This curriculum outline introduces the components of a course which acquaints non-native English-speaking college students with Pacific Rim cultures while providing the writing and reading skills necessary for success in college. First, the goals and student objectives of the course are introduced, emphasizing the use of the Pacific Rim cultures and immigrant experience to expose students to referential writing and to the necessary college reading and writing practices. Next, the course's outline and assignments are presented, focusing on an essay assignment comparing educational experiences in different countries, an essay assignment dealing with a controversial issue related to the immigrant/refugee community living in the local area, and a list of various activities for students to use, both in and out of class. The different criteria for evaluating students are then described, highlighting peer review sheets and responses, an English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) composition profile, timely completion of the assignments, and references to the test sources provided. Following examples of discussion questions for the two essay assignments mentioned, the activities and strategies for presenting materials are listed, including group discussions, prewriting and modeling exercises, and viewing of relevant film/video. The remainder of the curriculum outline contains examples of audiovisuals used in the course, the annotated bibliography, and the instructor's personal book list. (TGI)

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"READING AND WRITING ABOUT PACIFIC RIM CULTURES"

Use in: Composition I for Non-Native Speakers

BY

LARRY MCDONIEL
Asian Studies Instructional Module
St. Louis Community College at Meramec
1.) GOALS

To acquaint or reacquaint non-native English-speaking college students with Pacific Rim cultures as well as immigrant groups who derive from those cultures now living in the St. Louis Metro area.

To introduce students to referential writing; i.e., writing which "refers" to outside authorities, specifically authorities on Pacific Rim cultures

To provide students with the (essay) writing and reading practice necessary for success in college.

To require students to explore various resources regarding the educational and immigrant experience of Pacific Rim cultures.

To allow students to discuss elements of Pacific Rim cultures, specifically Chinese and Japanese, as well as the elements of relevant immigrant experience in the St. Louis Metro area.

2.) STUDENT OBJECTIVES

Students will focus on a specific topic relevant to Pacific Rim cultures for the essay(s).

Students will read and select relevant and appropriate testimony from the (text) resources provided, readings on Pacific Rim cultures and their immigrant experiences.

In an appropriate essay form, students will explain how their educational experiences compare to those of students from Pacific Rim cultures. (Essay Assignment #4)
In an appropriate essay form, students will propose that some controversy relevant to the immigrant experience in St. Louis is of critical importance to themselves and their reader. (Essay Assignment #5)

Students will revise their writing according to the advice of their fellow students and classroom instructors, with particular attention to the addition or augmentation of relevant (text) authorities.

Students will relate their experience to a comparable educational experience of students from Pacific Rim cultures.

Students will portray and analyze a significant controversial issue relevant to the local community; i.e., the immigrant population currently living in St. Louis Metro area, with special emphasis on Pacific Rim émigrés.

3.) OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Continuing on with the sequence of assignments in Ilona Leki's Academic Writing, students will complete the writing of Essay Assignments #4 and #5 (provided below). Each of these assignment sequences will require 9 hours (approximately 3 weeks) of class time to complete.

Essay #4: “Comparing” Educational Experiences (“here” vs. “there”)

For Essay #4, compare / contrast your “different” educational experiences. This comparison should be of two “different” systems, not just two different time periods. Of course elementary school and high school are different! Of course high school and college are different! These are obvious differences, not worthy of your time and effort. But the differences between an American (junior) high school education and a Vietnamese middle school education are not so obvious. The differences between “your” elementary education in the U.S. and “your” elementary-level education in Japan are not obvious: what would they be? And obviously, your previous university experiences (in another country) and your experiences here at St. Louis Community College would be different! How?

In addition, I ask you to refer to an outside authority in your paper. This authority can be anyone whom you think would add valuable information to your explanation, whom you would consider a corroborating source of information. To display your contact (in the required interview) and use of such an outside expert, you are required to quote your outside expert in the
text of the paper. Specifically show your reader exactly what your authority told you about a particular educational difference.

Essay #5: A Controversial Issue in the St. Louis Immigrant Community

Using the readings provided in An Invisible Population, write about a controversial issue related to the immigrant/refugee community living in the St. Louis Metro area. Remember that in writing about this controversy, you are required to refer to (“to cite”) outside authorities (in the articles) in your essay to support the positions that you take in your essay.

