

**Long Beach City College**

**Sabbatical Leave Report**

**Spring 2020/Spring 2021**

**Kirsten Moreno**

**English Department**



**LONG BEACH  
CITY COLLEGE**

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## Section 1: Original Sabbatical Proposal

Name: Kirsten Moreno, English Professor

Academic Year: Spring 2020 / Spring 2021

Date: September 10, 2018

### 1. Briefly state the purpose of your sabbatical leave:

I am requesting a two-semester sabbatical leave for Spring 2020 and Spring 2021. The purpose of my sabbatical proposal is to address three areas of importance to Long Beach City College through the following efforts:

- Read and conduct academic research in online composition course pedagogy and Culturally Responsive Teaching-Learning course design. Collect data on current English online/hybrid student success rates, including “gaps,” (areas that require improvement to address disparities in student achievement), retention and completion rates.
- Create a student writing survey and student learning outcomes assessment tools for online English composition courses
- Contribute an online teaching best practices module, utilizing Culturally Responsive Teaching-Learning pedagogy, for faculty professional development. This module will be included in Long Beach City College’s *The Online Teaching Best Practices Series* (please see attached communication from Melvin Cobb, Faculty Coordinator of Online Education)

California’s new funding formula is encouraging Long Beach City College’s drive to improve and accelerate college readiness for students. In addition, there is a demand for online courses. Students need access to pedagogically solid courses, specifically in English. Our transfer-level English 1 courses are foundational in building students’ abilities to write, read, and think critically. The purpose of my sabbatical project is to help increase the number of students who successfully complete English transfer-level online and hybrid courses while still maintaining course-specific Student Learning Outcomes and departmental academic rigor. Over the last 18 years, I have taught courses in each of the English

Department's composition course sequence (English 801, English 105, English 1/1H, and English 3). The last two years, I have taught English 1 online. My online teaching certification process and teaching experience have been both amazing and daunting. This experience has taught me the importance of creating impactful digital spaces for student collaboration, reading, writing, and critical thinking. I would like to further my knowledge of impactful online composition course design and writing assessment tools and strategies to help our students succeed and contribute to faculty professional development in this area.

In response to AB 705 (a bill signed by the governor in 2017 that requires community colleges to maximize the possibility that a student will enter *and* complete transfer-level English and math within a one-year timeframe), the last two years have seen changes in the English Department's composition course offerings. In an effort to increase students' ability to succeed and transfer, our department is transitioning away from developmental writing courses. More of our students will be placed in English 1 within their first year. My sabbatical project will allow me to contribute research and specific, pedagogically-sound tools for faculty (and by extension, students) to use. In short, I will convert an extensive literature review into practical course resources to assess student preparedness, engage and support student-learning in transfer-level composition courses, and contribute to faculty professional development. This information will be shared with faculty via LBCC's *Online Teaching Best Practices Series* (please see attached communication from Melvin Cobb) and with my English Department colleagues.

- 2. Give all pertinent details of your proposed plan. This should include all activities, projects, research, itinerary, study, employment, expected outcomes, relationships with current coursework, etc. connected with your proposed leave:**

The first part of my sabbatical project will be to read a variety of academic journals and books on metacognitive approaches to online teaching, online composition teaching best practices for faculty, assessing student writing outcomes, and building equity-minded practice into online course design. The equity component is based on the Online Education Initiative's Culturally Responsive Teaching and

Learning pedagogy (CRTL). I will include a literature review in my final report. Additional sources may be added. Below is a list of the proposed articles and books I plan to read and analyze:

Angelino, Lorraine M., Frankie Keels Williams, and Deborah Natvig. "Strategies to Engage Online Students and Reduce Attrition Rates." *Journal of Educators Online* 4.2 (2007): n2.

Brock-Pacansky Michelle. *Best Practices for Teaching with Emerging Technologies*.  
New York, N.Y.: Routledge, 2013.

Burns, Kimberly A. "Community College Faculty as Pedagogical Innovators: How the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Stimulates Innovation in the Classroom." *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 2016. 41:3, 153-167.

Calandra, B., Gurvitch, R., & Lund, J. (2008). "An exploratory study of digital video editing as a tool for teacher preparation". *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*, 16(2), 137-153.

Cochran, Justin D., et al. "The role of student characteristics in predicting retention in online courses." *Research in Higher Education* 55.1 (2014): 27-48.

Davidson, Jennifer L. "Student Demographic and Academic Characteristics That Predict Community College Student Success in Online Courses" (2017): Theses and Dissertations. Illinois State University, 788.

Django Paris and H. Samy Alim. "What Are We Seeking to Sustain Through Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy? A Loving Critique Forward." *Harvard Educational Review*: April 2014, Vol. 84, No. 1, pp. 85-100.

Hans Johnson, Marisol Cuellar Mejia, and Kevin Cook. "Successful Online Course in California's Community Colleges." *Public Policy Institute of California*, 2015.

James, Eileen M. "Encouraging connections to support a positive culture of writing assessment: Adjunct composition instructors, students, and campus resources." *Teaching English in the Two Year College* 42.3 (2015): A2.

Kimbark, Kris, Michelle L. Peters & Tim Richardson (2016) "Effectiveness of the Student Success Course on Persistence, Retention, Academic Achievement, and Student Engagement." *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 41:2, 124-138.

Kumar, Revathy, Akane Zusho, and Rhonda Bondie. "Weaving cultural relevance and achievement motivation into inclusive classroom cultures." *Educational Psychologist* 53.2 (2018): 78-96.

Ladson-Billings, Gloria. "Culturally Relevant Pedagogy 2.0: aka The Remix." *Harvard Educational Review* 84.1 (2014): 74-84.

Liu, Simon Y., Joel Gomez, and Cherng-Jyh Yen. "Community College Online Course Retention and Final Grade: Predictability of Social Presence." *Journal of Interactive Online Learning* 8.2 (2009): 165-83.

Mayberry, Bob. "Writing in Online Courses: How the Online Environment Shapes Writing." *Composition Studies* 46 (2018): 183-186.

Paquette, Paige. "Instructing the Instructors: Training Instructors to Use Social Presence Cues in Online Courses." *Journal of Educators Online* 13.1 (2016): 80-108.

Revathy Kumar, Akane Zusho and Rhonda Bondie. "Weaving Cultural Relevance and Achievement Motivation into Inclusive Classroom Cultures." *Educational Psychologist*, 53:2 (2018): 78-96

Rose, Tod. *The End of Average*. New York: Harper Collins, 2016.

Swan, Karen, et al. "Validating a Measurement Tool of Presence in Online Communities of Inquiry." *E-mentor* 2.24 (2008): 1-12.

Tovar, Esau. "The Role of Faculty, Counselors, and Support Programs on Latino/a Community College Students' Success and Intent to Persist." *Community College Review* 43.1 (2015): 46-71.

Villarreal, María de Lourdes, and Hugo A. García. "Self-determination and goal aspirations: African American and Latino males' perceptions of their persistence in community college basic and transfer-level writing courses." *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* 40.10 (2016): 838-853.

Williams van Rooij, Shahron & Zirkle, Kara. "Balancing Pedagogy, Student Readiness and Accessibility: A Case Study in Collaborative Online Course Development." *The Internet and Higher Education* 28 (2016): 1-7.

In addition to the research component of my project, I will work with Hussam Kashou, Associate Dean of Online Education and Technology to collect data on current English online/hybrid student success rates, including "gaps," (areas that require improvement to address disparities in student achievement) retention and completion rates.

Lastly, to contextualize my research, I will take a class on Culturally Responsive Teaching Methods (details in #3). This work will culminate in my tangible products: an online student writing survey, assessment tools to evaluate our online English students' success at achieving English1 course-specific SLO's, and an online teaching best practices module for inclusion in the College's *The Online Teaching Best Practices Series*. This module will focus on how to create an equity-minded online classroom that utilizes Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning Pedagogy. The intent is to build online courses that are both student-centered and intellectually engaging. The module I will build will be part of the ongoing online professional development training for all LBCC instructors.

**3. Provide a timeline indicating how the activities in your plan will be completed within the time frame of the proposed leave:**

### **Spring 2020**

To lay the foundation for my project deliverables, I will

- Begin research into Culturally Responsive Learning Teaching Methods and articles and books cited above.
- Take the @ONE course; “Equity & Culturally Responsive Teaching in the Online Learning Environment” (this is a 4-week course administered by the Online Network of Educators, a collaborative, system-wide network of CCC faculty, staff, and administrators and coordinated by the OEI professional development coordinators).
- Create the writing survey and SLO writing assessment tools for our online English 1 students

### **Fall 2020**

I will have the knowledge and tools to

- Implement the online student writing survey / writing assessment tools and
- Engage my students with the new course design

### **Spring 2021**

Based on the data and research results, I will

- Build a new faculty online teaching module for inclusion in the College’s *The Online Teaching Best Practices Series*. This module will be part of the ongoing online professional development training for all LBCC instructors who teach online, including adjunct faculty.

#### **4. Describe how the proposed leave will contribute to your professional development, including how it relates to your current assignment:**

I’m serving my 18<sup>th</sup> year as an English Department faculty member, but the last two years have taught me a great deal in terms of the College’s Strategic Plan and my role as a composition instructor. At this stage in my professional development, I feel it is important to further develop my online teaching philosophy and develop cogent strategies to teach writing in a digital space. My own online teacher training and

certification process demonstrated the level of diligence, digital literacy, and collaboration required to be successful in an online environment. My goal is to identify specific ways I can bring this same awareness to my students in our online classrooms. If approved, my sabbatical project will also create opportunities to collaborate on meaningful writing assessments with my English Department colleagues and other faculty, including adjunct faculty, who teach online courses.

I am also excited about having time to take a professional development course. The @ONE course on Culturally Responsive Teaching will further my professional knowledge and skillset as a composition instructor. This online course shows faculty how to use an equity framework for online courses, and it provides strategies for integrating CRTL practices into online classroom practices. Online professional development courses require collaboration, research, strong communication, and time management--skills that we require of students in our composition courses. I look forward to returning to the classroom as a student and working with other community college colleagues in this environment. It is a great opportunity to network with other community college instructors and share teaching best practices and resources.

**5. Describe how the proposed leave will benefit the College and students:**

I will begin with our students. Our English 1 SLO's include the ability to read and analyze college-level texts, write academic prose with a clear purpose and effective, logical, relevant support from sources, compose essays that demonstrate consistent control of academic discourse and rhetoric, recognize different rhetorical strategies such as purpose, voice, audience and tone in texts and utilizing these in your own writing, and demonstrate control of correct English usage, syntax, punctuation, and mechanics. A primary goal of my sabbatical project is to support these SLO's through intentional online course design and content and meaningful writing assessment tools.

My sabbatical project will benefit the College in terms of building our course completion rates. My project also ties into the College's Student Equity Plan; The Strategic Plan emphasizes the need to "incorporate equity-minded, student-centered teaching strategies and relevant curriculum"; I believe that both my sabbatical research on CRTL (Culturally Responsive Teaching-Learning) and the tangible

products I will produce will help my colleagues and by extension, our students, achieve some of our equity goals.

**6. List and describe the specific, tangible products you will bring to the college within 90 days after you return to your assignment. Tangible products derived from this research will include:**

- I will provide data on our English online student success rates, including “gaps,” retention and completion rates. I will answer some of the questions connected to online course success rates, specifically, what are the leading and lagging metrics for success in our English online courses and hybrid courses?
- I will create an online writing survey that English faculty can use to capture their online English students’ level of preparedness, and I will create writing assessment tools to determine whether students are achieving English 1 SLO’s in their online courses.
- I will build a faculty online teaching module focusing on equity-minded practices in the online classroom for inclusion in the College’s *The Online Teaching Best Practices Series*. This module will be part of the ongoing online professional development training for all LBCC instructors.

**7. Describe how you will share the outcomes of your proposed leave with other interested parties upon your return:**

- I plan to share data and annotated bibliography/research with my English Department colleagues via the Composition Committee, the Technology Committee, and the English Department Flex Committee. I will also deliver the data to our English Department shared Canvas site so that our adjunct faculty have access to it.
- I will present an English Department FLEX workshop on CRTL (Culturally Responsive Teaching-Learning) course best practices
- I will share my annotated bibliography/research with online teaching faculty across the disciplines via OL FANS and the College’s *The Online Teaching Best Practices Series*, a series of modules designed to prepare faculty to teach online courses at the College.

**8. If applicable, please disclose any additional sources of employment earnings during the proposed leave: N/A**

## **Section 2: Summary of Sabbatical Project**

This summary will be presented to the Board of Trustee as part of the requirements to fulfill the obligations of the sabbatical in accordance with Article VI, Section P, 6, a, 3 of the LBCCD – LBCCFA Master Agreement. Please be concise with your information. Your full report will be made available to the Board of Trustees upon request and individuals may be invited by the Board to a regularly scheduled meeting to give a presentation.

### **1. Purpose of sabbatical**

The purpose of my project was to examine critical pedagogy in an effort to increase transfer-level online English course completion and success rates. A significant portion of this examination was an in-depth look at culturally responsive teaching and learning pedagogy as a critical and impactful approach to reflect our diverse student population and to help our students be successful in their online English 1 courses. My research of CRTL (culturally responsive teaching and learning) also included other cognitive learning theories, an assessment of who our LBCC students are today, online engagement strategies, and tangible products and resources to assist faculty in applying these best practices to increase English 1 students' online course success rates. Many of these best practices can be applied across the disciplines and are also included in the body of the report.

### **2. Brief description of how the objectives of the proposal were met**

The first part of my sabbatical leave included completing a 4-week @ONE course through Fresno Pacific University; "Equity & Culturally Responsive Teaching in the Online Learning Environment." This course was a rigorous examination of equity-minded practices in higher education. I also conducted a literature review connected to CRTL, and in the second half of my sabbatical, I created four new assessment artifacts (rather than the two mentioned in my original

proposal). Two of these products function as formative assessment assignments in English 1 and two additional products include a Student CRTL Survey and a Faculty CRTL Course Self-Assessment. I also was a faculty lead on the *Canvas Template for Beginners* course shell, in collaboration with OLET, that was published and made available to all LBCC faculty in August 2020 for the Fall semester.

3. List the tangibles you are bringing to the college

- Two English 1 writing assessments; a formative self-assessment essay and a Socially Conscious Music essay
- Two CRTL surveys; one Student CRTL Survey and a Faculty CRTL Course Self-Assessment Survey
- CRTL resources shared with the English Department Composition Resources Canvas shell, and I submitted CRTL resources and the Faculty CRTL Course Self-Assessment Survey and Student CRTL Survey with Michael Robertson for inclusion in the College-wide Online Teaching Resources hub.
- An extensive literature review of culturally responsive teaching and learning theory and practices, including an additional list of best practices to be utilized across the disciplines.

