

# PROMISING PRACTICE

## MT. SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE



### *Using ESL Student Portfolios To Track Level Progress*

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CASAS National Summer Institute 2011

# Mt. SAC ESL PROGRAM OVERVIEW



DREAMS DO COME TRUE!

## "Success" In Any Language.

When Luisa Ceron arrived in California from Colombia in 1998, she came with an architecture degree and a dream to succeed. But one thing stood in her way. She couldn't speak English—at all. A relative arranged for Luisa to enroll in Mt. SAC's English-as-a-Second-Language program. She excelled in both vocational and credit English courses and honed her computer skills through additional classes.

With the confidence gained from her Mt. SAC training, Luisa went on to earn her master's degree in architecture at Cal Poly Pomona.

Today, she is realizing her American Dream. Luisa is a practicing architect at a firm in Orange County, where she helps design residential and multifamily developments.

*"Learning a new language in a new culture can be quite intimidating," says Luisa, "but the quality instruction I received at Mt. SAC made the transition easier. Now that I can speak English well, I have the confidence and competitive edge I need to succeed."*

Sometimes a college degree just isn't enough to fulfill your dreams. Like Luisa, you can enroll now at Mt. SAC and learn additional skills that will promote your success.

Find out how inside.

Luisa Ceron,  
Architect

Mt. San Antonio College  
— College of Champions —

Cover design by John Lavalloni • Back photo Mark Fernandez

- Scope: 3400 unduplicated Ss
- Staff: 55 – 60 all adjunct faculty and ~ 20 tutors
- Program Structure: 7 Levels of proficiency includes
  - **"Level"** classes: Integrated skills, portfolio-based assessment
  - **"Skill"** classes: Focus on R/W, L/S, TOEFL, Citizenship Prep ...
  - **VESL Career Paths:** Advanced bridge program
- Portfolios have been used in all the ESL Levels since 2001

# OVERVIEW OF ESL STUDENT PORTFOLIOS

- **Shared responsibility** of teaching and learning
- **Evidence-based** approach to track level progress
- **Cumulative history** of progress gives a big-picture and holistic perspective
- **“Progress Report” cover sheet** minimizes bulk without loss of evidence



# OVERVIEW OF ESL STUDENT PORTFOLIOS



- Systematic approach – all instructors use the same form
- Level progress considers student's entire portfolio, not just the final exam
- Final level (Level 6), students receive their portfolio along with certificate

# WHY WE IMPLEMENTED ESL PORTFOLIOS

## Reason #1

Majority of our students are adult learners with **well-established self identities and life experiences** who:

- Require an inclusive educational environments
- Are self-directed learners
- Want active engagement in the learning process
- Are lifelong learners who need English for work and personal needs



# WHY WE IMPLEMENTED ESL PORTFOLIOS

## Reason #2

All-adjunct faculty aspire for a balance between **quality** teaching **and efficiency**

- Streamlining the process allowed for dialog about course objectives
- Sharing lesson ideas and syllabi reduced work outside of class
- Standardizing and streamlining same-level syllabi
- Comparing student's readiness for level progress and measuring student learning outcomes



# WHY WE IMPLEMENTED ESL PORTFOLIOS



## Reason #3

Value of **evidence-based data** for internal and external accountability:

- Provides resource for level-transfer requests from students
- Verify student advancement through noncredit ESL program

**Pass Sample**

Name: [Redacted] (Hank) Date of Birth: [Redacted]  
 Level: pre-level 1 Instructor: [Redacted] M Term: Fall 2010  
 Mt. San Antonio College  
 English as a Second Language Department

**STUDENT PROGRESS REPORT**

	Midterm	End of Term
Oral Evaluations:	High Mid Low Vocabulary	High Mid Low
Writing Evaluations: <i>Gr. 03 04 05 06 07 08 09 80% 91% 100%</i>	High Mid Low	High Mid Low <i>94% 100% 100%</i>
Teacher Made Exams:	High Mid Low	High Mid Low
Midterm / Final:	<u>84%</u>	<u>95%</u>
Class Participation:	Great Good Fair Poor <i>missed a lot of class</i>	Great Good Fair Poor
Attendance & Punctuality:	Great Good Fair Poor	Great Good Fair Poor
Student Learning Outcome Project: <u>EL Civics / DMV</u>	Great Good Fair Poor	Great Good Fair Poor

Midterm	End of Term
Comments: <u>Hank, your writing is better than your speaking. I can see that your speaking and vocabulary is getting better through your performance. Good job!</u> Recommendation: <u>Please try not to miss class. You have a lot of absences. Also try to speak more in class and outside of class as well.</u>	Comments: <u>HANK, I'm impressed! You work very hard to improve your speaking. Now, we can have conversations!</u> Recommendation: <u>Good job! Continue to practice speaking English. Good luck in level 1!</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Advance to next level <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Repeat current level	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Advance to next level <b>→ P</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Repeat current level
Student Signature / Date: [Redacted] 10-15-10 Instructor Signature / Date: [Redacted] 10-15-10	Student Signature / Date: [Redacted] Hank 12/10/10 Instructor Signature / Date: [Redacted] 12/10/10

