lower than mixed-level regular and mixed-level honors students with respect to "boring"  $\chi^2(8, N = 564) = 30.40, p < .000$ .

**Objective 4: Are we providing the same learning experience for students whether enrolled for regular or honors credit?**

The new Freshman Humanities course provides the same honors level curriculum to the mixed-level classes and the honors-only classes. A review of the curricula for the Freshman Humanities program in the first year evaluation report substantiated this focus.

For the 2008-09 survey, students were asked to rate the amount of work assigned in their course. Results from this question were difficult to interpret. The question was reworked for the 2009-10 survey. Students were asked to assess how much time they spend on various activities as shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Amount of Work

			No time at all	Very little time	Some amount of time	A lot of time
<b>How much time do you spend outside of class on the following activities for your English class?</b>						
Doing homework						
Mixed-level (n=375)	2009-10		2%	15%	63%	19%
Honors-only (n=189)	2009-10		1%	21%	64%	15%
Studying for tests						
Mixed-level (n=374)	2009-10		13%	44%	36%	8%
Honors-only (n=189)	2009-10		18%	42%	33%	7%
Completing projects/essays						
Mixed-level (n=375)	2009-10		0%	9%	41%	50%
Honors-only (n=189)	2009-10		0%	4%	40%	56%
Completing assigned readings						
Mixed-level (n=375)	2009-10		3%	20%	56%	21%
Honors-only (n=189)	2009-10		1%	20%	59%	20%
Studying for a semester exam						
Mixed-level (n=375)	2009-10		8%	18%	37%	37%
Honors-only (n=188)	2009-10		5%	28%	36%	31%
<b>How much time do you spend outside of class on the following activities for your History class?</b>						
Doing homework						
Mixed-level (n=372)	2009-10		4%	24%	55%	17%
Honors-only (n=190)	2009-10		3%	27%	55%	15%
Studying for tests						
Mixed-level (n=372)	2009-10		14%	40%	36%	10%
Honors-only (n=190)	2009-10		16%	38%	37%	10%
Completing projects/essays						
Mixed-level (n=371)	2009-10		1%	13%	45%	42%
Honors-only (n=187)	2009-10		2%	7%	53%	39%
Completing assigned readings						
Mixed-level (n=372)	2009-10		7%	28%	50%	15%
Honors-only (n=190)	2009-10		6%	33%	51%	11%
Studying for a semester exam						
Mixed-level (n=372)	2009-10		9%	19%	36%	36%
Honors-only (n=190)	2009-10		6%	22%	38%	34%

For 2009-10:

- Overall, 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. On a scale from “no time at all,” “very little time,” “some amount of time,” and “a lot of time,” students most often chose “some amount of time” for all the items except “studying for tests.” For this item, they most often selected “very little time.”

**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 may recommend level changes. English and History teachers reported that between 12 and 16 (6% to 8 %) students requested a change from mixed-level regular to mixed-level honors. All in all, including student and teacher requests, English teachers reported that they recommended 23 students (12%) move from mixed-level regular to mixed-level honors credit. History teachers reported that they recommended 14 students (7%) move from mixed-level regular to mixed-level honors credit. Since no teacher change is necessary, these changes are easily accomplished. Ten or fewer students requested a move from honors credit to regular credit in mixed-level classes.

**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,

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

For the 2008-09 survey, students were asked the 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.” 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.

Table 9. Rigor

Student Survey	1-Strongly Disagree	2	3	4	5- Strongly Agree	Avg.
My Humanities classes challenge me to do my best work.						
Mixed-level (n=370)	3%	11%	32%	35%	20%	3.57
Honors-only (n=189)	3%	13%	22%	37%	25%	3.68
The books and other materials in my Humanities classes are interesting to me.						
Mixed-level (n=370)	11%	20%	35%	23%	11%	3.02
Honors-only (n=189)	3%	15%	31%	35%	16%	3.48
The work in my Humanities classes makes me think deeply about the content.						
Mixed-level (n=370)	8%	22%	34%	25%	12%	3.11
Honors-only (n=189)	5%	16%	34%	33%	13%	3.33
My Humanities classes have taught me to better analyze readings and ideas.						
Mixed-level (n=370)	4%	15%	26%	31%	24%	3.56
Honors-only (n=189)	5%	10%	20%	42%	24%	3.69

For 2009-10:

- Ratings were comparable for the mixed-level and honors-only students for all but one item. Significant differences were found using a chi-square test of significance between honors-only and mixed-level classes for the item relating to the interest level for books and other materials. Honors-only students found the books/materials to be more interesting,  $\chi^2(8, N = 563) = 25.63, p = .001$ . In general, 80% or more of both mixed-level and honors-only students gave a rating of “3” or higher to being challenged to do their best work, and learning to better analyze readings and ideas. Fifty-five percent or more selected a “4” or “5” to these items.

### Objective 7: Are we increasing the level of student achievement?

Several sources of data were used to provide information on student achievement in the Humanities course including grades, results from the common semester exam, EXPLORE to PLAN test analyses, and selected student survey items.

#### Grades

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

- With the new curriculum in 2008-09, students in the regular-level classes are now taught the same curriculum that students in the honors level classes receive. This adds to the rigor of the course.
- Since 2008-09, the Freshman Humanities classes now have a common assessment and semester exam, which is reflected in the semester grade.
- In addition, there are now common grading scales for Humanities classes.
- The number of students in the mixed-level classes has more than 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 2 (regular level) or Level 1.

Tables 10 and 11 show first semester grades for the two most 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 (Old Hum. Program)		2007-08 (Old Hum Program)		2008-09 (New Hum. Program)		2009-10 (New Hum. Program)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<b>Mixed-level Regular (EN4012/EN0002)</b>								
A/B	62	47%	60	45%	32	27%	50	40%
C	45	34%	38	28%	41	34%	45	36%
D/F/NC	25	19%	36	27%	47	40%	30	24%
Total	132		134		120		125	
<b>Mixed-Level Honors (EN4013)</b>								
A/B	81	88%	72	85%	125	76%	150	86%
C	7	8%	9	11%	22	13%	16	9%
D/F/NC	4	4%	4	5%	17	11%	8	5%

Table 11. Semester Grades – History

	2006-07		2007-08		2008-09		2009-10	
	(Old Hum. Program)		(Old Hum Program)		(New Hum. Program)		(New Hum. Program)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<b>Mixed-level Regular (HS4012/HS5002)</b>								
A/B	59	44%	64	48%	43	35%	49	40%
C	43	32%	47	35%	37	30%	46	37%
D/F/NC	31	23%	22	17%	44	35%	29	23%
Total	133		133		124		124	
<b>Mixed-Level Honors (HS4013)</b>								
A/B	78	86%	72	87%	118	72%	142	82%
C	11	12%	9	11%	34	21%	25	15%
D/F/NC	2	2%	2	2%	12	7%	6	3%
Total	91		83		164		173	

- The data for the 2009-10 cohort are very encouraging compared to last year’s 2008-09 cohort grade data. In 2008-09, the baseline year of the new curriculum, there were fewer A/B grades and more D/F grades both in History and English than in prior years before the revised Humanities program. It was suggested that this decline was in part due to the implementation of a new program. For semester 1 of 2009-10, the percentages of A/B grades increased both for English and History and are back to the levels prior to implementing the revised mixed-level curriculum. Similarly, the percentage of D/F/NC grades is lower than 2008-09 and more like the 2006-07 and 2007-08 levels.

