



# CONTEXTUALIZED CROSS- DISCIPLINARY READING PROPOSAL

Learning Assistance Department, Fall 2018

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# Contextualized Cross-disciplinary Reading Proposal

## READ Philosophy

Reading is inquiring about, constructing, and evaluating one's own understanding of texts and real world issues. It is a natural, strategic process of interaction between readers, their context and text. Literate reading requires developing skills and strategies in reading. Strategic reading is dynamic and evolves through ongoing dialogue and experimentation. It is developmental in nature and varies with each reader and situation.

### Instructional Philosophy:

- Instructors trust students to make self-discoveries.
- Instructors create an environment that encourages students to value reading.
- Strategy, not skills or rhetorical modes, define what students need.
- Students are encouraged to reflect on their own learning.
- Students have the autonomy to create their own strategic approaches.

## STEPS to Increase Support of Academic Reading in Content Areas



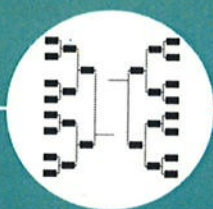
**#1**

### FOSTER AWARENESS OF DEMANDS OF COLLEGE READING:

Evaluating Text Complexity & Reading Expectations by Discipline

- Provide DRP textbook readabilities linked to course schedule
- Add "Sample Required Reading Assignment" to CORs

**RESOURCES NEEDED:**  
6 annual LHE & EDC appr.



**#2**

### ADVOCATE FOR READ ADVISORIES:

Utilizing Contextualized courses: READ 100 (CSU transferable) & READ 90 (CSU pending) to Support Discipline Specific Reading

**Current 2018-19 READ Advisories:**  
BIOL 1; ANTH 3, 4, 30; ACCS 31; COUN 5, 12; DSPS 32; ENGL 90; LATN 1, 1H, 2H; PSYC 1A, 1AH, 99; PUBH 26, 30; SPCH 30, 30H; TUTR 10R; STDY 85C

**RESOURCES NEEDED:**  
Departmental Support



**#3**

### PROVIDE ONGOING FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Supporting Faculty in scaffolding the demands of discipline specific reading into course design

- Facilitated 2018 Inspired Teaching Conference: "Text Scrolling"
- Plan Spring 2019 FLEX DAY: Readabilities Session
- Plan & Facilitate ongoing READ workshops through POD

**RESOURCES NEEDED:**  
6 annual LHE



**#4**

### DEEPEN CONTENT AREA LITERACY:

Reading complex texts proficiently & understanding technical vocabulary are essential for the success of students and skilled workers

- Collaborate with discipline faculty to link "specialized" READ sections with content areas
- Develop Canvas READ module to support online learners

**RESOURCES NEEDED:**  
6 annual LHE



## ✓ PUBH 26 Current Advisory

Eligibility for READ 100 or AMLA 33R

"PUBH 26 is global public health. This course requires significant amounts of reading from a number of sources because the topics are constantly changing. It includes scientific papers, textbooks, newspaper articles, journals.

PUBH 30 is the most advanced course in the series. This is infectious diseases and public health epidemiology. As with global, it requires a substantial amount of reading from a variety of sources. Most of the assignments involve reading several publications of primary literature from medical journals."

Dr. Carmen E. Rexach  
Professor, Anatomy, Physiology,  
Microbiology & Public Health  
Advisor, Caduceus Club

Population Health Research Institute in Hamilton (ON, Canada) where further quality control measures were implemented. We collected data at national, community, household, and individual levels with standardised questionnaires. Questions about age, sex, education, smoking status, hypertension, diabetes, and obesity were identical to those in the INTERHEART and INTERSTROKE studies. The names of all drugs taken by an individual (at least once per week) were recorded and classified by type. Most individuals brought their drugs to clinic visits or interviewers recorded drugs at home visits. We assessed histories of cardiovascular and other diseases from every participant with standardised questionnaires. Coronary heart disease was ascribed on the basis of self-reported myocardial infarction, coronary artery bypass graft surgery, or percutaneous coronary angioplasty or angina (categories were not identified separately). Stroke was ascribed on the basis of self-reports. We verified self-reports with medical or hospital records in a sample of 455 reported events during follow-up. The confirmation rates were 89% during central adjudication.

