Quasi-Experimental Evaluation of a Pilot Noncredit to Credit

English as a Second Language Program for Refugees

by

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A dissertation submitted to the faculty of

San Diego State University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Educational Leadership

May 14, 2012
SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

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Quasi-Experimental Evaluation of a Pilot Noncredit to Credit

English as a Second Language Program for Refugees

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ABSTRACT

Serving almost half of all undergraduate students in the country, community colleges are a vital part of the postsecondary education system in the United States. Nearly 50% of these students come from an immigrant background, are permanent legal residents, are naturalized U.S. citizens or children of immigrants, and increasingly, refugees and asylees. For many, this often begins with non-credit English as a Second Language (ESL) courses. Unfortunately, of all the students who begin their studies with noncredit courses, only 10% make the transition to further education of any kind, and an even smaller percentage ever complete a degree or certificate. In response to both the increasing need of teaching ESL to immigrants and refugees, and facilitating the academic success of students who begin their studies in noncredit, Cuyamaca College developed an innovative ESL-Link program which begins with intensive (150 hours/semester) noncredit instruction. Those students who successfully pass this course are guaranteed admission into the first level credit course (ESL 80). The study evaluated the efficacy of the pilot ESL-Link program by comparing the academic success of students in credit ESL 80 (taken in spring 2011) of the ESL-Link students to those students who did not participate in the ESL-Link program. Quantitative data (final course grades and enrollment in additional classes) and qualitative data (interviews of participating ESL faculty members) were used to evaluate this program. Further research should examine the longer-term academic and personal benefits of participating in the ESL-Link program, the benefit of linking additional courses to the sequence of linked classes, and the role of student support services in supporting the unique psycho/social and emotional needs of refugees.
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Once bound and published, the world will forever bestow unique and undivided recognition upon the author for the creation of this document. Such undivided recognition, although certainly welcomed and appreciated, imparts gross injustice to people whom, without them and their time, efforts, guidance, wisdom, and most importantly, their confidence in and commitment to me, this document would not have been completed and, lacking this document, a terminal degree would not have been achieved. These people are:

Dr. Fred McFarlane, Dissertation Chair and mentor

Dr. Marilee Bresciani, Dissertation Committee

Dr. Terrance Burgess, Dissertation Committee (and President of San Diego City College)

Dr. Kendra Jeffcoat, Dissertation Committee.

To them I express my most sincere appreciation for their patience, tolerance, and confidence.

Namaste—I bow to your souls!

In addition, I must also thank several people who exercised divine patience with and tolerance of me by sharing their time, wisdom, and insights. These people are:

Alicia Munoz, ESL Department Chair, Cuyamaca College

Steve Weinert, Faculty, Cuyamaca College (for his help and guidance with statistics)

Leif Christianson, Research Office, Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District

But mostly, I must thank my family who tolerated my absence for the past several years while I completed my studies: Abigail, Rachel, and Sofia.
CHAPTER 1—INTRODUCTION

Students enrolled in noncredit English as a Second Language (ESL) community college courses face a variety of challenges. As non-English speakers, they struggle with the many challenges of trying to adapt and survive in a new culture which may be very alien to them. Additionally, the personal circumstances of how and why many non-English speakers arrive in the United States, as with the case of refugees, are often tragic. English as a Second Language courses offer non-English speakers an opportunity to learn English and can contribute to the student’s personal development and self-confidence. If we can understand how to maximize the impact and benefits of our noncredit and credit ESL courses, then, in addition to teaching English, we will have the opportunity to help our students in their long and difficult road to cultural adaptation, personal independence, and professional success.

Cuyamaca College is one of two colleges in the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District (GCCCD), in the eastern part of San Diego County. The local community served by the GCCCD, and especially Cuyamaca College, has experienced a significant increase in refugees from Iraq, with approximately 400 refugees per month coming to the local community since 2008. This growth is expected to continue for at least another 2 years (Refugee Coordinator, San Diego County, personal communication, September 19, 2011). The continued increase in numbers of immigrant refugees in the community is providing unique challenges for student support services and instruction at Cuyamaca College. Briefly, these refugees come to the College with a desire to enroll in a credit course of ESL—to learn English so they can pursue higher education, gain employment, and earn an income. The College simply does not have the
resources to offer the number of for credit courses that the non-English speaking community, especially the recently arrived refugees and immigrants, needs to meet the student demand. Credit ESL is critical because the students receive financial aid for taking the credit courses. As has been stated in numerous college planning meetings by counselors and faculty, there is a belief among the refugee students at the College that financial aid is a viable income stream for the student and their family (personal communication—stated repeatedly to the researcher and in college committee meetings). Not only is financial aid not available for noncredit courses, neither are student support services, such as counseling, Equal Opportunity Program and Services (EOPS), Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (CARE), or California Work Opportunities and Responsibilities to Kids (CalWORKs). According to the College’s financial aid and instructional staff (as reported in numerous committee meetings), financial aid is so important to the refugee population that when they cannot get into a credit ESL course, they will enroll in whatever credit course they can get into (which does not have a prerequisite) just so that they can qualify for financial aid. As an example, faculty and administrators expressed a concern that science courses have students who lack the English proficiency needed to successfully complete the course. It is uncertain if the students fully comprehend the implications of not passing a course on their financial aid and academic future. Unfortunately, by failing the course they put their current and future financial aid and academic success at risk.

The refugee students are not the only ones who are disadvantaged by such practices. Due to a reduced schedule forced by the diminished budget of the College, many of the few courses that are offered are highly sought after as required “gateway”
courses to high-demand training programs such as healthcare. If a non-English speaking refugee or immigrant registers and gains admission into one of these courses (with the primary intent of securing financial aid), an English-speaking student who might have needed that course as part of his/her degree plan may find himself/herself being displaced and having to wait an entire semester before having access to the course. This is a common scenario at Cuyamaca College and another reason why developing specific programs for students requiring ESL will also have benefits for students throughout the College. Developing courses designed to meet the unique and specific needs of the refugee students will not only help them succeed in their academic aspirations but will also benefit all the other students by reducing the enrollment pressure on courses throughout the curriculum.

**Significance of the Study**

As with many other segments of the United States, refugees and immigrants are coming to community colleges as part of their effort to begin their new lives in their new country. In the case of refugees and immigrants, they are looking primarily for ESL courses—because without knowing English, they cannot continue with their studies or find employment. This increase in demand for ESL courses comes at a time when courses are being cut by the hundreds due to unprecedented budget cuts. Nowhere is this crisis being experienced more acutely than at Cuyamaca College in the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District in East San Diego County—the primary place in the country where Iraqi refugees are being resettled. As the availability of ESL courses diminishes and the demand for those courses increases, non-English speaking students take whatever courses they can get into as part of their requirement to maintain
CalWORKS funding and also to access financial aid. Non-English speaking students taking credit courses at a time when all students are struggling to gain access to fewer and fewer courses causes a variety of challenges for the non-English speaking students, the students who are displaced from credit courses, for faculty, and the institution.

Community colleges are a vital part of the postsecondary education delivery system in the United States. They are serving almost half of all undergraduate students, providing open access to postsecondary education, preparing students for transfer to 4-year institutions, providing workforce development and professional skills training and retraining, and offering a variety of noncredit personal and community development and enrichment programs, including ESL (American Association of Community Colleges [AACC], 2011). As mentioned by Cohen and Brower (2003), “These functions are noted in practically each state’s legislation” (p. 22). As a result, community colleges are the gateway to postsecondary education for many minority, low income, and first-generation postsecondary education students, and, increasingly, a growing number of refugees, asylum-seekers (“asylees”), and immigrants (Connell, 2008).

In their commitment to meet their mission, community colleges strive to serve all members in the community who can benefit from its services. This becomes increasingly more difficult as the needs and composition of the population to be served becomes more diverse and complex. Seventy-six years ago in 1936, Hollinshead wrote that “the junior college should be a community college meeting community needs” (p. 111). In the eastern part of San Diego County, and in many parts of the country, community colleges are finding themselves responding to community needs defined by a growing population of refugees, asylees, and immigrants. Given their broad mission and their accessibility to
the community, the community college has a unique role in meeting the needs of non-English speaking immigrants.

According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR, 2009), there were some 42 million people forcefully displaced worldwide in 2008. Of these 42 million, 15.2 million were legally classified as refugees. Of the total number of refugees worldwide, less than 1% of that population is eventually permanently resettled in a foreign country. Only one-half of that 1% is resettled in the United States (Christian & Sinema, 2007). For refugees from Iraq, the United States, which has increased the number of Iraqi refugees being resettled in the United States from only 202 in 2006 to approximately 17,000 in fiscal year 2009, remains the only option for thousands of refugees who are still in exile in the Middle East (International Rescue Committee [IRC], 2009). In fiscal year 2008, the United States was the recipient of slightly over 60,000 refugees (IRC, 2009). According to an unpublished report on Chaldean demographic trends in San Diego written by Dr. John Weeks (professor of Geography at San Diego State University) and his graduate student, Ms. Marta Jankoskahas, San Diego County has been receiving over 400 refugees per month since October 2008. Of the refugees and asylees coming to San Diego in recent years, nearly 85% have been from Iraq, making San Diego the top destination for recent Iraqi refugees in the United States (Krueger, 2009). This trend is evidently not expected to change because, in a recent meeting with the ORR staff, they stated that there are “approximately 60,000 refugees currently in the pipeline being processed for resettlement to the U.S.” (Krueger, 2009, p. A1). According to Makda Belay (Office of Refugee Resettlement [ORR], personal communication, November 10, 2011), the rate of resettlement into the United States has temporarily
slowed due to a change in security procedures for screening refugee applicants, but the 60,000 have already been approved for refugee status, and once they pass their security check, will be resettled to the United States.

**Community Colleges and Foreign-Born Populations**

Community colleges enroll approximately 6.5 million students, or almost half of all U.S. undergraduates (AACC, 2011). Nearly 50% of these students either come from an immigrant background, are permanent legal residents, are naturalized U.S. citizens, or children of immigrants (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2008). In 2007, the foreign-born population in the U.S. rose to a record 38.1 million, or 12.6% of the population. Between 2005 and 2050, the U.S. population is expected to grow by 48%, with 82% of that growth being attributed to immigrants (Passell & D’Vera, 2008). If present immigration levels remain constant and are used for projections, one in five residents (or 19% of the U.S. population) will be foreign-born by 2050. The impact of the country’s growing immigrant population will not only pose unique challenges for our education system but also has the potential of making a significant contribution to our national economy. The foreign-born share of the U.S. population in the 100 largest metropolitan areas climbed from 10.4% to 16.3% between 1990 and 2008. In fact, immigration accounted for 38.5% of total population growth in these metropolitan areas (Chaudry & Simms, 2011). “How we incorporate immigrants into every facet of U.S. society—and prepare them for a job market that increasingly relies on skilled workers—will determine the economic future of our country” (Connell, 2008, p. 1).

For many people, community colleges represent not only the best but the only opportunity for a better life. This is especially true for immigrant and refugee
populations, who must also struggle with the added challenge of having to learn English as a second language. Community colleges offer foreign students the unique opportunity to learn English, as well as further their education while learning a marketable skill. According to the National Commission on Community Colleges (2008), “For individuals, particularly those from low-income or minority backgrounds, community colleges can open the door to opportunity through the surest route to personal security and income growth: an associate or a bachelor’s degree” (p. 23). The report goes on to say that “Community colleges . . . can close the gap between the immigrant promise and the immigrant experience by integrating new Americans into our national life” (p. 24).

The Commission on the Future of Higher Education stressed that, despite whatever shortcomings community colleges might experience, community colleges are “the major route for new generations of Americans to achieve social mobility” (U.S. Department of Education, 2006, p. 1). Although a large number of refugees and immigrants are resettling in San Diego County, many other areas of the country and many community colleges are responding to the challenges posed by non-English speaking learners. In response, community colleges from throughout the country are developing innovative and creative programs in response to assisting individuals from populations to transition to a new life in the United States. Community colleges provide refugees not only with the educational and training opportunities to be able to make a living (relatively quickly), but also provide them with the language training, through ESL programs, necessary to take advantage of those opportunities.

The first step to self-sufficiency and assimilation in the United States is for an immigrant to learn English. But people come with different levels of English language
awareness and different levels of capabilities to learn a new language. For many
non-English speakers, this first step often begins with non-credit ESL courses. According
to the research of Chisman and Crandall (2007), most students who start in noncredit
never get any further because “only 10 percent make the transition to further education of
any kind. Transition rates are so low primarily because educational pathways from the
lowest levels of English proficiency to enrollment in academic or vocational programs are
so long” (p. 137). The transition from noncredit ESL to for-credit programs can be long
and difficult for immigrants, if they are ever successful.

**Iraqi Refugees in San Diego**

San Diego is home to a large refugee population and has one of the fastest
growing immigrant communities in the United States. A large percentage of refugees
arriving in San Diego County (both through primary and secondary migration) are from
Iraq, and because of the already established Chaldean (Iraqi Christians) community in
east San Diego County, the new Iraqi arrivals are settling primarily in that community.
“East County has long been an enclave for Chaldean immigrants from Iraq. Some 35,000
[Chaldeans] are here, mostly in El Cajon, [California]” (“Refugees and Rescuers,” 2009,
para. 1). Although the war in Iraq has officially ended, a significant number of additional
Iraqi refugees are still expected to arrive in San Diego (Makda Belay [ORR], personal
communication, November 10, 2011).

The recent influx of refugees from Iraq into East San Diego County has been very
rapid. The growing population is impacting local institutions such as colleges, high
schools, and social and human services. The individual and collective well-being of the
refugees residing in East San Diego County, as well as the economic and social well
being of the larger community, depends in great part on the efforts and success of the local institutions to meet the needs of this new and growing population.

Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District

The following section documents the efforts of the local community college and its district to provide services to the rapidly growing refugee population and leadership in the local community. Nearly 85% of all refugees coming to San Diego County come from Iraq, and nearly 75% of all refugees that have arrived in San Diego County since October 2008 have settled in the GCCCD service area (Director of CalWORKs, personal communication, Cuyamaca College, 2010). Primarily because of geographic proximity, the college of choice for these refugees (who have mostly settled in east San Diego County) is Cuyamaca College. At a time when the state’s budget is arguably the worst it has ever been, the GCCCD, and more specifically, Cuyamaca College, are being overwhelmed by an unprecedented number of refugees from Iraq. In an effort to respond to this growing need, Cuyamaca College has dedicated efforts and resources to better understand the challenges being imposed by this growing population, and more importantly, how best to organize and reorganize its efforts and resources to provide the services needed by the members of this immigrant community.

Additionally, the GCCCD has taken its own steps to hold a large-scale community forum, to bring greater attention to this issue. On Friday, November 6, 2009, the GCCCD hosted an open community forum titled East County Community Summit-Spotlight on Refugee Education and Employment at the Cuyamaca College Student Center, El Cajon. The Summit was co-hosted by the GCCCD and Grossmont Union High School District and was attended by approximately 200 representatives from all sectors of education,
business, and government, as well as from the media and a variety of community and social service organizations. This Summit focused on the educational and employment needs of the growing East San Diego County refugee population with the following goals:

- Raise **AWARENESS** of the refugee population’s circumstances and impact on education and employment.
- Determine the **RESOURCES** currently available and required.
- Propose **ACTIONS** to advance the systems that support refugee education and employment.

The outcomes of the forum were primarily an iteration of what was generally known by all participants: There is a significantly large number of refugees currently living in East San Diego County who need to learn English and secure an income; more refugees are coming each month; and the resources available are terribly insufficient. Action items identified during the forum included forming a “think tank” to further discuss innovative solutions to addressing the needs of the refugees and to develop a website which would serve as a “one-stop shop” for all things related to the needs of the refugees in East San Diego County. The Grossmont-Union High School District drafted a preliminary website but it was never followed up or built upon by GCCCD. The “think tank” never met or materialized. The official outcomes (minutes and notes) of the Community Forum are included in Appendix A.

**Cuyamaca College**

Refugees living in East San Diego County realize that their first step in making a successful transition to life in the United States is to learn English, and, for many of them, this means attending Cuyamaca College. As a result, Student Support Services and the
Office of Continuing Education (which offers non-credit ESL courses) expressed a concern about being overwhelmed by the numbers and the needs of this potential student population. In an effort to better understand and respond to the unique needs presented by this student population, Cuyamaca College held its first meeting of all Student Support Services staff, the President of the Academic Senate, and other administrators on September 25, 2009 to get a better understanding of how the College was being impacted by this growing population and what efforts are being taken to respond to their needs.

In order to help ESL students transition from noncredit to credit courses, and then to better prepare them to be successful once they begin taking credit courses, Cuyamaca College initiated a new and innovative program called ESL-Link. ESL-Link started with the highest level noncredit ESL course (ESL 70) which provided intensive ESL instruction 4 days/week, 3 hours/day. The program was called ESL-Link because students who participated in and successfully passed the intensive noncredit class were guaranteed enrollment into a “linked” for-credit ESL course the following semester, which was also “linked” to a required Personal Development Counseling (PDC) course as part of the ESL-Link program. Personal Development Counseling courses are not required of all students but were made a requirement of this ESL-Link program to further assist refugees with social and cultural issues associated with life in the United States. The addition of the PDC course to the credit ESL course was important because it allowed the students to be enrolled full-time and therefore become eligible for full financial aid support.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose(s) of this evaluation was to study the benefit of participating in an intensive noncredit ESL course to the subsequent academic successes of the participating refugee students enrolled in the linked credit ESL course. The specific protocol for the program’s evaluation is described in detail in Chapter 3. In addition to evaluating the success of the ESL-Link program, this study also:

- Documented the immigrant and refugee phenomenon currently underway in San Diego County, primarily in the East San Diego County in regards to Iraqi refugees.
- Documented the impact on and responses of the GCCCD, in general, and Cuyamaca College, specifically, to the growing need to provide ESL to refugees.
- Provided an overview of other models among community colleges in responding to non-English speaking immigrants.

Definition of Terms

A variety of terms and concepts require description due to their unique and specific context in this study. These terms and concepts are explained below:

Culture: There is no standard, universally accepted definition of “culture.” Culture, as defined by Anthrobase.com (2011), provides such an extensive analysis of the multiple concepts of culture as to make it unusable for this study. The definition of culture for the purposes of this study comes from the University of Manitoba Anthropology Department (2011), which defines culture as “the system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviours, and artifacts that the members of society use to cope with
their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning” (para. 2).

**Chaldean/Chaldean Culture:** Chaldean is a reference to an ancient cultural group originating from Mesopotamia, or modern Iraq, closely identified with the founders of the Judaic/Christian heritage (Abraham was Chaldean, and as a descendent of Abraham, Jesus Christ also shared in that heritage). Today, the term “Chaldeans” is synonymous with “Iraqi Christians” (Sengstock, 1999). One of the largest communities of Chaldeans in the United States resides in El Cajon, California in the eastern region of San Diego County.

**Refugee:** The 1951 Refugee Convention establishing the UNHCR defines a refugee as someone who

owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country. (UNHCR, 2001, para. 3)

To be eligible for refugee or asylum status in the United States, an applicant must meet the definition of a refugee set forth in 101(a)(42) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA, 2000):

A person who is unable or unwilling to return to his or her country of nationality because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

**CalWORKs:** California Work Opportunities and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) funds are provided to California Community Colleges for the purpose of
assisting welfare recipient students and those in transition from welfare to independence to achieve long-term self-sufficiency through coordinated student services. These services include: work study, job placement, child care coordination, curriculum development and redesign, instructional services, and under certain conditions postemployment skills training (CalWORKs, 2011).

**Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS):** The DSPS program provides support services, specialized instruction and educational accommodations to students with disabilities so they can participate in and benefit from their college experiences as do their nondisabled peers (California Community College Chancellor’s Office, 2011).

**CASAS:** Comprehensive Adult Students Assessment Systems. A widely used system for assessing adult basic reading, math, listening, writing, and speaking. The CASAS is used by the GCCCD, Grossmont Union High School District Adult Education, and the East County Career Center.

**Noncredit Instruction:** Provides remedial, developmental, occupational and other general educational opportunities critical for survival in today’s society. Noncredit often serves as a first point of entry for many underserved students, as well as a transition point to credit instruction (Cuyamaca College, 2011).

**Credit Instruction:** Designed for students who are interested in earning college credits towards a degree or certificate. Students typically receive a letter grade at the end of the semester (Cuyamaca College, 2011).

**PDC 130:** Personal Development Counseling course is offered at Cuyamaca College. This course prepares students to adjust to the academic community by learning to plan and study effectively within given time limitations. Strategies include: time
management, goal setting, textbook mastery, library research skills, note-taking, exam preparation, stress reduction, and educational planning. The syllabus for the PDC 130 can be found in Appendix B.

*ESL 70 (noncredit):* A multi-level Vocational English-as-a-Second Language (VESL) course designed for beginning to intermediate language level students whose first language is other than English. The syllabus for the PDC 130 can be found in Appendix C.

*ESL 80 (credit):* A multi-level VESL course designed for beginning to intermediate language level students whose first language is other than English who have completed ESL 70 or demonstrated proficiency at the ESL 70 level. The course focuses on developing the communication skills students will need to function effectively in the classroom or the workplace. The syllabus for the PDC 130 can be found in Appendix D.

**Limitations of the Study**

Limitations of this study were the following: The refugee and immigrant situation in the eastern portion of San Diego County is not a static situation, and not enough time has passed to have a clear understanding of the events in retrospect. This is a current and very dynamic situation—for the local community trying to respond to this situation, the refugees who are trying to adapt to a new life in the United States, and for the College that is constantly trying to respond to the needs of all students (during a time of uncertain budget reductions).