Outline

- Using the readings provided, students will explore the potential topics on "Education" and "A Controversy in the St. Louis Immigrant Community."
- In class, approaches to using outside authorities in a text will be introduced.
- The discourse pattern comparison as well as other analytical patterns will be modeled in class.
- In class, students will discuss the readings provided (see discussion questions below).
- In class, students will share and exchange their choices of focused topics.
- In class and out, students will "prewrite" and share the results of their prewriting in small groups.
- In class and out, students will participate in peer editing groups in which they will exchange and critique student essays, specifically for their use of outside authorities to complement personal experiences and observations.
- Students will revise and resubmit drafts of their essays for evaluation.

4.) EVALUATION

Students’ assignments are evaluated according to a number of criteria.
Using the peer "Review Sheet" and "Response to the Reviewers" forms provided in Scarcella and Oxford, *The Tapestry of Language Learning: The Individual in the Communicative Classroom* (136-137), students will critique each others' preliminary drafts in peer editing groups.

Using the "ESL Composition Profile" developed by Jacobs et al., *Testing ESL Composition: A Practical Approach*, I will evaluate the Final Revised Draft of Essays #4 and #5.

I will further evaluate the essays according to criteria specific to each assignment, namely

- completion of the assignments in the stages and to the schedule provided
- reference to the text (content) sources provided, with the number and kind of citations required

5.) **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

*for Writing Assignment #4: Comparing Educational Experiences ("here" vs. "there")*

Discuss the following questions as you consider what you will write about for Essay #4. Remember, your essay should include some reference to an outside source -- from the readings provided for Essay #4 -- as well as to your own educational experiences.

What are the most remarkable differences between American (college) students and (college) students from other countries?

What do you consider the more distinctive or more memorable features of your educational experience in another country?

How does your "American" education differ from your previous educational experiences?

What do the readings provided point to as being the major issues in contemporary Chinese or Japanese education?

How might you relate your educational experiences -- in America or another country or both -- to that portrayed in any of the readings on education.
To what extent do you think, are students' behavior in American schools different than that of students elsewhere (say, China or Japan)?

How are expectations in American schools different than in other countries' schools?

How different from other countries is the matter of choice in American higher education? That is, do you find that "your" choices are different than they would be if you were in another (perhaps your "home") country?

Based on your reading of the materials provided, what do you think would be most difficult about attending college in another country (say, China or Japan)?

**for Writing Assignment #5: A Controversial Issue in the St. Louis Immigrant Community**

Using the readings -- the Invisible Population series -- provided, write about a controversial issue related to the immigrant community in St. Louis. Remember that in writing about this controversy, you are required to refer to ("cite") outside authorities (in Invisible Population) in your essay to support the positions that you take in your essay.

What are some of the concerns of the immigrant population in St. Louis?

What are the difficulties faced by one immigrant in St. Louis?

To what extent have immigrant groups been able to maintain their ethnic values and/or customs?

To what extent have immigrant groups been able to adapt to the surrounding St. Louis culture/community?

In your experience, how have the most recent immigrants had difficulty maintaining their culture among the "next" generation (in their family)?

What is the problem with being "invisible" in St. Louis, and what must the immigrants in St. Louis do to overcome this invisibility?

Could being "invisible" be an advantage to immigrants in St. Louis? Would recent immigrants to St. Louis prefer to remain invisible?

How has the St. Louis community accommodated the most recent immigrants?
How might the St. Louis community benefit from the arrival of more immigrants than in years past?

What are some of the problems that you (as a recent immigrant) have faced, and how do you (and others you know) propose to overcome them?

As a recent immigrant, what advice would you offer other immigrants arriving in St. Louis? What, in your opinion, are the advantages and/or disadvantages of (re)settling in St. Louis?