PUBH 26 Representative Text:

### **Use of secondary prevention drugs for cardiovascular disease in the community in high-income, middle-income, and low-income countries (the PURE Study): a prospective epidemiological survey**

Yusuf, Salim; Islam, Shofiqul; Chow, Clara K; Rangarajan, Sumathy; Dagenais, Gilles; et al. The Lancet; London Vol. 378, Iss. 9798, (Oct 1-Oct 7, 2011)

### **Procedures**

To ensure standardisation and high quality of data, we used a comprehensive operations manual and periodical training workshops, training DVDs, and regular communication with study personnel. We entered all data in a customised database programmed with range and consistency checks and transmitted electronically to the Project Office at the

### **Statistical analysis**

We analysed use of antiplatelet drugs,  $\beta$  blockers, ACE inhibitors or ARBs, statin, and diuretics (because of recognised benefit after stroke). We included  $\beta$  blockers, ACE inhibitors or ARBs, diuretics, or calcium channel blockers in an analysis of blood-pressure-lowering drugs. We summarised categorical variables, including disease status and drug intakes, as n (%) and continuous variables as mean (SD). We compared proportions between groups with a two-sample Z test with a two-sided alternative. We adjusted proportions for individual-level factors with a generalised linear model as appropriate, and used the Cochran-Armitage test to assess trends in subgroups. We compared the contribution of country-level factors (eg, economic status) and individual characteristics to the variations in rates of drug use with a generalised linear mixed-effect model. Country economic status, which was used to estimate between-country variances and within country variances, was regarded as

# **Learning Assistance Department Fall 2018: Contextualized Cross-disciplinary Reading Proposal**

## **Introduction**

Moving forward with implementation of AB 705 and knowing that research indicates textbook usage is correlated with successful course completion (Landrum, *Assessment of Textbook Usage and the Relationship to Student Course Performance*, College Teaching, v60, 2012), where does reading fit in? To adequately answer this question, it is important to first delineate the purpose of Mt. San Antonio College's current contextualized reading curriculum. Since the Learning Assistance Department does not subscribe to a one-dimensional "deficit-remediation" model, READ curriculum integrates strategic reading with academic and personal development, thus instruction is holistic and developmental in nature. Since there are no assigned textbooks for READ courses, students use their own authentic texts from current classes to demonstrate proficiency in college reading outcomes. Since students read, evaluate, question, and analyze content from a variety of disciplines, this contextualized approach is foundational to READ curriculum.

It is important to note that in 2015, 63% of twelfth-grade students on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) were either basic or below-basic readers. It is also important to note that fewer people are reading for pleasure, and being a college student no longer guarantees active reading habits (*To Read or Not to Read: A Question of National Consequence*, National Endowment of the Arts, 2007). READ courses support students who may be less than proficient readers, as well as those who

are proficient but struggle to meet the demands of complex, college-level discipline specific texts.

## **Philosophy**

Reading is inquiring about, constructing, and evaluating one's own understanding of texts and real world issues. It is a natural, strategic process of interaction between readers, their context and text. Literate reading requires developing skills and strategies in reading. Strategic reading is dynamic and evolves through ongoing dialogue and experimentation. It is developmental in nature and varies with each reader and situation. READ courses utilize authentic texts and do not use "reading" textbooks or workbooks. Read courses use a developmental approach to foster the growth of independent learning and critical thinking:

- Instructors trust students to make self-discoveries.
- Instructors create an environment that encourages students to value reading.
- Strategy, not skills or rhetorical modes, define what students need.
- Students are encouraged to reflect on their own learning.
- Students have the autonomy to create their own strategic approaches.

