**ESOL Department Meeting Notes**

**Wednesday, October 15, 2015**

**12:10 to 1:00 pm, T-450**

**1. Procedures for accelerating "A" roster students**

A handout explaining the procedure for acceleration was distributed

* Acceleration decisions concern A level students only
* Ask students whether or not they want to accelerate
	+ encourage them to accelerate, but do not assume that they want to
* Give David a copy of your current A roster as early as Thurs., Oct. 30, or as late as Thursday, Nov. 5:
	+ highlight the names of the accelerating students
	+ write the course code for the B course on the roster
	+ sign your name at the bottom of the roster
* Remember, once as student has been moved to the B course, it’s almost impossible to move them back to the A course.   It’s important to make sure that students want to accelerate as changing their mind after they’ve been transferred to the B course can affect their financial aid.

**2. Discussion on determining who to accelerate**

* Students have expressed concerns about inconsistencies around the acceleration process throughout the department.
* Create a rubric based on the strands in the course outlines that defines the criteria that determine whether or not students will be recommended for acceleration.
* SLOs on course outline should be on syllabi
	+ You must demonstrate X, Y, Z to move to the B section
	+ You must demonstrate X, Y, Z to move to the following level
* There are some different perspectives regarding whether or not strands should be considered in the acceleration decision.
* Kathleen’s suggestion: Provide students with examples of A level papers, B level papers, etc. Help students see what meeting the SLOs looks like.
* Karen: Holistic approach to accelerating: The teacher knows who’s ready and who isn’t. Do we really need another rubric?
* Lisa: “Threshold Concepts”: if you don’t get it, you can’t really move on/you’ll suffer when you move on. A core concept can be a threshold concept.  Defining threshold concepts brings clarity and consistency to expectations.
	+ Benchmark, Milestone 1, Milestone 2, Cap. What’s the Benchmark at each level? What’s Milestone 1 at each level? What’s Milestone 2 at each level? What’s the Cap at each level?
	+ This is a longer term discussion that we need to have: Acceleration as minding threshold concepts.
* Historically, SLOs were meant to be limited and general.
* Concern for students—we need to communicate with them about the process and the factors that are taken into consideration.
* Jill: Survey students to check their understanding of the process.
* Steve: We need consistency, we need to coordinate so that the achievement marks are consistent.
* Students expressed their confusion about who gets accelerated at a recent event.
* Deb: Common mid-terms required teachers to plan together. Rick’s grammar chart is helpful. We need to be clear about what needs to be taught at each level.
* Annie: Caution against overreacting to anecdotal evidence. We should survey a larger population of students to get a better sense of the extent of the problem.
* Kathleen: How and why are we accelerating? We instructors need to agree and  be on the same page about this for our students’ sakes.

**3. Certificates of Proficiency**

We are now offering certificates at the intermediate, high intermediate and

 advanced levels.

* International students can use this certificate as evidence of English training abroad, add to resume, hang on the wall.
* This will help our program—it gives students an incentive to take all of the classes at a given level.
* Advertise this at all levels every semester, to encourage students to persist.
* A model certificate would help us promote the certificates in class.
* Include certificate requirements on the syllabus each semester (esp. at the Intermediate level)
* As far as we know, there is no additional cost for the certificate.  Students can apply now for certificates that depend on a course they are currently taking, and students can get multiple certificates over the course of their academic career.

**How to address students who need to repeat a course**

* email the student, Rick will share a form with us

**4. Announcements:**

**Faculty Senate resolution (Barbara)**

* the Senate is considering a resolution to establish a procedure for requesting and granting smart classrooms.
* AC 110 (regular chairs), AC 112 (high stools at tall tables) are underutilized smart classrooms.  Check for availability.
	+ See the PDF version of the class list/semester schedule and search for the classroom to see what time it is available

**Conversation practice with seniors (David)**

* Friday mornings at 11:00, beginning Oct. 23, at Lake Merritt Independent Senior Living, 1800 Madison Street in Oakland. Please contact ryan@thelakemerrittsenior.com to sign up.
* Here’s [a nice video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-S-5EfwpFOk) about English language learners in Brazil conversing with senior citizens in the USA via internet that might inspire participation.

**Conversation Club at the Oakland Public Library**

* Thursday afternoons 2:00–3:00, at the Bradley Walters Community Room, 125 14th Street in Oakland.