6.) ACTIVITIES / STRATEGIES FOR PRESENTING MATERIALS

Activities: group discussion, prewriting exercises, modeling exercises, viewing of relevant film/video (eg. Enemy Mine; The Milagro Beanfield War; Stand and Deliver; Star Trek: The Next Generation series)

Discourse Strategies: comparison/contrast; argument / persuasion; reference

7.) AUDIOVISUALS

In addition to the overhead transparencies students will generate as they explore their topics as well as those illustrating course materials (as found in An Invisible Population --samples 7.1 - 7.3 attached to hard copy) we may use feature films (eg., Stand and Deliver), excerpts from supplementary resources (eg., the "lecture" on U.S. immigration in the video supplement provided for The Real Thing, an ESL communications textbook), and/or clips from local news broadcasts.

8.) CONNECTIONS

The emphasis in this class -- on Pacific Rim cultures -- is its distinguishing characteristic. Otherwise, the class fulfills the minimal requirements required of college composition, specifically English Composition I as defined / described by the English Department, St. Louis Community College at Meramec.

9.) ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Faculty)

Books and Articles

This text describes an overall system for responding to ESL students' writing, probably the most difficult task in all of composition teaching. It provides the schema needed if one would "show" ESL students how to improve their writing. It also might be seen as a guide to those who would reduce their grading "load," for, according to this text, the teacher should not be the sole evaluator. This is both an insightful and practical work. Teachers will appreciate the variety of grading approaches/tasks.


This collection of articles on how to combine English literacy instruction and work in the disciplines is very helpful. We are able to consider various approaches being used at various colleges and universities. It makes shopping around for a new approach to "grounding" ESL in the disciplines a lot easier.


This is a "classic" in the explanation of what occurs as one learns a new language. It has one foot in EFL, the international concern of teaching English in foreign countries, much as we teach Spanish to students here. It does provide a history of the methodology of ESL, as well as discussions of the philosophical underpinnings of the major pedagogical techniques. For its time, this was a very comprehensive book. However, the third edition has recently been published, and this would be a more appropriate choice, since it will look at ESL moreso than EFL.


This is a significant book because it mimics the thinking in (native-speaker) English composition that reading and writing are intimately linked; i.e., there is a reading-writing connection that must be sustained in literacy instruction. The articles in this collection make a good case for the reading-writing connection in ESL -- the result being that this says as much about writing as it does reading.

The Japanese School explores the impact of the Japanese school system on Japan's tremendous economic development since World War II, as it demonstrates how the United States can increase its industrial competitiveness by strengthening and revitalizing the American school system.


In this article, Er considers the problems that occur as the state moves to an open market economy. One such problem is the higher pressure put on students to progress to the higher and more prestigious levels of education, for better education usually means greater economic opportunities. Parents, as well as others in Chinese society, must be made aware of new laws and attitudes toward the treatment of children in contemporary Chinese society.


This pamphlet provides a good overview of what Japanese education consists of. It is a very helpful encyclopedic article.


Gardner claims to have found the optimal approach to creativity by combining pedagogical approaches of China and America. Based on his personal assessment of his American (progressive) education and observations of Chinese arts (mimetic) education, Gardner discusses what he sees now as the "long march to creativity."


The question of assessment may be more problematic in ESL than anywhere else. Why? Diverse populations! The basic questions of assessment -- "Whom are we assessing and why are we assessing them?" -- solicit very complicated answers in ESL. But Liz Hamp-Lyons does an outstanding job in trying to "uncomplicate" the matter of ESL Writing Assessment. She not only provides a rationale for assessing based on the premise that one assesses to assist one's teaching, but also presents and explains several instruments that ESL writing teachers might actually use in their classrooms. The book blends theory and practice, but every "recipe" has the same basic ingredient; i.e., direct assessment (one assesses writing by looking at actual writing and not a scantron report on an indirect, multiple choice instrument).

Hui reports on a recent change in the Chinese school policy, a reform that relieves pupils from having to take entrance exams to get into junior middle schools, putting less emphasis on getting into so-called "key" schools that may determine a student's economic prospects.


Higher education was once reserved for China's most gifted class. Lately, however, education has been showing the influence of the new market economy. Private schools offer students an option previously unavailable in Chinese education.


The Chinese economy is not the only facet of Chinese society affected by modernization. Institutions of higher learning are now opening up to new ways of approaching education, including cooperating with private and foreign investors. The government monopoly of education has become a thing of the past, deferring to the priority of upgrading the overall quality of education.