4. Briefly describe how the sabbatical benefited you professionally

My interest in examining culturally responsive teaching and learning grew out of my passion for sharing good writers and engaging texts with my students. I have been a proponent of culture-based learning in my courses, but reading Geneva Gay's text, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*, was instrumental in my desire to delve deeper into the theoretical principles beneath the practice. Another goal was to create what Elizabeth Birr-Moje

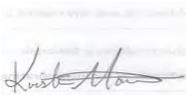
refers to as the “Third Space” in a course; this is the area where students’ funds of knowledge and academic knowledge meet. This sabbatical project also has helped me to grow as a researcher, and I have formed additional professional connections with other CRTL practitioners in higher education due to the FPU course that I took in Spring 2020.

5. Briefly describe how the results of your project benefited the college and students, including methods of instruction or services to students

My sabbatical research has been transformative in how I teach my writing courses; I have shifted from a multi-cultural practice in teaching writing and literature to a more inclusive “multiple-cultural” approach. Culturally responsive teaching and learning is not a new pedagogy, but it is rarely applied in higher education. I strongly believe that, as community college educators, we have an obligation to build online courses that are student-centered, intellectually engaging, and reflective of all the dimensions of diversity represented in our students within those spaces.

The literature review in my report also serves as an academic and professional resource for my colleagues, including those outside the English Department.

In addition, the four assessment artifacts that I created will benefit students in my online English courses, and both the Student CRTL Survey and the Faculty CRTL Course Self-Assessment Survey will be made available for faculty to implement in their own online courses. These surveys are opportunities for students to share, and faculty to reflect, on course climate and ways to incorporate diversity into the course curriculum.



Kirsten Moreno

June 20, 2021

### **Section 3: Detailed Results of Sabbatical Project**

The purpose of my sabbatical project was to examine critical pedagogy in an effort to increase transfer-level online English course completion and success rates. The first part of my sabbatical leave was spent conducting research into online composition course design, Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning Theory and pedagogy, and an examination of Long Beach City College's online course success and enrollment data. This review of literature culminated in four new assessments, including two writing assessments for English 1. This portion of my research project evolved into becoming a faculty lead on the Canvas Template for Beginners course shell, in collaboration with OLET, that was published and made available to all LBCC faculty in August 2020 for the Fall semester.

The second half of my sabbatical included an analysis of who our LBCC students are in terms of demographics and generational learning styles, an examination of barriers to students' online success, and applications of CRTL best practices for increasing students' online course success rates. As a result of the research I conducted in this second half, I created two additional assessments; one Student CRTL Survey and a Faculty CRTL Course Self-Assessment Survey. These surveys are optional opportunities for both reflection and information-gathering. The Student CRTL Survey asks students to share their expectations for an online course, drawing from a culturally responsive list of identities. The Faculty CRTL Course Self-Assessment is an opportunity for an instructor, in any discipline, to reflect on the equity-mindedness of their course content and practice. I was inspired to create these surveys after reading "Instructional Design of Interactive Multimedia: A Cultural Critique," by Lyn Henderson. Henderson asserts that *all* online spaces reflect the class, gender, culture, values, and ideologies of their instructional designers. This

idea reinforces the need for instructors to be both intentional and deliberate in creating online courses that reflect their students identities and culture(s) rather than just their own.

Below is a summary of my sabbatical tangibles:

- I was a faculty lead for the Canvas Template for Beginners; this full template Canvas course includes best practices for online course design, creating modules, and writing Discussion posts and was worked on in collaboration with Hussam Kashou, C.C. Sadler, and Michael Neal, Assistant Professor of Graphic Design:
- CRTL resources shared with the English Department Composition Resources Canvas shell, and I submitted CRTL resources and the Faculty CRTL Course Self-Assessment Survey and Student CRTL Survey with Michael Robertson for inclusion in the College-wide Online Teaching Resources hub.
- An extensive literature review of culturally responsive teaching and learning theory and practices, including an additional list of best practices that can be utilized by faculty across the disciplines.
- I created four new assessment artifacts (rather than the two mentioned in my original proposal). Two of these products function as formative assessment assignments in English 1 and two additional products include a Student CRTL Survey and a Faculty CRTL Course Self-Assessment.

Additional sabbatical-related products, not in my original proposal, are also bullet pointed below.

- Proctorio Work Group/Academic Integrity/Remote Exam Process & Data. I contributed welcoming and equitized syllabi language to help foster academic honesty.
- Covid Instructional Work Group Spring 2020/ Summer 2020/ Fall 2020/Spring 2021/Summer 2021. I have been a Faculty Association representative on the Covid

Instructional Work Group, contributing feedback on the three online certification options for faculty in spring and summer 2020 to expedite certification (“Test Out” option with distinguished, satisfactory, and incomplete levels and three peer reviewers for Canvas, TOS, and Growing with Canvas)

- I wrote a course netiquette document included in the Canvas Template for Beginners and shared it with OLET. The Canvas Template for Beginners was made available to all LBCC fulltime and adjunct faculty in August 2020.
- I provided feedback and language for the revised E-8 F Student Evaluation of Online Teaching Faculty in the LBCCFA contract (connecting the evaluation criteria to OEI standards).
- Fall 2020: Faculty Co-Presenter, “How to Be an Anti-Racist” with Life Sciences Assistant Professor Patti Vallela and Sociology Professor Janét Hund.
- I created a ZTC (zero textbook cost) English 1 online summer course and a LTC (low textbook cost) English 2 16-week course.

#### **Section 4: How My Sabbatical Project Benefitted Me Professionally**

My interest in examining culturally responsive teaching and learning grew out of my passion for sharing good writers and engaging texts with my students; I wanted to broaden the scope of writers and readings that I use in my English 1 and English 1Plus courses. The correlations between culturally responsive pedagogy and student learning and success drive much of my professional interest. I have been a proponent of culture-based learning in my courses, but reading Geneva Gay's text, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*, was instrumental in my desire to delve deeper into the theoretical principles beneath the practice.

On a personal level, I wanted to find new ways to practice what Gay calls "cultural affirmation" (52) into my composition and literature courses while adhering to course outcomes and maintaining academic rigor as I teach my students how to become stronger writers and critical readers and thinkers. Since my leave was split over Spring 2020 and Spring 2021, I also had the time to research and apply CRTL strategies in my fall courses. I have a richer understanding of the theoretical principles beneath culturally relevant pedagogy and its importance to my students' success in my courses.

## **Section 5: Description of How the Sabbatical Project Benefitted Students**

This project benefits our LBCC students in three ways; first, the review of literature chapter and data give faculty a deeper insight into who our students are and how they learn best; this analysis of our student population includes a look into the factors that help Millennials and Gen Z thrive in online college courses.

Secondly, the research offers a practical and relevant pedagogical framework to support and celebrate the rich diversity LBCC students bring to our courses; third, this project offers strategies on how to apply culturally responsive teaching and learning tools in English 1, and other disciplines, to help build both student retention and course success rates.

## **Section 6: Description of How the Sabbatical Project Benefitted the College**

This project benefits the College in the following ways, specifically in contributing to two areas of the Strategic Plan; “Innovate to Achieve Equitable Student Success” and “Accelerate College Readiness and Close Equity Gaps.”

Our Strategic Plan states the need to “incorporate equity-minded, student-centered teaching strategies and relevant curriculum,” “embrace innovative teaching strategies to enhance student engagement and learning (e.g., blended teaching methods, flipped classrooms, self-paced and adaptive learning software, and transformative pedagogy),” and “Meet students where they are and move away from a deficit model to embrace an educational and cultural capital approach to teaching and supporting students.” This commitment to student equity and student success is at the heart of culturally responsive teaching and learning. Geneva Gay describes this instructional approach as “[filtering] curriculum content and teaching strategies through [students] cultural frames of reference to make the content more personally meaningful and easier to master” (32).

My project also includes college-wide data to help inform faculty of student success rates, including “gaps,” and it makes recommendations to address retention and completion rates.

**Section 7: Tangible Products**

## **Chapter 1: Review of Literature and Online Course Data**

“Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world.”

– Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

### **Introduction**

My sabbatical project focused on how to increase transfer-level online English course completion and success rates by building student preparedness and creating equity-minded online course design, utilizing Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning Pedagogy. The products included in this report are a student self-assessment tool and a Student CRTL Survey that faculty may use in their online and hybrid English composition courses. In March 2020, my sabbatical project evolved to help address the immediate move faculty had to make to online teaching. As a result, there are additional projects included in my report.

#### **I) National Online Course Trends and California Community Colleges**

In “Online Education Ascends” published in *Inside Higher Ed*, Education Editor Doug Lederman examines the rise of online course offerings in the midst of a decline in overall postsecondary enrollment. According to Lederman, 1/3 of all students now take at least one online course (see table A below).

##### **A. All Enrollments and Online Enrollments, 2016 and 2017**

	<b>2016</b>	<b>% of 2016 Total</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>All Students</b>	<b>20,224,069</b>		<b>20,135,159</b>
<b>Enrolled Exclusively Online</b>	<b>2,974,836</b>	<b>14.71%</b>	<b>3,104,879</b>
<b>Enrolled in Some Online Courses</b>	<b>3,325,750</b>	<b>16.44%</b>	<b>3,552,581</b>
<b>Enrolled in No Online Courses</b>	<b>13,923,483</b>	<b>68.85%</b>	<b>13,477,699</b>

The demand for online courses in California’s Community Colleges (CCC) has grown in the last 12 years. The Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) reports that nearly 20% of students taking courses for credit are enrolled in at least one online course. *The Online Learning Consortium* report, “Online Nation: Five Years of growth in Online Learning” states that two-year associate’s institutions have the highest growth rates and account for over one-half of all online enrollments for the last five years. The National Center for Education Statistics tracks the growth of online course demand and enrollment at postsecondary institutions. It is interesting to see how 2-year institutions such as LBCC rank compared to 4-year undergraduate and graduate universities (see Table B below):

**B. National Growth of Online Course Enrollments 2017-18, The National Center for Education Statistics**

	2018	% of 2018 total	2017	% of 2017 total	% change, 2017-18
<b>Undergraduate</b>	16,972,521		17,133,000		-0.9%
<b>4-year</b>	10,865,098		10,818,442		0.4%
Enrolled exclusively in distance education courses	1,519,949	14.0%	1,461,660	13.5%	4.0%
Exclusively distance education institutions	275,798	2.5%	245,265	2.3%	12.4%
Not exclusively distance education institutions	1,244,151	11.5%	1,216,395	11.2%	2.3%
Enrolled in some, but not all, distance education courses	2,232,239	20.5%	2,114,610	19.5%	5.6%
Not enrolled in any distance education courses	7,112,910	65.5%	7,242,172	66.9%	-1.8%
<b>2-year</b>	5,849,184		6,057,268		-3.4%
Enrolled exclusively in distance education courses	805,872	13.8%	773,772	12.8%	4.1%
Exclusively distance education institutions	3,764	0.1%	3,501	0.1%	7.5%
Not exclusively distance education institutions	802,108	13.7%	770,271	12.7%	4.1%
Enrolled in some, but not all, distance education courses	1,169,159	20.0%	1,161,388	19.2%	0.7%
Not enrolled in any distance education courses	3,874,153	66.2%	4,122,108	68.1%	-6.0%
<b>Graduate</b>	3,035,913		3,005,477		1.0%
Enrolled exclusively in distance education courses	932,845	30.7%	868,708	28.9%	7.4%
Exclusively distance education institutions	162,084	5.3%	152,584	17.6%	6.2%
Not exclusively distance education institutions	770,761	25.4%	716,124	469.3%	7.6%
Enrolled in some, but not all, distance education courses	274,520	9.0%	274,211	38.3%	0.1%
Not enrolled in any distance education courses	1,828,548	60.2%	1,862,558	679.2%	-1.8%

**II) Long Beach City College Online Demand and Data**

So how is the national online enrollment trend reflected in Long Beach City College’s course offerings? In 2017-18, LBCC’s traditional, on-campus course offerings declined by 6, 611 students while the online enrollment increased by 4,700 students. In 2018, online course offerings increased 15% based on student demand. The data suggests that LBCC’s online course demand mirrors the national trend at this time. According to data provided by Hussam Kashou, Associate Dean of OLET at LBCC, the total online enrollment in 2018 was 32, 978 students. Between 2017-2019, online and hybrid course offerings increased from 786 sections college-wide to 1,036 sections. While the College moved fully online in March 2020 due to Covid, it is worth examining why some students choose online courses during non-pandemic times and how, as faculty, we can best support their learning.

There are many reasons why students may choose online courses over (or in addition to face-to-face courses) including place or time bound issues, such as work or family commitments or distance from campus. There will be more in-depth demographic look at who our LBCC students are in section IV below.

Another factor in the increase of online courses is California's new funding formula and the passage of AB 705. The push from the Chancellor's office to accelerate college degree, certification, and transfer completion for students comes with its own challenges and consequences but as these are largely outside the scope of my project, I will focus on specific culturally responsive teaching and learning strategies and best practices to meet the demand for online courses by creating pedagogically solid courses, specifically for English 1.

### **III. The Need for Pedagogically Solid Online Writing Courses**

Since our assessment and placement process has undergone extensive changes in the last few years, English faculty continue to work hard to both build and assess our students' writing proficiency and critical thinking skills. There is an urgent need for our students to be prepared to read, write, and engage in academic discourse across the disciplines and this requirement is, at times, more challenging to meet in an online format. There are incentives and challenges embedded in the online modality. Faculty teaching online composition courses must address these challenges directly in order to help our students successfully complete English transfer-level online and hybrid courses and meet course-specific Student Learning Outcomes while maintaining academic rigor. In conducting research for this project, I was inspired by a statement in Jeffrey Duncan-Andrade and Ernest Morrell's text, *The Art of Critical Pedagogy: Possibilities*

*for Moving from Theory to Practice in Urban Schools*. The writers defend the practice of being “hands on” with students and not giving up on them nor allow students to give up on themselves. According to the authors, critical pedagogy requires meaningful exchanges with texts, the instructor, and their peers. It means challenging students to the extent that they have “more power after the pedagogical encounter than they did before” (102) and that students leave each educational encounter with more confidence. Duncan-Andrade and Morrell state, “We sometimes need to explain to [students] that the work they are used to handing in is not satisfactory... A critical pedagogy can bring love, discipline, self-respect, and academic rigor all at the same time” (103-4).