## **History**

The field of college reading has been traced from the founding of Harvard University's reading program in 1915 (Yale and Stanford soon followed), and the body of post-secondary reading studies that followed, established a subfield in reading research for at least the past 100 years. This research provides a timeline of discussions, approaches, and responses to the ever-present population of underprepared post-secondary readers and writers. According to Norm Stahl, college reading researcher and professor emeritus from Northern Illinois University, the history

of Learning Assistance Centers is entwined with the history of college reading instruction, as reading was assimilated as an intricate component to learning centers during the 1960-70s (Flippo & Caverly, *Handbook of College Reading and Study Research*, 2000).

Mt. SAC's Learning Assistance Center (LAC) began in the late 1970s and initially used a skills-based approach that soon evolved to a developmental approach as understanding of college reading and learning theory shifted. In Fall of 1997, a reading placement tool had not been implemented, but the campus approved the Assessment of Written English (AWE) and discontinued the ASSET. At the same time, a Title III grant began which included exploring reading curriculum. Through the grant and with Rita Burleig- Caven's endorsement, the development of a reading program began. At this time, an ad hoc committee was established, and the LAC's reading/writing committee undertook a project to develop a reading program that included a reading assessment tool for placement and four courses to meet the needs of all readers. Two papers were published, one in April of 1998, *A Report on Reading and its Place in the Community College Environment*, and one in Fall of 1999, *Results of Reading Research: Title III, Assessment Component*. Both were published by LAC faculty members Patricia Bower and Barbara Gonzales, and recommendations were made for use of Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) for placement and offer a four course reading program. A series of READ courses was developed by the LAC based on reading research, learning theory, and Mt. SAC student needs. About this time, the ad hoc committee was resurrected to help create a reading competency through a Senate Resolution (2004-09), and the reading competency was passed by AMAC on November 10, 2004.

Through continued advocacy for reading curriculum, the current reading competency was established, and the LAC was tasked through a Title V Grant to establish readabilities and a tutor training course in tutoring reading. Readabilities were linked to courses in the Spring 2010 on-line schedule; however, due to limited Instruction Office staff, readabilities were not subsequently published in the online schedule.

### **The Reading-Writing Connection**

A college English composition class, as the title suggests, focuses on writing essays and papers for many purposes. These essays/papers might be informative, persuasive, descriptive and comparative in nature and instruction focuses on structure, grammar, and correct MLA format. Many times the essays are a response to various readings. These readings vary from literature to expository articles and possibly academic journals. Instructors might include instruction related to some specific reading skills such as finding the central point, annotating, and making accurate inferences. Summary writing, paraphrasing, and MLA format are also emphasized.

A college Reading class focuses on preparing students for the demands of reading across the disciplines. READ courses utilize students' authentic texts (textbooks and course readings from students' current classes) in order to explore strategic academic reading processes, demonstrate approaches to complex text, and engage in and sustain cross-disciplinary reading practice. Skills emphasized include establishing a purpose for reading, building reading endurance, questioning at multiple levels, summary writing, creating complex organizational strategies such as mapping, schema

building, increasing metacognition, applying critical analysis, and developing cross-disciplinary domain specific vocabulary.

For many approaching college textbook readings, there are significant challenges. Students may have limited vocabularies and lack the background information needed to process highly specialized content. Furthermore, many students lack confidence as readers and demonstrate reading avoidant behaviors. For these students, the amount of reading required in a college class is daunting. Readers in online courses are equally, if not more, challenged. While the skills addressed in an English composition class are essential, and completion of transfer English in a timely manner is an important goal, ensuring that students have the skills needed to comprehend college textbooks supports learning across disciplines. Ensuring student success across the curriculum relies on supporting students' abilities to read-to-learn as a foundational skillset.

In a 1997 *Journal of Advanced Composition* article "The Role of Reading in the Composition Classroom," author Nancy Morrow states, "reading and writing, are quite simply, different, albeit complementary ways of knowing the world." Since READ faculty provide expertise in designing authentic, cross-disciplinary curriculum that supports reading in content areas, reading professors are equipped to ameliorate discreet reading processes to promote a highly transferable reading skill set. To address the needs of students who may be unlikely to succeed in transfer level coursework, as well as high-achieving students struggling to adjust to the demands of college reading, READ courses provide intervention, support, and intensive practice to alter and improve academic reading processes.