The study takes place in one setting (an ESL program at a community college in East San Diego County) and with one student population (Iraqi refugees). The results of this study cannot be generalized to other community colleges or immigrant groups.
Delimitations of the Study

The delimitations of the study were the following: The outcome measure is narrowly focused on the exit scores in credit ESL 80. The sample size of the total pilot cohort is small \( N = 50 \). Not all non-English speaking refugee students accepted the opportunity to participate in the pilot program, because the program required the students to begin with noncredit courses (which did not provide the students with financial aid). The commitment of the faculty who volunteered to participate in the pilot program may be different than those teaching other noncredit or credit ESL courses. As a result, the generalizability of this study and its outcomes are questionable with regard to the broad spectrum of the student demographic, linguistic and ethnic groups, other settings, and a broader array of academic disciplines.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher has a special interest in this topic in part because of his own immigrant experiences. The researcher, his parents, and older siblings were born overseas and immigrated to the United States. The researcher’s father, who was the family’s only financial provider, struggled throughout his entire professional career because of his limited English proficiency. The researcher’s mother never learned to speak English fluently. Adapting successfully, in a cultural context, to life in the United States had always eluded the researcher’s parents, primarily because of their inability to interact linguistically and culturally. Additionally, the researcher has spent nearly his entire professional career either as an administrator in higher education or in international humanitarian aid. In 1995, the researcher was invited to serve as the Program Director for the first global conference on the Social Obligations of Universities and the Health of
the Disadvantaged, co-sponsored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The researcher worked with the international committee to draft the global charter for the social obligations of universities and colleges. As a result of these experiences, both personal and professional, the researcher has a special interest in both the experiences of non-English speaking immigrants and the role of higher education in meeting these needs. The role of the researcher was to analyze the data (the exit scores in the credit ESL 80 course of refugee students participating in the ESL-Link) to see if participating in the non-credit ESL 70 had any academic benefit for the students. To accomplish this, the researcher worked with the Chair of the ESL Department at Cuyamaca College and the GCCCD Office of Institutional Research to analyze the course’s final grade data and compare the grades to those students who participated in the ESL-Link program to those who did not.
CHAPTER 2—REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The review of the literature provides an overview of issues concerning the education and teaching of immigrants and refugees. The following are reviewed:

(a) Theory of Academic Integration; (b) Adult Learning Theory; (c) Student Success Courses; (d) Review of the nation’s more successful Community College Models in ESL for non-native speakers of English: Bunker Hill Community College, Charlestown, Massachusetts; City College of San Francisco, California; Kingsborough Community College, Massachusetts; Pima Community College, Arizona; College of Lake County, Grayslake, Illinois; Fiorello H. LaGuardia Community College, New York; (e) Impact on Cuyamaca College Programs and Services; (f) Cuyamaca College Response; (g) Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District Response; (h) History and overview of Chaldeans; and (i) Gaps in the Research. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the interventions examined in this study and the model under investigation. The discussion identifies the gaps in research for the purpose of making a case for the proposed study and how this research can contribute to the knowledge in the field of educating refugees, and possibly all non-English speakers, at the community college level.

Academic Integration

Because the ESL-Link program relies heavily on increased interaction between the student, the faculty member, and the college, the theoretical framework that guided this study is the academic integration theory of Tinto (1975). The fundamental premise of Tinto is that for students to persist in school, they need to be “integrated,” formally and
informally, in both academic and social systems. The student’s level of integration is directly affected by what the student brings to the institution, such as personal and family attributes and prior qualifications. The more a student feels academically and socially integrated, the more likely he/she is to persist (Tinto, 1975). Tinto (1998) stated that institutions should design opportunities for students to develop academic and social connections, which will encourage persistence. Being forcefully displaced, the college can quickly become the place where refugees begin to identify with their new country. In an effort to help non-English language learners to learn English, faculty attempted to structure courses to allow the students to be intensely immersed in learning English. Not only does the extended exposure to learning English benefit the student, but according to Tinto’s theory, the extended exposure may also assist in persistence because of the educational connection that is created with the student.

According to Tinto (1993), the factors which influence a student’s decision to remain in school are related more to what happens after a student begins classes rather than before: “They are reflections of the dynamic nature of the social and intellectual life of the communities which are housed in the institution, in particular of the daily interaction which occurs among its members” (p. 5). Tinto goes on to state that student success, as measured in terms of retention and persistence, include a student’s intentions to attend higher education, attendance, and the student’s motivation and commitment. In addition to these factors, other critically important factors that influence student success in regards to retention and persistence are the interactions that take place between students and the faculty, as well as between the students themselves (Engstrom & Tinto, 2008; Jehangir, 2008; Tinto, 1993: Treisman, 1992; Zamani, 2000). Horn and Nevill
(2006) also recognized the importance of full-time versus part-time status of the students. All these elements were addressed in the structure and format of the ESL-Link program that is discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

Another significant contribution of Tinto’s (1993) research is the acknowledgment that “student involvement in the life of the college, especially its academic life, is an important mechanism through which student effort is engaged” (p. 131). One successful and proven method of increasing student academic involvement is through learning communities (Engstrom & Tinto, 2008; Jehangir, 2008; Tinto, 1993). The benefits and contributions of learning communities towards student academic success and persistence have been well documented (Engstrom & Tinto, 2008; Jehangir, 2008; Jones-Kavalier & Goetzinger, 2008; Laufgraben & Shapiro, 2004; McChenney, 2009; Mills, 2009; Minkler, 2002; Moore & Shulock, 2007; Shapiro & Levine, 1999; Smith, MacGregor, Matthews, & Gabelnick, 2004; Tinto, 1993). Among the positive contributions of participating in learning communities for the students are the opportunities to increase interactions between each other and with the faculty (Engstrom & Tinto, 2008; Shapiro & Levine, 1999; Testone, 2001; Tinto, 1993). As Raftery (2005) noted, learning communities can help “students face multiple academic, social, and economic barriers, become comfortable with the learning process, and gain the skills and self-confidence they need to be successful throughout their educational journey (pp. 71-72). Jehangir (2008) also noted that “students . . . found a sense of ‘family’ within their community” (p. 29) which contributed to the student’s sense of belonging.
Adult Learning Theory

Adult Learning Theory (Knowles, 1978) provides a framework concerning how adults learn. Core to this theory is that educators should communicate to the students the relevance and purpose of learning specific content. Equally important, adult students must take ownership of their learning, thus providing them with a sense of empowerment. Learning should be relevant to real-world issues and/or personal circumstances. This helps the adult learner better connect the content of the subject to their personal situations. Given that adults have many different learning styles, the teaching methods should appeal to a wide range of learning preferences and styles. It is critically important to adults that the curriculum be of high-interest to them, so that they will engage in their learning. Finally, and probably most relevant in the case of immigrants and refugees who may have various learning challenges that impede their academic success, all students need guidance and nurturing in gaining confidence and courage to increase their self-esteem as learners (Conner, 1997). Although relevant to many ages and populations, this theory is especially impactful for adult learners of English as a Second Language (ESL) because their needs are very specific—learn English.

Student Success Courses

Refugees pose a unique challenge to academic institutions because, in addition to needing to learn English and possibly earning a professional recertification, they also come with a wide range of nonacademic issues that may interfere with their academic success. Recognizing that students have more than just academic needs, “some experts contend that helping students address . . . non-academic deficiencies is just as important as helping them acquire basic academic skills through remedial classes” (Zeidenberg,
Jenkins, & Calcagno, 2007, p. 1). Through their research of students in Florida, Zeidenberg et al. (2007) found that “students who enrolled in a student success course were 8 percent more likely than their peers to earn a credential, 7 percent more likely to persist in school and 5 percent more likely to transfer” (p. 3). The practice and benefits of coupling student success courses with basic skills or other courses is well-recognized (Achieving the Dream [ATD], 2009; Jarrell, 2004; McClenny, 2009).

**Successful Community College Models in English as a Second Language for Non-Native Speakers of English**

A 2-year comparative study of five community colleges titled “Passing the Torch,” conducted by the Council for the Advancement of Adult Literacy, and reported in Connell’s (2008) report on the *Vital Role of Community Colleges in the Education and Integration of Immigrants*, examined some of the best practices in teaching English and other skills needed by immigrants to be prepared for and succeed in higher education and in the workforce (Zachry & Dibble, 2007). The colleges in the study included:

- Bunker Hill Community College, Charlestown, Massachusetts.
- City College of San Francisco, California.
- Kingsborough Community College, Massachusetts.
- Pima Community College, Arizona.
- College of Lake County, Grayslake, Illinois
- Fiorello H. LaGuardia Community College, New York.

From this extensive examination of what is recognized to be some of the most innovative and exemplary ESL programs in the country, three strategies for increasing learning outcomes for community college ESL students were noted:
• High-intensity instruction with managed enrollment. Most community college classes meet either Monday-Wednesday-Friday, or Tuesday-Thursday. This pattern of class meetings also applies to ESL classes. Additionally, most ESL classes meet only between 3 and 6 hours per week. The model colleges in the Passing the Torch report all had classes that met between 12 and 24 hours per week during the entire semester. Students were dropped from the course if they missed too many classes, as opposed to many other “nonmodel” programs, where students could enter and exit the program as they desired. Having a required attendance policy imposed upon the students required that they understood the expectations of participation and implied expectations of success. Although there were initial criticisms that immigrants, who were also trying to earn a living and provide for their families, would not be able to meet these exceptionally high attendance expectations, all the programs maintained fill rates and active student participation. Results from these programs revealed that these “high-intensity classes were achieving gains two to three times faster than their counterparts in lower-intensity classes” (Connell, 2008, p. 9).

• Extended learning outside the classroom. In addition to very high in-class demands and expected contact hours each week, model programs made additional out-of-class requirements and provided additional opportunities for students to interact with native English speakers outside the classroom. Learning ESL was not only an exercise in language acquisition but part of a
larger effort in feeling comfortable in assimilating into the larger, dominant culture.

• Curricular adaptations for learners’ needs. Success of the model programs depended upon ensuring that the ESL programs did not apply a “one-size-fits-all” approach to ESL education. The programs functioned from the premise and understanding that not all students are equally prepared and equally capable in learning and advancing at the same pace. The model programs developed what they referred to as a “learner-centered thematic” curriculum.

As with many successful academic programs, the success of the model programs depended upon institutional commitment, dedicated faculty, and ample resources. The study found that most faculty members had master’s degrees in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). There was a minimal use of part-time faculty. In those programs that utilized part-time faculty, special compensation was found to be a considerable incentive for the part-time faculty, such as higher pay, better benefits, and opportunities for professional development.

In addition to the many innovative and creative programs developed by the model colleges, what was most noteworthy was the investment of financial resources to ensure the success of the ESL programs. The colleges in the Passing the Torch study spent, on average, between $1,500 and $3,000 per student on instruction and support (compared to $600 per student per year spent nationally; Connell, 2008). The Passing the Torch study highlighted five steps that all community colleges can utilize to improve success rates for ESL students:
• Curricular integration with college preparation. For students in intermediate language instruction, integrating “high intensity instruction” which focused on “life skills English” resulted in success rates higher than other programs.

• Co-enrollment. To speed along the success of students in ESL programs, colleges allowed students to co-enroll in vocational or academic courses taught in English even before they complete their entire sequence of ESL courses. The authors indicated that this practice not only allows students to gain valuable skills taught in those courses, but it also allows them to practice their English in authentic situations. It may also increase their motivation to persist in ESL, because it reinforces the idea that the purpose of ESL is not simply to learn more English. (Connell, 2008, p. 9)

• Vocational ESL (VESL). Vocational ESL courses are some of the most successful programs in helping an ESL student in their efforts to learn English and complete a training program so that they can provide financially for themselves and their families. The VESL programs are particularly successful because they typically offer high-intensity ESL instruction coupled with basic skills support (including Math) and vocational training.

• Spanish GED. For the colleges whose primarily non-English population was Spanish-speaking immigrants, several colleges offered the students an opportunity to prepare for and take the high school equivalency exam in Spanish.
• Enhanced guidance and counseling. Because the pathway from noncredit ESL to academic and vocational studies can be long and confusing, strong guidance programs helped ESL students navigate this pathway successfully. Counseling can be a significant benefit for all students, but especially for ESL students who may have had a limited educational background in their own country and then tried to understand the college’s own unique pathway to degree or certificate completion. Some colleges even required that students enroll in a “college success” course, workshop or program.

In Connell’s (2008) work, *The Vital Role of Community Colleges in the Education and Integration of Immigrants*, he highlighted some of the most notable community college programs in the country, utilizing the above and other innovative strategies to help immigrants and refugees. Below is an overview of those colleges and their programs.

**Bunker Hill Community College, Charlestown, Massachusetts**

An underlying factor, if not ultimately the principle motivator, of any program’s success was institutional and administrative commitment. At Bunker Hill, one of its principle goals was to “advance immigrant success” and “expand and develop new programs for immigrant students to enable them to achieve” (Connell, 2008, p. 10). Nearly 2,600 of the college’s 9,000 students took ESL. Almost half of the students took courses that prepared them for the academic demands of higher education and classes that combined language instruction with for-credit courses (Zachry & Dibble, 2007). Additionally, both full-time and part-time faculty members were required to have master’s degrees in ESL or a related field to teach the credit or basic ESL classes.
City College of San Francisco, California

The largest academic department at City College of San Francisco (CCSF) is ESL, with 130 courses and more than 340 faculty members (Seymour, 2007). Among the college’s innovative programs and activities is the intensive, 18-week Vocational ESL Immersion Program (VIP) to help students not only learn the language but to also find a job. Students participating in the intensive VESL program received 20-30 hours of instruction a week. Although demanding, the program had an 80% retention rate. Another exemplary CCSF program was Project SHINE (Students Helping in the Naturalization of Elders). Project SHINE is a service learning effort that matches community college students from CCSF and college students from San Francisco State University with immigrant students (taking ESL or other classes) in a dedicated effort to help immigrants prepare for the U.S. naturalization exam. Many of the student tutors who worked in Project SHINE to help the immigrants were former ESL students themselves. This aspect of having former ESL students return to assist new students played an important part in promoting the success of the program by motivating the immigrants through their personal experiences and encouragement from those who have come before them.

Three-quarters of CCSF’s ESL instructors teach in the noncredit program. Although many colleges have different qualifications for instructors teaching in credit or noncredit ESL, CCSF does not. Additionally, “ESL instructors receive the same salary as all other instructors at CCSF and salary rates are the same for non-credit and credit full-time faculty” (Seymour, 2007, p. 2.12).
Kingsborough Community College, Massachusetts

More than one-third of Brooklyn’s 2.5 million residents were born outside the United States. The Kingsborough Community College matriculated students represented over a hundred nations and spoke over 80 languages (Connell, 2008). Kingsborough has received national acclaim for its Learning Communities approach to ESL and developmental classes. “Cohorts of no more than 25 first-year students take the same block of three courses, and receive two extra hours of classroom instruction and four hours of tutorials each week” (Connell, 2008, p. 12). Typical general education classes have about 42 students.

The Learning Communities offer intensive instruction. Students spend from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. each weekday in classes or meeting with tutors. To qualify for the Learning Communities, the student must first be placed in an intermediate ESL course. Data from student outcomes revealed that such dedicated and intensive efforts resulted in positive outcomes. Ninety-eight percent of the participating students passed the college’s English entrance requirements.

Pima Community College, Arizona

Students enrolled in Pima Community College’s ESL classes learned much more than just English. Students enrolled in ESL are involved in activities that focus on understanding the governmental systems and the nature of power in our society. They go to city council meetings, meet with legislators, travel to the state legislature, and engage in civic activity as a regular part of their studies. (Connell, 2008, p. 14)
Additionally, students were encouraged to participate in one of eight student councils, where they obtained first-hand experience in public speaking, leadership and civics.

**College of Lake County, Grayslake, Illinois**

The College of Lake County offers two ESL tracks: ESL for Academic Purposes, for students who desire or intend to pursue a degree or certificate, and ESL for Life Skills, for students interested in immediately entering the workforce. In addition to teaching English, both tracks teach students how to navigate the U.S. education system, what it takes to succeed in college, which involves writing papers, giving speeches, doing research, and explaining basic principles such as the definition of a credit hour.

Instructors in the Life Skills track spent time in the vocational programs to learn the vocabulary used in the courses and professions. The instructors needed to learn first-hand exactly what their students were going to need to learn when enrolled in vocational training programs. Once the instructors developed their own basic understanding of the vocational programs, they incorporated what they learned from the vocational programs into their ESL courses. The ESL programs helped boost the enrollment into Lake County’s automotive and horticulture programs.

**Fiorello H. LaGuardia Community College, New York**

In 2007, 58% of the 15,000 students at LaGuardia Community College were foreign-born. These students came from 156 countries and spoke 118 different languages (Connell, 2008). Despite these numbers and this diversity, LaGuardia graduates almost twice the national average of students (regardless of nationality and language of origin) and more than a quarter graduated within 6 years. Additionally, nearly “two-thirds of the 2006-2007 graduating class started in basic skills or English” (Connell, 2008, p. 20).
Like Kingsborough Community College, LaGuardia “makes extensive use of learning communities that link ESL and other developmental courses with credit-bearing introductory courses in business, computers, and sociology” (Connell, 2008, p. 21). LaGuardia has learned that the most successful approach to teaching ESL is in “contextualizing” skills instruction when teaching is embedded in, or in the context of a student’s chosen discipline or major.

In reviewing the colleges researched by Connell, several important lessons can be learned:

- Simply because a college is challenged with a large non-native English speaking student population does not automatically indicate a lower student success rate for the institution, as evidenced by Fiorello H. LaGuardia Community College in New York.
- To be successful, non-native English speakers require more classroom interaction than students in non-ESL courses.
- Institutions have greater success with ESL students when the ESL courses are contextualized in an applied context, such as in a vocational training program.

**Impact on Cuyamaca College Services and Programs**

Primarily because of geographic proximity, the college of choice for refugees who have resettled in San Diego County, primarily East San Diego County, is Cuyamaca College within the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District (GCCCD). Over the past year, the College’s Student Support Services, as well as Instruction, have been overwhelmed by the numbers and the needs of this student population. The following
section provides an overview of the reported impacts from the various Student Services offices:

**Admissions and Records**

In Admissions and Records, ESL students often need help applying to the College and registering for their courses. The refugee population needs “a lot of hand holding” because many have never used a computer and do not understand how to use online services and programs. Arabic-speaking College staff is desperately needed to help students with language and technology barriers. These students need an exceptional amount of time to be assisted which causes long lines and frustrations for the students who must wait sometimes for many hours, and for the staff who are unable to meet the needs of all the students and are also the recipients of the frustrations expressed by the students.

At the same time, residency determination is backlogged. At “a year and a day” of being in the United States, refugees are eligible to enroll in credit courses without paying the nonresident tuition rate. Determination of residency must be done carefully and accurately and is therefore extremely time-consuming. Many of the refugees were forced to flee their countries without any documentation or resources. With the high cost of living in San Diego, many refugee families live together in a single home. When proof of residency is required to complete the financial aid paperwork, many families lack a documented home address or utilities billing statement simply because they are living with another family and have no documentation of their own. Additionally, cultural differences are creating their own challenges. Being told “no” in response to a question or request is not taken politely by the refugee students because everything is believed to
be negotiable. Many times, students try to engage the staff in seemingly endless bargaining and negotiations to get what they need or want.

**Assessment**

The Assessment Office provides placement testing for students planning to take English, English as a Second Language, Mathematics and other courses. As the numbers of refugees continued to increase, the Assessment Office experienced a dramatic increase in requests for placement tests from students requesting access to ESL courses. In 2007-2008, the Assessment Office tested 268 ESL students. In 2008-2009, the Assessment Office tested 1,065 ESL students, which resulted in a 500% increase in 1 year. Conducting assessments at such a large scale was ceased because the Office of Student Services determined that it was not ethical to conduct assessments when there were no classes to offer the students regardless of their assessment. The demands and requests for ESL assessment continued to rise as the Iraqi refugees continued to seek community college ESL courses. In an effort to accommodate more students, the Assessment Office has attempted to hold large group assessments of up to 65 people. When the rooms meet their seating capacity, tempers flare, and public safety has been called on several occasions to settle down the emotions. The pressure to get into one of the few available ESL courses is great, and the refugees know that their hopes to enter into one of these few classes begin with assessment. When an assessment test begins at 9:00 a.m., hopeful students are already arriving at 6:00 a.m. to get in line.

In the fall 2009 semester (the year before the ESL-Link program was initiated), approximately 500 ESL students were assessed by mid-July. Of these, 200 students were placed in ESL 70/80, low-level credit courses not even offered by Cuyamaca College.
Despite the fact that there were no courses available, the College continued to assess ESL students. Noncredit courses offered through Continuing Education are an option, but students do not receive financial aid when taking noncredit courses. Financial aid is a strong driving force for refugee students wanting to attend for-credit classes. Students who are placed in the lowest-level ESL courses, or those who have not met the community college residency requirement, often have no choice but to take noncredit courses or other community-based ESL classes. The Continuing Education office at the GCCCD enrolled nearly 10,000 students in ESL classes in 2008-2009 and surpassed that number in 2009-2010—even while Continuing Education has been disproportionately affected by the budget cuts, and the number of ESL courses have been significantly reduced.