Faculty teaching online courses benefit from being equipped with the knowledge to create impactful and engaging digital spaces for their students and knowing how to utilize different assessment tools for evaluation. This report will focus on the usefulness of students’ conducting a writing self-assessment in online English 1 and creating assignments and utilizing texts that are culturally responsive. Our transfer-level English 1 courses are foundational in building students’ abilities to write, read, and think critically. While there are embedded challenges in teaching online, I hope that the data, teaching approaches, professional resources, and best practice recommendations that I offer here will assist my colleagues, and by extension, our LBCC students.

#### **IV. Who are our students? California and LBCC demographic data**

##### **a. California Community College Students**

The following is student demographic data provided by the California Community College Chancellor's Office:

<u>Ethnicity</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
African-American	5.9%
Native American	0.43%
Asian	11.56%
Hispanic	44.54%
Filipino	2.69%
Pacific Islander	0.41%
White	25.88%
Multi-ethnicity	3.82%
Unknown	4.77%

In addition, according to the Foundation for California Community Colleges, 53% of community college students are female and over 40% are working adults age 25 or older.

b. Our LBCC Students

Below is LBCC's student demographic data, published in the 2019 Student Success Scoreboard.

The data shows that LBCC students are predominantly students of color (approximately 86%):

Gender

Female 55.6%

Male 43.3%

Unknown 1.1%

Ethnicity

African American 11.3%

American Indian/Alaska Native 0.2%

Asian 7.5%

Filipino 3.6%

Hispanic 58.4%

Pacific Islander 0.7%

White 13.4%

Two or more races 4.8%

Unknown ethnicity 0.2%

Age

Under 20 years old 26.7%

20 to 24 years old 37.0%

25 to 39 years old 26.6%

40 or more years old 9.8% Two or More Races 4.8%

Unknown Age 0.0%

c. Millennials and Gen Z: Online Learning Preferences and Styles

In “Accommodating Diverse Learning Styles in an Online Environment,” the authors share that Millennials (those born between 1981-1994/6) are both multi-taskers and visual learners who “prefer a lot of interactivities, the use of mobile tools, and social networking” (Arp, et al. 3). This preference for online interactivity and engagement is even more pronounced in Gen Z, those

born between 1997-present, according to the Pew Research Center. Sometimes referred to as the “iGeneration”, Gen Z is the generation most immersed in technology; it has been part of their lives from the beginning. Other distinguishing characteristics of Gen Z that shape how they respond (or do not respond) to online spaces, specifically our courses, include the following:

- Gen Z use their cellphones regularly to access course materials, complete assignments, and to conduct research. They consider their smartphones to be computers and according to Kieva Kozinsky in “How Generation Z is Shaping the Change in Education,” this generation of college students expect learning to be interactive, complete with digital learning tools. Students often use their smartphones to complete coursework as well. While more LBCC students are using laptops than smartphones to do their schoolwork in fall 2020 compared to spring 2020, a fall 2020 survey of LBCC students conducted by IE found that 8% of Asian students and 13% of White students continue to use their phones for schoolwork. This percentage increased for our most disproportionately impacted students: 21% of our Black/African-American students and 54% of our Hispanic students used their smartphones to complete and submit coursework.
- Gen Z tend to be visual learners. According to researcher Dr. Darla Rothman in “A Tsunami of Learners Called Generation Z,” Gen Z, our current generation of students want “fast delivery of content with complex graphics,” and online learning that includes interactive multimedia. This generation has also been immersed in web-based tools and different learning management systems since elementary school.

- Gen Z prefers to work in small groups rather than large, whole class settings, value instant feedback, clear goals, and positive reinforcement (Rothman 3-4). According to a study conducted by Arlene Nicholas in the article, “Preferred Learning Methods of Generation Z,” Generation Z’s preferred method of contact is text messaging. Email is one the least preferred methods of communication for Gen Z. This leads me to believe that sending short, informative messages to students via Canvas Announcements, for example, may be more productive than longer, whole class emails to relay course information.
- Gen Z students want practical, real-world connections to course content. According to research conducted by Elizabeth Cameron and Marisa Anne Pagnattaro published in *The Journal of Legal Studies Education*, Gen Z students feel that coursework should be relevant to both their lives and future careers.

Understanding our LBCC students’ generational learning styles and preferences is just step one in creating dynamic and engaging online courses. For example, it is important to keep in mind that while Generation Z students are considered “digital natives,” they need help understanding how to sift through vast amounts of information and used critical thinking skills to identify, evaluate, and synthesize outside sources.

In “Understanding Generation Z Students to Promote a Contemporary Learning Environment,” published in *the Journal on Empowering Teaching Excellence*, Kathleen Mohr and Eric Mohr created a table that creatively summarizes key learning attributes of three generations of students (see Table C).

**Table C. Learning Comparison of Three Recent Generations (source)**

Perspective	Gen X—Busters	Gen Y—Millennials	Gen Z—Digital Natives
Birth Years	1965-1980	1981-1994	1995-2010
Life Paradigm	Relate to me	Life is a cafeteria	Make a difference
View of Authority	Ignore them	Choose them	Work with them
View of Relationships	Central, caring	24/7	Collaboration, resolution
Value System	Media	Shop Around	Open-minded
View of Career	Irritant	Place to serve	Place to solve problems
View of Technology	Enjoy it	Employ it	Live it
View of Future	Hopeless	Optimistic	Solve it!

Based on their research, Mohr and Mohr suggest that online teaching instructors provide specific guidelines for online research to assist this generation from engaging in their “binge mentality” (89). Also, creating assignments and research that connect, in some definable way, to our students lives, is very important to Generation Z. This generation approaches life from a global perspective and wants to see their education made relevant to their daily lives and educational goals: “These students are driven by their passions, are empathic, and are looking for others to be a part of their personal and professional journeys. This generation is also constantly seeking value and return on investment” (Barber).

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly to creating culturally responsive spaces in our online courses, Gen Z students are more racially and ethnically diverse than previous generations.

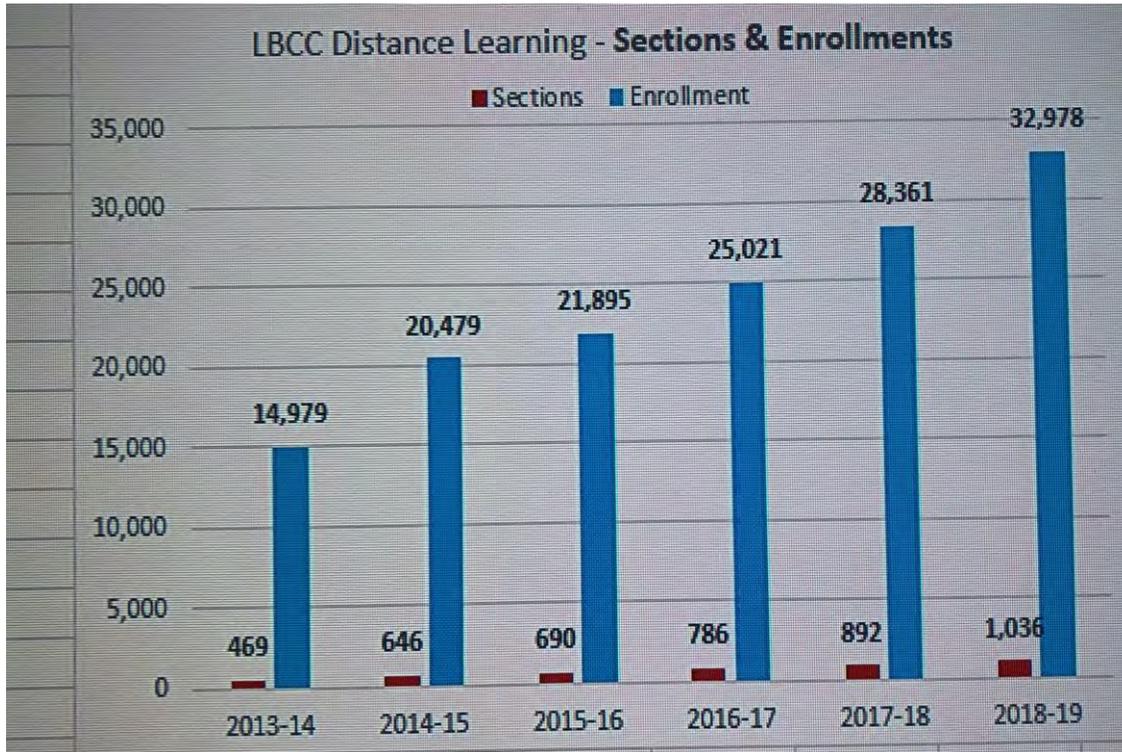
According to the Pew Researchers Kim Parker and Ruth Igielnik, 52% of students are non-Hispanic White, 25 % are Hispanic, 14% are Black, 6% are Asian, and 5% are another race or two or more races. As faculty, we can help to bridge generational preferences and our students' need to be both valued and academically successful by creating culturally responsive themes and course materials for them.

## **V. Online Course Offerings and English Department Success Rates**

### **a. LBCC Online Sections and Enrollment**

In keeping with the national trend, LBCC has seen a steady increase in online course offerings (this data point is referencing the period prior to the College move online due to Covid). The bar graph below illustrates this increase in course sections and enrollment across the College from 2013-2019 (the increasing number of online students during this time period was responsible for the College maintaining its “large college” status. This, of course, changed with the implementation of performance funding). See Table D.

**Table D. LBCC Distance Education Enrollment Growth, 6-Year Average**



The reasons for the increase in online enrollment, both at LBCC and nationally, often include non-academic commitments. In addition to completing their degree and transfer goals, the majority of our students are working, often two or more jobs, and taking care of their families. Some of these external demands and reasons behind an increase for online courses are identified in a study conducted by Educationdata.org:

**Reasons for Online Learning Choices by Students (nationwide)**

Existing commitments to not allow for attendance in campus-based courses	47 %
Online learning was the only way to pursue the field of interest	21%
Employer incentive or partnership	21%
Reputation of a specific school	8%

Other

4%

b. Online Course Success Rates

While online course success rates have been historically lower than face-to-face courses, there is room for optimism. One of the most well-known and comprehensive studies conducted on community college online success rates was done by U.C. Davis researchers, Cassandra M.D. Hart, Elizabeth Friedmann, and Michael Hill in 2015. Their report, *Online Course-Taking and Student Outcomes in California Community Colleges*, draws from data provided by the California Community College Chancellor's Office. The authors examine the causes for low success rates in online courses compared to face-to-face courses, analyzing college-course fixed effects and individual fixed-effects. Key takeaways from this research include the finding that students who were enrolled in courses conducive to online learning (e.g., computer programming) were more successful than peers in other subject areas, intersession and non-transfer level courses have the lowest success rates, and faculty "characteristics" impact student performance in online courses.

However, another study conducted by Community College Research Center at Teachers College, Columbia University found that achievement gaps tend to widen in online courses, particularly for three student demographic groups, including males, students with lower prior GPAs, and Black students. This online achievement gap was present in all subject areas.

I chose to include this research for two main reasons. First, the U.C. Davis report is one of the most in-depth examination of online course success rates in the California Community College system. And two, both pieces of data show the areas for improvement (impacted student groups)

and Hart, Friedmann, and Hill's conclusions strongly suggest that the ability to improve the success rates of disproportionately impacted students resides with faculty; we play a vital in students' online course success, and this sabbatical report posits the solution that applying culturally responsive teaching practices can be instrumental in addressing online achievement gaps and increasing students' ability to be successful in our online courses.

To-date, all LBCC faculty have received online teaching certification or completed the Test-Out process. There have been ongoing professional development opportunities offered by the College as well, including Cultural Curriculum Audits and Faculty Distance Ed Facilitator roles. The U.C. Davis report *Role Ambiguity in Online Courses: An Analysis of Student and Instructor Expectations*, conducted by R.H. Bork and Z. Rucks-Ahidiana, highlights the need for online teaching faculty to be qualified: "If it is especially important in online settings for instructors to be able to anticipate confusion over material because online settings for instructors lack the real-time, visual cues that would allow them to assess and react to student confusion during lectures, more experience teaching the subject matter may be more advantageous online" (5).

**Table E. LBCC College-Wide Online Student Success Rates, Averages 2017-2020**

\* Represents a cell with fewer than 15 students and is therefore hidden for privacy

		2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
All	All students	54.2% (67,444)	56.1% (79,572)	59.0% (92,064)	60.9% (96,470)

Table E. shows the 4-year average online student success rates at LBCC (spring 2020 was not available at the time of this report, and it is not included in this calculation). This data includes all online sessions (5-week, 6-week, 8-week, 12 week, and 16-week sessions). The 2016-2017 average parallels the nationwide average but it is worth noting the incremental success rate improvements, including the 6% increase from 2016 to fall 2020. This increase in online student success is maintained even with the steady increase of students due to Covid and the move online (29,026 more students from 2016 to fall 2020). While there have been steady increases in most student demographic areas, there is obvious room for improvement. An examination of these course success rates is even more impactful when we look at the breakdown by race and ethnicity (see Table F).

**Table F. LBCC Online Course Success Rates by Race and Ethnicity**

Summary Table | COURSE SUCCESS
Office of Institutional Effectiveness  
Last Updated 8/06/2020 by TS

School	Season	Session length	Location/Modality	Demographic Breakout
(All) ▼	(All) ▼	(All) ▼	Online ▼	Student Equity: Race/Ethnicity ▼
Departments	Subject	Course	Select a measure	Spring 2020 has been excluded. See Summary Dashboard 02 for details
(All) ▼	(All) ▼	(All) ▼	One-Year Averages: 2017-2020 ▼	

\* Represents a cell with fewer than 15 students and is therefore hidden for privacy

		2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
All	Asian	66.7% (2,231)	68.6% (2,595)	72.5% (3,164)	75.1% (2,592)
	Black/ African-American	38.4% (3,769)	41.2% (4,315)	49.6% (5,049)	50.8% (3,990)
	Hispanic/Latino	56.2% (10,786)	58.8% (11,906)	63.4% (14,205)	64.4% (11,058)
	Native American	48.1% (104)	43.4% (83)	56.3% (119)	50.5% (95)
	Pacific Islander	46.3% (361)	53.5% (383)	58.9% (465)	59.5% (326)
	Unknown/Other	60.6% (502)	67.5% (474)	67.3% (376)	71.9% (228)
	White	67.1% (3,798)	71.1% (4,279)	71.5% (5,150)	73.0% (4,067)

Table F. includes both intersession online courses, 5-week, 6-week, 8-week, 12 week and 16-week sessions. Over the course of the last four years, our Asian students and White students have had the highest online course success rates, with Asian students at an increase of 1% in 2018-19 and a 2.1% increase over White students in 2019-20. The largest improvement in online student success over the last four years has been by our Pacific Islander students with approximately a 13% increase. The second largest increase has been for our Black/African-American students. There is a 12% increase in online student success from 2016-20 but a decrease (by 1,059) in the

total number of Black/African-American students who enrolled in online courses in 2019-20. Our Hispanic/Latino students' success rates have increased approximately 8% from 2016 to 2020. Our Native American students saw an 8% increase in student success from 2016 to 2018-19, but this number decreased by roughly 5 percentage points in 2019-20.