**Common Exam**

The 2009-10 school year was the second 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 review items 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 81.5% compared to 75% in 2008-09. The overall average score for the multiple-choice portion of the History common exam was 71.5% compared to 70% in 2008-09.

**EXPLORE to PLAN Analysis of Gains**

One of the long-term objectives of the 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 two report, we now have EXPLORE and PLAN scores for the first 2008-09 cohort experiencing the new mixed-level Humanities program. We compared the gain for this cohort with prior cohorts identified as comparable to 2008-09 in terms of initial test scores but were taught under the old mixed-level Humanities program. We further disaggregated cohort data by the following placement groups:

- Qualified to place into mixed-level regular Humanities based on meeting EXPLORE reading placement criteria (EXPLORE percentiles 40-69)
- Qualified to place into mixed-level honors Humanities based on meeting EXPLORE reading placement criteria (EXPLORE percentiles 70-94)

- Placed up into mixed-level honors Humanities from mixed-level regular Humanities
- Placed down into mixed-level regular Humanities from mixed-level honors Humanities

Students who are “qualified” are those that meet the EXPLORE reading placement criteria for either mixed-level honors or mixed-level regular and are placed within these levels. One of the advantages of the mixed-level Humanities course is the fluidity between the levels. Students can place themselves up into mixed-level honors or place themselves down from mixed-level honors into mixed-level regular Humanities. Teachers can recommend level changes as well. Table 12 shows the average scale score for the EXPLORE and PLAN tests and the gains for these placement/cohort groups.

Table 12. Mixed-level Students’ Gain Between Grade 8 (EXPLORE) and Grade 10 (PLAN) Reading Achievement by Placement Group

<i>Placement Group</i>	<i>Grade 8 Avg. Scale Score</i>	<i>Grade 10 Avg. Scale Score</i>	<i>Gain</i>
<b>Qualified to place into Mixed Regular Level</b>			
2006-2007 (N=115)	13.2	15.1	<b>1.9</b>
2007-2008 (N=115)	13.0	15.8	<b>2.8</b>
2008-2009 (N=114)	13.1	14.9	<b>1.8</b>
<b>Qualified to place into Mixed Honors Level</b>			
2006-2007 (N=88)	17.1	20.8	<b>3.7</b>
2007-2008 (N=80)	17.2	20.4	<b>3.2</b>
2008-2009 (N=161)	17.0	20.0	<b>3.0</b>
<b>Placed up into Mixed Honors Level</b>			
2006-2007 (N=14)	13.4	18.4	<b>5.0</b>
2007-2008 (N=20)	13.5	16.5	<b>3.0</b>
2008-2009 (N=42)	13.4	17.9	<b>4.5</b>
<b>Placed down into Mixed Regular Level</b>			
2006-2007 (N=76)	16.0	18.4	<b>2.4</b>
2007-2008 (N=72)	16.0	18.2	<b>2.2</b>
2008-2009 (N=26)	16.5	17.4	<b>0.9</b>

In general, 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 down 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 students the gain between the EXPLORE test (pretest) and PLAN test (posttest) in reading performance was statistically significant. (See Table 13 below). There were no significant interactions between the reading scores and cohort groups.



Table 13. Statistics for Repeated Measures Analysis of Variance

Placement Group	MS	df	F	p
Qualified to place into Mixed Regular	841.03	1	168.24	<.001
Qualified to place into Mixed Honors	1634.00	1	313.52	<.001
Placed up into Mixed-level Honors	537.90	1	75.48	<.001
Placed down into Mixed-level Regular	228.84	1	43.44	<.001

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 new revised Humanities program or the former Humanities program. 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.

The 2008-09 cohort included the first mixed-level group at the regular level to be exposed to the new curriculum. With upcoming cohorts, one might anticipate greater gains for the mixed-level regular students now experiencing an honors curriculum. Even though these students did not show greater gains on EXPLORE to PLAN than prior cohorts, more students from the 2008-09 cohort took honors courses as sophomores than the 2006-07 and 2007-08 cohorts. Therefore, there may be greater gains from EXPLORE to ACT when these analyses are conducted after their junior year.

An additional analysis was conducted between students in the Freshman Humanities honors-only classes (EN0003) with EXPLORE reading scores in the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or greater and students in the Freshman Humanities mixed-level honors classes (EN4013) with EXPLORE reading scores between the 85<sup>th</sup> and 94<sup>th</sup> percentiles. These students reflect the top end of the mixed-level honors group.

Students in the mixed-level honors classes showed greater gains than the honors-only students in reading achievement between the EXPLORE and PLAN assessments, although slightly lower than the average gains made by the entire group of correctly placed mixed-level honors students. (See Table 14 below). Based on a conversation with ACT we found that it is not unusual for students whose scores are at the high end of a scale to show only a small amount of growth between assessments. All assessments have a ceiling effect. Some students at the high end do see their scores increase a little, but for the most part scores stay the around the same or drop a little. This is partly due to a statistical artifact called “regression to the mean” where there is a tendency of scores to gravitate towards a center of distribution, or the mean of scores.

Table 14. Special Analysis: Honors and Mixed- Level Honors Students Gain Between Grade 8 (EXPLORE) and Grade 10 (PLAN) Reading Achievement

Placement Group	Grade 8 Av. Scale Score	Grade 10 Avg. Scale Score	Gain
<b>Mixed Honors Level, EXPLORE 85-94<sup>th</sup></b>			
2006-2007 (N=30)	18.8	22.2	<b>3.4</b>
2007-2008 (N=56)	17.9	20.6	<b>2.7</b>
2008-2009 (N=104)	17.8	20.5	<b>2.7</b>
<b>Honors, EXPLORE 95<sup>th</sup> &amp; above</b>			
2006-2007 (N=111)	23.0	24.4	<b>1.4</b>
2007-2008 (N=84)	23.0	24.3	<b>1.3</b>
2008-2009 (N=122)	22.9	24.8	<b>1.9</b>

**Objective 8: Are we encouraging and explicitly teaching students how to become successful in English and History classes?**

Several student and faculty survey items focused on motivation, preparedness, and helpful strategies for students including effective effort. The items on strategies were reworked from the 2008-09 student survey and therefore, the 2008-09 results are not reported in the table below. Table 15 summarizes results for the revised items.