Cheating during assessments is another challenge, especially during large group assessments. There is a lot of “sharing of work” and “cooperative learning” among refugee students. The students know it is not acceptable, but the pressure to support each other is greater than the desire to conform to college policies. There is also a great amount of community assistance outside the college. During assessment tests, people are bringing pre-prepared responses to questions on a scrap piece of paper, or are calling out the answers in Arabic, knowing that the college staff does not know what they are saying. College staff has had to call public safety when they have felt threatened due to cheating situations.

**California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs)**

The majority of Iraqi refugees qualify for CalWORKs (California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids), the State of California’s welfare program for
families with children. The refugees have limited English skills but are required, as
CalWORKs recipients, to prepare for employment. CalWORKs students at Cuyamaca
College increased 45% in just a single year (from 182 in 2007-2008, to 265 in 2008-
2009). The number of students in Summer 2009 swelled to 418, which included 282
students in noncredit courses. As of September 22, 2010, credit students totaled 287 and
noncredit courses had 667 students. Over half of the credit students are refugees and all
of the noncredit students are refugees.

CalWORKs students are required to have a Student Education Plan written every
semester. The Student Education Plan includes an Individual Training Plan (ITP) for the
County of San Diego. In the summer of 2010, CalWORKs wrote close to 400 ITPs but
have not signed off on the education plans they believe the students are not able to handle
because of low ESL assessment scores. This has left many students upset and angry,
because the focus of many students is to enroll in 12 credit units, whether they are
prepared for the rigors of such coursework or not, simply to get financial aid. The
education plan is an authorizing document for the County of San Diego supportive
services, and, ethically, the counselors believe they can only support students with classes
consistent with their assessments. The students were counseled on the financial aid
consequences of failing classes and were referred to continuing education ESL classes
(with CalWORKs’ support to write an ITP). Some students chose to drop credit courses
and take Continuing Education (CE) classes, and some decided to stay in credit courses.

Financial Aid

One of the reasons immigrants and refugees attend college is to receive money
through financial aid. This income, in addition to other public assistance they receive,
helps them transition into their new lives in the United States. The increase in the refugee population has significantly contributed to a substantial increase in financial aid applications.

Under the best of circumstances, even for nonimmigrant students, the financial aid process can be complicated and confusing due to the forms that are required to determine financial aid eligibility. Non-English speaking students need a significant amount of time and assistance in getting through this process. Cuyamaca College has only one student worker who speaks Arabic. The rest of the staff struggles with trying to communicate with the Iraqi refugees. Visits that would typically take only a few minutes routinely run a half-hour, and 30 minutes appointments with advisors regularly run for more than an hour. The struggle to communicate often frustrates both the staff and the students. Because financial aid is so crucial in the refugees’ efforts to not only go to school but, more importantly, to literally survive, they are reluctant to put down a “wrong” answer. Many refugees try to schedule appointments for when the only student Arab speaker will be working with the hope that she will give them the “right” answer to put on the financial aid application. When the student worker does not provide the expected answers, the refugees get angry and have even spread rumors around the Chaldean community that the student worker is rude and not at all helpful. The Chaldean students working in the Student Services office have reported that this has started to negatively affect the student worker’s social status and reputation within the Chaldean community.

The College has heard of people in the community who are making a profit by trying to assist the refugees in completing their financial aid paperwork. Such guidance results in students completing forms dishonestly and results in them receiving financial
aid they would not be eligible for if they answered the questions truthfully. At times, the forms are completed incorrectly. These errors delay the financial aid process because the student or the financial aid office has to correct the errors. One such incident required the Financial Aid staff to contact a federal processing department that they did not know even existed before trying to fix the financial aid application.

**Counseling and Disabled Students Programs and Services**

Counseling and Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS), as with all other Student Services, have been significantly impacted by the number of refugees seeking their assistance. Many refugees have physical, mental, and/or emotional disabilities that require special assistance from the College. Confidentiality becomes a significant issue in counseling sessions when translators are used because the Chaldean community is a tight community and most people know each other either directly or through family, friends, or through one of the two Chaldean churches in the community. Because of the close-knit Chaldean community, exceptional care needs to be taken to ensure the translators understand the importance of confidentiality.

**Instruction**

The day registration opened in the fall semester 2010, all ESL classes filled by the time the day was over. This past fall (2011), ESL classes had wait lists of up to 40 students for each class. Although ESL classes should be capped at 25 students (due to lab space limitations), some instructors, sympathetic to the students’ circumstances, have taken up to 40 students. However, the ESL labs do not have enough computers to accommodate the extra students. Having 40 students in an ESL class is not pedagogically sound. Taking additional students has compromised the learning environment for all
students in overbooked classes. As a result, instructors are not likely to take extra students in the future.

Many students are desperate because if they cannot get the required number of courses, their financial assistance is at risk, and if they do not receive their financial aid, they will not be able to meet their basic living needs. Students who have been in the United States for a year and a day (which allows them to pay resident tuition) are enrolling in any class that has an opening, regardless of the student’s ability to successfully participate or even pass the course. The result is that students who fail one or more of their courses risk losing financial aid.

Cuyamaca College’s Response

The administration, faculty, and staff realized that they had to better understand how refugee students are entering the College and how they process through the College’s offices and systems. Special meetings were held in the spring and summer of 2010 that focused on developing programs and activities to better serve the refugee population. Although the state’s financial crisis is making it increasingly difficult to provide even some of the most basic services to any of our students, the College has identified a list of its own needs and developed the following strategies to better serve the refugee community:

- Personal Development Course (PDC) 101 in Arabic. The PDC 101 course, which focused on study skills and academic aptitudes, is currently being offered in all the high schools in the Grossmont Union High School District. The PDC 101 course in Arabic gave an introduction to college services, a college tour, overview of the college programs, curriculum planning, and
lunch. About 70 students attended each of the two courses. The response from
the community has been enthusiastic.

- Thanks to online translation services, many online resources have been
  translated into Arabic with the plans to translate many more.

- The College is developing a clearer pathway to success that takes students from
  noncredit ESL to credit programs. The pathway includes assessment, advising,
  placement, a full-sequence of noncredit and credit courses, noncredit to credit
  bridge courses, ESL/PDC links, and ESL to content area bridge programs).

- The College has developed and implemented cultural training programs for
  administrators and staff to better understand and communicate with different
  ethnic and linguistic groups. The programs are being taught by a counselor of
  Chaldean descent.

- The College staff is working with social services agencies, such as the Catholic
  Charities’ Refugee Center and the Middle Eastern Social Services, to host
  additional workshops on completing documents (such as financial aid) in
  Arabic.

- The College piloted an intensive noncredit-to-credit ESL program. Students
  who successfully passed the noncredit ESL course were guaranteed admission
  into a credit ESL course linked to a PDC 130 course.

During the College’s internal meetings it was noted that students are not to be
labeled “ESL students.” They are not “ESL students,” but rather, they are “everybody’s
students.” The College has an obligation to respond to the needs of these students, and
staff members from Student Support Services through Instruction have a responsibility to ensure their success.

**Community Spotlight on the Education and Employment of Immigrants and Refugees**

The research conducted for this study identified many community colleges that have developed innovative, even nationally acclaimed programs that provide services to immigrant populations. The mission of the community college is to provide education and training, and that is what the colleges are doing. But, as a public institution, a community college, or a community college district, has the potential of having much greater community impact and influence than just providing educational and training services.

In addition to the internal meetings and efforts of Cuyamaca College, the College and District leadership recognized that the community college has the capacity to move a community to action. East San Diego County is situated not far from the U.S.-Mexico border. Immigration issues are a sensitive subject. Additionally, “East County,” as it is commonly referred to, suffers from one of the highest unemployment rates in San Diego County. At a recent meeting hosted by Cuyamaca College for the Rotary International Assembly (a meeting of all the Rotary Clubs in East County), a college administrator was invited to be the keynote speaker and to make a presentation about the College. The presentation touched upon the budget, growing enrollment, and increasing refugee community. After hearing the presentation, a Rotarian in the audience asked “given the challenging budget, the increasing number of students, and the growing population in our community, how is the College giving priority to which students you’re letting in?” It
was obvious that the question was about making sure we educate “our” students first before letting “those” students fill the classes.

The District and College leadership are aware that, with the rapid growth of the refugee population in a conservative community with a high unemployment rate, the potential for social unrest or backlash is significant. As a result, the District and the College have the unique potential of not only helping the refugee population attain postsecondary education and workforce training, but can also help the local community assimilate these new arrivals. There is an awareness on the part of the GCCCD and the College that if care, effort, and attention are not given to helping the community understand and assimilate the refugee population, then social tensions may develop.

Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District began hosting planning meetings with local community leaders, especially from the Middle Eastern Social Services (MESS). Middle Eastern Social Services is the primary social services agency involved in supporting the Iraqi refugees settled into the East County. Although the needs of the refugees are many and significant, from housing assistance to mental health support, it became clear that given the mission of the College, the focus of the intervention efforts would be education and employment. The idea of hosting a community forum was developed to bring together all entities involved with ensuring the success of the members of the refugee community. On November 6, 2009, the GCCCD hosted a Community Spotlight on the Education and Employment of Immigrants and Refugees. The meeting was so well-attended that the College had to double the size of the meeting room. Attendees included educational administrators, politicians, business leaders, social services agencies, government officials, and many others. As a result of
the meeting, it was decided that a regional “Think Tank” be formed to further explore how best to respond to the needs of the refugees; a website be developed to serve as a “one-stop” information resource for refugees and all other stake-holders; the region’s elected officials be engaged to determine political solutions to the growing refugee situation; and external funding be sought.

**Iraqi Refugees: Chaldeans**

Most of the refugees coming to East San Diego County are “Chaldeans.” “Chaldean” is a name that has special religious and linguistic significance (Sengstock, 1999). Chaldeans are Iraqi Catholic Christians who speak both Arabic and a modern dialect of Aramaic, which they call Chaldean (Hakim-Larson, Kamoo, Nassar-McMillan, & Porcerelli, 2007; Kamoo, 1999; Sengstock, 1999). A simple portrayal of the Chaldeans would be that they are Christians whose ancestors can be traced to ancient Mesopotamia, literally thousands of years before the birth of Christ, and even as far back as to the Garden of Eden (Perry, 2008). The earliest historical reference of the Chaldeans may date to the 9th century B.C. “when the Assyrian King Shalmaneser encountered them as inhabitants of an ancient land called Chaldea” (Perry, 2008, p. 12). The Chaldeans believe themselves to be the original ancestors of the world’s three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam (Perry, 2008).

Most Chaldeans who have immigrated to the United States trace their ancestry to an area in northern Iraq referred to as the Nineveh Plain, and, more precisely, to a small village in the plain called Telkaif in Arabic, and “Telkeppe” in Aramaic (Perry, 2008; Sengstock, 1999). According to Kayal (1995), “It is significant for the Chaldeans of Iraq that their Arabic heritage was first brought to the United States by one of their own
religious leaders” (p. 81). This religious leader was Elias of Mosul (Iraq), who from 1668 to 1683 journeyed through Spanish America. Large scale immigration of Chaldeans and Arabs (with whom the Chaldeans share a great deal of cultural similarities) to North America began in the late 1800s and came in three major waves (Abudabbeh, 1996, 2005; Hakim-Larson et al., 2007). The earliest wave of immigrants were mostly Christian and less educated, while immigrants who came later tended to be more Muslim and better educated (Abudabbeh & Hays, 2006; Shabbas & Al-Qazzaz, 1989).

Both religious and economic factors have played a role in the decision of the Chaldeans to come to America. The early immigrants reported that economic hardship was a major factor in their decision to migrate (Sengstock, 1999). Also, as Christians, they very much recognized their minority status in a predominately Muslim country. The first known emigrant from Telfaif to the United States arrived in Philadelphia around 1889. His name was Zia Attala. Although initially settling in Philadelphia, Attala’s destination, as was the case for practically all of the earliest emigrants to the Western hemisphere, was “unspecified” or “unknown” (Sengstock, 1999, p. 65). It was not until a number of Telfefees had settled in Detroit did this become a definite destination for those who followed. According to Sengstock (1999), “The Chaldean population in Detroit has grown to such an extent that there are now more persons of Telkeffe descent residing in the Detroit metropolitan Area than in Telfaif itself” (p. 68). Although Sengstock published her book Chaldean Americans Changing Conceptions of Ethnic Identity in 1999, there is no mention of Chaldeans living in or moving to El Cajon, CA.

According to Dr. Michael J. Bazzi (2001), Pastor of St. Peter Chaldean Catholic Church in San Diego, California, who published Chaldeans Present and Past, the first
Chaldeans began to immigrate to San Diego County in 1951. By 1973, there were 150 Chaldean families living in San Diego. The first known Chaldean immigrant in San Diego was Dr. Joseph Gibran, who arrived in December 1951. Dr. Gibran was a special physician to the kingdom guard’s palace of Baghdad (Bazzi, 2001). Father Bazzi goes on to chronicle in great detail the growth of the Chaldean community in San Diego but makes no mention to why the Chaldeans chose San Diego in the first place, saying only that “Chaldeans left their country searching for a better life and hoping for a more peaceful and serene atmosphere. They found this atmosphere in the United States because it guarantees life, liberty and the pursue [sic] of happiness” (p. 20). Even the beautifully illustrated oversized book *The Chaldeans: A Contemporary Portrait of One of Civilization’s Oldest Cultures* (Chaldean Cultural Center, 2008), describes in great detail the Chaldean community in Michigan but makes no reference to the establishment of the Chaldean community in El Cajon, CA. There is a reference in this publication that might suggest why a Chaldean community would have logically become established along the U.S.-Mexico border. Quotas imposed by the United States restricted immigration from “least favored nations” such as Poland, Italy, and Iraq to only 100 persons per year (Chaldean Cultural Center, 2008). But “in Mexico, children of Chaldean immigrants born there saw a much greater opportunity at gaining an entry visa to the United States than other refugees” (Chaldean Cultural Center, 2008, p. 64). A recent conversation with the social services coordinator at the Chaldean Middle Eastern Social Services of San Diego suggested another possible origin to the Chaldean community in San Diego. The coordinator mentioned that the first Chaldeans were brought to San Diego by the U.S. Army shortly after WWII to serve as translators for the military. Once this small cohort
of Chaldeans was established, the seeds of the eventual community to follow were sowed (social services counselor, Chaldean Middle Eastern Social Services [CMESS], personal communication, April 12, 2012). Because of the fluid nature of migration and immigration, obtaining an accurate number of Chaldeans (or any immigrant) in San Diego county in general, or East County in specific, is problematic. According to the CMESS of San Diego, there are approximately 58,000-59,000 Chaldeans in east San Diego County as of April 24, 2012 (Besma Coda, personal communication, April 24, 2012).

Conclusion

Without community colleges, millions of students and adult learners would not be able to access the education they need to be prepared for further education or employment. This role of community colleges is especially true for the growing numbers of refugees entering the United States, and increasingly, San Diego County. Reversing the policies of the previous administration, President Barak Obama’s administration has allowed thousands of refugees, especially from Iraq, to immigrate to the United States (IRC, 2009, pp. 5-6). The place where the largest percentage of these Iraqi refugees are settling, even greater than Detroit, is in the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District service area (CalWORKs, 2011; Sally Beslay, CMESS, personal communication, April 26, 2012).

The greatest impact made by non-English speaking populations seeking an education at a community college is in ESL programs. Although not impacted as much by refugees as by immigrants, community colleges around the country have developed many innovative and noteworthy models for increasing the success of adult learners
struggling through both credit and noncredit ESL programs. The majority of the most successful ESL programs include such elements as intensive instruction (increasing the number of hours of instruction per week), contextual education, vocational ESL, and closer integration between ESL and the rest of the college’s instructional community. The rapid influx of Iraqi refugees into East San Diego County has overwhelmed the resources and services at Cuyamaca College, as well as the local community’s social services. In response, the GCCCD hosted a “Community Spotlight on the Education and Employment of Immigrants and Refugees” to bring awareness and attention to the plight of not only the population in need, but also to the educational systems trying to respond to this need. It is too early to tell what impact such social mobilization will have, but given the enthusiastic response by the attendees of the community spotlight, which included a retired U.S. Senator, congressional staffers, and representatives from government agencies and social service organizations, there has already been much more exposure in the media to this growing situation. Providing education and training to non-English speakers, no matter how creative and innovative, is only part of what is needed to facilitate their successful transition into American culture. Attention and services must be extended to the local community to facilitate this transition and to avoid the very real potential of a negative public backlash to a rapid increase of immigration into a community. If, as Hollinshead said in 1936, a community college is to meet the needs of its community, it must provide services to both its students and the greater community.
CHAPTER 3—METHODOLOGY

All colleges struggle with the significant challenge of helping noncredit students transition to and be successful in for-credit courses. The majority of students at the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District (GCCCD), and at many other districts, assess at a Basic Skills (noncredit) level (GCCCD, 2011). In order to help students transition from noncredit English as a Second Language (ESL) into credit ESL courses, and then to better prepare them to be successful once they begin taking credit ESL courses, Cuyamaca College developed what it called the ESL-Link program.

ESL-Link was a year-long ESL pilot program that linked an intensive noncredit ESL course (offered in fall 2010) to a credit ESL course offered the following semester (spring 2011). This linked sequence was innovative because coordinating such a linked sequence required unprecedented collaboration between two distinct administrative units of the college: credit programs are administratively housed in the division of instruction, and noncredit programs are administered by the office of community education. The noncredit ESL 70 portion (the highest level noncredit ESL course offered at Cuyamaca College) provided intensive 3 hours/day, 4 days/week, ESL instruction (150 contact hours for the semester). Following the noncredit ESL 70 course, students who participated and successfully completed the intensive noncredit ESL 70 class (by scoring a passing grade on the CASAS exam and review of a writing sample) were guaranteed enrollment in a credit ESL 80 course while concurrently enrolled in a Personal Development Counseling (PDC) course.
Mixed Method Quasi-Experimental Design

This study was designed to determine the effectiveness of the ESL-Link program for refugee students attending Cuyamaca College. Specifically, the study was designed to determine if students participating in the intensive noncredit ESL 70 course preformed better academically when taking the subsequent “linked” credit ESL 80 course than students who did not take the noncredit ESL 70 course. Since there is little or no control over the randomized allocation of the study’s subjects or other factors being studied, the investigator utilized a quasi-experimental research design to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot ESL program in regards to final course grades. In addition to the quantitative analysis of student final grades, the researcher interviewed the ESL department chair and the two faculty members who taught the ESL 80 courses for the ESL-Link students. Therefore, the research design consisted of a quantitative study of final grades of students enrolled in the ESL-Link program’s ESL 80 course compared to those who did not participate in the ESL-Link program, and a qualitative study of faculty member observations. This mixed-method quasi-experimental study used a self-selected experimental group enrolled in the ESL-Link courses and a control group of all other students enrolled in ESL 80. This approach is supported by Gliner and Morgan (2000) as a quasi-experimental design because the students self-selected themselves into the classes, and the researcher is looking for relationships between the two groups.

The primary drawback of the quasi-experimental design is the complications introduced by confounding bias, such as the influence of friends and family, participation in community life, economic circumstances of the students and many other factors, which cannot be eliminated and may make it difficult to draw causal inferences.
The primary comparison examined in this study was between students who participated in the pilot ESL-Link program and those who did not participate in the program. Initially, the researcher proposed to further analyze the data from the students who participated in the two pilot ESL-Link courses because one cohort of ESL-Link students had the same instructor for the noncredit and credit courses, while the other ESL-Link cohort had different instructors. But the sample size of these cohorts were so small (28 and 29 students in the two courses), it was determined that any analysis of such a small sample would not yield meaningful results. Therefore, the quasi-experimental evaluation will compare the outcomes of two distinct cohorts of students who have completed ESL 80 (English as a Second Language I). The two cohorts are:

1. Students who participated in the pilot ESL-Link program (which consisted of noncredit ESL 70 taken in fall 2010 and then the credit ESL 80 and the accompanying PDC course, both offered in spring 2011).

2. Students who did not participate in the ESL-Link program but enrolled directly in the credit ESL 80. These non-Link students did not take the PDC course in spring 2011 while they were enrolled in the ESL 80 course.

Figure 1 provides the visual representation of the quasi-experimental design.

Specifically, this study focuses on the following research questions:

- What effect, if any, did participating in the ESL-Link program have on students’ academic success in credit ESL 80 course as compared to students who did not participate in the ESL-Link program?
Figure 1. Program evaluation design.

- What were the perceptions of the ESL faculty of the ESL-Link program and in the performance and engagement of the ESL-Link students as compared to the non-Link students?

**Hypotheses**

Stated in testable, null-hypothesis form, the null hypotheses are that there are no differences based on the factors described above.

- $H_0$ Academic Success: $\mu_{\text{Pilot ESL-Link students}} = \mu_{\text{Non-ESL-Link students}}$
- $H_0$ Noticable Differences: $\mu_{\text{Pilot ESL-Link students}} = \mu_{\text{Non-ESL-Link students}}$

The alternate hypotheses are that there are differences based on the previously described factors:

- $H_1$ Academic Success: $\mu_{\text{Pilot ESL-Link students}} \neq \mu_{\text{Non-ESL-Link students}}$
- $H_1$ Noticable Differences: $\mu_{\text{Pilot ESL-Link students}} \neq \mu_{\text{Non-ESL-Link students}}$
Research Questions

The focus of the program evaluation was to analyze if the students benefitted academically by participating in the ESL-Link program as compared to students who did not participate in the program. To begin a study of the ESL-Link program, it was important to define what factors are considered a successful outcome for this program. The initial definition of success for the program designers, and the primary reason for the case study, was to determine if the intervention (noncredit ESL 70) resulted in students being more successful in credit ESL 80 than students who did not participate in the ESL-Link program.

