

February 21, 1978

Private, non-profit, funded
by Exxon.

TO: Freshman English Policy Committee

FROM: Martha King

SUBJECT: Formative Evaluation of Writing Programs

The Formative Evaluation Research Associates of Ann Arbor, Michigan has been asked by Exxon to make an evaluation of writing programs in colleges and universities. This request follows their similar evaluation of university engineering programs.

The University of Texas has two of the six programs which FERA wishes to study: Dr. Kinneavy's and Susan Wittig's.

The Program Directors were asked to go to Ann Arbor on February 15 to confer with three members of FERA. I went in Susan's place. The Program Directors there were Mary Doobie and Cy Knoblaugh of Columbia University and Barbara Fassler of Central University in Pella, Iowa. Ross Winterowd of the University of Southern California was not present.

John Meeker of FERA discussed three purposes the evaluation might serve: 1) to describe the program's purposes and activities and analyze their import on students, faculty and the colleges and universities, 2) to provide formative evaluation for program development, and 3) to test a research design for other application. The testing apparatus is to be both holistic and analytic, and the initial proposal is for a one year study. A longitudinal study over a three year period will be requested, but no school which agrees to the study is committed to participate in the longer one.

(done in the process of formation of the this?)

The nature of the tests is still undecided. The several proposed were not favorably received by the Program Directors (i.e., Diederich's and Janet Lauer's). There was unanimous agreement that it would be necessary to know what the testing mechanism would be before any commitment could be made.

USC - rhetorical Pella Central Univ. (Iowa) - non-English
Texas (2) - classical rhetorical
Columbia (2) - functional

~~USC~~

- Pre & Post Tests.
- Talks to students/faculty (3 days)
- Evaluate our program.

Tests

1.) Diedrich ETS - General merit criteria

1. Ideas	2-4-6-8-10
2. Organization	2 - 10
3. Wordiness	1 - 5
4. Flavor	1 - 5

Mechanics

1. Usage	1 - 5
2. Punctuation	1 - 5
3. Spelling	1 - 5
4. Handwriting	1 - 5

2.) National Assessment Test.

1. Pictures of ghetto scene. Student asked to list details + then write a paper relating ideas + details (2).

(Primary traits test)

3.) Program Director's Test. (In house test)

Will study only 6 sections: 4 reg.
2 lab.

Winterrowd will be included.