Table 15. Motivation, Effective Effort, and Strategies

<b>Student Survey</b>	<b>1- Not at all</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4 - A great deal</b>	<b>Avg.</b>	
<b>To what extent have the Humanities classes helped you improve in the following areas:</b>						
<b>Effective effort</b>						
Mixed-level (n=374) 2009-10	7%	27%	47%	19%	2.77	
Honors-only (n=190) 2009-10	12%	30%	42%	16%	2.62	
<b>Being responsible for your learning</b>						
Mixed-level (n=375) 2009-10	4%	20%	45%	31%	3.03	
Honors-only (n=190) 2009-10	6%	24%	47%	23%	2.87	
<b>Working in groups</b>						
Mixed-level (n=375) 2009-10	5%	20%	44%	32%	3.02	
Honors-only (n=190) 2009-10	8%	20%	46%	26%	2.89	
<b>Organization</b>						
Mixed-level (n=372) 2009-10	15%	27%	36%	23%	2.67	
Honors-only (n=189) 2009-10	15%	35%	33%	17%	2.51	
<b>Reading</b>						
Mixed-level (n=373) 2009-10	7%	21%	46%	27%	2.93	
Honors-only (n=190) 2009-10	14%	27%	40%	20%	2.65	
<b>Writing</b>						
Mixed-level (n=373) 2009-10	4%	15%	43%	37%	3.14	
Honors-only (n=189) 2009-10	6%	17%	41%	37%	3.08	
<b>Research</b>						
Mixed-level (n=373) 2009-10	6%	17%	41%	36%	3.07	
Honors-only (n=189) 2009-10	8%	27%	41%	27%	2.88	
<b>I am motivated to do well in my...</b>						
	<b>1 - Strongly disagree</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5 - Strongly agree</b>	<b>Avg.</b>
<b>English class</b>						
Mixed-level (n=423) 2008-09	3%	5%	16%	27%	49%	4.2
(n=376) 2009-10	2%	6%	15%	34%	43%	4.1
Honors-only (n=171) 2008-09	1%	5%	10%	37%	47%	4.2
(n=190) 2009-10	2%	2%	8%	27%	61%	4.4
<b>History class</b>						
Mixed-level (n=423) 2008-09	3%	5%	16%	29%	47%	4.1
(n=375) 2009-10	3%	5%	18%	36%	38%	4.0
Honors-only (n=171) 2008-09	2%	4%	15%	30%	49%	4.2
(n=189) 2009-10	3%	5%	12%	34%	47%	4.2
<b>Encouraging and Explicitly Teaching Students</b>						
<b>How would you rate the effort you put forth in this class?</b>						
	<b>None at all</b>	<b>Not too much</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>Very much</b>	<b>A great deal</b>	
<b>English class</b>						
Mixed-level (n=420) 2008-09	0%	7%	31%	41%	21%	
(n=375) 2009-10	2%	8%	31%	38%	21%	
Honors-only (n=168) 2008-09	1%	2%	25%	50%	22%	
(n=186) 2009-10	0%	4%	22%	48%	25%	
<b>History class</b>						
Mixed-level (n=420) 2008-09	1%	7%	32%	41%	20%	
(n=375) 2009-10	2%	9%	34%	41%	13%	
Honors-only (n=169) 2008-09	0%	3%	34%	45%	18%	
(n=187) 2009-10	4%	8%	35%	37%	16%	

Table 15. Motivation, Effective Effort, and Strategies cont'd

<b>Faculty Survey</b>						
	<b>Not at all motivated</b>	<b>Not too motivated</b>	<b>Somewhat motivated</b>	<b>Very motivated</b>	<b>Extremely motivated</b>	
<b>How motivated are your...</b>						
Mixed-level regular students (n=17) 2008-09	0%	24%	71%	6%	0%	
(n=21) 2009-10	0%	5%	62%	33%	0%	
Mixed-level honors students (n=17) 2008-09	0%	6%	24%	71%	0%	
(n=21) 2009-10	0%	5%	29%	62%	5%	
Honors-only students (n=11) 2008-09	0%	0%	0%	46%	54%	
(n=14) 2009-10	0%	0%	14%	50%	36%	
<b>How would you describe the effort put forth by your...</b>	<b>None at all</b>	<b>Not too much</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>Very much</b>	<b>A great deal</b>	
Mixed-level regular students (n=16) 2008-09	0%	19%	44%	31%	6%	
(n=21) 2009-10	0%	10%	52%	33%	5%	
Mixed-level honors students (n=16) 2008-09	0%	0%	19%	62%	19%	
(n=21) 2009-10	0%	0%	29%	67%	5%	
Honors-only students (n=10) 2008-09	0%	0%	0%	30%	70%	
(n=14) 2009-10	0%	0%	23%	54%	23%	
<b>How would you describe how prepared your students are?</b>	<b>Never prepared</b>	<b>Rarely prepared</b>	<b>Somewhat prepared</b>	<b>Usually prepared</b>	<b>Always prepared</b>	
Mixed-level regular students (n=16) 2008-09	0%	30%	59%	12%	0%	
(n=21) 2009-10	0%	5%	81%	14%	0%	
Mixed-level honors students (n=16) 2008-09	0%	0%	59%	41%	0%	
(n=21) 2009-10	0%	0%	19%	71%	10%	
Honors-only students (n=10) 2008-09	0%	0%	9%	36%	55%	
(n=14) 2009-10	0%	0%	0%	64%	36%	

For 2009-10:

- Students were asked to rate the extent to which they improved in seven areas using a 4-point scale ranging from “not at all” to “a great deal.” For all seven areas, more students in mixed-level Humanities gave a rating of “3” or “4” compared to honors-only students. Furthermore, there were significant differences for two items, reading and research,  $\chi^2(6, N = 563) = 16.31, p = .012$  and  $\chi^2(6, N = 562) = 12.49, p = .052$ , respectively. More mixed-level regular students reported improving in reading and research (81%) than mixed-level honors students (69% and 75%, respectively) and in turn, more mixed-level honors students reported improving compared to honors-only students (60% and 68%, respectively).
- When 2009-10 students were asked to rate their motivation to do well on a scale where 1 represented “strongly disagree” and 5 represented “strongly agree,” students in honors-only Humanities English classes gave significantly higher ratings than students in mixed-level classes,  $\chi^2(8, N = 566) = 29.87, p < .000$ . There were no significant differences between students in honors-only and mixed-level classes for History.
- When faculty members were asked to rate student motivation on a 5-point scale where 1 represented “not at all motivated” and 5 represented “extremely motivated,” the percentages fell along a continuum. Sixty-two percent described students in mixed-level regular classes as “somewhat motivated,” 62% described students in mixed-level honors classes as “very motivated,” 50% described students in honors-only classes as “very motivated,” and the remaining 36% described them as “extremely motivated.” Responses were different for English teachers compared to History teachers. Eighty percent of English teachers indicated that students in mixed-level honors classes were “very motivated” or “extremely motivated” while only 55% of History teachers reported students in mixed-level honors classes as “very motivated” or “extremely motivated.” Compared to 2008-09, English teachers’ responses have changed. In 2008-09, teachers perceived a difference in motivation between students in mixed-level honors classes and honors-only classes. English teachers no longer perceive a difference in motivation

between these two groups. However, History teachers continue to perceive a difference in motivation between students in mixed-level honors and honors-only classes.