The primary quantitative and qualitative research questions that were considered in this study can be found in Appendix E (quantitative questions) and Appendix F (qualitative questions) and include:

1. What effect, if any, did participating in the ESL-Link program have on students’ academic success in credit ESL 80 as compared to students who did not participate in the ESL-Link program, as assessed in the following ways:
   • Did they matriculate into the credit ESL 80 course?
   • Did they complete the ESL 80 course?
   • Were the students successful in the ESL 80 course (measured by earning a letter grade of “C” or better)?
   • Did students who successfully completed ESL 80 matriculate in credit courses the following semester (either summer 2011 or fall 2011)?
   • Were there differences in the above measure between the cohort of students who participated in the ESL-Link program and those who did not?
2. What were the perceptions of the ESL faculty of the ESL-Link program and in the performance and engagement of the ESL-Link students as compared to the non-ESL-Link students? The following questions were used to gain insights into these issues:

- Were there any noticeable differences in the performance and engagement of the ESL-Link students as compared to the non-Link students?

- Given that the GCCC District has many international students who need to learn English, why was the ESL-Link program developed specifically for the Iraqi refugees? (All the students in the ESL-Link program were Iraqi refugees).

- Was it important, in terms of instructional design, to have all the students in the ESL-Link program come from Iraq or would it have been more pedagogically sound to have mixed the cohort with people from different countries and languages? Please explain.

- Given your experiences and observations working with the ESL-Link cohort for two semesters, please share any observations you may have about elements of the program that worked, or might have been better, or anything about the students—as a class, or as a cohort—especially as compared to other ESL students you have had and taught in the past.

- During the course of the ESL-Link program, did you discuss and compare experiences with other ESL instructors who were teaching ESL students not in the ESL-Link program? If so, what observations were made or conclusions reached during those discussions about the ESL-Link program,
the needs of the Iraqi refugees, or ESL pedagogy (as implemented at Cuyamaca College)?

• From an educational perspective, did you consider this a successful model? If so, what were some specific examples?

Quantitative and Qualitative Data Gathering Tools

As stated previously, the program evaluation utilized available quantitative data in the form of the final grades posted for both ESL-Link and non-Link students in the credit ESL 80 course completed in spring 2011. Final grades were retrieved from the GCCCD student information database by the Office of Institutional Research and provided to the researcher. Data retrieved by the Office are stored in the GCCCD student information system (Datatel). All data are identified by the student, using a unique student identifier assigned by the system, and not by student name, social security number, or other individual-identifying information.

In addition, qualitative data were obtained by interviewing, using an open-ended questionnaire, the ESL Department Chair and the two faculty members who taught the ESL-Link credit 80 course. The chair and two faculty members who taught in this pilot ESL-Link program were interviewed to gather their perceptions regarding the original design and intent of the ESL-Link program as well as their perceptions regarding the program’s strengths, weaknesses, and benefits regarding future designs or students.

Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative data were provided by the GCCCD Office of Institutional Research in a file format compatible with standard analysis software. The program review utilized IBM SPSS software to allow analysis of final grade results using available data. The
primary statistical test utilized in the analysis of the student performance and outcomes data was the *T*-test. The *T*-test was selected because it can be used to compare the means of two groups (the students in the ESL-Link cohort and the students in the control group which was made up of all non-Link students taking ESL 80). Specifically, the unmatched *T*-test, or independent *T*-test, was used because the groups to be compared are independent, meaning knowing something about one group does not affect what is known about the other. Knowing that one group went through the pilot program does not affect the analysis of the nonpilot cohort. Additionally, a Chi-square analysis was used to analyze more precisely the student grade data—specifically, to measure not only if the students “succeeded” but to also analyze in more detail the distribution of final grades between the ESL-Link cohort and the control group.

Qualitative data were obtained by interviewing the Department Chair of ESL who recommended also interviewing the two faculty members who taught the credit ESL 80 course in the pilot program. The names of the two participating faculty members were provided by the Department Chair. The interviews were conducted by the researcher both at the College and off campus following an established open-ended questionnaire (listed above) designed specifically to obtain the input, perceptions, and insights of the chair and faculty. The data were reported by the researcher in as much of the original form and content as possible (with only the minimal of grammatical edits) to maintain the purest accuracy and content of the faculty members’ responses.

**Internal Validity**

Validity extracted from this study was primarily internal to Cuyamaca College and its ESL program. External validity was limited because of the uniqueness of the
instructional interventions, and the faculty involved and the participating students. Due to the uniqueness of linking noncredit ESL 70 to credit ESL 80 and a PDC 130 course, extracting external validity may be challenging because of this unique sequence of courses. The final report which summarized the actual planning for the ESL-Link pilot program is included in Appendix G.

**Ethical Treatment of Human Subjects**

This study was considered and approved on February 24, 2012 by SDSU’s Institutional Research Board as an Exempt Research based on the following criteria. For this study, there was no advertising for the purpose of recruiting participants. A signed consent is generally not required for exempt research. Existing data were used for the study, including final grades for the ESL 80 course. To respect personal and academic privacy, all students’ personal and academic information was deleted and coded by the Office of Institutional Research before the data were shared with the researcher. There was no violation of confidentiality, since all information was coded and all individual identifiers were removed, shredded, and discarded by the researcher to ensure data collected remained confidential. All data were secured in a locked drawer located in the researcher’s home and destroyed when the dissertation was completed. Neither audio recordings, video recordings, nor focus group interviews were conducted in this study. Personal interviews with participating faculty members were transcribed directly onto the researcher’s laptop computer as the interviews were taking place and later edited for clarity.
Composition of the Student Group Participating in the ESL-Link Pilot Program

The composition of students participating in the ESL-Link pilot program was exceptionally diverse. According to the Department Chair of ESL, there were young 20-year-old students who have spent the past several years in a (or multiple) refugee camp(s), primarily in Jordan, as well as 80-year-old seniors with a variety of professional backgrounds. There were ex-military personnel who served in the Iraqi military, who were educated, mature, and had a generally stable upbringing in their own home country. There were elderly men and women and a variety of adults with academic and professional backgrounds, such as engineers and clinicians. The academic interests of the students in the pilot ESL-Link program were varied. The older students were there to learn English so that they could find employment, while the younger students were learning English to continue their education in pursuit of a degree and ultimately transfer to a university (Alicia Munoz, personal communication, October 14, 2011).

Table 1 provides an implementation plan, identifying key activities, who performed them, what resources were needed, and when these activities were done. Figure 2 provides the timeline for the key activities of the case study.

Future Students as an Audience

One of the challenges of getting students to register for the pilot ESL 70 course is that it is noncredit, which means that the students would not be eligible for financial aid. The GCCCD has learned through experience that many students who test at a basic skills level are rarely successful when subsequently enrolling in for-credit classes. In addition
Table 1

*Implementation Plan: Activities, Resources, and Timeline*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Key participant(s)</th>
<th>Resources needed</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gather background information, research</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Researcher time, literature, data from Institutional Research Information</td>
<td>8/2010-4/2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>from key participants (counselors, and ESL/PDC faculty)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft research plan</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Complete research design courses</td>
<td>5/2011-5/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft and prepare for Proposal Defense</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Finalized Chapters 1-3</td>
<td>Summer/Fall 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain and analyze data</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Data from Office of Institutional Research Interviews of ESL faculty members</td>
<td>10/2011-2/2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft and submit final report</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Researcher time and effort</td>
<td>Spring 2012</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To the challenges of basic skills, students being successful in credit classes is the problem of not being able to get into a for-credit class. Due to the state’s budget crisis, the GCCCD has cut over 2,000 courses in the past 2 years and access to for-credit courses is a growing challenge for all students.

There are two benefits of enrolling into the non-credit ESL 70 course: first, all the students who completed the pilot ESL-Link 70 course passed. Secondly, by participating and passing the pilot ESL-Link 70 course, which is the college’s highest level noncredit ESL course, the students were guaranteed enrollment into the for-credit ESL 80 course. Enrolling in ESL 80 provided the student with 6 credit units, which is sufficient to qualify
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aug</td>
<td>Sept</td>
<td>Oct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather background information, research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft program evaluation plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft interview questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Submit IRB</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiate interviews and data review</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft and submit findings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 2. Program evaluation timeline.*
for financial aid. A primary intent and expectation of the pilot ESL-Link 70 course is to help the students be more successful when taking the credit ESL 80 course. If this can be proven through this program evaluation, then all prospective ESL students will benefit from the outcomes of this study.

**Implications for Stakeholders**

Stakeholders related to this study are both the people who provided the critical information needed to conduct the study, as well as those who would find the results of interest and benefit. One of the primary stakeholders of this program evaluation was all the students in the noncredit and credit ESL programs. As part of their efforts to learn English, ESL students are also inevitably involved in learning to adapt to life in an English-speaking culture, which can be daunting and intimidating. All future students who hope to complete a certificate or degree but must begin their studies with noncredit ESL would be very interested in the results of this study. In addition, the ESL instructors who participated in the design and implementation of the ESL-Link program would be interested in the findings from this case study. Additionally, there are many others who are interested in the results of this study because their responsibilities are related to or impacted by the refugees. Stakeholders who were critical in providing information as well, as those who could find the result of interest, are listed in Tables 2 and 3.

To gather the data and information needed to adequately evaluate this program, a variety of information sources were needed. Since the ultimate goal of the program was to help students who start in noncredit to be successful in their credit studies, initially in their ESL 80 course, the students’ final course grades were the most important data to be analyzed. Additionally, after being successful in ESL 80, did the student continue his/her
Table 2

*Stakeholders (Individuals Who Generated Data for the Study)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholders</th>
<th>Why they are stakeholders</th>
<th>Data they have</th>
<th>How to get the data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Entered program to receive benefits of intensive study so they could be successful in credit study</td>
<td>Final grades in ESL 80, Enrollment after ESL 80</td>
<td>Data from Office of Institutional Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL Instructors participating in the program</td>
<td>Primarily responsible for teaching and preparing students for academic success</td>
<td>Their first-person experiences and perceptions</td>
<td>Interviewed by the researcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department Chair</td>
<td>Responsible for course design and planning</td>
<td>History, knowledge, and awareness of the needs of the ESL population</td>
<td>Interviewed by the researcher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

studies with the next level of credit ESL? Final course grades and course registration information are kept and provided by the Office of Institutional Research. The participating faculty members involved in teaching the credit ESL 80 course were able to provide insights, observations, and information that is not reflected simply in academic outcome data. The faculty members were able to discuss the unique challenges experienced by refugee students and the difficulties they themselves experienced teaching ESL to native Arabic speakers. Finally, it was important to interview the Department Chair of ESL to gain a thorough understanding of the origin, intent, and design of the ESL-Link program. The faculty members, as well as the Department Chair, were all able to provide unique insights into the strengths, benefits, contributions, and limitations of the ESL-Link program.
Table 3

*Audience (Interested in the Results of the Study)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Why they are an audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESL Department Chair</td>
<td>Data derived from this study will be useful to the Department Chair in the future modification of the ESL Link program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL Faculty</td>
<td>Data derived from this study will be useful to the faculty in the future modification and implementation of the ESL Link program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselors</td>
<td>They counsel non-English speakers on the best strategy to get into and succeed in credit courses. (Many ESL students are reluctant to start in non-credit.) The results of this study may be useful to counselors trying to encourage students to matriculate at the appropriate level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CalWorks</td>
<td>Most ESL students qualify for and will pass through CalWORKs to develop their Ed Plans. The results of this study may be useful to counselors trying to encourage students to matriculate at the appropriate level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
<td>Many refugee students matriculate in credit courses to qualify for financial aid, and, as a result, most go to/through financial aid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Dean, Vice President of Instruction</td>
<td>They decide the course schedule and distribution of courses based on student need. Results of the ESL Link evaluation may be useful in determining class sequencing and scheduling.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Based Organizations: Chaldean Middle Eastern Social Services (CMSS), Catholic Charities, International Rescue Committee (IRC)</td>
<td>They provide a comprehensive set of support services for the refugee community—including referrals to ESL courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Grossmont Cuyamaca Community College District</td>
<td>The District must decide the distribution of resources regarding instruction and student services, as well as community relations. The results of this evaluation may be helpful to the district in the allocation of educational resources and its community relations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is important to realize that “ESL students” are not only “ESL students.” English as a Second Language students are everybody’s students. As they progress through their academic programs towards completing their certificates or degrees, they will impact every facet of the institution—from student services to instruction to administration. As a result, the beneficiaries of the information provided by the program evaluation, the “audience,” are a cross-section of every program and service that is involved with students. Table 3 provides a list of the “audience” (people, offices, and services throughout the college and district) who would benefit from the results and information derived from this program evaluation.

**Implications of the Program Evaluation Findings**

All colleges struggle with the significant challenge of helping noncredit students transition and be successful in for-credit courses. Seventy-five percent of all students at the GCCCD, and probably many other districts, assess at a basic skills (noncredit) level. Unfortunately, very few students who begin their higher education in noncredit basic skills classes ever complete a degree or certificate.

A positive result of the ESL-Link program may have significant implications for course sequencing and planning. If this study can show that participation in the pilot ESL-Link 70 course had a direct and measurable academic benefit to the students taking credit ESL 80 course, then it would be wise for the college to further examine and possibly expand the ESL-Link program to more sections, classes, and students. The college should also consider exploring the feasibility and benefits of linking additional classes to provide ongoing access and support services to students beginning in basic
skills courses. What is yet unknown is how the students who successfully completed the credit ESL 80 course will do in subsequent credit courses.
CHAPTER 4—SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Chapter 4 provides the data analysis and finding to answer the following research questions:

1. What effect, if any, did participating in the ESL-Link program have on students’ academic success in the credit ESL 80 course as compared to students who did not participate in the ESL-Link program?

2. What were the perceptions of the ESL faculty of the ESL-Link program and in the performance and engagement of the ESL-Link students as compared to the non-Link students?

Specifically, the research was designed to determine if students attending the intensive noncredit ESL 70 course did better academically when taking the subsequent, “linked” credit ESL 80 than students who did not take the intensive noncredit ESL 70.

This chapter is divided into the following subsections so that the research data obtained can be readily understood.

1. A Brief Review of Methodology reiterates the research questions that drove this study, and the research design used for gathering the data to address these questions.

2. Descriptive Statistics identifies the selected Demographic Data (independent variables) about the participants in this study.

3. Findings of Key Quantitative Research Questions, specifically (a) Did the ESL-LINK students’ postscores improve in the noncredit ESL 70 course? (b) Did the ESL-LINK students matriculate into the credit ESL 80 course? (c) Did the ESL-LINK student complete the ESL 80 course? (d) Were the
ESL-Link students successful in the ESL 80 course (measured by earning a letter grade of “C” or better)? and (e) Were there differences in the above measure between the cohort of students who participated in the linked noncredit ESL 70 course and those students who did not enroll in the linked noncredit ESL 70 course?

4. Findings of Key Qualitative Research, specifically a Brief Summary of Data Analysis as the basis for the discussion, conclusions, and recommendations that are presented in Chapter 5.

**Brief Review of the Methodology**

The brief review of the methodology reiterates the research design used for gathering the data to address the study’s research questions. The research method used for this study was both quantitative and qualitative. Demographic variables that accounted for differences in academic performance in the courses of the participants, such as gender and age, are included under the descriptive statistics section. Key findings that resulted from testing the hypotheses put forth in the study were examined using the IBM SPSS statistical software. The specific choice of statistical models, the $T$-test and Chi-square, were governed by the data available and nature of the research questions.

This quantitative analysis was relevant to answer all research questions related to course outcomes. The data were gathered from the Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District’s (GCCCD) Office of Institutional Advancement. This information included enrollment and final grade data. To respect personal and academic privacy, all students’ personal and academic information was coded by the Office of Institutional Research before being released to the researcher.
In addition to the quantitative analysis, a detailed and thorough qualitative investigation of the core ESL faculty members was also undertaken using open-ended questions through individual interviews. These interviews provided unique and keen insights into the design, implementation, students’ interactions, and lessons-learned in the ESL-Link pilot program. Qualitative data were reported in this study in as much of the original form as possible to maintain the essence and integrity of the faculty members’ comments and insights. The interviewed faculty members were identified by the Department Chair of the ESL Department.

**Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Data**

Descriptive statistics identified the selected demographic variables represented in this study, which included gender, ethnicity, and age. These data are available only for the ESL-Link cohort participating in the credit ESL-80 course because the District Office of Institutional Research does not keep these data for noncredit courses. The only data available for the noncredit ESL-70 course are total number of students who started and finished the course. Data for both the ESL-Link and control-group students are presented in Table 4.

Demographic information concerning participants’ gender revealed that there were a total of 29 or 50.9% females and 27 or 47.4% males, with 1 person (1.8%) refusing to self-identify in the ESL-Link cohort. The control group (students who were also enrolled in ESL 80 in spring 2011) consisted of 42 females and 49 males, representing 44.7% and 52.1%, respectively, and 3 students (3.2%) nonresponding. The demographic breakdown information delineating participants’ ages depicted a total of 6, or 10.6%, of the students were 24 years old or younger, and a total of 48, or 84.2% of the
### Table 4

**Descriptive/Demographic Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>ESL-Link students in ESL 80</th>
<th>Other spring 2011 ESL-80 students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>47.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black non-Hispanic</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White non-Hispanic</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>71.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown/other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>70.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ESL-Link participants were 30 years old or older. Control group age distribution was a total of 17, or 18.1% of the students being 24 years of age or younger, and a total of 70, or 74.5%, being 30 years of age or older.

The demographic information depicting ethnicity was self-reported by participants. Since the state-mandated categories for ethnicity do not include a category for “Middle Easterner,” students are confused with which ethnic category best reflects their identity. English as a Second Language faculty members report that all students in the ESL-Link program were Iraqi (personal communication, March 28, 2012). The data provided by the Office of Institutional Research seems to imply a greater ethnic diversity. For the same reason, it is unknown how accurately the data for the control group represents the group’s ethnic diversity. The only accurate statement that can be made about the ethnic diversity of the control group is that it was not homogenous, although it is difficult to determine how accurately the self-reported ethnic identity of the group represents the group’s diversity.

**Findings of Key Research Questions: Quantitative Analysis**

The most significant question examined by this study is whether participating in the ESL-Link program benefitted the participating students as measured by their continued matriculation and success in credit ESL-80, and their persistence in school subsequent to successfully completing ESL-80. Table 5 reflects the results of this analysis.

The results provided by the college’s noncredit program (for data related to noncredit ESL 70) and the Office of Institutional Research (for data related to ESL 80), as
Table 5

**ESL 80 Results for Both ESL-Link and Control Group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>ESL-Link students</th>
<th>Other spring 2011 ESL-80 students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL-80 results</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Successful</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>75.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not successful</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrew</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total enrollments</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persisted to ESL-96 in fall 2011</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persisted to fall 2011 (any course)</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>39.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

presented in Table 5, can be used to answer the primary research questions that lead to this study. Specifically:

1. Did students in the noncredit ESL 70 course matriculate into the credit ESL 80 course?

Data from the college noncredit program (in Community Learning) indicated that 67 students began the ESL-Link program by matriculating in noncredit ESL 70 in fall 2010. Fifty-eight students successfully completed ESL 70, and 57 went on to matriculate into ESL 80 in spring 2011 (as noted above). According to the Department Chair for ESL, the 10 students who did not matriculate into ESL 80 in the spring (9 who did not complete ESL 70 and 1 who, after successfully completing ESL 70, chose not to continue into ESL 80), voluntarily withdrew from the program because of personal and family
issues (e.g., pregnancy, lack of access to transportation) or could not keep up with the commitment to attend all classes.

2. Did they complete the ESL 80 course?

Of the 57 ESL-Link students who matriculated into ESL 80 in spring 2011, 52 students (91.2%) completed the course. Of these 52 students, 43 students (75.4%) were successful, and 9 (15.8%) were not successful (did not make a grade of C or better). Five students (8.8%) withdrew from the course.

3. Were the students successful in the ESL 80 course (measured by making a letter grade of “C” or better)?

Of the 57 students who matriculated into credit ESL 80 in spring 2011, 75.4% (43) completed the course with a grade of “C” or better. Five students (8.8%) withdrew, and 9 students (15.8%) were recorded as “not successful.”

4. Did students who successfully complete ESL 80 matriculate in credit courses the following semester (fall 2011)?

Of the 43 ESL-Link students who successfully completed ESL 80 in spring 2011, 18 (41.9%) enrolled in the next level ESL (ESL 96) in fall 2011. According to the Department Chair of ESL, this relatively low number may be due to the significant reduction in available courses (due to budget cuts) and because after completing only 6 units, these students would be very low on the priority registration list. By the time it was their turn to register for classes, there were probably very few, if any, classes available (Alicia Munoz, personal communication, April 12, 2012).

5. Were there differences in the above measure between the cohort of students who participated in the ESL-Link program and those who did not?
The primary motivation for creating the ESL-Link program was to assist the students to be successful once they begin their studies in credit courses. But as the data reveal, control group students (students who did not participate in the intensive preparatory noncredit ESL 70 course the previous fall) performed better, in terms of “success” than the ESL Link cohort. Eighty-seven point two percent (87.2%) of the control group were “successful” (passed the course with a grade of “C” or better or took the course as a “pass”/“no pass” course and “passed”), whereas only 75.4% of the ESL Link group were “successful.” Additionally, 63.3% of the control group (31 students) went on to enroll in the next level ESL (ESL 96) in the subsequent fall, whereas 36.7% (18) of the ESL Link group went on to enroll into ESL 96 the following fall. Sixty point seven percent (60.7%) of the control group (71 students) went on to enroll in any other credit course in fall 2012 compared to 39.3% (46) of the ESL Link cohort.