Until content area faculty are proficient in addressing the ways reading is “different” from writing, as Morrow states, students will benefit from READ coursework designed to support learning across disciplines.

In addition to discipline faculty misperceptions about effective expository reading practice, tutors often lack awareness that reading and writing are not reciprocal processes. The College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) tutor training standards do not provide strategic reading methodology in program outcomes, goals, or objectives, so it is not uncommon for students to receive ineffective or incomplete academic support when seeking reading guidance from academic support centers. If Mt. SAC is truly committed to helping all students meet the demands of reading intensive transfer-level and CTE coursework, the integration of reading curriculum taught by reading experts should be embedded not only at the course level but throughout Guided Pathways as well.

Since it is common for students to over assess their reading abilities and underestimate when they need help, it is imperative that Mt. SAC embed a range of support for students such as faculty access to text complexity measures (readabilities), wide-spread use of READ advisories based on readabilities, faculty professional development to explore the benefits of scaffolding reading in discipline areas, and accessible reading support in both online and face-to-face content area courses. Since it is unlikely that instructors and tutors outside of the reading discipline are highly proficient in teaching effective expository reading strategies, academic departments should collaborate with reading faculty as a means to improve learning outcomes.

# Plan

## 1. Foster Awareness of the Demands of College Reading

- READ faculty will reinstate DRP readability project analyzing and sharing general text complexity levels (readabilities) by discipline areas. Representative textbooks from discipline areas will be evaluated by READ faculty using a free DRP readability web tool. A table with a range of course textbook readability levels will be published in the online course schedule along with a graphic symbol of text complexity next to courses:



- CLEAR: Familiar vocabulary, text structure clear and static, some specialized topics included, some background knowledge needed, predictions mostly accurate, requires reader to apply literal comprehension skills



- CHALLENGING: Specialized language, text structure varies, specialized topics, strong background knowledge recommended, accurate predictions vary, requires reader to apply some higher order comprehension strategies



- COMPLEX: highly technical/unfamiliar vocabulary, complex text structure, highly specialized discipline specific knowledge, abstract and ambiguous topics included, extensive background knowledge necessary, accurate predictions low, requires reader to apply sophisticated comprehension strategies

- Revise WebCMS 10 COR template to include “Sample Required Reading.” In order to facilitate departmental discussions on course reading expectations and ensure consistency in required reading assignments, a text box should be added to the COR so, much like “substantial writing” is listed, there would be transparency in sample reading assignments. This would be complementary to the already listed textbook information.

**Resources Needed:** 6 annual LHE to analyze textbook readabilities;  
stipend for adjuncts to help expedite readabilities; Instruction Office administrative support for adding readabilities to class schedule;  
EDC approval/ C&I approval/ Senate approval for adding “Sample Required Reading” to WebCMS 10 COR template;  
Instruction Office staff support to input readabilities in online schedule; WebCMS Vendor tech support

## 2. Advocate for READ Advisories

- With access to textbook readability levels, departments can make informed decisions as how best to support reading in their courses. Currently, BIOL 1; ANTH 3, ANTH 4, ANTH 30; ACCS 31; COUN 5, COUN 12; DSPS 32; ENGL 90; LATN 1, LATN 1H, LATN 2H; PSYC 1A, PSYC 1AH, PSYC 99; PUBH 26, PUBH 30; SPCH 30, SPCH 30H; TUTOR 10R; and STDY 85C have READ advisories. Reading faculty can consult with discipline faculty through professional development offerings to discuss how adding READ advisories support reading outcomes in their courses.