- In 2009-10, students and faculty were again asked to respond to an item about effort. The response pattern was similar to 2008-09 with about 60% or more of students in mixed-level classes responding “very much” or “a great deal” and about 90% or more of honors-only students responding “somewhat,” “very much” or “a great deal.” There were significant differences among groups. In English, there were higher ratings for effort among students in honors-only classes than for students in mixed-level honors classes which in turn, were higher than students in the mixed-level regular classes,  $\chi^2(10, N = 567) = 22.38, p < .013$ . However, for History, significant differences favored students in mixed-level honors classes over students in honors-only and mixed-level-regular classes,  $\chi^2(10, N = 567) = 19.20, p < .038$ . Teachers’ responses, on the other hand, followed a pattern where the amount of effort as represented by “very much” or “a great deal” increased from students in mixed-level regular classes (38%) to mixed-level honors classes (72%) to honors-only classes (87%). A similar pattern was also evident for the faculty survey item relating to student preparedness.

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

During the 2009-10 year, teachers participated in 17 days of workshops on differentiated instruction with Jessica Hockett, a consultant on this topic. The literature on professional development indicates that implementing a new teaching practice takes time and embedded support. Teachers were asked about their professional development experience on the faculty survey. New questions were developed for the 2009-10 survey to better understand teacher views on professional development since the responses from the 2008-09 survey were difficult to interpret. Table 16 shows faculty responses to these new questions.

- For both English and History teachers, 80% or more indicated that they implemented ideas they learned in professional development activities “sometimes,” “often,” or “all the time.” More History teachers indicated “often” compared to English teachers. On a 5-point scale where 1 represented “not at all” and 5 represented “to a great extent,” 50% or more of English and History teachers gave a rating of “3,” “4,” or “5” when asked if lesson study, small group workshops, and peer observations changed their classroom practices. About 50 to 60 percent of English teachers indicated that lesson study and observation/feedback by consultant had little impact on changing their classroom practices; this pattern did not occur for History teachers. Overall, teachers responded that they are better able to decide when to differentiate instruction; about 64 to 70 percent chose a rating of 4 or 5 for this item on a scale of 1 representing “strongly disagree” and 5 representing “strongly agree.”

Table 16. Professional Development

<b>Faculty Survey</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Often</b>	<b>All the time</b>	
<b>When creating your lessons, how often did you implement ideas that you learned in professional development activities this year?</b>						
English (n=10)	0%	20%	60%	20%	0%	
History (n=11)	0%	9%	27%	55%	9%	
	<b>1 - Not at all</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5 - To a great extent</b>	
<b>To what extent have the following professional development components changed your classroom practices?</b>						
Lesson study						
English (n=10)	10%	40%	20%	10%	20%	
History (n=11)	0%	18%	27%	36%	18%	
Small group workshops						
English (n=10)	0%	30%	20%	40%	10%	
History (n=11)	9%	9%	36%	36%	9%	
Peer observations						
English (n=10)	10%	30%	30%	20%	10%	
History (n=11)	27%	9%	36%	18%	9%	
Observation and feedback by consultant						
English (n=10)	30%	30%	10%	20%	10%	
History (n=11)	20%	0%	50%	20%	10%	
	<b>1 - Strongly disagree</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5 - Strongly agree</b>	<b>Avg.</b>
<b>I am better able to decide when to differentiate instruction.</b>						
English (n=10)	0%	0%	30%	50%	20%	3.9
History (n=11)	0%	18%	18%	55%	9%	3.6

Teachers' open-ended responses for these items reflected the following types of comments:

In response to "When creating your lessons, how often did you implement ideas that you learned in professional development activities this year?"

- "While I used differentiation more this year than last, the implementation was mostly the information from last year. This year's PD was not as helpful."
- "It would be more helpful if we could find a differentiation consultant who has solid experience in teaching and planning at the secondary level. We also participated in far too many lesson studies."
- "I have used the activators, summarizers, and other clarifying strategies I learned in **Studying Skillful Teaching**, and I have implemented several lessons and strategies I observed (and participated in creating) during time with the consultant."

In response to "How do you differentiate instruction in your classes?"

- "By varying the content we focus on, the various products that students are asked to make, and the processes by which they can learn information."
- "I group and re-group often based on interest, readiness and learning style. I put a lot more thought into how I am varying the tasks to accommodate everyone in the class."

- “Reading materials, groupings, products; using techniques such as the huddle, tiered questions, and structured academic controversy.”

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

With the implementation of the new mixed-level Humanities program, several support structures were modified to help assist students. These supports include the Freshman Reading class, Project EXCEL, AVID, and STAE. In particular, these supports focused on the pre-teaching of key concepts, explicit teaching of strategies, lessons on effective effort, and other skills (time management) needed to be successful in school. Table 17 shows these results.

Table 17. Support Structures

<i>Student Survey</i>	Not at all	Not too much	Somewhat	Very much	A great deal	Don't Know
<b>How much does your reading class help you do well in your Humanities class?</b>						
Mixed-level (n=18) 2009-10	6%	6%	22%	50%	11%	6%
Honors-only (n=n/a) 2009-10	Not Applicable					
<b>How much does AVID help you do well in your Humanities class?</b>						
Mixed-level (n=116) 2009-10	41%	17%	29%	6%	6%	
Honors-only (n=2) 2009-10	50%	0%	50%	0%	0%	
<b>How much does STAE help you do well in your Humanities class?</b>						
Mixed-level (n=110) 2009-10	42%	18%	21%	16%	3%	
Honors-only (n=34) 2009-10	44%	18%	21%	12%	6%	
<b>How much does EXCEL help you do well in your Humanities class?</b>						
Mixed-level (n=6) 2009-10	66%	17%	0%	0%	17%	0%
Honors-only (n=n/a) 2009-10	Not Applicable					
	I never came in for extra help.	I only came in when I needed 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.	
<i>Student Survey</i>						
<b>How often did you see your Humanities teachers outside of class for extra help?</b>						
Mixed-level (n=377) 2009-10	16%	52%	23%	7%	2%	
Honors-only (n=187) 2009-10	17%	70%	9%	4%	0%	

- When students assigned to reading classes were asked how much their reading class helps them do well in their Humanities class, 82% responded “somewhat,” “very much,” or “a great deal.”
- When AVID students were asked how much AVID helps them do well in their Humanities class, about 41-50% of students in mixed-level and honors-only classes indicated “somewhat,” “very much,” or “a great deal.”
- When STAE students were asked how much STAE helps them do well in their Humanities class, about 39% of students in mixed-level and honors-only classes indicated “somewhat,” “very much,” or “a great deal.”
- Responses for students in Project EXCEL were different. For the six students who identified themselves as EXCEL students, 83% of them responded “not at all” or “not too much” in response to an item asking them how much EXCEL helped them do well in their Humanities class.
- More students in mixed-level regular classes came in for extra help (43%) than students in mixed-level honors classes (24%), and in turn, more of mixed-level honors students came in for extra

help compared to students in honors-only classes (13%). These differences were statistically significant  $\chi^2(10, N = 567) = 56.0, p < .000$ .