Upon consultation with the ESL Department Chair and faculty members involved with these students and courses, these surprising results can be attributed to the following reasons:

- The faculty members involved with the ESL-Link program were too eager to encourage and promote the students participating in the ESL-Link program and were too inclusive in admitting students of marginal ability into ESL 80. Selection criteria for inclusion into ESL 80 should have been more stringent. Students who were not adequately prepared to meet the academic demands of ESL 80 were allowed to enroll in the course anyway.

- Students can enroll in any level of ESL, regardless of where they might have been assessed. English as a Second Language faculty members state that many
of the students in the ESL 80 control group were probably assessed at a higher level of ESL but simply chose, for a variety of reasons, to enroll into a class lower than where they assessed and below their ability. Students chose to take a lower level of ESL because they may not feel confident in their own abilities and would like to take a “refresher” course, or they want to intentionally take a less demanding ESL course because their other course(s) may be overly demanding (such as Math or science), or they are enrolled primarily to access financial aid and not to develop their language skills. A student might have assessed directly into ESL 80, which means their level of English is already higher than where the ESL-Link students started. As a result, the control group is made up of students whose English ability may be substantially higher than what a typical student who works his/her way into ESL 80 from noncredit may have. On the other hand, all of the students in the pilot ESL-Link program were assessed as having English skills no higher than ESL 70 at best.

- Regarding higher persistence rates for enrolling in either ESL 96 or any other credit courses in the fall 2011 semester, ESL faculty members and counselors believe this is a result of the control group students having access to early registration (because they had completed more credit courses than the ESL Link students). ESL-Link students had completed only 6 units by the end of spring 2011 (the PDC course required for the ESL Link students is a noncredit course). As a result, ESL-Link students had completed only 6 units by the end of spring 2011, and control groups students would have completed no less than 6 units and probably more—giving them priority during registration. Because
of the significant reduction in the number of courses and sections offered by the college (due to budget cuts), access to early registration, even if only a few days earlier than the rest of the students, would have made the difference between enrolling in a class or not. Many courses fill and close the same day they are made available for registration (ESL Department Chair, personal communication, March 28, 2012).

In addition to the basic quantitative analysis of data presented above, the researcher also conducted a $T$-test to examine the comparison of means between the ESL-Link cohort and the control group. In order to conduct a $T$-test, letter grades had to be converted into a numerical value. The following values were used for letter grades in order to perform the $T$-test:

- $W = 0$
- $NP = 0$
- $P = 2$
- $C = 3$
- $B = 4$
- $A = 5$

When conducting a $T$-test, the initial step is to confirm if there are similar variances in the two groups by checking the result of Levine’s Test for Equality of Variances. If the variances are equal in both groups then the $P$-value (“Sig.”) will be greater than 0.05. If the “Sig.” value is less than 0.05, the variances are not equal, which indicates that the variance between groups is not much, but that the variance within groups is significant. Table 6 provides general group statistics of the two cohorts.
Table 6

*T-Test Group Statistics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort comparison</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. deviation</th>
<th>Std. error mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESL-Link students</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>1.9123</td>
<td>1.125756</td>
<td>.16657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>1.7553</td>
<td>.68291</td>
<td>.07044</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

compared in this analysis. By looking at the data in Table 7, the “Sig.” = .000.

Therefore, “equal variances not assumed” must be utilized for the *t*-test. Table 8 provides
the two-tailed significance of the *t*-test because of having to use the “equal variances not
assumed” calculations. Because the *P* value is greater than .05, the *t*-test results reflected
in Tables 6-8 suggest that there is no significant difference in the success of the students
in the ESL-Link program and the control group.

Table 7

*T-Test Independent Samples Test 1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variance</th>
<th><em>F</em></th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th><em>t</em></th>
<th>df</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>20.327</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.994</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.868</td>
<td>76.349</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the *t*-test seem counter-intuitive to what would have been expected.

It would have been expected that the students who participated in the intensive noncredit
ESL 70 course would have earned higher grades in the ESL 80 course than those students
who did not participate in the intensive noncredit course. As mentioned earlier, although
students assess into a certain level of ESL, they cannot be forced to enroll in the level of
Table 8

*T-Test Independent Samples Test 2*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
<th>Mean difference</th>
<th>Std. error difference</th>
<th>95% confidence internal of the difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.322</td>
<td>.15696</td>
<td>.15797</td>
<td>-.15519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>.388</td>
<td>.15696</td>
<td>.18085</td>
<td>-.20320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* \( t(76.35) = .868; P = 0.388. \)

ESL into which they assessed. The control group included students who assessed higher than ESL 80. As a result, the final grades of the non-Link ESL 80 cohort where skewed upwards by students who should be in higher-level ESL classes. In order to conduct a more accurate comparison between the ESL-Link and non-Link cohorts, only those students who actually assessed into ESL 80 should be used as part of the non-Link comparison cohort. Unfortunately, the GCCCD Office of Institutional Research does not maintain assessment data. So there is no way to extract only those students in the control group who assessed directly into ESL 80 from students who assessed into other levels of ESL. Further complicating any such finer comparison is that the students in the ESL-Link program were assessed using a different assessment than the control group. ESL-Link students were assessed using the CASAS assessment and a writing sample. More weight was given to the writing sample because ESL faculty members believe that the writing sample provides a more accurate assessment of a student’s language knowledge, but also because they believe that the standardized assessments have been compromised. Writing assessments were not given to the control group as part of their
assessment simply because of lack of resources. It takes a significant amount of time to read and assess the writing samples and the funding to hire faculty members to read and assess writing samples for all students is simply not available.

Another possibility of conducting a more accurate comparison between the two groups involved assigning a common, equal numerical value to the grades of A, B, C, and P (since students earning a P [passing] grade may have actually earned either an A, B, or C). But after closer examination, this method was also problematic because although a P grade may reflect an A, B, or C, these grades are not equal. The only way to have conducted an accurate comparison was to include only those students who assessed directly in ESL 80 (using the same assessment instrument) and comparing different levels of success as reflected in letter grades. But this was not possible for reasons that are explained below.

Although the $t$-test did not reveal a significant difference in the success rate of students between the two groups, a closer analysis of the distribution of grades suggests a much different outcome. Students taking credit courses have the option of choosing to take the credit course with a “pass/no-pass” grade or for a letter grade. Typically, students who have aspirations to continue with their studies either for a certificate or a degree choose to take their credit courses for a letter grade. Courses taken for letter grades are counted towards the student’s GPA whereas “pass/no-pass” courses do not count toward the GPA. Figures 3 and 4 reflect the actual letter grades earned in credit ESL 80 by the students participating in the pilot ESL-Link program and the control group.
Figure 3. Grade distribution for ESL-Link students in credit ESL 80.

Figure 4. Grade distribution for non-ESL-Link students in credit ESL 80.
Comparison of the two figures above (comparing the final course grades in ESL 80) between the ESL-Link group and the control group suggests that the two groups are composed of students with very different aspirations. While the comparison of rates of success between the two groups seems to indicate that the control group has a much higher success rate (87.2% for the control group to 75.4% for the ESL-Link group), the tables above suggest a more interesting analysis. Students in the ESL-Link group are much more interested in taking the credit ESL-80 course for credit and a grade than the control group. Only 1 out of 97 students in the control group chose to take the credit ESL-80 course for credit—and made a B. Nearly half of the ESL-Link students chose to take the credit ESL-80 course for credit, suggesting an intent to become a better student in preparation for further study. These data seem to support the faculty member’s anecdotal observations that the students who complete the ESL-Link program perform better in subsequent courses (discussed in greater detail in the qualitative section below), and that many refugee ESL students enroll simply to obtain financial aid.

Since no control group students scored an “A” or “C,” the researcher opted to not analyze the statistical differences between the ESL-Link and control groups for these grades. But since the control group did have a student who scored a “B,” the researcher ran a Chi-square analysis (to analyze the expected versus the observed frequencies of data) to determine the statistical difference between the two groups earning a grade of “B.” Data related to students earning a letter grade of “B” are recorded in Table 9 and the Chi-square analysis of scoring a “B” between the two groups is reflected in Table 10.
Table 9

*Distribution of Students Scoring “B”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESL-Link cohort and control group scoring a grade of B</th>
<th>Observed N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESL-Link students</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Link control group</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10

*Chi-Square Analysis of ESL-Link and Control Group Students Scoring “B”*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>ESL-Link cohort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chi-square</td>
<td>10.286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>df</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. sig.</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The level of significance for scoring a “B” in the ESL-Link group was revealed to be significant at .001 (well below the confident interval of .05). Although the T-test suggests that there is no statistical difference in the overall academic success of the two groups, a closer analysis of the final grades suggests a significant difference in the intent of the students taking their courses and in their preparation for future, higher-level studies.

**Findings of Key Research Questions: Qualitative Analysis**

The purpose of the qualitative content analysis was to gain insight into the faculty members’ perceptions and insights in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the ESL-Link pilot program. To acquire this information, the researcher first interviewed the Department Chair for ESL and asked her which other faculty should be
interviewed to gain a keener understanding of and appreciation for the ESL-Link program. The names of the two faculty members who taught the credit ESL 80 course were provided. One of the faculty members stayed with the same ESL-Link cohort between noncredit 70 to credit 80, and the other faculty member participated in the program at only the credit 80 level (and did not teach the noncredit 70 course).

Interviews were conducted off-campus at a location of the faculty members’ choosing. The researcher used an Open-ended Questionnaire for both the ESL Department Chair, as well as the ESL faculty members. The questionnaire contained the following questions:

- Given that the GCCCD has many international students who need to learn English, why was the ESL-Link program developed specifically for Iraqi refugees?
- Was it important, in terms of instructional design, to have all the students in the ESL-Link program come from Iraq, or would it have been more pedagogically sound to have mixed the cohort with people from different countries and languages?
- Given your experiences and observations working with the ESL-Link cohort for two semesters, please share any observations you may have about elements of the program that worked, or might have been better, or anything about the students—as a class, or as a cohort, especially as compared to other ESL students you have had and taught in the past.
- During the course of the ESL-Link program, did you discuss and compare experiences with other ESL instructors who were teaching ESL students not in
the ESL-Link program? If so, what observations were made or conclusions reached during those discussions about the ESL-Link program, the needs of the Iraqi refugees, or ESL pedagogy?

• From an educational perspective, did you consider this a successful model? If so, what were some specific examples?

Significant insights were gained from the interviews and content analysis. The initial analysis consisted of reviewing the qualitative data question-by-question, response-by-response. Given that the three participating faculty who were interviewed each had a distinct and unique role and perspective on the program, the researcher chose to report as much of the original responses in their original context as possible, rather than approach the qualitative data through a coding process and reducing the data to simply common themes, believing that the analysis of data would be richer and more informative if the insights of each faculty member were reported separately and distinctly. Although no audio or video tape recordings of the interviews were made, the researcher typed the responses directly into his laptop as the Chair and faculty members spoke, ensuring that the responses were recorded as precisely as possible. This approach allowed for a more accurate representation of the faculty members’ unique thoughts and ideas. The identities of the faculty members have been coded to ensure confidentiality as follows:

• DC: Department Chair
• BS: Instructor who taught both noncredit 70 and credit 80 (Both Semesters)
• OS: Instructor who taught only credit ESL 80 (One Semester)
The first question focused on the perception of the faculty regarding the uniqueness of students participating in the ESL-Link program. “Were there any noticeable differences in the performance and engagement of the ESL-Link students as compared to the non-Link students?”

OS: “I did not see any difference. The majority of students I’ve had even before the Link program were either Chaldean or Muslim from Iraq. But being a refugee adds another component to teaching ESL to students, because being a refugee is a forced arrival to the U.S. They are not here because of economics but because of other factors. This matters because when you have the kind of psychological and emotional trauma that refugees have experienced then you often encounter disabilities, such as attention deficit disorder, lack of concentration, anxiety, stress, and many other psycho-social challenges. It was definitely noticeable in the class. There’s also an enclosed community there. They live together, en masse. They shop together, study together, and they cheat together.

What do you mean by cheating?

They all want to do well because their financial aid is dependent upon their performance in college. But it takes some people longer to learn a language than others, depending on their previous exposure to English. Many of my students didn’t have any education at all because of the disruption of the war in their lives. The younger students did not have the continuity of education because of the war, especially if they came from smaller villages and if they’ve been living in a refugee camp for the past several years. They are essentially war torn. The older students had a little more structured background in education. By cheating I mean
someone copies from another. Is it a cultural value of shared learning or really cheating? I don’t know. I ask my students, “Why do you allow others to cheat off you?” And they answer, “Because if I don’t allow him to cheat, he’ll be angry with me.” There would be repercussions in the community if a student didn’t allow a classmate to cheat. They all live in the same neighborhood, and there is a lot of peer pressure. And in the larger sense, it’s not really cheating. Especially in the Chaldean community, because they’re a persecuted community and they have survived by helping each other and watching out for each other’s back.

Is cheating a problem for us or for them?

It’s a big problem for them. If you’re cheating, you’re not learning. You’re cheating. But part of it is survival.

During our interview, OS asked me about my doctoral program because she said she might be interested in matriculating. We talked about the program, and I shared that a great dissertation would be to conduct a longer-term follow-up to the ESL-Link program and the education of refugees. Several years of the program would have passed by the time OS would be ready to conduct research on how the ESL-Link program had evolved and the longer-term benefits of the program for the students who had completed the program earlier. I shared that it would be relatively easy, not only because the instructor is already teaching in the ESL program, but also because I have already completed a literature review for teaching ESL to immigrants, and my dissertation was dedicated to this topic. OS recognized how having access to my literature review and dissertation would significantly simplify her dissertation. I found it ironic that during our
discussion on cheating among the Chaldeans, OS thought nothing about the idea of using my literature review and dissertation.

BS: I absolutely see a difference between the students. I had four students out of six, who were non-Link students drop out. They just couldn’t take it. All my link students earned A and B grades. The extra preparation (of the noncredit 70 course) helps A LOT! They are just better prepared. Link students are better prepared to handle the rigors of credit courses. I have two non-Link students in my credit course who are going to fail. I told them they should be in the Link program—but they didn’t know about it. Most students don’t know about the ESL-Link program.

The second question was to determine why the refugees were given preference to ESL programs when there is such a great need among many other students as well. Given that the GCCCD has many international students who need to learn English, why was the ESL-Link program developed specifically for Iraqi refugees?

DC: We developed the ESL-Link program because of the overwhelming need for ESL. There was one semester with 700 seats available and 3,000 students on the wait list. The class maximum is 25 students. We had over four times as many students per class as the class could accommodate. Prospective students used to show up 5 hours in advance for an assessment test. Many had to be sent away because the room was beyond capacity. So we knew we had to do something—something that would help the students not only get into the right level of ESL (noncredit) but then help them to be successful when they transition to credit ESL. Condemning them to noncredit with no end in sight was not acceptable.
ESL-Link was developed in response to the great need for ESL, but not specifically for the Iraqi refugees. It just turned out that only Iraqi refugees filled the class.

Actually, it took convincing to get them to sign up for noncredit because they wanted into the credit program to access financial aid. The only way to help them was to start them in noncredit. And in the first semester many said “no”—because it didn’t meet their need for financial aid. Two semesters later, some of the refugees who refused entry into the noncredit program are still trying to get into the credit program, while the Link students are well into the advanced levels of ESL.

OS: The ESL-Link was planned for and intended for everyone and anyone. But as we were planning the program, the refugee population was exploding. I decided I needed to take an Arabic course because all my students were Arabic speakers.

All my students are Arabic speakers.

We have immigrants from everywhere, why are all the classes filling with Iraqis?

OS: You tell me! The Chaldean community is very organized, and I’m sure it’s not an accident.

BS: It wasn’t developed for only Iraqis or refugees. But they were all Iraqis in the pilot ESL-Link program. Probably because of the sheer numbers of Iraqis on the wait list. My classes went from 99% Mexican in 2006 (there were two Iraqi Chaldean women—sisters, and 28 Mexicans). Today, it’s 100% Iraqi in the first cohort.
The next question was aimed at determining the best mix of students in an ESL class to teach English. Was there a benefit or a detriment to having all the students from one culture in the class? Was it important, in terms of instructional design, to have all the students in the ESL-Link program come from Iraq, or would it have been more pedagogically sound to have mixed the cohort with people from different countries and languages?

DC: It was not part of the instructional design to have only Iraqis. It’s always better to have a mixed group. The best is to have 50% Latinos and 50% Iraqis. Then it’s a beautiful class and the exchange and interaction are amazing. If the distribution is not equal (5 Latinos, 20 Iraqis), the 5 Latinos sit by themselves and they don’t mix and they don’t participate. The more equitable of a mix, the more sharing occurs. There is more student collaboration. A homogenous group doesn’t share as much because they don’t learn from each other. Also, a more mixed group is forced to use English because that’s what they have in common. When you have a homogenous group, they speak only their original language.

BS: When all the students in an ESL class are from the same cultural and linguistic background, then it’s very easy to build community among the group. In our case, there might be some conflict between Chaldean and Muslim. When you have a mix of students in a class, especially a mix of Mexicans and Iraqi—all the Mexicans on this side, and all the Iraqis sit on the other. Trying to group them and mix them just wasn’t working. Pedagogically, it’s better to have as mixed as possible because then they are forced to speak English. A mixed group has no other common language. As a common group of Iraqis, they speak Arabic. You
have to constantly monitor their language use because they’ll always go back to Arabic. As an instructor and teacher, I have to be on top of it all the time. When a class has a mix of students from different countries, cultures, and languages, it is very easy to mix people with others, so there’s no common language. But if you’re trying to build a learning community, it’s better to have a more homogenous group.

What’s the benefit of a learning community of students with a common background if the intent is to learn English?

BS: When you have a learning community based on some commonality, you have enhanced classroom dynamics; there is no conflict, you have more interaction, cross-cultural gender issues are not a much of a problem. The Mexican women in my classes complain that the Iraqi men are “hitting on them” all the time; whereas an Iraqi man would not dare behave that way with an Iraqi woman. There are a lot of classroom issues that would not have to be dealt with in a learning community of common students.

OS: There are advantages to both. When all your students come from the same background, they are all making the same mistakes, at least the second language mistakes. So I can teach them all about the same mistakes they’re all making. Pedagogically, it’s been noted that it’s better to have multiple languages, so that the only common language they can speak is English. But I don’t see that. The Iraqis live in an enclave where they don’t have to speak English until they come to my class. They shop and live in Arabic until they come to my class. It’s not important to their everyday life to speak English. It’s important to their financial
aid. They want to be successful, they want to be a part of the community, and they want to be financially independent and make something of themselves. But I’m not sure they want to live the American way of life.

When we’re studying “culture and living” in my class, they watched a video about a single mother [in the chapter about the Changing American family]. The scenario in the video is of a single mother who went to the neighbor, who happens to be a man with a female roommate from Japan. I asked the class, “What do you see different in this scenario from your culture?” My class responded that a single mother would never exist in Iraq. And a man would never have a female roommate. This is both Chaldeans and Muslims saying this.

The benefit of a more mixed class is that the common language would be English, and everyone would be forced to go to a grocery store not of their culture and ask for chickens in English. A mixed class usually is reflective of a mixed cultural community so there is not such a cohesive culture and community. The class would reflect a more heterogeneous community and so people would have to learn English.

The benefits of a class are not only reflected in the final grades. Many dynamics come to play in a classroom, especially in an ESL class, especially in a class of refugees. The next question was aimed to gather what the faculty thought worked best in the class and what could have been improved. Given your experiences and observations working with the ESL-Link cohort for two semesters, please share any observations you may have about elements of the program that worked, or might have been better, or anything about
the students—as a class, or as a cohort, especially as compared to other ESL students you have had and taught in the past.

DC: What I believe worked the best was having this preparation experience before going to college [credit program]. Also, the planning and implementation of this program created greater links between noncredit and credit instructors. [Note: The credit and noncredit programs at Cuyamaca College are under separate administrative units. Credit is under instruction. Noncredit is under community learning]. For example, an instructor teaching credit ESL 80 shared that it would be useful if the students entered the class knowing the alphabet. Alphabetization is not important in Arabic—like order and sequence of letters. Credit level instructors also said that it would be very helpful if by the time they come to their classes if they could know about capital letters, periods, and margins on a paper. Thanks to the feedback of the credit instructors, the noncredit instructors modified their curriculum and now stress the alphabet, ABCs, phonetics, spelling, periods, capital letters, margins, and more of the most fundamental basics that would otherwise be assumed for other students at this level coming from a language more similar to English.

Before this feedback from the credit side, noncredit was looking at more traditional things like verbs, and sentence structure, because the noncredit faculty members assumed that students came to class with some basic knowledge about the alphabet (such as knowing the sequence of the ABCs). Feedback from credit classes proved otherwise.
Also, thanks to the feedback from the credit instructors, the students are introduced to computers earlier, so by the time they enter credit they know how to use the computer and how to function in a tech-rich environment. The instructors are now also even using the Blackboard Course Management System at the lowest level credit courses. This is an exciting way of addressing the digital divide.