In this collection of articles, the editors have provided definitive statements (I think) by leading thinkers in ESL on the curriculum, rhetorical concerns, and cultural differences of ESL. It sees ESL teaching as an essential political activity, one necessary for students to realize their enfranchisement in their adopted country. This "text" defines what is meant by the "communicative competency" (whole language) school of ESL theory and pedagogy.


This collection of articles consider both the philosophical "underpinnings" of ESL writing instruction as well as possible pedagogical approaches. Most of the major figures/thinkers/writers in the field of ESL writing are represented in the array of articles. The experts consider the most significant issues in ESL writing instruction.


This collection of essays looks to existing studies on Japanese education to compose a picture of the status quo in the educational system in Japan. Of particular interest
to the western reader would be essays on Japanese student behavioral characteristics and the question of creativity.


This is a "primer" for any composition teacher who is a total stranger to the issues of ESL composition. For both the English Comp teacher and the new teacher of ESL at the college level, this is the most helpful book. It is a "must read" for anyone who has many questions but little time to pursue answers regarding their ESL writing students.


Joy Reid's book is comparable to Ilona Leki's, but perhaps not as user-friendly. Her concerns in this book lean more toward the academic features of the enterprise more so than the social and/or psycholinguistic. She concentrates more on the "how" than the "why" of teaching ESL writing. It is a worthy companion to Leki's book.


This "overview" is a challenging introduction to a comprehensive textbook series. I'd say it goes beyond "all you really wanted to know about ESL" and on to "all there is to know about ESL," in only 200 pages. Thus, it is a very dense (contextually-speaking) text, which requires persistent re-reading. I found that it called upon all my reserves -- many graduate hours in upper-level linguistics and years of professional activity in composition theory and pedagogy -- to "fill in the blanks" as I waded through this text. Fortunately, this book serves as evidence that the authors knew what they were doing as they composed their series of textbooks for ESL students. And theirs is the most promising, most theoretically ...what, righteous...series I have seen.

(SLCC has adopted several texts from the Tapestry series and probably will select more as our curricular design takes shape.)

In this work, Schoolland focuses on youth discipline and rights, within the context of other contemporary social issues. He looks at the pervasive problems with the systems of lower level colleges.


Stevenson and Stigler discuss the results of several national studies on elementary education in the United States. The authors — social scientists — look at the various factors that will affect an elementary education.


This is an interesting "guide" from the contrastive analysis school of ESL, whose position is that one's previous language experiences (L1) may interfere with and/or corrupt one's current attempts at acquiring a new language (L2). Based on such thinking, Learner English authors analyze approximately 20 different language families (the L1's), including some cameos on their educational systems and societies, and propose/describe the kinds of problems such L1 speakers are likely to have in attempting to acquire English. Although I do not subscribe to the tenets of contrastive analysis theory, I do believe that this "collection" is very helpful for those who have 'no clue' about the language backgrounds of their ESL students. It treats the phonetic questions more, in greater depth, than I appreciate, but the practical experience underlying the comments in each chapter is irreplaceable.


White proposes that we (Westerners, Americans) should look to Japanese education not as a model but as a new standard. By looking at the various elements — "the psychocultural, historical, and social conceptions that create the environment in which Japanese children experience life" — of Japanese education, White shows us how we can adjust programs and policies to the needs and resources of the times.

**Journals**

(There are a number of scholarly journals in the ESL field, some devoted to specific areas such as writing. These journals add countless articles to the ESL Literature. Of the many, there are several that I rely on for the "latest" in ESL writing.)

This journal (distributed free upon request) "provides a unique forum for exploring questions and concerns regarding the education of English as a second language (ESL) students, specifically urban immigrant and refugee adults in college and pre-college settings." That it does, and so offers to college teachers a view on the growth of ESL in major cities like New York and Miami, but also provides glimpses of our (smaller Midwestern cities) future.

ERIC Digests and Minibibs. Published by the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics (ERIC/CLL) in Washington, D.C.

ERIC does the legwork for the professional looking for "what's out there" regarding a wide range of ESL issues. Digests are summaries or position papers by experts on specific ESL concerns. Minibibs are annotated bibliographies, compiled by experts in the field, of "selected" documents in the ERIC database. For the serious researcher, this is the treasure trove.