These numbers tell us that there is a great need for improvement and opportunities to build on the incremental progress that has already been made. The data tells us that students of color deserve our attention and intentional commitment to their academic success. The Cultural Curriculum Audits during summer 2020 and winter 2021, in addition to the required TOS and Growing with Canvas certifications that occurred in spring, summer, and fall 2020, have helped to equip FT and adjunct faculty with the tools to develop more robust and engaging Canvas courses for their students. Applying culturally responsive teaching and learning practices within our online courses will further support our students' abilities to succeed.

#### c. LBCC English Department Online Course Success Rate Data

While the success rates for online courses have been low historically, this sabbatical project proposes that as faculty, we can help to further build our students' abilities to successfully complete our courses by applying culturally responsive teaching and learning pedagogy into our courses. At its core, CRTL is the practice of teaching "*to and through* [students] personal and cultural strengths, their intellectual capabilities, and their prior accomplishments" (Gay 32). A closer look at the online success rates in the English Department highlights the need to reach our students in a more impactful pedagogical way. Table G. shows a 4-year average of English 1 online course success rates, overall.

**Table G. English Department English 1 Online Success Rates, Summer 6-Week Session and 4-Year Average 2016-20**

## Summary Table | COURSE SUCCESS

Office of Institutional Effectiveness  
Last Updated 8/06/2020 by TS

School	Season	Session length	Location/Modality	Demographic Breakout
Language Arts and Communication	Summer	6 Week	Online	None
Departments	Subject	Course	Select a measure	Spring 2020 has been excluded. See Summary Dashboard 02 for details
English	ENGL	ENGL1	Four-Year Averages: 2017-2020	

\* Represents a cell with fewer than 15 students and is therefore hidden for privacy

		2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
All	All students	57.1%	56.0%	57.2%	60.2%
		(357)	(511)	(726)	(953)

Table G. shows the English 1 online course success rates during a 6-week summer session, over a 4-year average. Like most other departments, the English success rates are higher during the summer term than the 16-week semester. There has been a steady increase in the number of students taking English 1 during the summer session (pre-Covid) but only a 1% increase in success rates from 2017-18 to 2018-19. This percentage increases, along with the total number of students enrolled, by 3 points in 2019-20. It would be interesting to compare this data with the upcoming summer 2021 numbers and examine any correlations between student online readiness and faculty online certification.

**Table H. English Department English 1 Online Success Rates, 16-Week Session and 4-Year Average 2016-20 (demographics not included)**

**Summary Table | COURSE SUCCESS** Office of Institutional Effectiveness  
Last Updated 8/06/2020 by TS

School	Season	Session length	Location/Modality	Demographic Breakout
Language Arts and Communication	(All)	16 Week	Online	None
Departments	Subject	Course	Select a measure	Spring 2020 has been excluded. See Summary Dashboard 02 for details
English	ENGL	ENGL1	Four-Year Averages: 2017-2020	

\* Represents a cell with fewer than 15 students and is therefore hidden for privacy

		2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
All	All students	49.4% (1,938)	50.5% (1,961)	49.6% (2,260)	49.8% (2,312)

Table H. shows the online course success rates for a 16-week English 1 over a 4-year average. There is a noticeable decrease in success rates when the English Department numbers are compared to the College-wide data; there is an average of 10%-point decrease, in total, between the English Department success rates and the College-wide success rates (see Table I.). This variation exists across departments and other areas share similar percentages (or lower) to the English Department.

**Table I. LBCC Online Success Rates, 16-Week Session and 4-Year Average (demographics not included)**

## Summary Table | COURSE SUCCESS

Office of Institutional Effectiveness  
 Last Updated 2/03/2021 by TS

School	Season	Session length	Location/Modality	Demographic Breakout
(All) ▼	(All) ▼	16 Week ▼	Online ▼	None ▼
Departments	Subject	Course	Select a measure	
(All) ▼	(All) ▼	(All) ▼	Four-Year Averages: 2017-2020 ▼	Spring 2020 has been excluded. See Summary Dashboard 02 for details

\* Represents a cell with fewer than 15 students and is therefore hidden for privacy

2020-2021 data does not include Spring 2021.

		2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
All	All students	61.2% (38,889)	61.7% (41,299)	62.4% (43,182)	58.8% (39,884)

This data highlights the need to re-examine and revise our online pedagogy and practices to help our students become successful. This need is even more urgent when we look at the online course success rates by race, ethnicity, and gender (see Table J).

**Table J. English Department Online Success Rates by Race/Ethnicity/Gender, 16-Weeks and 4-Year Average**

**Summary Table | COURSE SUCCESS**

Office of Institutional Effectiveness  
Last Updated 8/06/2020 by TS

School Language Arts and Communication	Season (All)	Session length 16 Week	Location/Modality Online	Demographic Breakout Student Equity: Race/Ethnicity & Gender
Departments English	Subject ENGL	Course ENGL1	Select a measure Four-Year Averages: 2017-2020	Spring 2020 has been excluded. See Summary Dashboard 02 for details

\* Represents a cell with fewer than 15 students and is therefore hidden for privacy

	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
All				
American	*	*	*	*
Indian/Alaska Native ..	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
American	*	*	*	*
Indian/Alaska Native ..	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
American			*	*
Indian/Alaska Native ..	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
Asian - F	45.7%	53.8%	57.4%	55.4%
	(116)	(119)	(129)	(139)
Asian - M	56.8%	61.2%	59.3%	61.3%
	(88)	(98)	(113)	(119)
Asian - Unknown	*	*	*	*
	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
Black/African-	45.8%	49.0%	47.6%	42.8%
American - F	(201)	(198)	(252)	(290)
Black/African-	32.4%	29.7%	34.8%	33.9%
American - M	(74)	(74)	(92)	(112)
Black/African-	*	*	*	*
American - Unknown	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
Hispanic - F	48.8%	47.5%	46.3%	47.3%
	(578)	(608)	(728)	(719)
Hispanic - M	44.9%	43.7%	44.8%	48.1%
	(314)	(325)	(373)	(378)
Hispanic - Unknown	*	*	*	*
	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
Pacific Islander - F	43.5%	42.9%	39.3%	39.3%
	(23)	(21)	(28)	(28)
Pacific Islander - M	52.9%	72.2%	68.2%	61.1%
	(17)	(18)	(22)	(18)

Pacific Islander - Unknown		*	*	*
	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
Unknown - F	50.0%	56.3%	44.4%	50.0%
	(34)	(32)	(27)	(20)
Unknown - M	38.5%	47.4%	56.5%	58.8%
	(26)	(19)	(23)	(17)
White - F	60.9%	63.1%	63.0%	62.5%
	(271)	(252)	(254)	(259)
White - M	53.6%	56.9%	52.8%	54.7%
	(181)	(181)	(193)	(181)
White - Unknown	*	*	*	*
	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)

As community college educators, we are aware that there are many external factors that impact a student’s success in any given course. A 2020 LBCC student survey found that 68% of students said they did not have a quiet place to study and, as mentioned previously, some of our students complete coursework on their smartphones. Despite the numerous external challenges our students face, as faculty, we have the ability to shape both the content and discourse in our respective courses. The authors of “Grit Growth Mindset, and Deliberate Practice” published in the *Journal of Instructional Research*, contend that while there are numerous personal and institutional reasons for low attrition rates in online courses, deliberate practice can improve students’ persistence in a course, and by extension, their successful completion of it (McClendon, et. al.).

Why is CRTL the best pedagogical approach for LBCC students?

Culturally responsive teaching and learning is a transformational approach to creating a course; it requires that as teachers, we give up the false idea that good teaching has little or nothing to do with our students (or our) cultural capital in the classroom. It requires that we also give up the belief that we may hold that, as professor and researcher Geneva Gay argues, “cultural

neutrality” exists as we teach (29). In “Strategies for Implementing Online Culturally Responsive Teaching,” English and Social Studies teacher Larry Ferlazzo contends that CRTL is a necessary approach to teaching students today since it is a response to the “legacy and existence of racism” in their lives. As educators, we can help to combat this by creating intentional, equitized online spaces for our students. Faculty are more than content experts; we are, according to Barbara Diamond and Margaret Moore, “cultural organizers” (Gay 51). We can create and facilitate opportunities for academic achievement by promoting cultural and ethnic diversity and weaving these elements into our teaching practice, assignments, and discourse with our students. As faculty, we begin this process by delving deeper into who our LBCC students are and how they learn in an online course.

## **VI: Opportunities Rather than Challenges in Online Instruction: Reaching**

### **Disproportionately Impacted Students**

LBCC is primarily a Hispanic serving institution with over 58% of our students identifying as Latinx. According to an article published in the *Community College Review*, 7 out of 10 Latino students are graduating from high school and entering community colleges. The reason is simple: community colleges offer students a more affordable and accessible choice (Chen). But what happens when many of these students, due to work or family commitments, decide to take an online course? In “Successful Online Courses in California’s Community Colleges” by Hans Johnson, Marisol Cuellar Mejia, and Kevin Cook, the authors discuss the disadvantages of taking online courses for many students. While their study shows that students in California community colleges are on average 10 to 14 percentage points less likely to complete an online course compared to a face-to-face course, this disparity grows for specific ethnic and racial student

populations. They cite research that concludes that African American and Hispanic students have respectively 17.5 and 9.8 percentage points *lower* online course success rates than white students (Johnson, et. al.).

In relation to our LBCC students, the goal for faculty becomes closing the achievement gap on two fronts: between online and traditional face-to-face courses and eliminating the online achievement gap for disproportionately impacted students. It is imperative that faculty become intentional in reaching out to our specific student populations. The LBCC online course success rate average for Latinos is 60.8% and 61% for Latinas. However, these numbers decrease for some students when they take English 1 online; the overall English 1 success rates for Latinos is 52.1% and 50.4% for Latinas. The same downward pattern occurs for our Black/African-American students. Their average college-wide success rate in 2019-20 was 50.8% and 45.3% for Black/African-American females and 46.1% for Black/ African-American males. The decrease also occurs for our Pacific Islander student population. While the College-wide online success rate was 59.5% in 2019-20, it was 53.7% for male Pacific Islanders and 47.8% for female Pacific Islanders in online courses during 2019-20. Our Native American students' college-wide success rates were 50.5% with a slight increase to 52.9%, in terms of English composition course success rates. One student area that has seen the most significant drop in terms of online course success rates in the English Department is our Asian student population. There is a 13 point, and 16 points respectively, decrease from a college-wide success rate of 75.1% to 62% (Asian males) and 59.7% (Asian females) in English Department composition-based courses (see Table K.). This data includes all composition based English courses and all semester session lengths.

**Table K. LBCC Online Success Rates for All Sessions, 4-Year Average, by Race/Ethnicity/Gender**

**Summary Table | COURSE SUCCESS** Office of Institutional Effectiveness  
Last Updated 2/03/2021 by TS

School: Language Arts and Communication | Season: (All) | Session length: (All) | Location/Modality: Online | Demographic Breakout: Student Equity: Race/Ethnicity & Gender

Departments: English | Subject: ENGL | Course: (Multiple values) | Select a measure: Four-Year Averages: 2017-2020

Spring 2020 has been excluded. See Summary Dashboard 02 for details

\* Represents a cell with fewer than 15 students and is therefore hidden for privacy

2020-2021 data does not include Spring 2021.

		2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
All	American	50.0% *	45.8% *	50.0%	52.9%
	Indian/Alaska Native ..	(0)	(0)	(18)	(17)
	American	*	*	*	*
	Indian/Alaska Native ..	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
	Asian - F	61.3% (224)	62.8% (265)	63.3% (341)	59.7% (404)
	Asian - M	64.7% (154)	63.7% (193)	63.2% (258)	62.0% (292)
	Asian - Unknown	*	*	*	*
	Asian - Unknown	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
	Black/African-	51.0%	49.5%	48.6%	45.3%
	American - F	(411)	(475)	(670)	(783)
	Black/African-	42.1%	43.4%	45.1%	46.1%
	American - M	(149)	(171)	(233)	(297)
	Black/African-	*	36.8% *	40.9% *	*
	American - Unknown	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)
	Hispanic - F	54.6% (1,072)	53.4% (1,377)	53.4% (1,883)	50.4% (2,135)
	Hispanic - M	53.4% (543)	52.8% (673)	53.1% (870)	52.1% (960)
	Hispanic - Unknown	58.3% *	52.8% *	50.8%	34.5%
	Hispanic - Unknown	(0)	(0)	(19)	(29)
	Pacific Islander - F	52.1% (39)	47.1% (43)	49.6% (62)	47.8% (67)
	Pacific Islander - M	58.7% (31)	62.5% (31)	61.2% (43)	53.7% (41)
Pacific Islander - Unknown	(0)	(0)	(0)	(0)	

Before examining the benefits of applying culturally responsive pedagogy in English 1, it is important to look at some of the barriers that may occur in online course design and student learning practices. Based on my research, there are three main areas that can impact students’

success in an online course: student preparedness, online course design, and social isolation and cognitive overload.

- a. Student Preparedness: preparing students to take online courses is another key component to successful course completion. In the article “Promises and Pitfalls of Online Education,” researchers Eric Bettinger and Susanna Loeb acknowledge the widely accepted benefit of online learning: it grants access to students who may otherwise have limited or no other opportunity to a higher education. However, statistically, those who are underprepared to take online courses, failed at a higher rate than those students who met in face-to-face courses. This study was based on a for-profit institution but it lends credibility to the point that in order for students to succeed, they must have more than access to courses; they should have technology training *and* support.
- b. Isolation and Weak Online Course Design: building community and opportunities for engagement is crucial to online student success. In the article “Engagement Matters: Student Perceptions on the Importance of Engagement Strategies in the Online Learning Environment” by Doris Bollinger and Florence Martin, the authors conducted a survey-based research study to examine which engagement strategies were most helpful in reducing the sense of online isolation, enhancing student motivation, and improving student success in online courses. The survey sample consisted of online students at eight universities across the United States. The research questions were as follows: 1. Which strategies do students perceive to be important in enhancing learner-learner, learner-instructor, and learner-content engagement in the online environment? 2. Which strategies do students identify as most valuable and least valuable to engaging them in the

online learning environment? 3. Are there differences in responses based on individual differences, such as gender, age, and experience with online courses? The survey utilized Michael G. Moore's well-known "Three Types of Interaction Framework," published in the *American Journal of Distance Education: Learner-to-Content Interaction, Learner-to-Instructor Interaction, and Learner-to-Learner Interaction* (a description of these three types is below).

