**Former EPI Students’ Academic Achievement at USC and ESL Skills at EPI**

The purpose of this report is to show statistics about the proportion of former EPI students out of the group of foreign students studying at USC, their academic achievement in terms of GPA and grades from both the English 101 and 102 courses, and the relationships between their academic achievement and their performance levels at their last classes in EPI as well as the class level that they reached finally at EPI.

1. General Statistics about USC students from EPI and their Academic Achievement

1.1 The numbers of foreign undergrad and grad students from EPI

The number of international undergraduate students attending USC this spring (spring 2012) was 346, of which 136 students (39%) used to study at EPI. These data are summarized in Table 1 and Figure 1. Compared to the data obtained in fall 2010, the percentage of former EPI students increased by about 6 percent (33.4 🡪 39.3) due to the decrease in number of the whole international undergraduate students (388 to 346), even though the number of former EPI students did not differ much from fall 2010 (e.g., 136 vs. 133).

Table 1. The number of USC undergraduate students from EPI in spring 2012 and fall 2010

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sources | Spring 2012 | | | Fall 2010 | |
| Number | Percentage | Number | | Percentage |
| EPI | 136 | 39.3 | 133 | | 33.4 |
| Non-EPI | 210 | 60.7 | 255 | | 65.7 |
| Total | 346 | 100 | 388 | | 100 |

Figure 1. The proportion of USC undergraduate students from EPI in spring 2012

On the other hand, the number of USC graduate students from EPI numbered 40, which made up 4.5 % of the total of 880 grad students. Compared to the data collected in fall 2010, the total number of foreign graduate students at USC increased by 38 (862 🡪 880), but the number of graduate students from EPI was not much different: a little increase of 3 students (40 vs. 37) or by 0.4 % (4.5% vs. 4.15%). Finally, the number of former EPI students studying in a professional school such as pharmacy was 2, and one of them was from EPI. In fall 2010, the total number of foreign students in this area was 6 students, and one from the 6 students was from EPI.

Table 2. The number of USC graduate students from EPI

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sources | Spring 2012 | | | Fall 2010 | |
| Number | Percentage | Number | | Percentage |
| EPI | 40 | 4.5 | 37 | | 4.1 |
| Non-EPI | 840 | 95.5 | 862 | | 95.9 |
| Total | 880 | 100 | 862 | | 100 |

Figure 2. The proportion of USC grad students from EPI

1.2 Former EPI students’ GPAs and grades from English 101 and 102

Of the total of 136 foreign students from EPI, the number of students that had a GPA from courses attended was 105, and the average GPA of these students was 3.30. Compared to the average GPA of 3.23 obtained from 140 students in spring 2010, there was a little increase in GPA by 0.07. The average grade on a 4-point scale that 93 out of 136 students got from English 101 was 3.13, which was the same as that obtained from 121 students in spring 2010. Finally, the average GPA that 82 students got from English 102 was 3.42, which was a little higher than that which was obtained from 76 students in spring 2010. Table 3 and Figure 3 summarize these data.

Table 3. Former EPI Students’ Average GPA and Grades from English 101 and 102

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Time Line | GPA | Eng 101 | Eng 102 |
| Spring 2012 | 3.30 (n=105) | 3.18 (n=93) | 3.42 (n=82) |
| Spring 2010 | 3.23 (n=140) | 3.18 (n=121) | 3.34 (n=76) |

Figure 3. The Average GPA and Grades from English 101 and 102 of Former EPI Students

2. Former EPI students’ academic achievement at USC and performance levels at EPI

2.1 Former EPI students’ academic work at USC and grade levels in EPI GW/WG classes

2.1.1 The distribution of former EPI students’ grades at levels 5 and 6

Every 9-week term EPI offers students three types of classes such as Grammar/Writing (GW), Reading/Vocabulary (RV), and Speaking/Listening (SL), each of which has 6 levels in it (Level 6 is the highest proficiency level and Level 1 is the lowest). Based on the results of the placement test that they took before the term begins, EPI students are placed in one of the 6 levels across the three class types.

The numbers of students across EPI levels and their grades appear in Table 4 and Figure 4. Of the six levels in each class type, almost all of the students attended level 5 and level 6 classes in their final EPI term, except for 3 students that attended level 4 classes. In both level 5 and level 6 classes, the biggest proportion of students got a B grade: 20 and 49 students from level 5 and level 6 classes respectively. The next biggest group of the students got a D or an F from both of the class levels.

Table 4. Distribution of Former EPI Students’ grades at GW level 4, 5 and 6

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Levels | Grades | Groups | Number of Students |
| 4 | A-F | 4 | 3 |
| 5 | A | 5a | 5 |
| B | 5b | 20 |
| C | 5c | 5 |
| D-F | 5d | 7 |
| 6 | A | 6a | 11 |
| B | 6b | 49 |
| C | 6c | 18 |
| D-F | 6d | 17 |
| Total | | | 135 |

\* 1 of 136 students did not attend any GW class.

Figure 4. Distribution of Former EPI Students grades at GW level 4, 5 and 6

2.1.2 Students’ GW grades at level 5 and academic achievement at USC

Because the number of students that attended Level 4 classes is very small, the focus of analyses is on level 5 and level 6 students. The average GPA and the average scores from English 101 and 102 courses for level 5 students are summarized in Table 5 and Figure 5.