### How satisfied are students and faculty with the mixed-level Humanities course?

Students and faculty were also asked to rate the Humanities course with respect to satisfaction/effectiveness. Table 18 shows these results.

Table 18. Satisfaction

<b>Student Survey</b>	<b>1 - Very dissatisfied</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5 - Very Satisfied</b>	<b>Avg.</b>
<b>Rate your satisfaction with this course.</b>						
Mixed-level (n=409) 2008-09	8%	13%	34%	29%	16%	3.3
(n=368) 2009-10	3%	12%	30%	42%	13%	3.5
Honors-only (n=164) 2008-09	2%	11%	26%	51%	10%	3.5
(n=190) 2009-10	2%	8%	27%	39%	25%	3.8
<b>Faculty Survey</b>	<b>Not at all effective</b>	<b>Not too effective</b>	<b>Somewhat effective</b>	<b>Very Effective</b>	<b>Extremely effective</b>	
<b>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</b>	0%	6%	72%	22%	0%	
<b>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</b>	5%	14%	48%	33%	0%	
English (n=10)	0%	0%	60%	40%	0%	
History (n=11)	9%	27%	36%	27%	0%	

#### Students

- Overall, ratings of satisfaction were higher for students in both mixed-level and honors-only classes for 2009-10 compared to 2008-09. On a five-point scale where 1 represented “very dissatisfied” and 5 represented “very satisfied,” mixed-level students’ average rating was 3.5 and honors-only students’ rating was 3.8. A chi-square test applied to the percentages found significant differences in favor of students in the honors-only classes  $\chi^2(8, N = 558) = 18.16, p = .020$ . It should be noted that for both honors-only students and mixed-level students, 85 % or more of these students selected a rating of 3, 4 or 5.
- When asked an open-ended question about the strengths of the mixed-level classes, the following themes and comments were typical responses:

#### Connection between English and History class and teachers working together as a team

- “All of the materials we learn are somewhat combined to what we are learning in each class. For example, when we read *Romeo & Juliet* in English, we also were learning about the era and times in history, which helped me connect to both homework assignments.”
- “The teachers are very in touch with the students. They teach in a way that is easy to learn and easy to understand. I like how the two classes are often focusing on the same era’s (sic), it gives a different perspective of the same time period.”

### **Participation in class discussions and different points of view**

- *“I found that the discussions in English allowed me to read the books in greater depth than I would have otherwise. In History, I thought the variety of perspectives allowed for better understanding.”*
- *“There are a lot of different views and opinions from people and it brings up very interesting discussions that make me think about a lot of things that are happening around the world and to me.”*

### **Group work in class**

- *“The strengths are working in groups and how in-depth we talk about specific topics.”*
- *“The strengths of the humanities classes would have to be working in groups, doing group work and projects helps me understand the topic a whole lot better.”*

- When asked what changes students would make to the mixed-level Humanities classes, the following comments were typical responses:

### **Change the literature**

- *“Change the literature we read.”*
- *“I would change some of the literature we read because some of it is boring and not many people take something away with them after they have read it.”*

### **More interesting topics/activities**

- *“I think that we should do more interesting things and we need more time in our history class. The things we do in our history class aren't as interesting as the things we do in our English class. Most of the time in our history class we watch informational movies and fill out movie sheets. We also need more time in that class because sometimes we'll be in the middle of doing something and the bell will ring.”*
- *“I think the history class could go in more depth and be slightly more challenging. I felt like all we really did was worksheets, and I did not need to study for many/any of the tests because the material was really simple and sometimes boring.”*

### **Better connection between English and history classes**

- *“I would change the fact that the classes are not so connected and make it where they have a better connection between the two classes.”*
- *“I would make more of a connection between the English and history classes.”*

### **More class discussions**

- *“Have more class discussions.”*
- *“I would have more discussions and more interesting/motivating projects.”*

### **Time for projects**

- *“The time for projects should be extended.”*
- *“They both give big projects due at the same time.”*
- *“We don't spend enough time preparing for essays so I always feel really rushed and like I could have done better.”*



## More group work

- *“I would allow the class to work in groups more often.”*

## Faculty

- The majority (81%) of faculty felt that the mixed-level model is “somewhat effective” or “very effective” (scale ranges from “not at all effective” to “extremely effective”) for meeting students’ needs. More English teachers responded in this way than History teachers. Faculty members were asked to provide more detail in an open-ended question asking them to explain their responses. Representative comments were as follows:
  - Four faculty members who responded with “not too effective” or “somewhat effective” suggested that “the straight honors class needs to be collapsed into the mixed-level class for the model to really work.”
  - Three faculty members who responded “not too effective” or “somewhat effective” indicated that “some students benefit from being in a mixed-level class” but “straight honors students could be challenged more.”
  - Six faculty members who responded “very effective” indicated “students’ instructional needs were met by the material provided and lessons provided.”
    - *“Placing students in a more diverse atmosphere as it pertains to ability/skill/placement aids in not only exposure but in gain/improvement. Students contribute to the growth of one another.”*
- When asked about the strengths of the mixed-level classes, the following comments were typical responses:

## Mixed-level structure

- *“I believe the mixed-level course does help to bring up the caliber and quality of work done by lower level students. I have found that my mixed-level class discussions have more depth and students are better able to use abstract thinking skills in discussion. My all honors students are so preoccupied with getting the right answer and impressing their peers that they are reluctant to engage in thought-forming discussion.”*
- *“Dismantling the straight 2 level was a good thing. The 2 level students in the mixed classes are being challenged more and the behavior is better.”*
- A few teachers commented that the pacing is too slow for students in the honors-only and mixed-level honors classes with the new model.

## Diversity

- *“The ability to expose students to diverse perspectives.”*
- When asked about how the mixed-level classes could be improved, the following were typical responses:

## Eliminate the honors-only class

- *“Remove the ‘straight-honors track and make all classes mixed level.”*
- *“Blend the straight honors with the 2-H class.”*
- *“It can be improved by having a stronger ratio of honors to regular students. I have found that when the ratio is 60% honors to 40% regular, the regular level students*

*benefit more. If it is closer to 50-50 I haven't noticed appreciable gains by regular level students."*

### **Curriculum**

- *"The curriculum is contrived and has many gaps. Students do not see themselves in it nearly often enough."*
- *"Broadening of world studies with emphasis on world."*

## **Year Two Findings**

Overall, the data indicate encouraging results for the second year of the new mixed-level Freshman Humanities course. The demographic data indicate the program is making progress in meeting the objectives with respect to increasing numbers and diversity of students in honors classes, and students and faculty generally provided positive feedback with suggestions for improving the course as implementation continues into the third year.

### **Objective 1: Preparing Students for Honors Classes**

- The percentage of students in mixed-level Freshman Humanities taking the course for honors credit in 2009-10 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 cohort took honors English and History classes as sophomores compared to prior cohorts.