### Three Types of Learner Interaction

- 1) Learner-to-Content Interaction: This type of interaction involves the student's (or learner's) intellectual engagement with course content; the interactive mental process that occurs when a student reads, writes, responds, and views course material is foundational in creating understanding. Moore cites professor and researcher Borge Holmberg's study that refers to this level of interaction as the "internal didactic conversation."
- 2) Learner-to-Instructor Interaction: This type of interaction is the engagement between the online instructor and students. The aim of this interaction has four key parts; generate interest in the subject content to motivate students to learn, model the desired skillsets/outcomes and present content in an organized and pedagogically-driven format, create informative assessment to ascertain how students are learning material and acquiring the necessary skills, and finally, instructors provide support and direction to students based on the assessments.
- 3) Learner-to-Learner Interaction: This type of online interaction happens (initially) without the real-time interaction of the instructor. According to Moore, learner-learner

engagement is particularly useful when students lack self-motivation and autonomy. In this case, online peer collaboration and opportunities for discussion are helpful.

Of these three online communication areas, Bollinger and Martin’s survey of the online college students found that *learner-to-instructor engagement strategies* were considered the most beneficial by students. These results further support the importance and impact of positive faculty and student online interaction. Below are the results of this survey.

**Bollinger and Martin Survey Results: Importance of Student Engagement Strategies**

Possible total scale scores ranged from 29 to 145 (based on 29 items with a range of 1 to 5), and respondents’ scores ranged from 84 to 145 (M = 113.74; SD = 12.06). Their total mean scores ranged from 2.90 to 5.00 (M = 3.92; SD = 0.42).

**Table 1. Learner-to-Learner Survey Results** (Note: Scale ranging from 1 [very unimportant] to 5 [very important]).

Item	M	SD
Students use a virtual lounge where they can meet informally to share common interests.	3.03	1.17
Students complete an integrated profile on the learning management system that is accessible in all courses.	3.45	0.97
Students introduce themselves using an icebreaker discussion.	4.08	0.93
Students moderate discussions.	3.55	0.93

Students have choices in the selection of readings (articles, books) that drive discussion group formation.	3.78	0.95
Students post audio and/or video files in threaded discussions instead of only written responses.	3.60	0.92
Students interact with peers through student presentations (asynchronously or synchronously).	3.89	0.93
Students work collaboratively using online communication tools to complete case studies, projects, etc.	3.94	1.07
Students peer-review classmates' work.	3.66	1.09
Students are required to rate individual performance of team members on projects.	3.38	1.13

**Table 2. Learner-to-Instructor Survey Results**

Item	M	SD
The instructor refers to students by name in discussion forums.	4.13	0.87
The instructor sends/posts regular announcements or email reminders.	4.53	0.67
The instructor creates a forum for students to contact the instructor w/ questions about the course.	4.36	0.81
The instructor creates a course orientation for students.	4.10	0.92
The instructor posts a “due date checklist” at the end of each instructional unit.	4.33	0.89
The instructor creates short videos to increase instructor presence in the course.	4.04	0.98

The instructor provides feedback using various modalities (e.g., text, audio, video, and visuals).	4.05	0.88
The instructor provides students with an opportunity to reflect (e.g., journal /surveys).	3.67	0.99
The instructor posts grading rubrics for all assignments.	4.41	0.79
The instructor uses various features in synchronous sessions to interact with students (e.g., polls, emoticons, whiteboard, text, or audio and video chat).	3.85	0.88

**Table 3. Learner-to-Content Survey Results**

Item	M	SD
Students interact with content in more than one format (e.g., text, video, audio, interactive games, or simulations).	4.17	0.81
Students use optional online resources to explore topics in more depth.	4.09	0.72
Students experience live, synchronous web conferencing for class events and/or guest talks	3.40	1.06
Discussions are structured with guiding questions and/or prompts to deepen their understanding of the content.	4.39	0.66
Students research an approved topic and present their findings in a delivery method of their choice (e.g., discussions forum, chat, web conference, multimedia presentation).	3.97	0.82
Students search for and select applicable materials (e.g., articles, books) based on their interests.	3.97	0.81

Students have an opportunity to reflect on important elements of the course (e.g., use of communication tools, their learning, team projects, and community).	4.00	0.81
Students work on realistic scenarios to apply content (e.g., case studies, reports, research papers, presentations, client projects).	4.40	0.65
Students use self-tests to check their understanding of materials.	3.54	0.98

**Bollinger and Martin Survey Takeaways and Applications for Online Instruction and Online Student Success at LBCC**

Over 94% of the students surveyed in the Bollinger study ranked regular and effective contact (described as “sends/posts regular announcements or email reminders” in the survey), as important to online engagement and success. 90% of students ranked an instructor posting rubrics for all graded assignments as important and 89.1% of students ranked a forum for students to contact their instructor as an important engagement strategy. According to Moore, feedback in Learner-Instructor Interaction is extremely important because online learners are most vulnerable at the “point of application” (Moore). This is the key moment when the online student requires confirmation (or redirection) that they are applying the course tools, content, reading, or writing practice, correctly.

I propose that culturally responsive pedagogy lends itself well to learner-to-instructor online engagement and success. The premise of culturally responsive teaching and learning (also referred to as “Culturally Relevant Teaching,” “Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy,” and “Culture-Based Education”) is that culture, teaching, and learning are interrelated; opportunities for academic

achievement increase when, as Geneva Gay states in *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Practice, and Research*, “teaching employs the cultural referents of the students to whom it is directed” (274). In practice, CRTL is a deliberate effort by an instructor to “demystify and defuse the threat of academic and cultural discourse” by creating curriculum that invites conversations and context from different ethnic, racial, cultural, and socioeconomic groups (Gay 271).

- c. Cognitive Overload: Cognitive overload occurs when the brain’s capacity for effectively processing information becomes taxed. There is a breakdown between a person’s working memory and his/her/their long-term memory. In short, when an individual is completing a new task or solving an unfamiliar problem, they rely on their working memory. Our working memory is limited in terms of both its capacity and the amount of time it retains information. As a result, processing and completing a multitude of new tasks, while secondary distractions occur, leads to cognitive overload. Cognitive Load Theory (CLT) was first developed by educational psychologist John Sweller. According to Sweller, removing unnecessarily complex factors from the learning process makes it easier for students to learn. Drawing from Sweller’s research in “Cognitive Load During Problem Solving: Effects on Learning,” there are three forms of cognitive load:

### Three Types of Cognitive Load

- Intrinsic Cognitive Load: the demands made of a learner by the intrinsic quality of information being learned and the learner’s ability to understand new information. The cognitive load of the new information (or processes) increases when there are several parts or components in the information. ICL can be reduced for learners when information is broken down into small, more manageable steps (or chunks).

- **Extraneous Cognitive Load:** additional and unnecessary steps, directions, demands made on the learner by the instructor. The extraneous information may distract, confuse, or may a learning task more complex than it needs to be. As a result, the students spend more time trying to decipher the instructions than developing a response to the prompt, exercise, etc.
- **Germane Cognitive Load:** this load is a direct effort by the brain to support the development of schema in long term memory. CGL occurs when a learner makes critical thinking connections, including between new and existing pieces information. This type of cognitive load is a crucial facet of learning as it allows learners house information in long-term memory and to acquire course content, skills, and apply these to different discipline areas.

Sweller’s research emphasizes the need for online teaching faculty to create Canvas courses that reduce extraneous intrinsic load and extraneous load and *increase* germane cognitive load.

Culturally Responsive teaching and learning pedagogy will assist with GCL since it connects course content with our students’ own diverse backgrounds and learning experiences.

## **VII. Best Practices to Address Online Learning Challenges Using OEI Principles & CRTL Strategies**

- a. Recommendations to Address Online Student Preparedness

One advantage of Canvas for many of our LBCC students is the fact that they transfer from the LBUSD system. Since March 2020, K-12 students have been utilizing the Canvas LMS and in the process, become more familiar with its tools and applications.

Furthermore, in 2020, LBCC built in more substantial online training opportunities for students who register for online courses. In addition to the numerous Online Learning Student Readiness tutorials shared within Canvas, QUEST for Online Student Success 2.0 was implemented in fall 2020. This is a self-paced, ungraded series of modules that introduces students to online learning, including time management, study skills, reading strategies, and tech readiness. In 2020, approximately 6,700 LBCC students were trained or enrolled to complete QUEST. As of spring 2021, QUEST is optional and not proctored. Although outside the scope of my project, I would recommend that the College explore the possibility of making student online readiness a requirement or co-req to increase our students' technological knowledge base and familiarize them with Canvas features.

Another recommendation to incrementally improve online student success is for faculty to frontload, small but targeted, online readiness practices in their Canvas courses. These tutorials may include topics such as how to navigate a Canvas course, strategies for effective time management, and how to access instructor feedback on submissions.

b. Recommendations to Reduce Online Isolation

While the OEI (Online Education Initiative) by the California Community College Chancellor's Office is an important collaborative effort to centralize online course access and success,

leveraging effective and impactful pedagogy, specifically culturally responsive practices, at the course level is also crucial to reducing online isolation and increasing student success.

Education researcher Lyn Henderson refers to CRTL pedagogy as the “Multiple-Cultures Model of Instructional Design.” Henderson proposes that a more equitable online instructional design model is one that is “multiple-cultural” rather than “multi-cultural” (85) The Multiple-Cultural paradigm acknowledges and embraces intersectionality and that people belong to more than one culture. Courses that borrow from this type of instructional design, incorporate numerous cultural perspectives in course content and opportunities for interaction and reflection with both the instructor and peers. Henderson contends that all online spaces reflect the class, gender, culture, values, and ideologies of their instructional designers. This idea reinforces the need for instructors to be both intentional and deliberate in creating online courses that reflect their students rather than just themselves.

A multi-cultural approach to online course design is an opportunity for online instructors and students alike; it reinforces the importance of creating curriculum, including assignments, discussions, collaborations, and reflections that invite students, particularly those from disproportionately impacted groups, to be active and knowledgeable participants in their own learning. It means, as Henderson argues, “that the central importance of the multiple cultural model and the multiple cultural contextualization axis is to ensure that the instructional designer is fully cognizant of the role culture plays in in learning and teaching, and acts on that awareness” (102).

Equity-minded instructional design also requires that online instructors know *who* their students are and *how* they learn. A diverse group of students may exist in the same online space (i.e. classroom) but their learning experiences and levels of responsiveness vary. More insight into our students' learning styles and cultural perspectives will help to inform faculty as they build culturally responsive online courses. Daniel R. Smith and David F. Ayers examine this idea in "Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Online Learning: Implications for the Globalized Community College," published in the *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*. Their review of literature offers an interesting look at how Hispanic/Latino students navigate and learn in online community college courses. Smith and Ayers argue that distance education, while seemingly "culturally neutral," is in fact, reflective of Western-designed thought and design; much computer software and programs foster individual autonomy, "[isolating] the learner from his or her peers" (5). In a study of Latino students conducted by I. Sanchez and C. Gunawardena, the authors found that the most effective instructional design strategy was cooperative distance-learning. They note distinguishing characteristics of cooperative distance-learning and their Latino students' learning style preferences:

Hispanic/Latino adult learners often demonstrate a strong preference for feedback, so the distance learning instructor must be mindful to provide feedback frequently and thoroughly throughout the learning experience. Also, Hispanic/Latino learners often prefer activities that are collaborative rather than competitive. The opportunity to work in groups on projects that are planned, carried out, and evaluated by the group may accommodate these preferences. Hispanic/Latino adult learners also show a preference for reflectivity that is well-supported by asynchronous discussion boards...facilitators of distance-learning experiences offered through community colleges should strive to incorporate higher-order

cognitive processing into learning activities...and [make] judgments based on the convergence of information with their own realities. (Ayers and Smith 10)

Another important student demographic that will benefit from culturally responsive online course design are our Black/ African-American students, particularly males. Susan Salvo, Kaye Shelton, and Brett Welch conducted an in-depth look at the causes for low attrition rates of African-American male college students. Their study, “African American Males Learning Online: Promoting Academic Achievement in Higher Education” published in 2019, found that several factors contributed to online course completion, including a less racist learning environment. 40% of the Black students who participated in the study shared that they felt online courses permitted a non-prejudicial learning environment, and one college student subject elaborated on this issue:

It’s an open forum where everyone has the opportunity to say what they want to say. In the classroom you may not get picked. That’s being honest. In online classes, everyone has the same access. I hate to talk about all that kinda stuff. You know, race and that. But I see fewer people of color raising their hands. Because they already know that it’s not going to happen. Now we can decide. In online classes, it takes all of those variables away. It makes you feel comfortable. NO anxiety about any of that. (Salvo, et al)

In her dissertation, “Spaces for Success in Higher Education: Males of Color at an Online Predominantly White Community College,” Wanda Gail Tucker examines the online learning conditions that will increase both retention and successful course completion rates of males of color. One of her key findings clearly connects back to culturally responsive teaching and learning theory. Tucker argues that incorporating “positive information about their cultures within the curriculum” and “placing men of color at the center of discourse demonstrates that others value their experiences” (44). Lastly, Carol Lundberg and Dennis Sheridan examined the

correlation between online course engagement best practices and student success rates. In “Benefits of Engagement with Peers, Faculty, and Diversity for Online Learners,” published in *College Teaching*, the authors examined the primary factors that contributed to the success of the 812 college students who participated in their survey. In addition to a supportive learning environment and faculty feedback on student work, the findings state that online “student learning increases when the campus environment is broadly supportive of their success and when it encourages them to interact with diverse peers” (15).

c. Recommendations to Reduce Online Cognitive Overload

In “How to Mitigate Cognitive Load in Online Learning,” Matthew Lynch emphasizes five key strategies to minimize students’ online distractions and maximize their ability to process and retain important information. These strategies are to use “chunking,” (breaking course content into smaller chunks for a defined period of time and avoid “cramming” multiple ideas or practices into a module), use meaningful infographics to relay course content, use an intuitive design that allows students to easily navigate the course and complete assignments, be practical and create opportunities for students to draw connections between the course content and real-world tasks or experience, and lastly, use clear and concise language in our courses. While the assignment or practice we are asking students to complete may be multi-layered and complex, the words we use to provide direction should be both intentional and straightforward, avoiding what researcher Ton de Jong refers to as “extraneous cognitive load.”