Some of the Iraqi students had absolutely no background or exposure to computers. Some tried to physically move the cursor on the screen with their finger. They didn’t know what a mouse was for. So the program is introducing technology much earlier than previously. What didn’t work was that we couldn’t offer the students a full-time load in the second semester of the link because the accompanying 80 course was not yet approved by the curriculum committee. So instead of being able to take a full load of 12 units (which would provide them with full financial aid), the students were able to take only 7 units (6 for the ESL 80, and 1 for the PDC course).

BS: Having an intensive noncredit link is a must! It prepares students for education in the U.S. The expectations, the way teachers work, cultural norms in the classroom. I would recommend it as a mandatory pre-requisite at all levels. Even at the higher levels. For everyone! Do it in the summer so they can get on the academic cycle. Also, in the summer you can create a certain intensity to the program because it’s shorter and more compact and concentrated. Also, there are not that many other things around during the summer, so there are no distractions, and students would be more focused on the program. But it might create social problems at home with child care, transportation, work.
Since faculty talk, discuss, compare, and debrief, the next question was aimed to discern if the faculty in the ESL-Link program and the other ESL faculty were comparing notes on the benefits of the program. During the course of the ESL-Link program, did you discuss and compare experiences with other ESL instructors who were teaching ESL students not in the ESL-Link program? If so, what observations were made or conclusions reached during those discussions about the ESL-Link program, the needs of the Iraqi refugees, or ESL pedagogy?

DC: Yes, they talked because the college is focused on Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Because of this requirement, all faculty members had to do SLO assessments. Non-Link faculty members were concerned that their students would not perform as well because they were coming into credit ESL 80 without the same preparation as the Link students. Additionally, students said they wanted to stay together through other classes because they developed a real learning community. But we couldn’t provide that opportunity for them. If we had a perfect world, I would like to continue the cohort longer.

OS: I didn’t discuss the credit ESL 80 class with the other instructors because I’m an adjunct and don’t spend much time on campus. But I did make it a point to speak with the instructors of the following class (ESL 96 grammar writing). I wanted to speak with the instructors who were getting the ESL-Link 80 students. I needed their feedback so I could learn how to better serve the students, and how to be a better instructor. Some of them wanted me to do a little too much—introduce the past and future tenses, and knowing the different classifications of grammar (what is a noun, verb).
One of the greatest problems is that they don’t have the verb “to be” in Arabic.

So I wanted to start introducing that in ESL 80. I would rather they learn vocabulary in noncredit 70 so that I can build on that in ESL 80. And begin with simple structure in ESL 80, such as simple grammar, “I am . . .” “I am” + noun + adjective. They don’t have it in Arabic.

When you’re teaching as an adjunct [teaching here and there, and not available for discussions], it’s practically impossible to get the four ESL 80 instructors together because they’re all adjunct and never on campus at the same time. As a group, we never sat down and talked about it. The chair always brought it up, but it never happened. Don’t know if we can because as adjuncts, we’re all over the county teaching classes. The program suffers greatly by not having a dependable full time faculty dedicated to the students, and specific populations. We have only two full-time faculty in the entire ESL department.

BS: On the few occasions I had a chance to speak with other faculty, the reaction of non-Link faculty was one of great surprise. They asked, “There’s a Link program? What do you mean? You mean that faculty in credit and noncredit are working together?” They had no idea.

Finally, knowing the first ESL-Link program was only a pilot program, what did the faculty think of the program. From an educational perspective, did you consider this a successful model? If so, what were some specific examples:

DC: Yes! That’s why we kept it and kept improving it and added additional links going into the credit—going into ESL 80, 90, 100, 103. We’ve expanded the program from only ESL 80 to the others, as well. Because it created a clear
pathway for students beginning in noncredit and into credit—which never existed before. That pathway is critical, because students know if they start in noncredit, they have someplace to go and will not be stuck there forever. It’s been very successful because it creates a real learning community—a cohort model where the students all benefit.

ESL students will be everybody’s students. Not just of the ESL department. ESL students are not just ESL students. Therefore, the stronger they can be in foundation courses, the stronger they’ll be in higher level collegiate courses, and the more successful they’ll be in school and afterwards.

They work hard because they want a job, they want to work, and the younger ones want a degree. The older ones, if they could, would be working. They’re here for financial aid and learn enough English to find work.

OS: Yes, in some ways. Students having gone through noncredit ESL 70 have more linguistic knowledge to work with. More knowledge about “extra-linguistic” issues—what is appropriate behavior in a classroom, how to express yourself appropriately (they can be very “in your face”)—behavioral issues, as well as academic—terminology, the continuity eliminates the need to learn all over again. Also, we’re finally addressing certain problems, which need to be addressed with a refugee population. We’re not psychologists. We don’t have the ability to provide the counseling some of these victims of war need. All I can do is lend a sympathetic ear when they want to talk to me.

I have involved myself into their community—going to weddings, shopping in their stores, funerals, celebrations. And when I go shopping there, everywhere I
go people go, “Hello teacher.” I am very popular with my students because of my involvement in their community. It helps to help them feel connected and accepted. An ESL instructor, especially for these refugees, is not only a teacher, but a cultural liaison to everything she represents, and everything that’s behind her.

BS: Absolutely! Even as flawed as it was. Absolutely. I see it in the students. I see a real need to succeed in them. From those who were able to pass the ESL 80, they want to succeed. Of all the ESL-Link students, 10 didn’t pass the credit ESL 80—but they should have never been allowed to pass the noncredit ESL 70. We were too eager to try to help everyone. But those who passed ESL 80, I see them in their upper level courses. I see their interest in their own higher education. I know it’s anecdotal. But I see it.

It has a lot to do with the attitude the faculty took and put into the program with and for the students. Successful students are now looking beyond their financial aid—and it’s timely because their financial aid is running out. They see that their future is here and they have to make something out of it.

Interviewing the faculty involved with the ESL-Link program provided insights about both the program and the institution. It was noteworthy that the academic success rate of the students was mentioned only rarely. The greater focus of the discussions reflected a great concern and dedication on the part of the faculty for the plight of the refugees and their struggles, their desire to continue to improve the program to better serve the students. The faculty recognized the importance of close communication and articulation between noncredit and credit, and lower-level credit ESL and subsequent
higher levels of ESL to ensure that the appropriate materials are being taught at the right levels. But the faculty members also expressed frustration that both being only adjunct, and “institutional politics” prevented the faculty members from being able to dedicate more time and effort into enhancing and improving the program. Having noncredit in one administrative division, credit in another, the need to communicate between the two and among other levels of credit ESL, created obstacles for program develop—especially with the lack of a full-time faculty member dedicated to this program.

**Brief Summary of the Data Analysis**

The overall purpose of the ESL-Link program was to have students first go through an intensive noncredit ESL 70 program to better prepare them to be successful when they take the credit ESL 80 course. With the extra preparation provided to the students participating in the ESL-Link program, it was anticipated that these students would have a higher success rate (“C” or better, or “pass”) than the control group (students who matriculated into ESL 80 without participating in the intensive preparation course). But the data indicates the contrary. Only 75.4% of the ESL-Link students were successful, whereas 87.2% of the non-Link students were successful. According to the ESL faculty members interviewed, a possible reason for this is that the students who participated in the ESL-Link program actually assessed into a noncredit level and had to work their way up into the credit ESL 80 level. Whereas the control group could have assessed at any level (even much higher than ESL 80) and simply chosen to take the easiest level credit ESL, either simply for financial aid or because of the heavy demands of the balance of their course load.
A closer analysis of the data suggests an even more important revelation. The students in the ESL-Link program were opting to take their credit ESL 80 course for a credit letter grade rather than just as “pass/no pass” grade. The high incidence of students in the control group choosing to take the ESL 80 course as “pass/no-pass” seems to validate the faculty members’ suspicions that the students are taking this class primarily for financial aid, since “pass/no-pass” does not provide a letter grade. The ESL-Link students on the other hand, are choosing to take the ESL 80 course for credit, which seems to indicate that they are more intent on continuing with their education and their studies. So although a $T$-test may reveal that there is no statistical difference in the pass rate of the two groups, there is a significant difference in passing a class with a letter grade than with simply a “pass” grade.

Additionally, the control group was made up of students other than refugees. Being refugees, these students come to class with a variety of other psycho-social-emotional issues and trauma that may interfere with their ability to perform academically. English as a Second Language instructors state that the focus of an ESL class must be language acquisition, but with the case of refugees, if the context of their circumstances are not understood and appreciated, language acquisition, despite all efforts, may prove elusive.

Until now, the ESL-Link program has been presented as not being as successful as intended in preparing students to be successful in credit ESL 80. The reason for this shortcoming is that the faculty members were so eager to assist and support the ESL-Link students that they allowed ill-prepared students to pass the non-credit ESL 70. But, as mentioned above, the ESL-Link program was exceptionally successful in helping students
prepare for credit courses (as opposed to simply taking “pass/no-pass” courses).

Additionally, the program did initiate a process of awareness and exploration among the ESL faculty regarding what Arabic-speaking students need to learn at what level. With the feedback from upper-level ESL faculty members, students are now taught grammar, their ABCs, and the use of periods, punctuation, and margins much earlier in their studies. This allows them to be better prepared to learn more and be more successful at the upper levels.

It was very interesting to the researcher where the focus of the ESL-Link is depending upon who was being interviewed. The Department Chair’s primary interest was in ensuring that the ESL students would be successful in the credit ESL 80 course. As a result, the Department Chair recommended that the researcher interview only the faculty who taught ESL 80. But in interviewing the two ESL credit 80 instructors, they recognized that the success of the program depends mostly on what happens in noncredit ESL-70—since that is where the students are learning all the preparatory skills needed to be successful in ESL 80. They were surprised that I was not directed to interview the other faculty member who taught only the ESL 70 course.

Finally, the question of having the same instructor with the cohort over the two semesters (noncredit ESL 70 and credit ESL 80) revealed some surprising results. If a cohort has the same instructor, then there are no checks and balances to make sure that the students are learning what they need to be learning at the right level. Naturally, the instructor teaching both levels is going to assume that what was needed to be taught and learned during the first semester was taught and learned. Having an instructor who was not part of the noncredit ESL 70 and seeing the students for the first time as they enter
credit ESL 80 allowed this instructor the objective perspective to evaluate whether the students are coming into ESL 80 adequately prepared. There is certainly a benefit of having the same instructor with the same cohort over two semesters, especially with a population as fragile as refugees. It takes time to develop trust and rapport. But that seamless continuity also causes an unintentional liability in that there may be a loss of objective evaluation of the students’ knowledge and progress. Having a faculty member who was not with the same cohort for both the noncredit and credit courses over two semesters provided a beneficial perspective on the program.

**Conclusion**

As the use of data becomes increasingly more important for instructional planning, it is imperative that the right data be considered and in the right way. Looking at only the raw data, the control group appears to have a higher percentage of students who “succeeded” in passing credit ESL 80 (87.2% for the control group compared to 75.4% for the ESL-Link cohort). A $T$-test analysis revealed a nonsignificant difference between the ESL-Link cohort and the control group. But an analysis of grade distribution reveals probably the most important insight. Of the 94 students in the control group, 93 (all but 1) took the course as a ‘pass/no pass’ course. On the other hand, nearly half of the ESL-Link group took ESL 80 for a letter grade, implying a greater desire to continue their studies.
CHAPTER 5—DISCUSSION

Introduction

Chapter 5 provides the discussion and conclusions based on the findings from the data analysis in Chapter 4 and examines key implications and makes recommendations for practice in the field and for future research.

Examining the effects, impacts, and benefits of the ESL-Link program provided interesting data on how to approach designing a systematic sequence of courses to help non-English speaking refugees to be successful in college. This study examined the effects upon students’ academic performance and the faculty members’ perceptions of the program and the students. Findings from this study provide interesting information regarding student success and student outcomes, and, most importantly, faculty perceptions regarding developing better methods of helping refugee students succeed.

The outcomes provided interesting data regarding the effectiveness of the ESL-Link program, as a way of helping students who begin their studies in noncredit courses to be more successful when they transition into credit courses. Additionally, when compared to the non-Link control group, an interesting consideration of the interpretation of “student success” emerges.

Discussion

For this study, an innovative teaching program was evaluated, and two main research questions drove the research to investigate this problem. A variety of data, using both quantitative data from the district’s Institutional Research Office and qualitative data obtained from the participating ESL faculty were collected to address these questions.
The data were analyzed in Chapter 4, highlighting the results. These results serve as the basis for reaching the following conclusions for each question.

**Research Question One (Quantitative)**

The most significant question examined by this study was what effect, if any, did participating in the ESL-Link program have on students’ academic success in the credit ESL 80 course, as compared to students who did not participate in the ESL-Link program?

The first challenge addressed by the ESL-Link program was to help students make the transition from noncredit to credit courses. The second was to help them be successful once they have gained admission into the credit course. The transition from noncredit to credit was very successful. Of the 58 students who completed the noncredit ESL 70, 57 matriculated into credit ESL 80. Of those 57, 43 were successful (i.e., a “pass” or a letter grade of “C” or better) in ESL 80. Quantitative data gathered and analyzed for this question purported that the ESL-Link program had mixed results, depending upon which data were considered. Looking simply at absolute numbers, the data indicates that a higher percentage of non-Link students were “successful” in ESL 80 than the students who participated in the ESL-Link program. Using a $T$-test analysis, there was no statistical difference in student success between the students in the ESL-Link program and the non-Link control group. When the data were analyzed more closely, the ESL-Link students had a significantly higher number of students passing the course with letter grades of “A,” “B,” or “C.” All but one of the 94 students in the non-Link cohort took the course as a “pass/no pass” grade. This revelation introduces a very interesting twist to the growing discussion on the accountability of community
colleges and student success. The non-Link control group had a significantly higher percentage of students who were “successful” (as measured by scoring a “passing” grade). The non-Link control group had only one student who took the course for a letter grade, implying that the students in this cohort had ambitions and intentions other than furthering their academic careers. In the ESL-Link cohort, a significant number of students opted to take the course for a letter grade, probably indicating interests to continue with their education towards a certificate or a degree.

**Conclusion one.** Students enrolled in the ESL-Link program were more likely to take credit courses for letter grades rather than pass-no-pass credit.

**Conclusion two.** Anecdotal observations from ESL faculty indicate that students participating in the ESL-Link program were better prepared when taking upper-level courses.

Two conclusions were reached for Question One, concerning the effects with students participating in the ESL-Link program. Students interested in being successful in their academic studies, and not just in obtaining financial aid, realize that they need to take the proper sequence of courses in order to be prepared and successful in subsequent higher level courses. Additionally, information provided by faculty teaching higher levels of ESL report that the students enrolling in their classes are much better prepared and that they can cover more core content rather than having to address some basic issues, such as how to turn on a computer. The more subject matter that can be covered in the lower level ESL courses, the faster the students can progress through the sequence of ESL courses and complete their education.
Research Question Two (Qualitative)

In addition to the measurable effect of participating in the ESL-Link program on student outcomes and success, what were the perceptions of the ESL faculty of the ESL-Link program and in the performance and engagement of the ESL-Link students as compared to the non-Link students?

Quantitative data gathered and analyzed for Question Two indicated that the process of developing and implementing the ESL-Link program had a positive effect on both the engagement of the faculty, as well as the preparation of the students for higher level credit coursework. At Cuyamaca College, the credit and noncredit programs are administratively housed in separate areas of the institution. Credit programs are administratively connected to instruction and noncredit programs are in community learning. Rarely do these two divisions meet and collaborate. When trying to develop a seamless continuity of educational experiences, as with the ESL-Link program, this can cause significant challenges. Community Learning and Credit Instruction have different policies, resources, schedules, and minimum qualifications for faculty that make it very difficult to synchronize activities between the two divisions. As never before, the need to develop a sequence of noncredit to credit linked courses has contributed greatly to the communication and collaboration between these two divisions.

The most significant differences noted by the faculty between the students in the Link program and those not in the Link program is the subsequent success of the Link students after they leave the program. According to the faculty, the students who participated in the Link program seem to have more sincere academic ambitions and tend to perform better in their courses. Faculty also commented on the benefits, although
unintentional, of having a class totally made up of people from a common culture. Although it might cause challenges at times (when they tend to speak Arabic in class), the commonality of the students in the class helps create a very close learning community. As one faculty member noted, “When one student makes a mistake or doesn’t understand, chances are that all students are having the same problem. So I can address the needs of the entire class by answering one question” (OS, personal communication, April 25, 2012).

Finally, faculty members were divided on whether it is better for the students to remain with the same cohort and the same instructor over two semesters or to have different instructors while remaining in the same cohort. Because refugees are a unique population, with special psycho/social/emotional needs, and sometimes trauma, it takes time, more than one semester, to develop a trusting rapport with the students so that the students feel comfortable enough to open up and participate in the class. Teaching refugees is not like teaching other students. Because they are victims of conflict, refugees may have more and different personal issues to contend with that may interfere with their capacity to learn. But having the same instructor may compromise having an objective view of a student’s or of a class’ progress. Having a different instructor for the ESL 80 course allows for an appropriate check and balance to ensure that the students are being taught what they need to know at the ESL 70 level so that they can be successful at the ESL 80 level.

**Conclusion three.** Administrative structures inadvertently cause obstacles to student learning, such as when noncredit ESL and credit ESL are in separate organizational units of the institution. One of the fundamental objectives of the
ESL-Link program was to help students who started in noncredit courses to successfully make the transition into credit courses. ESL-Link did this by linking the highest level noncredit ESL course (70) with the lowest level credit ESL course (80). In order for this linkage to be successful, there had to be close communication and collaboration between the noncredit and credit instructors so that the classes were appropriately articulated. This is complicated by the fact that the noncredit program at Cuyamaca College was, and continues to be, administratively housed under Community Learning, and the credit program under Instruction. Additionally, noncredit and credit courses have different requirements for instructors, different scheduling, resources, and even different printed course schedules.

**Conclusion four.** Although refugees can benefit at a personal level from a continuity of experiences with the same instructor, there are benefits to having different instructors for different classes. Many refugee students come with a variety of very emotional and sometimes tragic stories. It is easy for caring faculty members to be sensitive and caring for their students’ circumstances. This may inadvertently lead to making accommodations for students with special circumstances at the cost of pursuing and achieving academic objectives or student learning outcomes. Also, given individual styles of instructors, a deficiency in comprehension or understanding on the part of students, may go unnoticed by one instructor but be picked up by another. Finally, students benefit when they realize they have to learn to adapt to different styles of teaching, accountability, and expectations.

Four conclusions were reached for Question Two regarding the perceptions of the faculty on the ESL-Link program and the participating students. These data were
gathered through interviews with open-ended questionnaires. Faculty, especially ESL faculty teaching refugees, must balance their personal concerns for their students and the quality and integrity of the educational program. It might provide personal comfort to the students to stay with the same cohort and with the same instructor, but there are benefits to students to be exposed to different teaching styles, personalities, and methods of doing things. Ultimately, although the faculty member has great care, sensitivity, and compassion for the students, their objective is to teach them English as effectively and efficiently as possible so that the refugees can become financially and socially independent.

**Recommendations for Practice**

The following recommendations are offered for planning and implementing noncredit to credit ESL courses for refugees.

**Recommendation for Practice One**

The community college needs to give serious consideration to holding professional development workshops for the faculty to make them aware of the ESL-Link program.

This recommendation derived from the conclusions made above that not all faculty or students are aware of the ESL-Link program. As mentioned in the introduction, in their pursuit of financial aid, many non-English speaking refugee students register for any class they can get into. Having limited or no English speaking or comprehension abilities, these students not only fail the course but also occupy a valuable seat unavailable for another student who may need the course to enter a degree program and/or graduate. Referring students to the ESL-Link program helps the non-English
speaking student be better prepared for credit coursework and makes scarce seats available for other, more prepared students.

**Recommendation for Practice Two**

Noncredit ESL and credit ESL should be administratively combined to facilitate the articulation and sequencing of courses in order to support student success. Trying to coordinate the sequencing of courses between two distinct institutional entities is administratively, programmatically, and logistically problematic. As mentioned in Conclusion Three above, noncredit and credit programs have different instructor requirements, different budgets, different administrative meetings, even different published course schedules. If a linked noncredit to credit program is to be successful, institutions must find ways to administratively combine disciplines which transcend both divisions.

**Recommendation for Practice Three**

Administrators and faculty members should consider extending the sequencing of courses to facilitate the continuity of educational experiences for the students who had formed a learning community while being together already for two semesters.

Recommendation Three would be to build upon the learning community that is formed early in the students’ time together and to help them process seamlessly from one level to another. The faculty would also benefit from such sequencing because they would be able to provide each other feedback regarding what the students should be learning and knowing at each level of their education (as occurred during the ESL-Link program). This type of sequencing is being suggested by the California Community
Recommendation for Practice Four

Instructional programs should be more closely articulated to student support services. Refugees are a special population and have exceptional extra-curricular needs. Simply offering a schedule of courses, or sequences of courses, may not be enough for students experiencing the psychological and emotional trauma of war and being forcefully displaced from their home and their country. Mental health services, services sensitive to the cultural customs and idiosyncrasies of a particular culture, and counseling may all be needed to help refugee students make the adaptation to their new home.

Recommendations for Future Educational Research

The following recommendations are offered for future research addressing both instructional opportunities and the unique psychological, emotional, and social circumstances of refugee students.