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

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

### **Objective 3: Increasing Diversity of Student Views in Freshman Humanities**

- 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 2009-10 than 2008-09 (70% vs. 53%). Responses were significantly higher for students in mixed-level classes than honors-only classes.
- Comparable percentages 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 contributing more than mixed-level honors and in turn, 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.
- In English, the percentages for honors-only students are significantly higher than mixed-level students with respect to “interesting,” “make me think,” and “provide different points of view.” Honors-only and mixed-level honors students’ responses were significantly higher than mixed-level regular students with respect to “add to my knowledge of the topic.” For History, responses were similar for mixed-level and honors students.

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

- The same honors-level curriculum is being provided to mixed-level regular, mixed-level honors, and honors-only Freshman Humanities classes. Overall, 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**

- All in all, including student and teacher requests, English teachers reported that they recommended 23 students (12%) move from mixed-level regular to mixed-level honors credit. History teachers reported that they recommended 14 students (7%) move from mixed-level regular to mixed-level honors credit. Teachers reported that ten or fewer 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**

- In the 2009-10 survey, questions were revised for this objective. Four questions were developed to assess rigor using a 5-point scale where 1 represented “strongly disagree” and 5 represented “strongly agree:”
  - My Humanities classes challenge me to do my best work.
  - The work in my Humanities classes makes me think deeply about the content.
  - My Humanities classes have taught me to better analyze readings and ideas.
  - The books and other materials in my Humanities classes are interesting to me.
- There were no significant differences between honors-only and mixed-level responses for the first three items relating to rigor. Comparable percentages of mixed-level and honors students found the class to challenge them to do their best work, make them think deeply about the content, and taught them to better analyze readings and ideas. Significant differences were found using a chi-square test of significance between honors-only and mixed-level classes for the item relating to the interest level for books and other materials. Honors-only students found the books/materials to be more interesting.

### **Objective 7: Increasing Student Achievement**

- **Grades:** For semester 1 of 2009-10, the percentages of A/B grades increased from 2008-09 and are back to the levels prior to implementing the revised mixed-level curriculum. Similarly, the percentage of D/F/NC grades is lower than 2008-09 and more like the 2006-07 and 2007-08 levels.
- **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 two report, we analyzed EXPLORE to PLAN score gains for the first 2008-09 cohort experiencing the new 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.
- Overall, students made gains from EXPLORE to PLAN. In general, 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 down 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 students gain between the EXPLORE test (pretest) and PLAN test (posttest) in reading performance was statistically significant.

- 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 new revised Humanities program or the former Humanities program. 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.
- The 2008-09 cohort included the first mixed-level group at the regular level to be exposed to the new curriculum. With upcoming cohorts, one might anticipate greater gains for the mixed-level regular students now experiencing an honors curriculum. Even though these students did not show greater gains on EXPLORE to PLAN than prior cohorts, more 2008-09 students took honors courses as sophomores than the 2006-07 and 2007-08 cohorts. Therefore, there may be greater gains from PLAN to ACT when these analyses are conducted after their junior year.
- An additional analysis was conducted between students in the Freshman Humanities honors-only classes (EN0003) with EXPLORE reading scores in the 95th percentile or greater and students in the Freshman Humanities mixed-level honors classes (EN4013) who have EXPLORE reading scores between the 85th and 94th percentiles. These students reflect the top end of the mixed-level honors group.
- Students in the high-end mixed-level honors group showed greater gains than the honors-only students in reading achievement between the EXPLORE and PLAN assessments, although slightly lower than the average gains made by the entire group of correctly placed mixed-level honors students. Based on a conversation with ACT, we found that it is not unusual for students whose scores are at the high end of a scale to show only small amounts of growth between assessments. All assessments have a ceiling effect. Some students at the high end do see their scores increase a little, but for the most part scores stay the around the same or drop a little. This is partly due to a statistical artifact called “regression to the mean” where there is a tendency of scores to gravitate towards a center of distribution, or the mean of scores.

#### **Objective 8: Encouraging and Explicitly Teaching Students to Become Successful**

- Both students in mixed-level and honors-only Humanities classes rated themselves high on motivation. Students in honors-only Humanities English classes gave significantly higher ratings than students in mixed-level classes. There were no significant differences between students in honors-only and mixed-level classes for History.
- However, faculty responses were lower for mixed-level regular, higher for mixed-level honors and even higher for honors-only students. Responses were different for English teachers compared to History teachers. About 80 % of English teachers indicated that both mixed-level honors and honors-only students were “very motivated” or “extremely motivated.” In contrast, about 55 % of History teachers rated mixed-level students as “very” or “extremely motivated”; 86% of History teachers rated honors-only students as “very” or “extremely motivated.” There were also differences between teachers and students with respect to effort and preparedness.
- Students were also asked to rate the extent to which they improved in seven areas (effective effort, being responsible for your learning, working in groups, organization, reading, writing, and research). For two areas, reading and research, there were significant differences between honors-only, mixed-level honors and mixed-level regular students. More mixed-level regular students felt their Humanities classes helped them improve in reading and research than students in mixed-

level honors. Also, more students in mixed-level honors classes reported improving in reading and research than honors-only Freshman Humanities students.

### **Objective 9: Increasing Differentiated Instruction**

- Eighty percent or more of teachers indicated that they implemented ideas they learned in professional development activities “sometimes,” “often,” or “all the time.” More History teachers indicated “often” compared to English teachers. Fifty percent or more of both English and History teachers indicated that lesson study, small group workshops, peer observations and observation/feedback by consultant changed their classroom practices “sometimes,” “often,” or “all the time.” Overall, teachers responded that they are better able to decide when to differentiate instruction.

### **Objective 10: Increasing Support Structures**

- Programs such as STAE, Project EXCEL, AVID, and Freshman Reading were modified in 2008-09 to provide help aligned with the Humanities curricula. Eighty percent of students in Freshman Reading classes reported that these reading classes help them in their Freshman Humanities class “somewhat,” “very much,” or “a great deal.” When AVID students were asked how much AVID helps them do well in Humanities, about 41- 50 percent of students in mixed-level and honors-only classes indicated “somewhat,” “very much,” or “a great deal.” When STAE students were asked how much STAE helps them do well in Humanities, about 39 % of students in mixed-level and honors-only classes indicated “somewhat,” “very much,” or “a great deal.” Responses for students in Project EXCEL were different. For the six students who identified themselves as Project EXCEL students, 83% of them responded “not at all” or “not too much” with respect to Project Excel helping them to do well in Freshman Humanities classes.

**Satisfaction:** Ratings of satisfaction were higher for students in both mixed-level and honors-only classes for 2009-10 compared to 2008-09. Responses were significantly higher for honors-only students compared to mixed-level students. The majority (81%) of faculty felt that the mixed-level model is “somewhat effective” or “very effective” (scale ranges from “not at all effective” to “extremely effective”) for meeting students’ needs. More English teachers responded in this way than History teachers. Open-ended responses suggest that about a third of the teachers who gave a rating of “somewhat effective” or “not too effective” believe that a more effective model would be to eliminate the honors-only class and incorporate those students into the mixed-level classes.