## **VIII. Learning Theories Conducive to Online Learning & CRTL**

- a. Sociocultural Theory of Learning contends that authentic learning occurs first during social and cultural interactions between individuals, and second, through individual internalization of social behaviors. These interactions help to construct individual cognitive development and we, in turn, shape those around us. Key tenets of sociocultural learning theory are that knowledge is co-constructed and learning is an active process. Sociocultural learning theory and culturally responsive pedagogy are the premise and practice of giving students agency; in a well-constructed online course, students will have opportunities to both share and socially construct knowledge with their instructor and peers. Collaborative assignments, peer review/research/interview activities, guided discussion posts and follow-up responses are a few ways that instructors can build in these opportunities. This student-centered online learning is cooperative and both community and course content building. These dialogic online spaces “remind students that learning does not occur on a vacuum and must be interpreted by the participants in the context of culture” (Edwards and Edick).
  
- b. Cognitivism is a learning theory that posits that learning should be focused and purposeful and meaning is constructed by Distance Education researcher Tony Bates describes as “reconciling new information with previous knowledge.” A key facet of cognitivism is that learning is inherently a social process between the student, teacher, and peers. Bates argues that “the social process cannot be effectively replaced by technology, although technology may facilitate it.” The role of technology in this intersection and construction of knowledge has been examined a lot in the last ten years. This merging of cognitivism and sociocultural learning has led to what education researcher and author Dr. Linda Harasim calls “Online Collaborative Learning Theory” or OCL. These social learning theories connect to two key premises in culturally responsive pedagogy; 1)

for learning to occur and be authentic, it must be relevant to our students' lives. 2) Peer discussions that require critical thinking and collaboration are essential. Gay cites several studies that illustrate the value marginalized groups of students, specifically Latino, Native American, Black/ African-American, and Asian Americans, place on cooperative learning. According to Gay, "underlying values of human connectedness and collaborative problem-solving are high priorities in the cultures of most groups of color in the United States [and] cooperation plays a central role in these groups' learning styles" (217).

In *The Art of Critical Pedagogy*, Jeffrey Duncan-Andrade and Ernest Morrell, examine this necessary intersection between students' culture and learning further. While discussing a youth research project, the authors emphasize an important idea; students need to be invited to see themselves as subjects and partners in the research process rather than as "objects" of research (107-108). According to Andrade and Morrell, involving students in learning that encourages them to draw from their own cultures, "brings in populations that are often alienated within the traditional research paradigm [and] these populations often have the best vantage point and the greatest vested interest in the work itself"

## **IX. CRTL History and Practice**

"In teaching ethnically diverse students I expect to learn about their cultural differences, too. There is no doubt in my mind that students from different ethnic groups and backgrounds can teach me a lot about their cultures, heritages, and experiences. I don't abdicate my responsibilities as teacher, or expect students to do my job...I expect students to be teachers as

well as learners, as I teach and learn simultaneously. We share the power and privilege of expertise and authorship.”

-Geneva Gay, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*

**a. Gloria Ladson-Billings; What is Culturally Reflexive Teaching and Learning? 4 Key Components**

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning Theory is a term introduced two decades ago by Gloria Ladson-Billings. Ladson-Billings is the former Kellner Family Distinguished Professor of Urban Education in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction and faculty affiliate in the Department of Educational Policy Studies at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She was also President of the National Academy of Education. Her body of work, including *Racialized Discourses and Ethnic Epistemologies*, *Education Research in the Public Interest: Social Justice, Action, and Policy*, and, most notably, “Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy” published in the *American Education Research Journal* in 1995, sparked much needed conversations about the role of race in education.

CRTL is a type of pedagogy that draws on students’ cultural references and ethnic identities and includes these components in all aspects of learning. The areas of student experiences that CRTL may address in a course include race, ethnicity, class, gender, region, religion, and family. CRTL goes beyond just acknowledging diversity in course curriculum; it is intentional in recognizing and connecting with students’ diverse backgrounds and making discipline-specific connections to engage and foster learning. Ladson-Billing's work emphasizes that culturally relevant pedagogy makes a concerted effort to engage learners whose cultural and ethnic

identities are not part of the mainstream. In “But That’s Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy,” Ladson-Billings identifies three teaching practices which promote student success; teaching yields academic success, students develop positive ethnic and cultural identities, and the instruction “supports students’ ability to recognize, understand, and critique social inequalities” (476).

**b. Raymond J. Wlodkowski and Margery B. Ginsberg**

Raymond J. Wlodkowski and Margery B. Ginsberg examine the relationship between students’ identities and learning in “A Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching.” Ginsberg and Wlodkowski examine the predominate academic system which focuses on “extrinsic” goals, including competitive assessments within the classroom. The problem, or challenge, in this approach is that it does not motivate every type of student and it restricts opportunities for intrinsic motivation. Building on Ladson-Billing’s work, Wlodkowski and Ginsberg propose four areas that illustrate the symbiotic relationship between students and the instructor:

The Wlodkowski-Ginsberg framework names four motivational conditions that the teacher and students continuously create or enhance in a culturally responsive classroom:

1. *Establishing inclusion*—creating a learning atmosphere in which students and teachers feel respected by and connected to one another.
2. *Developing attitude*—creating a favorable disposition toward the learning experience through personal relevance and choice.
3. *Enhancing meaning*—creating challenging, thoughtful learning experiences that include student perspectives and values.

4. *Engendering competence*—creating an understanding that students are effective in learning something they value. (Wlodkowski and Margery B. Ginsberg)

**c. Geneva Gay and Zaretta Hammond**

Geneva Gay and Zaretta Hammond are the leading researchers and practitioners of CRTL in education. Gay is Professor of Education at the University of Washington-Seattle where she teaches multicultural education and general curriculum theory. She has won numerous professional awards and she best known for her publications on the intersectionality of race, culture, and teaching and learning. Gay's publications and editorial work include, *Expressively Black: The Cultural Basis of Ethnic*, *At the Essence of Learning: Multicultural Education*, and *Becoming Multicultural Educators: Personal Journey Toward Professional Agency*. Her texts, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Practice, & Research* are key parts of this sabbatical research.

Gay's research begins with understanding and examining commonly held assumptions about student learning and barriers to student achievement. Her text also addresses how to cultivate student success by examining our individual teaching philosophies and how they align (or do not align) with culturally responsive teaching practices. Gay acknowledges, and I agree, that there are many factors that impede our students' success, specifically our students of color. These other underlying factors include socioeconomic and political inequities, and policies at both the local and state levels. However, after conducting research for this project, an important conclusion that I have reached as an educator is that the most promising attribute of culturally

responsive teaching and learning is that change is possible at the most important and local level: our courses.

Culturally responsive pedagogy requires that, as teachers, we critically examine the different ways that culture affects our approach to teaching and the impact this will have on our students. Including culturally diverse content into courses is not a new practice, but the ideological premise of culturally responsive teaching and learning goes beyond a reductive or token approach. Teacher and educator Zaretta Hammond's book, *Culturally Responsive Teaching and The Brain: Promoting Authentic Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students* examines, what she refers to as the "natural intersection" of, brain-based learning and culturally responsive learning. Because culturally responsive teaching and learning is social-emotional and relational in practice, understanding how students learn within their own cultures is paramount. Hammond's work asks educators an important question, "What is the connection between *neuroscience* and culturally responsive teaching and learning?" Hammond explores how learning barriers, specifically mindsets, language, and stereotype threats affect students (and us) both mentally and physically.

Hammond's work builds onto this foundation by explaining how these stressors create apprehension, fear, and insecurity that causes students to *move away*, as opposed to *lean into* a learning experience. Hammond expands on the importance of building connections between the brain and our students' cultures in "The Neuroscience of Call and Response." In this article, Hammond examines the role of "call and response" in indigenous oral cultures and its relevancy and currency today. According to Hammond, there are three components of the brain's learning process: (1) Attention activation (2). Firing and wiring (3). Mirror neurons. Garnering students' attention in a course is the "call" from the instructor. It is the action that triggers the response to

pay attention. According to Hammond, “calls” that include “high personal relevance” are effective in connecting with students. Firing and wiring is the remembering part of the learning process. Now that the instructor has the students’ attention, information is retrieved, reviewed, and processed so that it becomes part of the long-term memory. The last component, mirror neurons, refers to the brain cells that support observational learning and engage when a person experiences emotion or observes someone else with those emotions. Hammond offers insights about the nature of learning and how our brains work; an important takeaway and application from Hammond’s work is that “call and response” opportunities can be created in our online courses so that students can learn in a way that is both content driven and culturally affirming.

Lastly, Gay argues that culturally responsive teaching is both dynamic and collaborative; it is predicated on a solid communicative relationship between the instructor and students. Gay refers to this as the “dialectic discourse” that fosters trust and learning (203). In short, culturally responsive teaching relays course content and simultaneously connects it to students’ lives.

There are six key assertions regarding culturally responsive teaching and learning, according to Gay. Five of these tenets, I believe, are crucial to understanding why CRTL is an important pedagogy, specifically for our LBCC students.

#### Assertion #1 to Increase Student Achievement: Culture Counts

According to Gay, there is a clear connection between culture and education. The educational system is itself a sociocultural process that both students and teachers engage in. In Frederick Erickson’s “Culture in Society and in Educational Practices,” he asserts that “everything in education relates to culture-to its acquisition, its transmission, and its invention...In its scope and

distribution [education] is personal, familial, communal, institutional, societal, and global.” The goal, and I will add inherent challenge in this “communal” relationship, is that teachers must first recognize and then build curricular bridges between different cultural systems. This is only possible when we take the time to know who our students are and accept and value the funds of knowledge that they bring to our courses.

#### Assertion #2 to Increase Student Achievement: Conventional Reform is Inadequate

Gay asserts that in order for teachers to help students of color become more successful, the underlying academic paradigm must change. The idea here is two-fold; one, as an institution, we need to revisit how we talk about student achievement. In *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*, Gay refers to this as “deficit orientation,” which is to emphasize what ethnically, racially and culturally marginalized students can’t do (12). It is referring to students as “at-risk,” and not fully acknowledging what role the institution, as a whole, has in addressing inequities. Dr. Estella Bensimon, Co-Director of the Center for Urban Education at U.S.C. and Professor of Higher education at the U.S.C. Rossier School of Education, confronts this problem in *Confronting Equity Issues on Campus: Implementing the Equity Scorecard in Theory and in Practice*. According to Dr. Bensimon, higher education faculty are socialized to expect students take complete responsibility for their own learning and we often fail to recognize the role of the institution in making autonomous learning possible:

[Faculty] may unconsciously attribute the lower rates of success that are experienced by African-American, Latina, and Latino students, and other minoritized groups, to individual characteristics and backgrounds rather than to educational practices, institutional policies, and culture...in addition to blaming the student, race-based

disparities are made to appear as a natural occurrence that is not within the control of higher education practitioners. (29)

Research suggests that academic interventions are most helpful when they include other social supports, especially when these supports utilize cultural anchors to help students feel connected (13). This idea is supported in a meta-analysis conducted by Paul Wortman and Antony Napoli, published in the *Journal of Applied Research in the Community College*. The researchers concluded that community college student retention increased when there was strong academic and social integration infrastructure in place for students (5-21). This application can be seen in different online student support services at LBCC including QUEST and OLET's menu of online readiness tutorials for students, available in the "resources" Canvas navigation menu.

### Assertion #3 to Increase Student Achievement: Intention Without Action is Insufficient

Gay's assertion here strikes at the heart of revisiting our individual teaching philosophies because it asks us to move beyond extending, as Gay states, "goodwill" toward our students. To really begin to address inequities in our classroom, we need to recognize that our students' academic skills are not categories separate from their race, culture, ethnicity, and intellectuality (14).

Several studies have been conducted on this issue, including an interesting two-year longitudinal study of culturally responsive learning and its effects on students took at the University of British Columbia in 2017. The authors of the article, "Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Indigenizing Curriculum," published in *The Canadian Journal of Higher Education*, examine the positive impacts of culturally responsive curriculum in a first-year university course. EDUC 140 was

revised in collaboration with First Nations communities and incorporated aboriginal studies into the course curriculum. The university revamped this course during students' first year in recognition of the fact that this period is instrumental in introducing students to campus culture. The researchers reference both Geneva Gay and Gloria Ladson-Billings pedagogical contributions to their EDUC 104 course, stating "it is a pedagogy that recognizes students' differences, validates students' cultures, and asserts that cultural congruence of classroom practices increase students' success" (Ragoonaden and Mueller). The data collected led the researchers to conclude that culturally responsive teaching accomplished two goals; the practices built students' academic skills and built their relationships and sense of community. As a result of this study, the researchers have advocated for a system-wide community approach to including Aboriginal Studies into post-secondary education, stating, "the data taken from the interviews speak to the importance of the interconnectedness of the self in relationship to society and education...responding to the aspirations and needs of diverse learners means valuing their collective intellectual traditions and identities" (Ragoonadan and Mueller).

Assertion #4 to Increase Student Achievement: There is Strength in Cultural Diversity

Gay cites several studies on the positive impact of culturally responsive teaching for different cultures including a report on the increased participation and verbal fluency of Navajo students in a study conducted by Boggs Watson and McMillen and Au's report on the academic achievement of indigenous Hawaiian students when coursework was delivered via "culturally familiar content" (Gay 15).

In a 2019 study cited in *Online Learning*, “African American Males Learning Online: Promoting Academic Achievement in Higher Education,” the researchers strongly recommend that faculty revamp their instructional design to include more discussions of people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, people who practice different religions and faiths, and people of different nationalities or who live in different countries. These “voices” may also be drawn from the diverse pool of students in the courses. The researchers urge faculty to evaluate the perspective from which material is shared with students and “rather than learn about events from the mainstream or the victor’s point of view, current and historical events should also be examined from the perspective of the oppressed or overpowered” (Salvo et al 31). In “Hispanic students and Community Colleges: A Critical Point for Intervention,” educator and researcher Victor Saenez argues that “cultural validation was crucial to increasing the persistence and transfer rates among all Hispanic students in community colleges.”