Journal of Second Language Writing. Edited by Ilona Leki and Tony Silva. Published by Ablex Press, Norwood, NJ.

"Articles in this journal address topics directly related to the teaching of writing in a second language." The articles are written by serious scholars in the ESL field, oftentimes publishing theoretically grounded discussions of research. This is not the journal to look through for practical tips on what one might try to help Juan or Tran apply the rules on definite/indefinite articles.

TESOL Journal. Edited by Elliot L. Judd. Published by Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc., Alexandria, VA.

The Journal provides descriptions and discussions of pedagogical approaches used in the ESL classroom. This is a great source for new teaching techniques.

TESOL Quarterly. Edited by Sandra Silberstein. Published by Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc., Alexandria, VA.

This is the primary scholarly "voice" of those who work and write in the ESL field. The Quarterly publishes the burgeoning scholarship in the field. Of particular interest to "new" ESL people would be Volume 25, published in the 25th Anniversary of TESOL (1991). Silberstein commissioned the leading experts in various aspects of ESL – reading, writing, grammar -- to write a compendium of the
knowledge on specific ESL issues. Consequently, the two special issues (Nos. 2 and 3, Summer and Autumn, 1991) provide the most current update on what is known about ESL theory and research that exists. (These articles were later published together in book form.)

(Student)


Hui reports on a recent change in the Chinese school policy, a reform that relieves pupils from having to take entrance exams to get into junior middle schools, so-called "key" schools that may determine a student's economic prospects.


Higher education was once reserved for China's most gifted class. Lately, however, education has been showing the influence of the new market economy. Private schools offer students an option previously unavailable in Chinese education.


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(Special Reading Materials)

An Invisible Population

An Invisible Population is an "occasional" series of articles, largely written by Philip Dine, that appeared in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. The first articles in the series were published on May 21, 1995, and then periodically on June 25, July 30, October 15, and finally December 17, 1995. Each issue contains several major articles and "sidebars" dealing with a significant immigrant group in the St. Louis area. Many of these immigrant groups derive from the Pacific Rim cultures we have been studying: Cambodia, China (both Mainland and Taiwan, and even more specifically Hong Kong), Japan, Korea, Thailand, and Vietnam. Using specified articles from this series, as well making the entire series available, I would ask students to talk and write about their "immigrant" experience (or, in the few cases, their "visitor"
experience) in relation to the experiences described in these articles. Thus, the transplanted Pacific Rim cultures, and what those cultures bring to the American "salad," will be considered.

The Asia Experience

Robert Cross, a staff writer for the Chicago Tribune, had the assignment of a lifetime in 1995. His assignment required that he travel to the Pacific Rim and write about the "Asian experience" for the Travel section of the Tribune. He did so, writing lengthy articles about Hong Kong (Travel, Sunday, February 19, 1995), China (March 12, 1995), Taiwan (the "other" China, on April 16, 1995), the Phillipines (in "A Phillipine sampler," on May 21, 1995), and Tokyo (June _____, 1995). Each of these installments is written with the (not ugly, but rather under-informed and curious) American tourist as audience. These articles would be helpful resources for students in class from countries other than those in question.

The New Immigrants

USA Today ran a "3-day Special Report" (June 30 to July 2, 1995) on the new immigrants in response to reported impending changes in the immigration policies of the United States. In this series of articles, USA Today highlighted significant issues relating to immigrants. In addition, the newspaper printed and/or published numerous statistics about immigrants. Both the articles and the statistical charts / graphs are valuable sources of new information about the current trends in and among immigrants in the United States.
## Personal Book List

**Lawrence J. McDoniel**  
St. Louis Community College at Meramec  
March 1, 1996

(In Order of Priority, approximately)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>author / editor</th>
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<td>Li</td>
<td>&quot;Good Writing&quot; in Cross-Cultural Context</td>
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<td>Cheung</td>
<td>Asian American Literature: An Annotated Bib</td>
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<td>To Open Minds: Chinese Clues to ....</td>
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<td>Lingard</td>
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Title: "Reading and Writing About Pacific Rim Cultures"

Author(s): Larry McDoniel

Corporate Source: Meramec Community College

Publication Date: 4/2/97

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