### **Recommendations**

- Review books and materials in Freshman Humanities, both in History and English, to ensure these texts are interesting to students. Consider new texts in English and new topics in History that would draw on student interests. Review assignments and projects to ensure that they are challenging students to do their best.
- Continue to build skills in reading and research as well as in organization, effective effort, group work, writing, and taking responsibility for their learning.
- Review professional development activities to ensure that they are of high quality and address teacher concerns around behavior issues and varied student learning styles.
- Professional development should focus on examining the belief systems and expectations to ensure that all teachers hold and communicate high expectations for all students.
- Review support structures, particularly Project EXCEL and Freshman Reading, to ensure that instruction in these courses is directly aligned with the coursework in Freshman Humanities.

- Utilize the common time set aside during the day as well as time in department meetings, PLC's, and other professional development activities to discuss the mission/vision of the mixed-level model to ensure that there is a common vision and understanding of purpose.
- Continue to identify ways to ensure that students to seek out help outside of class.
- Improve the connections between English and History in Freshman Humanities by reviewing curriculum and being more explicit about the connections in answering essential questions.

# Appendix A



**Objective 3: Diversity of Student Views**

		Course Level			Total	
		ML-Regular	ML-Honors	Honors		
Q14_Diversity_ExposeRange Views	Count	4	4	1	9	
	% within Course Level	2.6%	1.8%	.5%	1.6%	
	A great deal	Count	9	27	7	43
	% within Course Level	5.8%	12.2%	3.7%	7.6%	
	Not at all	Count	10	18	34	62
	% within Course Level	6.5%	8.1%	17.9%	10.9%	
	Not too much	Count	24	33	56	113
	% within Course Level	15.5%	14.9%	29.5%	19.9%	
	Somewhat	Count	62	80	70	212
	% within Course Level	40.0%	36.0%	36.8%	37.4%	
	Very much	Count	46	60	22	128
	% within Course Level	29.7%	27.0%	11.6%	22.6%	
	Total	Count	155	222	190	567
	% within Course Level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Objective 3: Class Discussion**

		Course Level			Total	
		ML-Regular	ML-Honors	Honors		
Q8a_Contribute_ClassDiscuss_ENG	Count	1	5	3	9	
	% within Course Level	.6%	2.3%	1.6%	1.6%	
	All of the time	Count	17	33	48	98
	% within Course Level	11.0%	14.9%	25.3%	17.3%	
	Most of the time	Count	41	81	73	195
	% within Course Level	26.5%	36.5%	38.4%	34.4%	
	Never	Count	3	2	2	7
	% within Course Level	1.9%	.9%	1.1%	1.2%	
	Rarely	Count	27	23	20	70
	% within Course Level	17.4%	10.4%	10.5%	12.3%	
	Sometimes	Count	66	78	44	188
	% within Course Level	42.6%	35.1%	23.2%	33.2%	
	Total	Count	155	222	190	567
	% within Course Level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Objective 3: Class Discussion**

			Course Level			Total
			ML-Regular	ML-Honors	Honors	
Q8b_ Contribute_ ClassDiscuss_ HSS		Count	3	7	4	14
		% within Course Level	1.9%	3.2%	2.1%	2.5%
	All of the time	Count	18	39	36	93
		% within Course Level	11.6%	17.6%	18.9%	16.4%
	Most of the time	Count	33	75	60	168
		% within Course Level	21.3%	33.8%	31.6%	29.6%
	Never	Count	4	4	7	15
		% within Course Level	2.6%	1.8%	3.7%	2.6%
	Rarely	Count	32	17	27	76
		% within Course Level	20.6%	7.7%	14.2%	13.4%
	Sometimes	Count	65	80	56	201
		% within Course Level	41.9%	36.0%	29.5%	35.4%
	Total	Count	155	222	190	567
		% within Course Level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

**Objective 3: Class Discussion**

			Course Level			Total
			ML-Regular	ML-Honors	Honors	
Q6a_Interesting _ENG	strongly disagree	Count	9	9	4	22
		% within Course Level	5.8%	4.1%	2.1%	3.9%
	2	Count	31	33	14	78
		% within Course Level	20.0%	15.0%	7.4%	13.8%
	3	Count	56	74	36	166
		% within Course Level	36.1%	33.6%	18.9%	29.4%
	4	Count	31	73	67	171
		% within Course Level	20.0%	33.2%	35.3%	30.3%
	strongly agree	Count	28	31	69	128
		% within Course Level	18.1%	14.1%	36.3%	22.7%
Total	Count	155	220	190	565	
	% within Course Level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Objective 3: Class Discussion**

			Course Level			Total
			ML-Regular	ML-Honors	Honors	
Q6b_Think _ENG	strongly disagree	Count % within Course Level	6 3.9%	6 2.7%	4 2.1%	16 2.8%
	2	Count % within Course Level	22 14.2%	29 13.2%	16 8.4%	67 11.9%
	3	Count % within Course Level	40 25.8%	69 31.5%	36 18.9%	145 25.7%
	4	Count % within Course Level	54 34.8%	73 33.3%	67 35.3%	194 34.4%
	strongly agree	Count % within Course Level	33 21.3%	42 19.2%	67 35.3%	142 25.2%
Total		Count % within Course Level	155 100.0%	219 100.0%	190 100.0%	564 100.0%

**Objective 3: Class Discussion**

			Course Level			Total
			ML-Regular	ML-Honors	Honors	
Q6c_Diff PointsView _ENG	strongly disagree	Count % within Course Level	4 2.6%	7 3.2%	4 2.1%	15 2.7%
	2	Count % within Course Level	11 7.1%	21 9.6%	7 3.7%	39 7.0%
	3	Count % within Course Level	35 22.7%	51 23.3%	25 13.3%	111 19.8%
	4	Count % within Course Level	52 33.8%	79 36.1%	66 35.1%	197 35.1%
	strongly agree	Count % within Course Level	52 33.8%	61 27.9%	86 45.7%	199 35.5%
Total		Count % within Course Level	154 100.0%	219 100.0%	188 100.0%	561 100.0%

**Objective 3: Class Discussion**

			Course Level			Total
			ML- Regular	ML-Honors	Honors	
Q6e_Add Knowledge _ENG	strongly disagree	Count	0	5	8	13
		% within Course Level	.0%	2.3%	4.2%	2.3%
	2	Count	11	22	8	41
		% within Course Level	7.1%	10.0%	4.2%	7.3%
	3	Count	40	57	43	140
		% within Course Level	25.8%	26.0%	22.6%	24.8%
	4	Count	60	91	77	228
		% within Course Level	38.7%	41.6%	40.5%	40.4%
	strongly agree	Count	44	44	54	142
		% within Course Level	28.4%	20.1%	28.4%	25.2%
Total	Count	155	219	190	564	
	% within Course Level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Objective 3: Class Discussion**