Assertion #5 to Increase Student Achievement: Competence or Incompetence is Never Universal or All-Inclusive

In her research, Gay works to dismantle the assumption that students’ abilities in one particular area reflect their competencies in all areas. Gay cites the widely accepted idea that students who excel in science are believed to be equally proficient in math and similar content areas. Gay refers to educational assumptions like these as “the universality of competence” (16-17) and she warns educators that correlations are not without exceptions. The downside of universality of competence thinking is that it also diminishes opportunities for students of color and it leads to negative academic profiling; Gay supports this assertion by mentioning the tendency to categorize English language learners as “limited” or lacking intellectual abilities simply because

of language fluency. Too often, this inaccurate and academically damaging assumption follows students on their educational journey. In contrast, positive and faculty-student relationships can go a long way in promoting student success in a course. In “High Expectations, Strong Support: Faculty Behaviors Predicting Latina/o Community College Learning,” published in the *Journal of College Student Development*, the researchers examined how faculty interaction with Latino/a students contributed to their success. 10,071 Latino/a students completed a Community College Survey of Student Engagement Survey and the findings concluded that there is a direct connection between students’ perceptions of their own learning and ability to succeed in courses and the relationship they have with their professors. Faculty are, as lead researcher Carol Lundberg affirms, “the institutional agents with whom students interact the most” (55-70).

## Chapter 2: The CCC Equity Mandate and My English 1 Course Success Rates

“We also [endeavor] as educators to question and expand the literary canon...while we respected and honored much of the current literary canon and encouraged our students to gain a mastery and appreciation of it, we also recognized that the canon could be limiting in ways that were problematic and ultimately disempowering to our students.”

-Jeffrey Duncan-Andrade and Ernest Morrell, *The Art of Critical Pedagogy*

### X. My Professional Interest in CRTL and Course Success Rates

My interest in examining culturally responsive teaching and learning grew out of my passion for sharing good writers and engaging texts with my students. The correlations between culturally responsive pedagogy and student learning and academic achievement drive much of my professional interest. I have been a proponent of culture-based learning in my courses, but reading Geneva Gay’s text, *Culturally Responsive Teaching: Theory, Research, and Practice*, was instrumental in my desire to delve deeper into the theoretical principles beneath the practice. Another goal was to create what Moje et al refer to as the “Third Space” in a classroom; this is the area where students’ funds of knowledge and academic knowledge meet. My sabbatical research has been transformative in how I teach my writing courses; I have shifted from a multi-cultural practice in teaching writing and literature to a more inclusive “multiple-cultural” approach. My English composition courses needed a more deliberate and comprehensive commitment to ethnic and cultural diversity. During this research process, I learned that focusing on the “individual,” at the exclusion of their race, ethnicity, culture, and gender, can be detrimental to learning. Gay refers to this reasoning, however well-intentioned, as

“compartmentalization;” instead, as educators, we should make every effort not to separate students’ learning in our courses from the “context of their lives” (281).

This effort is reflected in the two new writing assessments that I created, and the Student CRTL Survey, which offer students the opportunity to share course expectations and draw from their own funds of knowledge to compose responses that exhibit critical thinking and writing.

Allowing students to both use and see their own culture(s) as part of the course curriculum helps to validate their experience as “participant” learners. Gay refers to the ability to retain new information more easily by connecting it to prior knowledge or frames of references as the Principle of Congruity (204). Funds of knowledge theory contends that students are not “blank slates” or solely embody their prior education; rather, they are “repositories of knowledge” existing from their respective communities, histories, and experiences (Gonzalez, et. al. 26). In practice, this means both acknowledging and inviting our students’ cultural diversity *into* our courses. Gay describes this instructional approach as “[filtering] curriculum content and teaching strategies through [students] cultural frames of reference to make the content more personally meaningful and easier to master” (32).

### **CRTL in Practice; My English 1 Online Course Success Rates**

**Table K.** shows the 4-year average course success rates (including online and face-to-face), which I have taught. There is a 75% course success rate across the board for courses that I teach and this rate increases by 3% during 2019-20. During these semesters, I had begun to implement culturally responsive teaching and learning practices into my two English 1 online courses, English 1 Plus (face-to-face) course, and English 2 online course.

# Cultural Curriculum Audit

## Individual Faculty Equity Course Success Profile for

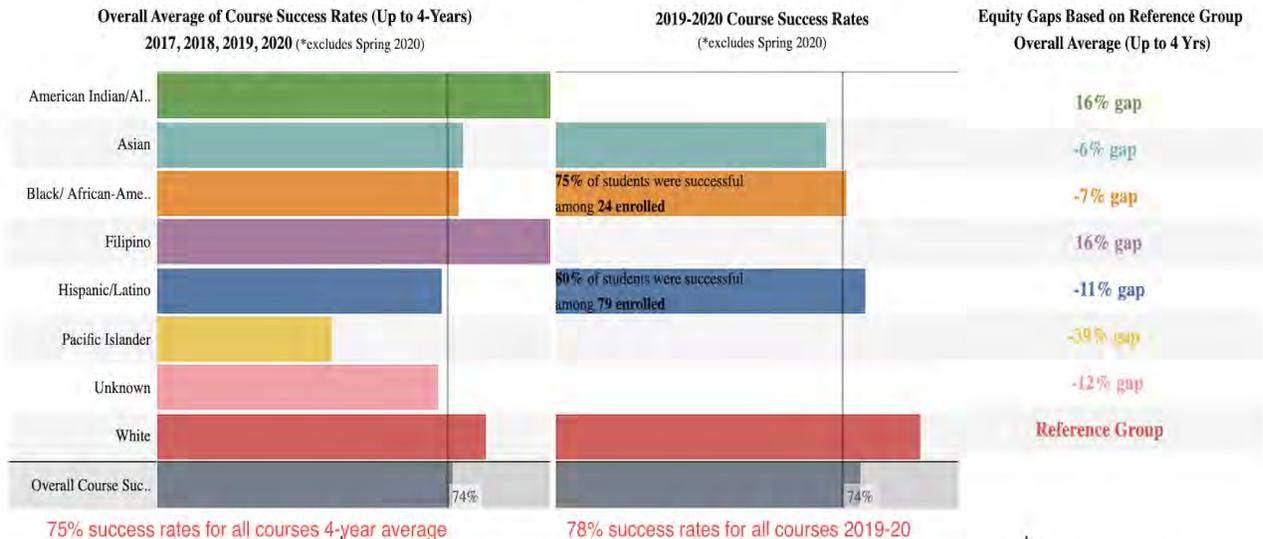
Faculty Name  
Moreno, Kirsten

Course  
(All)

Location  
(All)

### What is course success?

Course success is a measure of student progress at the completion of a term. We calculate it by dividing the number of students who finished a course with an "A", "B", "C", "CR (Credit)", or "P (Pass)" out of the course's total enrollment. Grades of "D", "F", "W", "NC (No Credit)", "NP (Not Pass)", and "I (Incomplete)" are considered not successful and will lower the course success rate. Below are the course success rates for your course that is currently a part of the cultural curriculum audit. The vertical reference line at 74% represents our Institutional Success Rate goal.



75% success rates for all courses 4-year average

78% success rates for all courses 2019-20

### How can I calculate the number of students I need to help in order to reach my goal?

Examining the count of students we need to serve to reach our goal can help us understand how realistic our goals are. In order to translate your goal into a target number of students, simply use this formula.

$$\% \text{ Percent Increase} \times \text{Enrollment} \#$$

### Number of Students and (Number of Sections) Per Term

Displaying Records Up to Four Years (2017, 2018, 2019, 2020)



To interact more with your individual course success rates, search for "Faculty Support Dashboard 03 - Course Success Rates Equity View" in Tableau Online. You can log-in here: <https://online.tableau.com/>

If you are unable to log-in, email Institutional Effectiveness at [research@lbcc.edu](mailto:research@lbcc.edu) for access. Access is currently unavailable for Adjunct Faculty.

These positive effects of culturally responsive teaching practices are, I believe, further reflected in my course data for English 1 online. See Table L.

**Table L. English 1 Online Success Rate Data for K. Moreno, 4-year Average and 2019-20**

## Cultural Curriculum Audit

Individual Faculty Equity Course Success Profile for

..

### What is course success?

Course success is a measure of student progress at the completion of a term. We calculate it by dividing the number of students who finished a course with an "A", "B", "C", "CR (Credit)," or "P (Pass)" out of the course's total enrollment. Grades of "D", "F", "W", "NC (No Credit)", "NP (Not Pass)", and "I (Incomplete)" are considered not successful and will lower the course success rate. Below are the course success rates for your course that is currently a part of the cultural curriculum audit. The vertical reference line at 74% represents our Institutional Success Rate goal.

Faculty Name	Moreno, Kirsten
Course	ENGL1
Location	Online



### How can I calculate the number of students I need to help in order to reach my goal?

Examining the count of students we need to serve to reach our goal can help us understand how realistic our goals are. In order to translate your goal into a target number of students, simply use this formula.

$$\% \text{ Percent Increase} \times \text{Enrollment} \#$$

### Number of Students and (Number of Sections) Per Term

Displaying Records Up to Four Years (2017, 2018, 2019, 2020)



To interact more with your individual course success rates, search for "Faculty Support Dashboard 03 - Course Success Rates Equity View" in Tableau Online. You can log-in here: <https://online.tableau.com/>

If you are unable to log-in, email Institutional Effectiveness at [research@lbcc.edu](mailto:research@lbcc.edu) for access. Access is currently unavailable for Adjunct Faculty.

Looking at the data through an equity lens, there were significant achievement increases for Black/ African-American students, Hispanic/Latino students, and Asian students. Based on the data here, White students appear to benefit tangentially from the more inclusive and dynamic approach of culturally congruent teaching and learning as well.

## XI. CRTL Supports the CCC Equity Mandate

The California Chancellor’s Office’s *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force Report*, published in February 2020, shared four key findings, including the need to increase faculty and staff diversity in the California Community College system. The Chancellor’s Office report also addresses the urgent need for faculty to deliver culturally responsive course content for the 2.2 million students in the system:

Some faculty recognize the need to teach about social justice issues to prepare their students to be leaders inside and outside of the classroom. However, many are not necessarily prepared to address the issues of social justice, cultural competency or to deploy critical pedagogy in their instructional practices due to lack of knowledge or training. Recognizing this as a priority and integral to teaching and learning environments, the role of professional development and other resources is critical for faculty to address matters such as implicit bias in the classroom.

In addition, Long Beach City College’s *2019-2022 Student Equity Plan Executive Summary* includes the mandate to close the achievement gap by providing equitable student learning opportunities and services for our students. Under “Activities for Each Success Metric” the report calls for “professional development workshops around high impact pedagogy” and “workshops on meaningful and equitable SLO assessment.”

CRTL pedagogy complements the American Association of Community Colleges commitment to equity and closing the achievement gap as well. AACC stated the following in *Empowering Community Colleges: To Build the Nation’s Future* implementation guide: “Community Colleges should engage faculty as leaders in the following work: redesign[ing] pedagogy and course content to meet the needs, learning styles, and expectations of 21st-century students” and

“encourage faculty to take ownership in the design of professional development programs and other experiences that lead to improved learning outcomes and success for a student population that is increasingly diverse in terms of race and ethnicity, learning styles, level of academic preparedness, and life experiences.” The Center for Urban Education (CUE) states "it is necessary to reinterpret inequity in educational outcomes from the perspective of those who experience them, taking into account the social, cultural, and historical context of exclusion, discrimination, and educational apartheid" (29).

Throughout this sabbatical research, I have been reminded of a statement by poet and self-professed “Black, lesbian, feminist, warrior, mother,” Audre Lorde: “it is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept and celebrate those differences.” As online teaching faculty and equity practitioners, it is time for us to dismantle and rebuild our approach to teaching students at every institutional level, beginning with our courses: “the solution to the problem of inequity may lie in taking a hard look inward into institutional practices--as well as our own within the classroom, the counseling office, the dean's office, or the president's cabinet" (Bensimon 25).

## **Chapter 3: Sabbatical Deliverables & Rationale**

**Deliverable #1: Canvas Template for Beginners/ <https://lbcc.instructure.com/courses/50783>**

## Deliverable #2: Student CRTL Online Survey

### Student CRTL Survey

Welcome to English 1! This is an ungraded and confidential survey. Please take a moment to share your expectations for this English 1 online course. The feedback will help me to shape course content and learn more about you and the other students in our online class. Thank you! Professor Moreno

1. How many other Canvas online courses have you taken in the last year?

- 1-2
- 3-4
- more than 5

2. How important is it for you to see the topics below represented or shared as part of the curriculum in this course? Check all that apply.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral
Racial identity	<input type="radio"/>				
Ethnic identity	<input type="radio"/>				
Cultural identity	<input type="radio"/>				
Gender identity	<input type="radio"/>				
LGBTQ+ identity	<input type="radio"/>				
Educational experiences	<input type="radio"/>				
Ability identity	<input type="radio"/>				

3. What motivates you to learn and participate in an online course?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral
Engaging with my peers in Discussion posts and collaborating on projects.	<input type="radio"/>				
Receiving constructive instructor feedback	<input type="radio"/>				
Seeing my culture/race/other identities represented in the course curriculum	<input type="radio"/>				
Opportunities to share my identities and experiences as it connects to course content.	<input type="radio"/>				
The course content is delivered in an easily accessible format	<input type="radio"/>				

4. How important is it for you to see the following in a course?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Neutral
Writing assignments encourage multicultural perspectives on an issue	<input type="radio"/>				
Texts and other outside sources include material from diverse points of view	<input type="radio"/>				
The instructor invites relevant discussions of issues of diversity as it connects to course content	<input type="radio"/>				
Peer discussions and collaborations are safe spaces to share my work	<input type="radio"/>				

5. In a few words, share your expectations for this course and how I can help you to be successful in English I.

**Link to view live survey:**

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=DQSIkWsW0yxEjajBLZtrQAAAAA AAAAAAEbCJI-zHBUMkNZVUdMUKI0Nlc1Wjm1SzZBRVJGTktXRy4u>

\*Rationale/Recommendation: This digital survey can be set up as a Canvas Quiz (no points or extra credit) or as a Google survey. Also, students can be encouraged to add their own examples of diverse content experts to a whole class discussion and become what culturally responsive practitioners refer to as “co-creators” and “co-designers” in their learning and the learning of their peers (Bovill, et.al. 133-45).

## Deliverable #3: Student Self-Assessment Essay-English 1

### Essay #3 Student Self-Assessment



#### Directions

Essay #3 is a self-assessment essay. You will have the opportunity to review and evaluate your own writing practice and process in this composition course by revisiting your Essay #1 submission. Because writing is a process, good writing is never truly finished. When you take a moment to revisit your writing, you have the opportunity to see what you did well and which areas need revision; this step of learning from your own writing is self-assessment. Self-assessment gives you the space to become a stronger critical thinker and communicator; it is an important step every strong writer takes. (Please note: you are *not* rewriting Essay #1. The self-assessment essay is a self-reflection and evaluation of your own writing to-date).

Please follow the details below.

#### How do I begin?

Open your graded Essay #1 and review my embedded comments in your submission file (directions here: [How to View Instructor Feedback in Canvas](#)).