**Resources Needed:** Discipline area faculty support;  
Counseling encouraging students to follow advisories

## 3. Provide Ongoing Faculty Professional Development

- Over the years, Learning Assistance instructors have facilitated a number of reading workshops to help discipline faculty scaffold students into college reading. As a follow-up session to the Spring 2018 Developmental Education Study Team's *Inspired Teaching Conference: What's Text Got to do with it?* (this session included thirty-eight faculty representing ABE, Natural Sciences, Humanities, Tech & Health, LLR, Counseling, Business, and Arts Divisions), READ faculty plans to offer a *Textmapping Community of Practice* (10 hours towards PGI pending approval):
  - Session 1: Come discuss how Mt. SAC instructors are using textmapping to support reading comprehension, compositional strategies, and content-area instruction across all disciplines and levels of academic readiness.
  - Session 2: Engage with colleagues to plan and implement textmapping strategies in your classroom. Participants will have the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues across campus with support from experienced practitioners.
  - Session 3: Share and reflect on experiences with use of textmapping strategies. Participants will share their insights gained from application of textmapping with students in their classroom practice.
- Both the Academic Support and Achievement Center (formerly Tutorial Services/LAC) and the Writing Center are College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) certified centers; however, CRLA standards do not provide strategic reading methodology in program outcomes, goals, or

objectives, so it is not uncommon for students to receive ineffective or incomplete academic support when seeking reading guidance from tutors. To ensure tutors are trained to provide high quality reading support to meet the demands of transfer-level coursework as well as introductory-level Career Technical Education (CTE), newly hired tutors should be incentivized to take VOCTR 10R: Tutoring in Reading. Currently tutors in CRLA certified centers are only required to take VOCTR 10A: Introduction to Tutoring.

Currently, a noncredit tutoring certificate is in development.

**Resources Needed:** 6 annual LHE to plan and facilitate faculty workshops; enlist POD's help in promotion, facility set up, technology needs, registration, follow up planning, flyer creation for faculty workshops; utilize Guided Pathways funding for workshop materials and handouts; obtain support from Guided Pathway funds to incentivize additional tutor training in strategic reading

#### 4. Deepen Content Area Literacy and Critical Reading

- Continue to provide sufficient face-to-face and online transfer-level READ 90 & 100 sections
- Collaborate with discipline faculty to link READ sections designed with specific contextualized “flavors” such as healthcare, social science, business, and STEM. In Spring 2018, READ faculty collaborated with Sociology to create a social science focused online READ 90. At the beginning of the semester, SOC 1 instructors encouraged students to add the online READ 90 to support SOC 1 texts. Since few students elected to enroll in the support course, the class was opened to all students. Creating an “official” Learning Community linked in the schedule of classes could increase student participation.
- Develop Canvas reading module to support online learners. If a READ module was available for discipline faculty to embed in online courses, this could increase awareness of the demands of college reading early in the term.

**Resources Needed:** 6 annual LHE; support from division administrative staff to create links in course schedule; collaboration with Guided Pathways; collaboration with discipline faculty; support from Counseling to share information about Learning Communities with students



## Conclusion

Some administrators and politicians blame developmental education courses for low completion rates among underserved students; however, this position fails to address the complexities of the issue such as low economic and social status, limited experiences and resources, and varying expectations, interests, and abilities of non-traditional students. With the implementation of AB 705, substantial numbers of students will enter transfer-level coursework in math and English without the necessary prerequisite skills or ways to develop them. READ 90 currently meets Mt. SAC's local reading competency for the Associates Degree (Title 5 § 55063), and it is important to note that in contrast to ENGL 1A, READ course outcomes require students to demonstrate proficiency in strategic reading of cross-disciplinary expository texts – an essential skill for post-secondary learners.

In addition to continuing to offer established READ curriculum, additional measures such as establishing wide-spread READ advisories, adding sample required reading assignments to CORs, continued faculty professional development in scaffolding college readers, publishing textbook readabilities in class schedules, supporting online learners, and collaborating with discipline faculty to “flavor” READ courses within specific disciplines will increase campus wide awareness of the demands of college reading with the ultimate goal of improving academic and workforce outcomes.