**Curriculum Design**

**9th-grade Writing**

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**Statement of Purpose**

A student’s ability to write properly greatly influences that student’s success in high school and their college experience that follows. Regardless of a college student’s major, they are going to eventually be required to write a research paper of some kind. The American students’ writing ability has steadily decreased over the recent years. According to Diane Tordillo from the Atlanta Post, the 2011 SAT scores have reached an all-time low. Tordillo writes, “Recent reports by the College Board indicate that the average scores on the SAT for the high school class of 2011 dropped in reading, writing and math” (Tordillo, 2011). Tordillo contributes the extreme fall of scores to the drastic increase of minority students taking the test. Tordillo states, “According to a College Board press release, there was a 44-percent rise in minority students this year, making this the most diverse class of SAT test-takers on record. The release also lists a 36-percent rise in first-generation college goers and a 27-percent rise of test-takers who speak another language at home other than English” (Tordillo, 2011).

The fall of the 2011 SAT scores was echoed in the Wall Street Journal. Contributing journalist Stephanie Banchero expressed, “SAT scores for the high-school graduating class of 2011 fell in all three subject areas, and the average reading and writing scores were the lowest ever recorded, according to data released on Wednesday” (Banchero, 2011). The writing score dropped from last year’s 491 to 489 on a scale from 200-800 (Banchero, 2011). Banchero goes on to explain that out of the 1.6 million students who took the 2011 SAT only 43% scored high enough to indicate that they would succeed during their first year of college (Banchero, 2011). According to the data, the large increase of the number of minority students taking the test contributed to the outcome. “Ten years ago, 8% of test takers were Latino, compared with 15% in 2011. For black students, the percentage jumped to 13%, compared with 9% in 2001. A growing percentage of students also grew up speaking a language other than English, and more than one-fifth of this year's test takers were poor enough to receive a waiver to take the exam for free” (Banchero, 2011).

The thought that the US’s writing scores are at an all-time low is rather unnerving. With our economy on the downfall this is the time when our future’s education is the most important. The job market has always been a competitive venture. With a failing economy the search for jobs is a brutal battle. Politicians and bureaucrats implore that we improve our nation’s education so that we once again can be a global competitor. This is a great ambition, but first the focus on writing instruction needs to be revisited and revamped in order to simply prepare our students to compete against each other and succeed in the career field. The 12th grade curriculum design included in this document will do just that. By implementing more writing instruction opportunities and assignments the students regardless of diverse characteristics will improve their writing knowledge and capabilities.

**References**

Banchero, S. (2011, September 15). *Sat reading, writing scores hit low*. Retrieved from http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424053111904491704576571060049856724.html#articleTabs%3Darticle

Tordillo, D. (2011, September 22). *2011 sat scores reach a new low, increase in diversity to blame*. Retrieved from http://atlantapost.com/2011/09/22/2011-sat-scores-reach-a-new-low-increase-in-diversity-to-blame/#