Carefully read my embedded comments in your Essay #1 file upload, the rubric, and any additional revisions changes that I made to the returned Essay #1.

Then, complete the Essay #3 Self-Assessment by responding to the questions below in essay format:

**Essay #3 body paragraphs:**

- a. Describe your own writing process; how do you begin and which tools do you use to help craft an essay? You may include how your writing process has changed during your academic life (for example; how is your process different than in high school or since your last semester?).
- b. Review the rubric and embedded comments in your graded Essay #1; how well did you connect the Essay #1 topic to the research question? Did your thesis statement deliver a clear argument?
- c. Based on the embedded feedback you received on Essay #1, what were your writing strengths? Be specific.
- d. What did you learn from reviewing your writing and the instructor feedback you received (thesis development, grammar issues, MLA documentation, etc.)? Be specific about areas for growth and improvement.
- e. What did you learn from the peer feedback you received (revisit the Thesis Peer Discussion and the Rough Draft Discussion in Module Weeks 2 and 3)?
- f. If you had problems or difficulties understanding the essay feedback, did you bring those concerns to the attention of the instructor so that your writing could improve?

- g. Where do you go from here? In other words, what changes will you make to improve and develop a stronger writing practice in the future? Reflect on your writing experience in this course and what writing "tools" you will take with you.
- h. Your self-assessment essay should also incorporate three sources: Ann Lamott's article, "Shitty First Drafts," Carol Dweck's Ted Talk, and Arthur Costa and Bena Kallick's "Habits of Mind." Consider how the ideas they offer connect to your own understanding of the writing process.
- i. Follow MLA guidelines for in-text citations and formatting.

### **Self-Assessment submission details**

The essay response should be 4-5 pages long. Organize your self-assessment essay into coherent paragraphs, including an introduction and a conclusion.

**Due: Sunday, 7/18 by 11:55pm.** Upload the completed FINAL draft self-assessment as a file upload (please label it lastname.selfassessment.)

### **\*Student Self-Assessment Essay Rationale:**

Since formative assessments are assessments for learning and they are recursive in nature, it made sense to create a writing self-assessment for my English 1 students. One of the challenges in teaching composition is persuading students to revisit their completed writing (both drafts and final submissions) and review instructor feedback. This feedback is both informative and instructive; it congratulates students on their writing strengths and offers constructive comments for future improvement. Like my colleagues, I have tried to fix this issue in so many ways. Once I began teaching composition online, I recognized the need to develop both a more productive

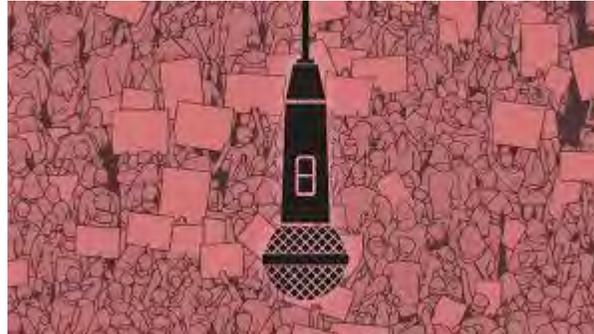
writing assessment loop and an opportunity for self-reflection for *each* student. One of my goals was to develop an assessment tool that relied heavily on the culturally responsive practice of allowing students to share their experience in writing and also offer them to “become participants in the process and to own and contribute to student success in ways appropriate to their roles” (Fulks and Pacheco).

Based on my sabbatical research, I also realized the benefit of beginning this self-reflective process earlier in the semester rather than near the end. In the article “Show Me Your True Colors: Scaffolding Formative Academic Literacy Assessment Through an Online Learning Platform,” researcher Weronika Fernando relays a study she conducted on the validity and value of online learning platforms and scaffolding to teach students writing, including outlines and essays with feedback. Fernando’s findings emphasize the importance of utilizing authentic, multimodal resources to assess student writing and find evidence of active reading and evidence-based writing (63-76). The scaffolded and process-oriented approach to writing is part of teaching English composition courses. This assignment allows me to evaluate how students are applying critical thinking and writing skills in their essay responses. From an English 1 student lens, this self-assessment essay gives them the opportunity to accomplish three learning tasks crucial to their success in English 1; first, as part of the assessment, students are required to revisit, review, and respond to my embedded instructor feedback comments on their first essay submission. Second, students revisit, review, and respond to their peers’ feedback in the Thesis Workshop discussion and Rough Draft Workshop discussion. Third, students respond to their feedback and make connections to the readings and media materials linked to the self-assessment module. This final portion of their self-assessment includes a personal English 1 plan for improvement and thoughts on the usefulness of self-assessment in achieving their larger

educational goals. Moving the self-assessment essay to week 10 rather than at the end of the course made a noticeable difference in my students' writing performance overall, and by extension, their level of confidence and grades in the course. In "Empowering Remote Learners Through Self-Assessment," author Katie Welch emphasizes the value of self-assessment in online learning as this type of evaluation equips students "for more autonomous learning by giving them the agency to reflect, set goals, and take ownership of their language-learning experience."

## Deliverable #4: CRTL Writing Assessment/Socially Conscious Music Essay

### Essay #2 Socially Conscious Music



#### **Introduction: What is Socially Conscious Music?**

Socially conscious music is a form of protest music that songwriters and musicians create to help become agents of change in society or in their communities. Sociologist R. Serge Denisoff, in *Sing a Song of Social Significance*, refers to protest music as “magnetic songs of persuasion.” In short, socially conscious music artists are agents of change, drawing audiences into a social protest movement by identifying problems and suggesting, at times, solutions. The course readings, Ted Talks, and interviews in Module Week 3 will provide you with richer insight into the idea of “socially conscious music.” Synthesize this information into a cogent, argumentative response to the prompt below.

#### **Assignment**

Choose a specific music artist or band and examine how this artist or group practices socially conscious music. In other words, how does this artist challenge or protest a certain dominate cultural, geopolitical, and/or social ideology? Consider how this specific music artist or band addresses social injustice through their music genre, lyrics and public image. You may choose a music artist, past or present, from any part of part of the world.

This is an argumentative essay; your analysis should include an examination of the artist's cultural identity, which social justice issue(s) the artist is addressing, and what change they hope to inspire. Evaluate the impact of this artist and the currency of their work. You may include your own experience to further develop your analysis on the impactful nature of the artist and/or the call for social justice. Be sure to incorporate text support, including song lyrics, to fully support your ideas.

### **Essay 2 Guidelines**

Use five outside sources, including texts used in class and at least two outside sources from an LBCC online database. Provide reasons (analysis) for why you have used your support (research) and how it relates to and supports your claim. Organize your information effectively so as to prompt easy, concise reading. Provide specific topic sentences at the start of each major unit of information (body paragraph), and make sure each topic sentence directly relates to and supports your thesis. Proofread carefully and follow MLA guidelines for the essay format, including in-text citations, and the Works Cited.

### **Essay #2 Format**

Essay #2 should be five pages in length and in MLA format. Create an interesting title (see sample Student Essay in MLA format here).

The final essay submission should include:

- The rough draft with instructor and peer embedded feedback
- The final file in MLA format

### **Due Date**

Essay # 2 should be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, July 11th (essays submitted at 12:00am *will be considered late essay and penalized accordingly*). We will work on a draft

before this date. Your submission should be titled: (for example: *essay2.yourlastname.course#*). *Only .docx, .doc, or .rtf files will be accepted. Failure to follow specific directions may result in significant penalties.*

**\*Socially Conscious Music Essay Rationale:**

This English 1 essay assignment draws from the CRTL premise that drawing from our students' lives and making real-world connections is an impactful way to increase student engagement and success. Spring 2020, I incorporated the Black Lives Matter movement into class Discussions and researched and gathered a new collection of readings and multimedia sources for students to engage with online. I included Module 2: Socially Conscious Music beginning in week 5. It is early enough in the semester to garner students' interest while building their confidence as they began to research and respond to a variety of outside sources. I reframed the topic as "social protest" and offered this module to my summer and fall 2020 English 1 students. Students had the opportunity to read and examine the role of socially conscious music across diverse cultures, including the rising role of Black female rap artists and LGBTQ+ artists using their voices to challenge bias and hate speech in Latin America. This writing assignment requires students to synthesize these sources and develop a cogent argumentative position on a socially conscious specific artist or group. This culturally responsive assignment has had the highest submission rate and, to date, highest essay grades. Students are connecting to the topic and by incorporating new diverse voices into the curriculum, I have contributed to what Duncan-Andrade and Morrell refer to as expanding the literary cannon (53-54). This assignment also allows me to "[teach] to and through ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity" with my students (Gay 241).

## Deliverable #5: Faculty CRTL Survey

# Faculty CRTL Course Self-Assessment

Part of developing an equity lens is assessing how we engage students in our online courses. This is a self-administered and informal assessment, focusing on to what extent the different dimensions of diversity are present in your online course content. It is an opportunity for professional reflection and growth. Should you have any questions or want additional information on creating a dynamic, equity-minded online course for you and your students, please see the Culturally Responsive resources available for you in the English Department Composition Resources Canvas shell under "Equity."

1. Are both the language and tone used in my online class welcoming and inclusive?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Neutral
Course syllabus	<input type="radio"/>				
Course homepage	<input type="radio"/>				
Announcements	<input type="radio"/>				

2. Are the following content areas reflective, when possible, of our diverse LBCC student population?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Neutral
Images	<input type="radio"/>				
Data	<input type="radio"/>				
Readings/Authors	<input type="radio"/>				
Case studies	<input type="radio"/>				
Speakers	<input type="radio"/>				
Multimedia	<input type="radio"/>				

3. The course content includes examples of individuals or groups from diverse groups

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Neutral
Different races	<input type="radio"/>				
Different ethnicities	<input type="radio"/>				
Different cultures	<input type="radio"/>				
Different gender identities	<input type="radio"/>				
Different ages	<input type="radio"/>				
Different abilities	<input type="radio"/>				

4. When a conflict or sensitivity over an issue of diversity arises in your course, rate your level of comfort and ability to address the issue.

- Somewhat comfortable
- Very comfortable
- Somewhat uncomfortable
- Very uncomfortable
- Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable

5. When there are hot button news stories or campus events related to identities, including race, ethnicity, and culture, rate your level of readiness in discussing these with your students.

- Somewhat comfortable
- Very comfortable
- Somewhat uncomfortable
- Very uncomfortable
- Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable

**Link to view live Faculty CRTL Course Self-Assessment survey:**

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=DQSIkWdsW0yxEjajBLZtrQAAAAAAAAAAAEbCJI-zHBUQzQ5QURSNUM1Q1NUMUFCQ0xKVTQ4TkZDSi4u>

**Deliverable #6:**

- **CRTL Best Practices and Resources for Faculty, Canvas English Department**  
**Composition/ Equity Resources**  
[\(<https://lbcc.instructure.com/courses/33793/pages/faculty-resources>\)](https://lbcc.instructure.com/courses/33793/pages/faculty-resources)
- **College-wide CRTL Faculty Resources and Faculty CRTL Self-Assessment Survey**  
(to be posted in Fall 2021 by Michael Robertson)

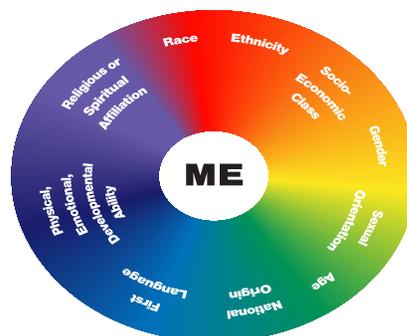
## Chapter 4: Additional Ideas/Practices for Incorporating CRTL Across the Disciplines

Utilize technologies that allow students to see and hear each other, particularly in asynchronous courses. Flipgrid and VoiceThread are great external tools to make online course discussions more engaging and personal for students. The benefits of giving online students a literal voice are discussed in more detail in Angela Velez-Solic’s article, “Creating a Culture of Inclusion in the Online Classroom.”

**Idea #1:** Use a “Dimensions of Diversity” (See U.C.L.A. Social Identity Wheel example below) graphic to create an interactive, culturally responsive Student Bio space in your Canvas course. Instead of the text-based only Discussion post, Flipgrid and Voice Thread allow students to introduce themselves in their own voices, and receive responses in return. A culturally responsive Student Bio Flipgrid prompt may include the following:

“Welcome to our English 1 online course! Please introduce yourself to our community of writers by sharing the following; your name, your educational goal(s), an interest or hobby that you enjoy, and share 1-2 identity profiles that are important to you (these identity profiles may include gender identity or expression, ability status, LGBTQ+, race, ethnicity, religion, age, educational experience, etc.).”

SOCIAL **IDENTITY** WHEEL



**Idea #2:** Incorporate multimedia (interviews, spoken-word poetry, documentaries, biographical accounts, etc.) that reflects diverse voices in the specific course curriculum. Offer opportunities for students to respond to these diverse voices and experiences in relation to the course content. Dr. Shelly Jones, a Professor of Math Education at Central Connecticut State University, integrates culturally responsive teaching and learning into her math courses by giving her college students what she calls “a positive math identity” (Ferlazzo). Jones creates short assignments that allow students to use math concepts to explore issues of inequity that reflect Black, Indigenous, and other voices of color (Ferlazzo).

**Idea #3:** Create discussion prompts or short response assignments that invite students to explore connections between outside sources (article, research data, case study, piece of literature, lab exercise, etc.) and real world experience, including relevant connections to students’ lives. This is “contextualized” practice of teaching helps to introduce and clarify new concepts for students (Hammond and Snyder).

**Idea #4:** Incorporate counter-stereotype exemplars in online course materials, including the syllabus, discussion posts, multimedia examples, to reduce implicit bias and stereotypic norms. Educational Equity Consultant Gina Laura Gullo argues that using counter-stereotypical images in course materials allows students not only to see themselves and others represented in different ways but “it can encourage students to excel in a wider variety of occupational fields” (Ferlazzo).

**Idea #5:** Implement discussion posts or collaborative assignments that encourage students to draw from their own identities via storytelling and autobiographical accounts to facilitate

connections to course In “Establishing Culturally Responsive Pedagogical Practices via Storytelling” published by the Office of Community College Research and Leadership, Colvin T. Georges shares a study conducted in a community college science course that utilized storytelling as a pedagogical practice to convey complex scientific information to students. The findings, conducted by Elizabeth Csikar and Jill Stefaniak, suggest that storytelling “improved students’ critical thinking skills, helped them to link new course concepts with pre-existing knowledge, and connected their lived experiences to the subject matter in a meaningful way” (Georges 1-2).

## Chapter 5

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