Recommendation for Future Educational Research One

Research needs to be conducted to examine the long-term benefits of participating in the ESL-Link program. Students in the ESL-Link program are more prone to take credit courses for letter grades, and ESL faculty members provide anecdotal feedback on the apparent success of students who passed through the ESL-Link program. Long-term empirical data are needed to see how well these students do through the rest of their academic careers—as compared to those ESL students who did not go through the ESL-Link Program.
Recommendation for Future Educational Research Two

More research is needed to assess the benefits of keeping the ESL-Link cohorts with the same instructor or having them experience different instructors. Faculty develop personal and professional relationships with their students. These relationships may be of significant benefit when trying to transcend the myriad of issues that a refugee student is struggling with in order to help him/her succeed academically. Given that the Iraqi refugee community in East San Diego County is relatively large and established, the community is very tight and closed. An instructor who stays with the same cohort begins to become accepted by the social group and they begin to open up (ESL instructor, personal communication, April 26, 2012). But the closer the faculty member becomes with the students at a personal level, the greater the risk that the academic integrity of the learning program may be compromised.

Having different instructors helps expose refugee students to different personalities, different teaching styles, and different expectations. Different instructors can assess how well the students are learning the materials from the previous semester and provide feedback as needed. And a different instructor may be successful in ways that another instructor may not.

Recommendation for Future Educational Research Three

What are the psychological, social, emotional benefits of attending ESL classes? Earning course credit and a grade are not the only benefits of attending classes. Refugees who may feel personally isolated at home or in the community may learn sufficient self-confidence skills in an ESL class to help them feel better about themselves, their circumstances, and their opportunities. Even if a refugee student does not pass an ESL
course, the personal benefits of having participated in that course may be many. Benefits may include enhanced self-esteem, sense of hope and belonging, feeling more connected to the larger community, greater sense of independence, and others.

**Recommendation for Future Educational Research Four**

To what extent does understanding the indigenous language (which provides an insight into the culture) of non-English speaking students, especially refugees, help the ESL instructor be more effective? It took Cuyamaca College faculty almost 1 year to learn that Arabic speakers do not have capitalizations, do not know the alphabet, and do not know about margins or punctuation. Understanding how a culture constructs their “reality” by the words they use may provide the ESL instructor an insight into why the non-English speaker is having certain problems with prepositions, pronouns, or other grammatical parts of speech.

**Recommendation for Future Educational Research Five**

A further recommendation is to pilot the ESL-Link program with a much more intimate connection with student support services. This recommendation addresses the extra-curricular needs of refugee students. Having access to courses is one thing, but being in the appropriate state of mind to take advantage of participating in that class is another. Refugees are unwillingly displaced. They are different than an immigrant who plans and intends to leave his/her home country for another. Refugees leave everything behind—possessions, wealth, family, their personal and professional identities and lives, and everything else they had. They are victims of war, conflict, or persecution, forced to leave their countries because of the very real threat and possibility of being killed. In the case of Iraqi refugees, they have now lived through 10 years of war and conflict. For the
Chaldeans, being an ethnic minority in Iraq, the persecution has lasted much longer. As a result, refugees come with a variety of psychological, emotional, and social issues which may prevent them from taking advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. Student Services, especially counseling, has a critical role to play in helping refugee students make the transition to life as a student. But colleges are not social service agencies, and the capacity of a college to address the myriad of needs that a refugee student may have is limited. What kinds and mix of student support services are warranted to help refugee students better adapt to life as students?

**Recommendation for Future Educational Research Six**

Researchers should consider evaluating the effects of teaching ESL in a more applied, or practical context. In addition to learning English, refugees need employment in order to make an income to support themselves and their families. Contextualized ESL has been used for many years in different contexts. Research should be conducted to determine which strategy is best for helping refugees to become financially independent: recertification in their past training, new training, apprenticeships, or another model.

**Recommendation for Future Research Seven**

The community college should collect and use data about the larger impact of an expanded ESL-Link program on the rest of the college community. As mentioned previously, refugee students register for whatever courses they can get into primarily to obtain financial aid. Instructors have complained that they have students who do not speak a word of English sitting in a chemistry class—and they are worried about the very real possibility of an accident. As the ESL-Link program expands, and more seats become available for refugee students, the college should see more students being able to
get the scarce classes they need to graduate. Additionally, as seen in the control group, 93 of the 94 students taking credit ESL 80 took the course simply as a “pass/no pass” course, indicating they have no real intent to further their education by pursuing a certificate or degree. But these students are filling valuable and limited seats. As the college continues to cut courses and sections, access to credit courses is becoming increasingly more limited. If all the seats in the entry level credit ESL 80 course are filled by students simply interested in a “pass/no pass” (implying an interest primarily in financial aid), this creates a significant obstacle for those students who are trying to access the credit program on their way towards a certificate or a degree.

**Recommendation for Future Research Eight**

A similar study should be conducted where the control group against which the ESL-Link cohort is compared against should include only those students who assess into ESL 80. As mentioned previously, the cohort of students who enroll into ESL 80 could have assessed into any level of ESL. Students can assess into any higher level of ESL and still choose to take the entry-level credit ESL 80. There are no controls or restrictions regarding which ESL course a student can enroll into. One of the reasons given by the faculty as to why the control group had a higher percentage of students who “succeeded” (scored a “pass” or C or better) is precisely because they believe that the ESL 80 classes contained students who assessed at higher levels. A more accurate comparison of the benefits and efficacy of the ESL-Link program would be to compare them to only those students who actually assessed into ESL 80. Although the control group would still not be made up of only refugees, it would make a more equitable comparison for a study.
Recommendations for Future Social Science Research

From a strictly social science perspective, the study of refugee students provides a wealth of research opportunities. The studies on rites of passage by Van Gennep (1960), the critical theory developed by Freire (1970, 1992), Horkheimer (1982), McLaren and Hammer (1989) and Abraham Maslow’s theory on the Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943) all provide valid perspectives to understanding the complex experiences of refugees and immigrants attending postsecondary education.

Recommendation for Future Social Science Research One

How does the student’s personal, cultural, and social circumstances interact to influence his/her experiences, and how does education serve as a means of “emancipation from oppression or injustice.” Freire (1970) rebuked the “banking” system of education where the previous, older generation “deposits” their knowledge into the minds of the next generation. Freire argued that students must construct new knowledge from knowledge they already have and that instructors must learn how the students understand the world so that they, the teacher, can better understand how the student can learn. In many ways, tragic life circumstances and lack of English communication skills impose a form of oppression on non-English speaking refugees. To help the refugee students gain independence from this situational and cultural oppression, instructors must be aware of and sensitive to the circumstances that brought the refugees to this country. Iraqi refugees adhere to a very strict and conservative cultural tradition based on age and gender. On many occasions, this conservative cultural tradition has posed challenges in the classroom. For example, an Iraqi Muslim husband may not allow his wife to participate in a conversation with another man during conversational exercises in class.
Additionally, Iraqi refugees come from a culture where everything is negotiated and they apply that understanding and approach to everything, including grades, admissions, financial aid, etc. In order to help the refugees to become independent, it is not only important to teach them English but also to help them understand the cultural differences that exist in their new country.

**Recommendation for Social Science Research Two**

How does Maslow’s hierarchy of needs affect a refugee’s state of mind, self-esteem and capacity to learn (considering that a refugee is probably going in the reverse order as proposed by Maslow). In a paper titled “A Theory of Human Motivation” (1943) and then more fully expressed in his book *Motivation and Personality* (1954), Abraham Maslow proposed a psychological theory on the hierarchy of needs. The most basic, or fundamental, level of need is understandably the physiological needs all people share and must meet in order to simply survive, such as breathing, food, water, sleep, and so forth. Once the physiological needs are relatively satisfied, the next level of needs Maslow refers to as the safety needs. Safety needs include financial security, health and well-being of self and family, employment, resources, and safety. Once physiologic and safety needs are met, then “there will emerge the love and affection and belongingness needs” (Maslow, 1943, p. 381). According to Maslow (1954), humans need to feel a sense of belonging and acceptance which can come from friendship, intimacy, or family. The next level in the hierarchy is the need for esteem.

All people in our society have a need or desire for a stable, firmly based, (usually) high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect, or self-esteem, and for the esteem of others. . . . Satisfaction of the self-esteem need leads to feelings of
self-confidence, worth, strength, capability and adequacy of being useful and necessary in the world. But thwarting of these needs produces feelings of inferiority, of weakness and of helplessness” (Maslow, 1943, p. 383).

Finally, the highest level of need in Maslow’s hierarchy is the need for self-actualization. Basically, “what a man can be, he must be” (Maslow, 1954, p. 91). This level of need pertains to a person pursuing and realizing his/her fullest potential. Maslow (1954) goes on to explain that a person must move from “becoming more and more of what one is to becoming everything that one is capable of becoming” (p. 92).

Maslow’s (1943) theory on the hierarchy of needs is keenly relevant and applicable to the circumstances of refugees because of their struggle for identity and survival in a new country. While the college is concerned about the refugees’ academic success and progress, the refugees are engaged in a much more complex struggle to address some of their most basic needs. As Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs demonstrates, it is natural and healthy for a person to transition from lower levels of needs to higher levels of needs through his/her life. But in the case of refugees, they find themselves moving from upper levels to lower of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. Some refugees may have attained high levels of professional accomplishment in their home countries, but as refugees find themselves literally struggling for shelter and survival. Instead of moving up Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, refugees are moving down the Hierarchy to more basic levels of needs. The research question this brings up relates to the role of student services in meeting the many complex personal and mental health needs of refugees.
Recommendation for Social Science Research Three

The academic experience provides an opportunity for personal growth and
development that reaches far beyond test scores, especially for non-English speakers and
for refugees. Future research should explore student perceptions of how they appear to
have developed (personally, emotionally, psychologically, socially, as well as
academically) through their participation in the ESL courses. All first semester noncredit
and credit ESL students should be interviewed to determine if participating in ESL made
any difference among the students’ personal attitudes, self-perceptions, emotional
well-being, and academic performance as assessed in the following ways:

1. Did the students experience an increase in personal confidence and self-esteem
   as determined by behaviors indicating greater independence when they were in
   the community, such as shopping and using public transportation (if and when
   necessary)?

2. Did the students experience a greater sense of optimism, hope, and ambition in
   relationship to their studies?

3. Did the students feel they better understood how to interact in their new culture
   because of their increased skills in the English language?

As indicated above, in addition to assessing the academic progress of the
participating students, a future, more thorough study should attempt to understand what
larger impact or benefit that participating in the ESL program has had and is having on
students’ personal lives and well-being. To this end, the study should take into account
both the participating instructors, as well as the students, in an attempt to ascertain the
benefits, if any, of participating in an ESL program.
The primary mission and obligation of institutions of higher education are to provide educational services to students in pursuit of a degree, a certificate, or simply personal growth and development. But academic institutions realize that simply offering access to courses, classes, and programs is not enough to ensure that students reach their academic or personal goals. This is why all colleges and universities have significant resources dedicated to student services and student affairs. Many times, the life circumstances of students are such that they can undermine even the most ambitious, capable, and dedicated of students. All students face personal challenges to varying degrees, but nowhere are the obstacles of life more evident and more challenging than to the ESL student. In addition to balancing all of the challenges and struggles of daily life that all students must overcome, ESL students must also overcome the basic, fundamental yet profound obstacle of communication. The challenge and paradox for educators is that the literature and data indicate that academic success is very much dependent upon connecting with students on a personal level, and building a relationship between the student and the institution. But a typical ESL class may have students from over a dozen different nationalities, ethnicities, and/or linguistic backgrounds. Trying to accommodate the personal needs and idiosyncrasies of each student is programmatically impractical and ultimately counterproductive. Experienced and successful ESL instructors know that although it is helpful to understand the cultural nuances of their students, successful ESL programs must be focused on the target language. The more the instructors and ESL programs make accommodations for the personal and cultural circumstances of their students the longer the road to cultural adaptation and personal success will be for the student.
Role of Institutions of Higher Education (Social Obligations)

Some of the most significant struggles of the refugee community, as well as the college, are those related to acculturation and assimilation. According to the Encyclopedia of Public Health (Maxwell, 2002), acculturation is the process whereby the attitudes and/or behaviors of people from one culture are modified as a result of contact with a different culture. Acculturation implies a mutual influence in which elements of two cultures mingle and merge. In contrast, assimilation is a process of cultural absorption of a minority group into the main cultural body. In assimilation, the tendency is for the ruling cultural group to enforce the adoption of their values rather than the blending of values.

(Para. 1)

To maintain their indigenous cultural integrity and cultural self-identity, the Chaldean community is struggling to acculturate. Through the inherent need to learn English to go about their daily lives in the United States, the Chaldean students are required to learn English—a process of assimilation.

Whether through a process of acculturation or assimilation, ESL programs are an important and effective resource for helping non-native populations transition into successful and self-supportive lives in the United States. But it is ultimately a passive service of the community college, because the students must come to the college to take advantage of those services. As a public institution with significant political and social influence in a community, community colleges have the potential of being able to do much more than simply offering education and training to those who come to them. Community colleges can serve as the catalyst for social awareness and political action.
Because of the resources they contain, represent, and have access to, community colleges, as do all higher education institutions, have an obligation to mobilize those resources for the greater well-being of their students and their communities.

**Summary of the Study**

How we incorporate immigrants into every facet of U.S. society—and prepare them for a job market that increasingly relies on skilled workers—will determine the economic future of our country. The foreign-born population rose to a record 38.1 million in 2007 or 12.6% of the population. Between 2005 and 2050, the U.S. population is projected to expand by 48%, with immigrants representing 82% of that growth (Passell & D’Vera, 2008).

A significant proportion of the future U.S. population and workforce will be foreign-born and probably not able to speak English when they arrive in the United States. It can be anticipated that most of these people will go to community colleges to learn English, and the place where most of these students will begin their studies will be in noncredit. Unfortunately, the vast majority of students who begin their studies in noncredit never complete a certificate or a degree. The more we, as community colleges, can do to facilitate the success of students transitioning from noncredit to credit, the more successful our students will be, the more students we will be able to serve, the more personally, academically and professionally successful the students will be, and the more our students will be able to actively participate in and contribute to our state and national economies. The ESL-Link program developed at Cuyamaca College is one promising innovation for supporting the successful transition of ESL students, especially refugees,
from noncredit to credit study so that the students will not only be successful in their academic pursuits but also in their new lives in their new homes.
REFERENCES


East County Community Summit- Spotlight on Refugee Education and Employment Report

Following are the findings from the East County Community Summit-Spotlight on Refugee Education and Employment that was held on Friday, November 6, 2009, at the Cuyamaca College Student Center, El Cajon. The Summit was co-hosted by Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District and Grossmont Union High School District and was attended by approximately 200 representatives from all sectors of education, business, and government, as well as from the media and a variety of community and social service organizations.

This Summit focused on the educational and employment needs of the growing San Diego East County refugee population with the following goals:

➢ Raise **AWARENESS** of the refugee population’s circumstances and impact on education and employment.

➢ Determine the **RESOURCES** currently available and required.

➢ Propose **ACTIONS** to advance the systems that support refugee education and employment.

During this working forum, preliminary data regarding the status of the refugee population in the U.S. and San Diego County were shared. Three questions were presented to the attendees for discussion. The public comments were recorded by note takers. This report summarizes findings from summit participants under the categories of Education, Employment, and Social Services/Healthcare/Police & Emergency Services. The full transcript of recorded comments is available in Attachment A.

I. WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATUS OF EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICES IN EAST COUNTY THAT MIGHT TARGET REFUGEES?

A. EDUCATION

• Insufficient number of ESL classes:
  o State budget cuts resulted in fewer classes and instructors
  o Instructors need BA to teach ESL classes

• Financial Aid:
  o Funding is one year behind
  o Credit courses are needed to meet financial aid requirements
  o Language skills are inadequate for timely graduation thus losing assistance

• Obstacles:
  o Childcare
  o Interpreters
o Language
o Transportation
o Cultural issues for easier transition into American society

- Education:
  o Refugees with degree cannot get transcripts and credentials
  o Refugees begin as freshmen despite age and background
- Services:
  o Centralized location needed for available resources
  o Refugee needs exceed available services
  o Structure of support is counter-productive

B. EMPLOYMENT
- Insufficient language skills create barriers
- High unemployment results in refugee jobs being cut first as they are usually the lower paying jobs
- Refugees need instruction on how to access on-line job opportunities
- Obstacles:
  o Insufficient K-12 and adult classes to maintain eligibility for aid
  o Transportation
  o Childcare
  o Interpreters
  o High level of required special education for a large percentage of San Diego military jobs
  o Lack of credentials or certification
- Accessibility to healthcare fields

C. SOCIAL SERVICES/HEALTHCARE/POLICE & EMERGENCY SERVICES
- Basic structure of social services is counter-productive to refugee well-being
  o 120 cases per manager
  o Social services brochures in Arabic
  o Bilingual Arabic interpreters
- Fewer resources and a high need for social services, refugees are sponsored by Ladies of Hope, Catholic Charities, Jewish Family, and Alliance for African Assistance. Families or relatives fill gaps in social services.
- East County emergency services are impacted when 911 calls are made for minor issues. There are language barriers, and a need for refugees to learn American laws.
- Refugees enter 8-month program with County Social Services for ESL classes, cash assistance, medical assistance, social security cards, and shelter; and if they have children, welfare assistance.

II. WHAT ARE THE GAPS OR UNMET NEEDS TO PROVIDE SUFFICIENT EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT TO REFUGEES (e.g., BARRIERS, PROBLEMS, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES)?

A. EDUCATION
- Classes and instructors:
  o Demand exceeds available ESL classes that have teachers with BA degrees
  o Need more Arabic speakers with ESL credentials, social workers and psychologists in public schools
  o Resources for special needs students
• Language:
  o Need language emersion programs, a methodology of learning English
  o More translators
  o How to teach people who do not read or write in their native language
  o Language barriers in education and employment
  o English skills to fill out applications for schools and employment
• Financial Aid:
  o Out of state tuition costs are prohibitive
  o Financial aid requires 12 units. Refugees enroll in classes without prerequisites for classes they do not need, to stay eligible for services
  o State apportionment for alternative education
  o Increase federal assistance
• Social Services:
  o No Arabic speakers in six career centers
  o Social services funding cuts created long waiting periods
  o CalWORKS available only for people with children
  o Difficulty assimilating into culture quickly
  o Not all refugees have family sponsors
  o Develop small business on the job training
• Obstacles:
  o Transcript certifications
  o Childcare, transportation
  o Lack of jobs and work history

B. EMPLOYMENT
• Social Services:
  o Lack of funding at job development offices
  o Need East County small business Development Center, Welcome Back Center, or International Trade Center
  o When head of household is employed or enrolled in ESL classes, 8 months of services are provided at the East County Refugee Center.
• Job market:
  o Lack of jobs
  o Current job market is saturated with part-time employment
  o Federal requirements are too restrictive
  o Background to qualify for bonds required for employment
• Education:
  o ESL classes and English skills needed to fill out job applications
  o Online job search tools businesses
• Obstacles:
  o Childcare
  o Transportation
  o Not all refugees have family sponsors, or are sponsored by family here a short time

C. SOCIAL SERVICES/HEALTHCARE/POLICE & EMERGENCY SERVICES
• Social Services:
  o Libraries need volunteers for translation, transportation, and classes
  o Time frame for assistance is not long enough for transition into American society
  o Assessment of education, workforce and document skills are needed for refugee success
• Healthcare:
  o Neighborhood healthcare culturally competent to build trust in Iraqi community but mental health services are not available
  o If a welfare system is set up, the state will become a welfare state
  o Eighteen and twenty-one year olds lose dental and medical coverage
  o Multiple family traumas
  o Newer immigrants are experiencing trauma from being in refugee camps
• Emergency Services: Public safety and fire departments are burdened with 911 calls for minor, non-emergency needs.
• Funding:
  o Money does not match needs
  o Federal government funding is inadequate and based on flawed assumptions
  o Grants 5-year cycle
• Culture:
  o Cultural orientation to American society
  o Muslim refugees (non-Chaldeans) are falling through cracks
  o Clashes between different refugee groups

III. WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS AND SOLUTIONS WOULD YOU SUGGEST TO MEET THE EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT NEEDS OF REFUGEES IN EAST COUNTY?