			Course Level			Total
			ML- Regular	ML-Honors	Honors	
Q6d_Boring _ENG	strongly disagree	Count	28	28	49	105
		% within Course Level	18.2%	12.7%	25.8%	18.6%
	2	Count	43	68	74	185
		% within Course Level	27.9%	30.9%	38.9%	32.8%
	3	Count	32	66	39	137
		% within Course Level	20.8%	30.0%	20.5%	24.3%
	4	Count	30	34	15	79
		% within Course Level	19.5%	15.5%	7.9%	14.0%
	strongly agree	Count	21	24	13	58
		% within Course Level	13.6%	10.9%	6.8%	10.3%
Total	Count	154	220	190	564	
	% within Course Level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Objective 6: Rigor**

			Course Level			Total
			ML- Regular	ML-Honors	Honors	
Q13b_Books _Interesting	strongly disagree	Count	16	26	5	47
		% within Course Level	10.5%	11.8%	2.6%	8.3%
	2	Count	33	42	28	103
		% within Course Level	21.6%	19.1%	14.7%	18.3%
	3	Count	54	76	59	189
		% within Course Level	35.3%	34.5%	31.1%	33.6%
4	Count	31	55	67	153	
	% within Course Level	20.3%	25.0%	35.3%	27.2%	
strongly agree	Count	19	21	31	71	
	% within Course Level	12.4%	9.5%	16.3%	12.6%	
Total	Count	153	220	190	563	
	% within Course Level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Objective 8: Motivation, Effective Effort, & Strategies**

			Course Level			Total
			ML-Regular	ML-Honors	Honors	
Q11e_Reading	not at all	Count	9	16	26	51
		% within Course Level	5.9%	7.3%	13.7%	9.1%
	2	Count	25	52	51	128
		% within Course Level	16.3%	23.6%	26.8%	22.7%
	3	Count	73	98	76	247
		% within Course Level	47.7%	44.5%	40.0%	43.9%
a great deal	Count	46	54	37	137	
	% within Course Level	30.1%	24.5%	19.5%	24.3%	
Total	Count	153	220	190	563	
	% within Course Level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Objective 8: Motivation, Effective Effort, & Strategies**

			Course Level			Total
			ML-Regular	ML-Honors	Honors	
Q11g_Research	not at all	Count	6	15	11	32
		% within Course Level	3.9%	6.8%	5.8%	5.7%
	2	Count	24	41	50	115
		% within Course Level	15.6%	18.7%	26.5%	20.5%
	3	Count	61	93	78	232
		% within Course Level	39.6%	42.5%	41.3%	41.3%
a great deal	Count	63	70	50	183	
	% within Course Level	40.9%	32.0%	26.5%	32.6%	
Total	Count	154	219	189	562	
	% within Course Level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Objective 8: Motivation, Effective Effort, & Strategies**

			Course Level			Total
			ML-Regular	ML-Honors	Honors	
Q4a_ Motivated _ENG	strongly disagree	Count	2	7	4	13
		% within Course Level	1.3%	3.2%	2.1%	2.3%
	2	Count	15	9	4	28
		% within Course Level	9.7%	4.1%	2.1%	4.9%
	3	Count	26	30	15	71
		% within Course Level	16.9%	13.5%	7.9%	12.5%
	4	Count	53	74	51	178
		% within Course Level	34.4%	33.3%	26.8%	31.4%
	strongly agree	Count	58	102	116	276
		% within Course Level	37.7%	45.9%	61.1%	48.8%
Total	Count	154	222	190	566	
	% within Course Level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Objective 8: Motivation, Effective Effort, & Strategies**

			Course Level			Total
			ML-Regular	ML-Honors	Honors	
Q12a_Effort_ENG		Count	2	0	4	6
		% within Course Level	1.3%	.0%	2.1%	1.1%
	A great deal	Count	29	48	47	124
		% within Course Level	18.7%	21.6%	24.7%	21.9%
	None at all	Count	4	3	0	7
		% within Course Level	2.6%	1.4%	.0%	1.2%
	Not too much	Count	11	20	8	39
		% within Course Level	7.1%	9.0%	4.2%	6.9%
	Somewhat	Count	54	62	41	157
		% within Course Level	34.8%	27.9%	21.6%	27.7%
	Very much	Count	55	89	90	234
		% within Course Level	35.5%	40.1%	47.4%	41.3%
Total	Count	155	222	190	567	
	% within Course Level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Objective 8: Motivation, Effective Effort, & Strategies**

		Course Level			Total	
		ML-Regular	ML-Honors	Honors		
Q12b_Effort_HSS	Count	2	0	3	5	
	% within Course Level	1.3%	.0%	1.6%	.9%	
	A great deal	Count	15	35	30	80
	% within Course Level	9.7%	15.8%	15.8%	14.1%	
	None at all	Count	4	5	8	17
	% within Course Level	2.6%	2.3%	4.2%	3.0%	
Not too much	Count	9	23	15	47	
% within Course Level	5.8%	10.4%	7.9%	8.3%		
Somewhat	Count	68	61	65	194	
% within Course Level	43.9%	27.5%	34.2%	34.2%		
Very much	Count	57	98	69	224	
% within Course Level	36.8%	44.1%	36.3%	39.5%		
Total	Count	155	222	190	567	
	% within Course Level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Objective 10: Support Structures**

		Course Level			Total	
		ML-Regular	ML-Honors	Honors		
Q3_HowOften_HumTchr_ExtraHelp	Count	0	0	3	3	
	% within Course Level	.0%	.0%	1.6%	.5%	
	I came in almost every day.	Count	6	0	0	6
	% within Course Level	3.9%	.0%	.0%	1.1%	
	I came in for help 1-2 times a week.	Count	16	12	8	36
	% within Course Level	10.3%	5.4%	4.2%	6.3%	
I came in once every couple of weeks.	Count	44	42	17	103	
% within Course Level	28.4%	18.9%	8.9%	18.2%		
I never came in for extra help.	Count	21	41	31	93	
% within Course Level	13.5%	18.5%	16.3%	16.4%		
I only came in when I needed something explained or clarified.	Count	68	127	131	326	
% within Course Level	43.9%	57.2%	68.9%	57.5%		
Total	Count	155	222	190	567	
	% within Course Level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

**Overall Satisfaction**

			Course Level			Total
			ML-Regular	ML-Honors	Honors	
Q15_Overall Satisfaction	very dissatisfied	Count	4	6	3	13
		% within Course Level	2.7%	2.7%	1.6%	2.3%
	2	Count	18	27	15	60
		% within Course Level	12.1%	12.3%	7.9%	10.8%
	3	Count	50	62	51	163
		% within Course Level	33.6%	28.3%	26.8%	29.2%
4	Count	53	100	74	227	
	% within Course Level	35.6%	45.7%	38.9%	40.7%	
very satisfied	Count	24	24	47	95	
	% within Course Level	16.1%	11.0%	24.7%	17.0%	
Total	Count	149	219	190	558	
	% within Course Level	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	