Top copy: ESL office copy  
 Middle copy: Student's final copy  
 Last copy: Student's address copy

# LOGISTICS & RESOURCE NEEDS OF THE PORTFOLIO PROCESS



- Hard copies (vs. electronic versions) of portfolios still seem to work best for our highly mobile population and our all-adjunct faculty:
  1. Begin the process four weeks into the term to avoid the initial drops and no-shows
  2. Collect and redistribute the portfolio folders of dropped or transferred Ss
  3. Print and distribute the Progress Reports on 3-part NCR paper
  4. Utilize classroom aides in preparing the labels
  5. Instructional support staff conduct quality checks just after mid-term

# COLLABORATIVE & STANDARDIZE PROCESSES BENEFIT STUDENTS

A screenshot of an IBM Lotus Notes email client window. The window title is "ESL Department Weeks 15 and 16...end of the semester - IBM Lotus Notes". The email is from Margaret Teske, dated 06/06/2011 08:15 AM. The email content is organized into sections for Week 15 (June 6-11) and Week 16 (June 13-18). Two green arrows point from a central text box to specific items in the email: one points to the Thursday Needs Assessment Survey, and the other points to the Student Portfolios section.

**ESL Department Weeks 15 and 16...end of the semester**  
Margaret Teske to: abelblidia, achu, apedroza2, asunnaa, akuo, awarner, akim, acheng, bwarnar, bkao, cyanuaria, dmiho, dcooke, Dougmevans, ecasian... 06/06/2011 08:15 AM [Show Details](#)

**Week 15: June 6 - 11**

EL Civics: (Tuesday) Make-ups and retests for Level 3, 4, 6 and Pre-1 (check with ISO for times and places);  
(Thursday) Needs Assessment Survey in P-1, 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 is due

Transfer Log Preparation (Level Classes): Enter anticipated student transfer information into ESL database

Student Progress Reports (Level Classes): Write up as much as possible in preparation for next week.

Skills classes Session 2 end this week; record P, NP, SP grades for all skills students at the end of the week

**Week 16: June 13 - 18**

Student Portfolios: Collect 3<sup>rd</sup> writing sample

- organize contents (writing sample + progress report); remove all non-essential material

Summer 2011 Priority Registration

- June 13 (M): Beginning Ss (Pre-1, Levels 1 & 2)
- June 14 (T): Intermediate & Advanced Ss (Levels 3 - 6)

Registration Receipts will be distributed to students, in class, on the last day of your class

ESL Calendar of  
Events streamlines  
processes and  
syllabi of all-  
adjunct department

# ASSESSING THE VALUE OF PORTFOLIOS



- VESL Career Paths Student Focus Group (Spring, 2010)
  - job advancement, transitioning to credit, and lifelong learning strategies.
  - gained confidence in their abilities as English speakers and computer users
  - were better prepared to apply for jobs and provide samples of their proficiencies (e.g., using Microsoft programs and writing coherent essays)
  - shared the portfolio with family and friends to show their accomplishments in the program
  - Planned ways to continue with English improvement as they exit the highest level of noncredit ESL

# EVIDENCE OF QUALITY TEACHING & LEARNING



## Mt. SAC ESL Persistence & Level Progress (June, 2011)



CASAS  
Data Portal

Introduction » California » Persister Report

### California Adult Education Data

#### California WIA Title II Learners Persister Report

Start here:

Refine your search:

Program year:

#### Educational Functioning Level Persistence Rates

Type	Name	Program Year	Enrollment	ABE		ASE	ESL						All	<a href="#">Remove all</a>
				Beg. Lit.	Beg. Low/High	Int. Low	Int. High	Low Adv	High Adv	All				
CA State Average		2009-2010	6	70.1%	71.5%	72.2%	74.2%	74.4%	72.1%	N/A	69.6%			
Agency	Mt. San Antonio CCD	2009-2010	6	75.0%	76.9%	74.3%	82.8%	87.0%	83.0%	N/A	71.4%	<a href="#">Remove</a>		
				(4)	(13)	(70)	(754)	(378)	(1039)	N/A	(3801)			

Student progress is consistently above the state average →

Note: The number in parentheses represents enrollment in Federal Title IV Educational Functioning Level.

# IN SUMMARY

## MT. SAC'S ESL PORTFOLIOS...



- Benefit Students by
  - Allowing them to critically reflect on their own learning progress
  - Helping them to develop lifelong learning strategies for English and job advancement, beyond the ESL program.



# IN SUMMARY

## MT. SAC'S ESL PORTFOLIOS...

- Benefit Instructors & Strengthen the Program by
  - Bringing a degree of standardization to the evaluation progress
  - Providing opportunities for teachers to discuss how to best measure their students' learning – fine-tuning rubrics, norming their assessments, matching instruction to course objectives
  - Continuing to develop professionally and personally through collaboration with colleagues and cross-training workshops



THANK YOU!  
PLEASE VISIT OUR **POSTER SESSION**