A. EDUCATION
• Libraries:
  o Searchable database/website to distribute information
  o Provide community education on available resources
• Create life skills, cultural education and community service learning on civil procedures; community laws, proper use of government programs, use of 911, through the educational process
• Federal grants to increase ESL funding
• Learn ESL first before receiving federal funding
• Classes
  o An ESL program mirrored after the military language immersion program
  o Teach language skills for employment and cultural orientation that interface with ESL classes
  o PDC offered at community colleges at middle to advanced level but need all levels developed
  o Waive out-of-state tuition fees
  o Classes for refugees to obtain employment in their profession: medical and/or engineering occupations
  o Laws and regulations education for new refugee businesses
• Create a process for those with qualifications to obtain, make, or waive credentials
• Validate transcripts
• ESL instructors and programs:
  o Relax standards or waive requirements for ESL instructors
  o Contextualize ESL certificate programs to get people into workforce

B. EMPLOYMENT
• Funding:
  o Grant partnerships
  o Develop a non-traditional funding source for short term job readiness programs that partner with industry
• Facilities:
  o Create a job development office in East County
  o Identify available facilities for training
• Job preparation:
  o Networking
  o Resume writing and interview skills
  o Match needs with skills
• Create website:
  o Provide resource information
  o Assistance to service providers
  o Online community forums
• Assistance:
  o Set up business sponsors of families
  o Provide interpreters at employment and social service sites
  o Transportation and bus passes
  o Case management for nursing assistants
• Businesses:
  o Market benefits of hiring refugees to businesses
  o Tax incentives for hiring refugees
  o Allow volunteer hours to apply towards cash aid requirements
  o Build internships, partnerships and mentoring for refugee professionals
  o Modified scope of work for degreed professionals allowing them to work in their field while earning American credits

C. SOCIAL SERVICES/HEALTHCARE/POLICE & EMERGENCY SERVICES
• Funding:
  o Grant writing
  o Funds available at OAR but no one has applied
  o Accurate 2010 census for future funding
• Virtual newcomer center
  o Social education programs
  o Newcomer centers in school districts
  o Interpreters at employer and social services sites
  o Hold refugee friendship street fairs
  o Transportation, bus passes, transportation within El Cajon to one-stop center and support services
  o Refugees to volunteer at businesses
• Create short, mid, and long-term goals
• Collaborative service organizations partnerships (one organization to look at the entire region)
  o Ask County of San Diego for a Blue Ribbon Commission to foster long term solutions, avoid duplication, focus on issues, develop stronger partnerships and collaborative efforts
  o a refugee taskforce
  o Identify current resources, coordinate providers and eliminate duplication of services
  o Collaborative teams within East County to speak to community
  o Communicate with other areas of the country experiencing high refugee populations
• Educate state and federal politicians on needs and develop relationships:
  o Contact Dianne Jacobs and Duncan Hunter.
  o Meet with San Diego County legislators.
  o Educate service providers on how to present legislators with the refugee needs and concerns
Cuyamaca College
Course Syllabus for PDC 130
Study Skills and Time Management
Spring 2011

Instructor: Raad Jerjis
Email address: Raad.Jerjis@gcccd.net
Tel: (619) 660-4546 (work)

Class meetings:
Mondays: 10:00-11:50 or Tuesdays 11:30-1:50
February 14-April 29, 2011

Recommended Texts: College And Career Success By Marsha Fralick
College Success Web Site: http://www.collegesuccess1.com/

Course Description: Designed to prepare students to adjust to the academic community by learning to plan and study effectively within given time limitations. Strategies include: time management, goal setting, textbook mastery, library research skills, note-taking, exam preparation, stress reduction and educational planning.

Course Objectives: Students will be able to:
1) Identify learning style and appropriate learning strategies
2) Utilize time management techniques to accomplish lifetime goals and establish an effective study schedule
3) Make a list of lifetime goals
4) Practice textbook reading systems
5) Locate Internet and hard copy resources in the library
6) Utilize note-taking systems based on learning style
7) Develop an educational plan
8) Practice stress reduction techniques to increase academic success
9) Prepare effectively for a college exam
Class Format:
This course consists of lecture and class discussion. The method of instruction that I will use involves cooperative learning, which entails audience participation. Selected videos will also be shown as deemed appropriate. I encourage you to take an active part in class discussion and in sharing your experiences. Your active involvement will ensure a much richer experience for all of us.

Attendance, Use of Cell Phones, and any Disruptive Behavior:
You may be asked to leave the class and will not be awarded credit if any of the following occurs:
1) A student who leaves class early or comes late or takes a longer lunch break will be counted as absent and will not be awarded credit for the course.
2) Absolutely no cell phone usage is permitted in my class. That includes answering phone calls, checking, receiving, or sending messages. You must have your cell phones switched off during class.
3) Taking while the instructor is talking or while others are talking and sleeping in class.

Out of Class Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Page#</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campus Orientation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Research</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>41-42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly College Schedule &amp; Study Schedule Analysis</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27 &amp; 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test Talking Checklist &amp; Analyze Your Test-Taking Skills</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32 &amp; 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Assessment &amp; What is Your Stress Index</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>36-37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To receive credit in the class, you have complete all in class and out of class assignments in your packet

Calendar for PDC 130-Spring 2011

TOPICS, ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS DUE

Week 1
Feb. 14 & 15
Introductory exercises & overview of the course requirements and syllabus

Week 2
Feb. 21 & 22
No School on Monday Feb. 21
Self-Assessment (pp. 4-6); What Do I want From College (pp.7-8)

Week 3
Feb. 28 & March 1
Internal vs. External Locus of Control (p.9); Positive Thinking (p.10)
Understanding the U.S Culture & the Educational System

Week 4
March 7 & 8
Memory, Marking a Textbook, and Reading (pp.16-17)
(In class: pp.12-14 & 18-19)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 5</th>
<th>Active Listening, Note-Taking Skills, and Concentration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 14 &amp; 15</td>
<td>(p. 21 &amp; 24); (In class: pp. 22-23 &amp; p. 25)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 5</th>
<th>Time Management</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 21 &amp; 22</td>
<td>(pp. 27-30)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Educational Planning and Goal Setting</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 28 &amp; 29</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 7</th>
<th>Test Taking</th>
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<tr>
<td>April 4 &amp; 5</td>
<td>(pp. 32-34)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 8</th>
<th>Library Research, Campus Tour &amp; Resources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 11 &amp; 12</td>
<td>(pp. 41-43)</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 9</th>
<th>No School-Spring Break</th>
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<tr>
<td>April 18 &amp; 19</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 10</th>
<th>Health and Stress Management</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 25 &amp; 26</td>
<td>(pp. 36-37); (In class: pp. 38-39)</td>
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**Important Deadlines**

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<tr>
<th>COURSE</th>
<th>SECTION</th>
<th>LAST DAY TO ADD</th>
<th>REFUND DEADLINE</th>
<th>NO 'W' DEADLINE</th>
<th>PASS/NO PASS DEADLINE</th>
<th>FINAL DROP DEADLINE</th>
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<td>PDC-130</td>
<td>6934</td>
<td>2/25</td>
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<td>PDC-130</td>
<td>6937</td>
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<td>2/18</td>
<td>2/18</td>
<td>3/1</td>
<td>3/29</td>
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**The instructor reserves the right to do any changes on course syllabus as deemed appropriate**
ESL 070 Non-Credit Course  
Fall 2010  
Section #

150 Hour-class/3.5 Hours a Day  
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 10:00 to 1:30 PM  
Bldg. F-411

Instructor: Manuel Mancillas-Gómez, MA  
Email: Manuel.Mancillas-Gom@gcccd.edu  
Office: B-267  
Office Hours and Voice Mail: 619-660-4000 x3014

Text & Materials:  
Required texts:  
Futures: English for Results, Level 1. Student Workbook  
Oxford Picture Dictionary  
Textbook will be provided including additional materials.

Course Description:  
This 150-hour class is designed to help students, whose first language is not English, increase their understanding of the English alphabet and sound system, as well as simple word and sentence level grammar. They will also increase their vocabulary and reading ability, learn basic classroom rules and communication skills necessary for success to the point they feel comfortable with proceeding with their educational goals in more difficult classes.

Course Objectives:  
Students will be expected to:  
a) Recognize that letters make words and words make sentences  
b) Read from left to right, top to bottom, front to back  
c) Relate letters to sounds  
d) Read basic sight words (e.g., the, is)  
e) Interpret common high-frequency words and phrases in everyday classroom settings  
f) Use capitalization as a clue to interpret words (e.g., names, place names, other proper nouns)
g) Interpret contractions
h) Interpret common punctuation and sentence-writing conventions (e.g., capitalized first word)
i) Read and understand simple texts on familiar topics (e.g., short narratives, basic consumer materials)
j) Interpret basic sentence structure and grammar (e.g., statements, questions, negatives; adjectives modifying nouns)
k) Predict the content of a text from title, pictures, type of material
l) Use supporting illustrations to interpret text
m) Distinguish between simple questions (e.g., WH- & yes/no) and statements
n) Identify the main idea of a simple paragraph
o) Make inferences and draw conclusions from simple text

Course Requirements:
1. Attend at least 135 hours (four days absent maximum).
2. Complete all assignments, testing and assessments, including course quizzes and exams.

Attendance:
Attendance will be taken each class. Students may be dropped after four absences.
If you miss a class, call a friend for the homework assignment. It is the student’s responsibility to make sure his or her Student File Record is up-to-date.

Friend __________________________ Phone # ________________________
Friend __________________________ Phone # ________________________

Classroom Policies:
The expectations are that the majority of the students enrolled in this course are serious adults, who are here to learn and improve their skills. However, to be sure that everyone understands what constitutes acceptable classroom behavior the following statements must be considered:

1. It is the instructor’s goal not to fail any student.
2. The instructor does not give grades the students will earn them.
3. Students will treat each other with respect.
4. It is unacceptable to speak when someone else is addressing the class.
5. It is unacceptable to read unrelated course material during class.
6. It is unacceptable to disrupt the class with rude behavior.
7. It is unacceptable to use in class, in any matter, a cellular or mobile phone.
8. Students are encouraged to review the discussion of academic integrity provided in the Cuyamaca College catalogue.
9. This course adheres to the policies outlined in the Cuyamaca College catalogue. For further information, see Academic Policies in the catalogue. Students with disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss options with the instructor during the first two weeks of the class.
APPENDIX D

Syllabus for ESL 80

Cuyamaca College
Communication Arts/English as a Second Language
Spring 2011
ESL 80-INTRODUCTION TO ESL LITERACY

General Information:
Course: ESL 080-6414, Introduction to ESL Literacy (6 units)
Days: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday
Time: 9:00 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.
Room: Building F, Room 401
Instructor: B. W. Stern
Email: brooke.stern@gcccd.edu; bstern@mail.sdsu.edu
Office Hours: By appointment
Prerequisite: Recommended placement based on assessment.
Texts:
- Composition Practice, Book 1, Blanton, Linda. (ISBN 08-3841993-3)

Course Materials: Loose-leaf notebook
- Large bluebook for journal writing (available at the Book Store on campus)
- A pen, pencil, eraser, and a highlighter
- A good English dictionary (Longman's or Oxford)

Student Learning Outcomes:
At the end of the semester, students will be able to:
- Recognize and produce the shapes and names of the letters of the English alphabet in simple academic texts, writing and grammar exercises and on tests.
- Recognize sounds of letters and letter combinations of the English alphabet and differentiate them by reading and writing simple academic texts.
- Decode new words by applying knowledge of English letter-to-sound correspondence by reading simple academic texts.
- Demonstrate familiarity with basic parts of speech, word order, word and sentence boundaries introduced at this level when producing written academic texts.
• Locate, comprehend and interpret information in simple texts and in documents commonly found in the classroom.
• Recognize, comprehend, and use very basic vocabulary commonly found in a classroom setting demonstrated through writing academic texts and tests.
• Write complete simple sentences with accurate capitalization and end punctuation.
• Demonstrate culturally appropriate social behaviors and interactions in the classroom.
• Respond appropriately when asked to follow simple classroom directions.

Course Content:
• Develop learning skills.
• Understand and use basic grammar, including simple present, commands, negatives, capitalization and punctuation.
• Ask and answer questions.
• Show ability to use structures introduced at this level in writing responses, simple sentences, paragraph formation, and other documents.
• Decode new words, locate, understand and interpret information in simple texts and in documents found in a classroom setting. (schedules, directions, textbooks, forms, etc.)
• Recognize, comprehend and use vocabulary commonly found in a classroom setting.
• Show knowledge of how to act in groups of diverse (or same) cultures in an American classroom.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

10 ORIGINAL Journal entries (20 points each) 200 points
(The journal entry should be at least ½ page in the blue book and should be written by the student with NO outside help.)

*5 chapter tests (100 points each) 500 points
*8 practice quizzes (25 points each) 200 points
3 different paragraphs of at least 7 sentences each
written by the student during lab time (100 points each) 300 points

5 chapter homework assignments (25 points each) 125 points
Homework is in the Azar workbook, unless designated by the instructor.
(Workbook chapters must be completed.)

1 Midterm exam (175 points) 175 points
1 Final exam (200 points) (Must receive at least 125 pts) 200 points
Total points 1700 points
*Chapter tests and quizzes will consist of matching, completion, cloze, open ended, short answers, and multiple choice questions. They will be similar to those exercises presented in the grammar workbook and grammar text. Quizzes are given at the discretion of the instructor. THERE ARE NO MAKE UP TESTS OR QUIZZES. I will NOT accept late work.

Your description of course assignments is still not enough. Take a look at Christie's syllabus to see how she describes her assignments.

Grading:  
- **A** ......1530-1700  90-100%  Excellent
- **B**......1360-1529  80-89%  Very good
- **C**......1190-1359  70-79%  Pass-Average
- Less than 1190 points  No Pass-Less than average

**This is a Pass/No Pass class. Students earning less than 1190 points will need to repeat ESL 80 again.**

Students have the ESL Writing Center in Building B available to them upon request. You need to make an appointment at least one week in advance. There is also an ESL open lab in Room B-154 on Fridays for extra help (9 a.m. until 4 p.m.) I encourage you to use both the ESL Writing Center and the ESL Lab. Both are free for ESL students.

Students with disabilities who may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor and contact Disabled Student Services and Programs (DSPS) early in the semester so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented as soon as possible. Students may contact DSPS in person in Room A113 or by phone at (619) 660-4239 (ITY for the deaf).

This course adheres to the policies outlined in the Cuyamaca College catalogue. For further information, see Academic Policies stated in the catalogue.

**Student Responsibilities:**
- Come to class on time and participate actively in class.
- Be responsible for all classwork, homework assignments and announcements.
- Spend at least 10 hours every week doing homework for this class.
- Plan for more time to study and do homework (for example, family or roommates can help with children and/or with food preparation, so that YOU can study).
- Get at least three (3) student phone numbers, so you can call for missed work and announcements.
- Attend the final exam (December).
- Schedule appointments (doctor, EOPS, driving tests, etc.) before or after class.
• Turn off all cell phones (and other electronic devices) while in class. DO NOT text message. Do not use electronic dictionaries unless they are silent. The instructor may pick up such devices if they continue to disrupt the class and return them after class is over.
• If you need a break, leave class during the 15 minute break. Please DO NOT leave during class.
• DO NOT CHEAT. Do your own work on homework and tests. Students who cheat or allow other students to cheat will get no credit for that assignment or test. Continuous cheating will result in NO CREDIT for the class.
• Show respect for the teacher and other students. DO NOT make negative comments about other people's religions, race, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, appearance, nationality, language, age, etc.
• DO NOT interrupt others while the teacher or another student is talking.
• USE ENGLISH in the classroom.

Disruptive Behaviors:
Disruptive behavior interrupts the classroom and disturbs the teaching and learning process.
The following is considered disruptive behavior:
• Using cell phones, text messaging, iPods, or loud electronic devices in class.
• Coming in and out of class frequently during class time without permission.
• Coming to class late.
• Interrupting the teacher or another student who is talking. Giving answers for other students while they are thinking. Correcting other students' answers.
• Talking to other students while the class is in a large group format.
• Asking other students for translation or help to give an answer when called on in class.
• Showing anger, arguing, and demanding immediate attention to questions about tests, grades or individual needs.
• Making disrespectful comments about religion, race, language, appearance, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, nationality, etc.
• Cheating. This includes:
  o Copying homework answers or copying writing.
  o Giving others answers.
  o Copying ideas from the internet or from books without giving credit to the source.
  o During tests and/or quizzes doing any of the following:
    • Talking about anything
    • Looking at another student's paper
    • Looking at notes on a desk, paper, in a book, or any other place
    • Not returning papers to the teacher when the time has finished, and the teacher asks for papers
Consequences for Disruptive Behavior:
If a student does any of the disruptive behaviors described above, the student will be disciplined. The following are the steps in the discipline process:

- The teacher will inform the student of what he/she has done. If it is not serious, the teacher will talk with the student. If it is serious, the teacher will refer the student to the Dean of Student affairs.
- For a second offense, the teacher will refer the student to the Dean of Student Affairs, and the teacher can suspend the student.
- If the teacher suspends the student, the student must miss two (2) class periods before attending class again.
- If a student has too many absences (more than 3), the teacher may drop the student from the class. (See Attendance below)
- Cheating my result in getting "0" points for a test, quiz, or a homework.
- If a student continues to cheat, the student may receive NO CREDIT (NC) for the class.

Attendance:
Students should attend each class, stay for the entire class session, and spend at least 10 hours each week on out-of-class preparation. If you can't attend class, please do the following:

- Notify me by e-mail (brooke.stern@gcccd.edu).
- Call a friend and get the information you missed from another student.
- Do the assigned homework on time.

Attendance will be taken. **STUDENTS MAY BE DROPPED AFTER THREE (3) ABSENCES.** If you miss a class call a friend for the homework assignment. It is the student's responsibility to make sure his/her work is up to date. Quizzes and journals CANNOT be made up. All worksheets are expected to be on time.

FRIEND: ______________________________________ Phone #:________________
FRIEND: ______________________________________ Phone #:________________
FRIEND: ______________________________________ Phone #:________________
FRIEND: ______________________________________ Phone #:________________

**IMPORTANT DATES:**
Section Start Date  | January 24, 2011
Section End Date   | May 31, 2011
Last Day to Add    | February 4, 2011
Last Day to Drop Without a W | February 4, 2011
Last Day to Drop With a W | April 15, 2011
Refund Deadline    | February 4, 2011
Credit/No Credit Deadline | February 25, 2011
Final Exam          | May 24, 2011 (9-11 a.m.)

HAVE A GREAT SEMESTER!! HAVE FUN and LEARN!!!
APPENDIX E

Quantitative Research Questions

What effect, if any, did participating in the ESL-Link program have on students' academic success in credit ESL 80 as compared to students who did not participate in the Link program, as assessed in the following ways:

- Did they matriculate into the credit ESL 80 course?
- Did they complete the ESL 80 course?
- Were the students successful in the ESL 80 course (measured by making a letter grade of "C" or better)?
- Did students who successfully complete ESL 80 matriculate in credit courses the following semester (either summer 2011 or fall 2011)?
- Were there differences in the above measure between the cohort of students who participated in the ESL-Link program and those who did not?
APPENDIX F

Qualitative Research Questions

What were the perceptions of the ESL faculty of the ESL-Link program and in the performance and engagement of the ESL-Link students as compared to the non-Link students? The following questions were used to gain insights into these issues:

- Were there any noticeable differences in the performance and engagement of the ESL-Link students as compared to the non-Link students?
- Given that the GCCC District has many international students who need to learn English, why was the ESL-Link program developed specifically for the Iraqi refugees? (All the students in the ESL-Link program were Iraqi refugees).
- Was it important, in terms of instructional design, to have all the students in the ESL-Link program come from Iraq or would it have been more pedagogically sound to have mixed the cohort with people from different countries and languages? Please explain.
- Given your experiences and observations working with the ESL-Link cohort for two semesters, please share any observations you may have about elements of the program that worked, or might have been better, or anything about the students—as a class, or as a cohort—especially as compared to other ESL students you have had and taught in the past.
- During the course of the ESL-Link program, did you discuss and compare experiences with other ESL instructors who were teaching ESL students not in the ESL-Link program? If so, what observations were made or conclusions
reached during those discussions about the ESL-Link program, the needs of the Iraqi refugees, or ESL pedagogy (as implemented at Cuyamaca College)?

- From an educational perspective, did you consider this a successful model? If so, what were some specific examples?
APPENDIX G

Original Planning Document for the ESL-Link Program

Cuyamaca College ESL Link Program
Pilot Program to Increase Student Success
August 9, 2010

Committee: Danene Brown, Dean Division II; Alicia Munoz, ESL Department Coordinator; Susan Topham, Dean Counseling and Enrollment Services; Donna Hajj, Department Chair Counseling; Molly Ash, Colleague Clerk Continuing Education; Darlene Spoor, Dean Continuing Education and Workforce Training

History:
The credit ESL department at Cuyamaca College and Continuing Education propose to offer a pilot program to support student success and strengthen the pathway between non-credit and credit ESL. Currently there are 78 students out of the 260 that have been assessed by student services who have placed into ESL 70 or below. In addition, there are 100 students currently on the waiting list for ESL 80 for the fall semester that will likely not get into the class.

The hypothesis is that students who test between 210 and 220 on the CASAS and receive a preparation class prior to attending ESL 80 will test higher in their exit exam than students who do not.

After a year of discussion and planning we propose that a pilot program be developed. The pilot program will consist of the following:
- 40 students from the waiting list for ESL 80 and from the most recent assessment will be invited to attend an orientation about the program. All of the students invited will have taken the CELSA.
- The orientation will consist of a program overview and the students will take the CASAS assessment to more closely evaluate their levels.
- Students who place between 210 and 220 on the CASAS will be invited to join the cohort.
- The first class for the Cohort will begin in mid September 2010.
- The class will consist of 3 - 50 hour sections of non-credit ESL totaling 150 hours of instruction between September and December 2010.
- The class will be taught by a seasoned ESL instructor. There will be a bi-lingual volunteer in the class who will assist with individual instruction as necessary.
- The instructor will be supervised by Alicia Munoz, the department coordinator for ESL.
- The class will have access to the Work Readiness Learning Lab and to the ESL language lab where they can access basic English and pronunciation programs.
- The students will receive a parking pass for the one semester that the non-credit pilot is taking place.
- The students will receive text books and an Oxford Picture Dictionary for enrolling in the class.
- Students who successfully meet all of the requirements and who place above 220 on the exit CASAS will be invited to enroll in an ESL 80 section in the spring 2011 semester.
- Data:
  - Students in the cohort and in the control class will be administered the CASAS as a pre- and posttest.
  - The control class will consist of students in an ESL 80 class who test above 220 on the CASAS but did not receive the additional support.
  - The data will be compared to determine if the additional class increased student success. Student success will be measured using the CASAS exit exam results.