Overall, the grade levels from EPI patterns with the levels of the GPA and the scores from the two English courses, except for a few cases: the GPAs from both the B and C students were almost the same and the average scores of D-F students from the two English courses were greater than those from C students, which showed a reversed trend. The latter case seems to have occurred due to the fact that some students might have concentrated on preparing for TOEFL not doing their best for a good EPI grade but that they got back to their academic work when taking credit-bearing USC courses.

Table 5. Level 5 Students’ GW Grades vs. Average GPAs and Scores from English 101 and 102

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| EPI GW Grades | GPA | English 101 | English 102 |
| A | 3.76 | 3 | 4 |
| B | 3.36 | 2.88 | 3.73 |
| C | 3.34 | 2.67 | 2.5 |
| D-F | 2.59 | 3 | 2.75 |

Figure 5. Level 5 Students’ GPA and Grades by EPI Levels and Grades

2.1.3 Students’ GW grades at level 6 and academic achievement at USC

As Table 7 and Figure 7 show, students’ grade from GW 6 classes may be a good indicator of their academic achievement because students’ grade levels show a very strong correlation with the three types of scores: average GPA and average grade from English 101 and 102. The only one exception was the case of the average score of D-F students, which seems to be due to the 4 students that got an A grade, compared with much lower grades from the other two measures, which was mentioned in the sub-section above.

Table 7. Level 5 Students’ GW Grades vs. Average GPAs and Scores from English 101 and 102

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| EPI GW Grades | GPA | English 101 | English 102 |
| 6a | 3.71 | 3.69 | 4 |
| 6b | 3.38 | 3.39 | 3.58 |
| 6c | 3.16 | 3.14 | 2.68 |
| 6d-6f | 2.85 | 2.83 | 3.69 |

Figure 7. Level 6 Students’ GW Grades vs. Average GPAs and Scores from English 101 and 102

2.1.4 The comparison of Level 5 and 6 Students’ academic achievement across GW grade levels

In the case of level 6 students, as Table 6 shows, the average GPAs and scores from English 102 were not much different between level 5 and level 6 students across different EPI grades, except for the D-F students in scores from English 102. It means that the difference in class levels at EPI classes is not so important as that in grades within each class level in predicting students’ academic achievement in college. The abnormal rise of the average score from English 102 in the D-F students at level 6 compared to level 5 seems to be due to the presence of these two types of students: the students that did not do their best at Level 6 while preparing for TOEFL and the 4 (out of 8) students who got an A grade (4 points on a 4-point scale) although they got much lower GPAs and scores in English 101.

Table 6. Level 5 and Level 6 Students’ GW grades and academic work

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| GW grades | GW levels | GPA | English 101 | English 102 |
| A | 5 | 3.76 | 3 | 4 |
| 6 | 3.71 | 3.69 | 4 |
| B | 5 | 3.36 | 2.88 | 3.73 |
| 6 | 3.38 | 3.39 | 3.58 |
| C | 5 | 3.34 | 2.67 | 2.5 |
| 6 | 3.16 | 3.14 | 2.68 |
| D-F | 5 | 2.59 | 3 | 2.75 |
| 6 | 2.85 | 2.83 | 3.69 |

In contrast to these, as seen in Figure 6, the comparison of the average scores from English 101 between level 5 and level 6 students showed a great difference: level 6 students got a much higher score compared to level 5 students who made the same grade in GW classes, except for the students with D-F grades. This difference might mean that completing the higher level in EPI GW classes can prepare students for doing better on the tasks assigned to students enrolled in English 101. This interpretation should be supported by the fact that in most of the cases, English 101 is taken in the first few semesters of college, leading to the prediction of a bigger effects on the achievement of the class level that the students had attained before they started college. English 102 is taken some semesters after English 101 is taken, which might reduce the possibility that the grades from those courses are affected by the class level where they were placed during their last EPI term.

Figure 6. Students’ GW levels and scores from English 101

2.2 Former EPI students’ academic work at USC and grade levels in EPI GW classes

2.2.1 Distribution of Former EPI students’ grades at level 5 and 6

The distribution of students’ grades at RV classes was not so different from GW classes. As shown in Table 4 and Figure 4, all the students attended level 5 and level 6 classes with an exception of 3 students at level 4. The biggest proportion of students got a B grade: 20 and 49 students from class level 5 and level 6 respectively and the next biggest groups were grade C students at level 5 but grade A students at level 6, followed by the other two grades.

Table 8. Distribution of Former EPI Students’ grades at RV level 4, 5 and 6

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Levels | Grades | Groups | Number of Students |
| 4 | A-F | 4 | 3 |
| 5 | A | 5a | 5 |
| B | 5b | 19 |
| C | 5c | 6 |
| D-F | 5d | 6 |
| 6 | A | 6a | 22 |
| B | 6b | 46 |
| C | 6c | 14 |
| D-F | 6d | 14 |
| Total | | | 135 |

\* 1 of 136 students did not attend any GW class.

Figure 8. Distribution of Former EPI Students’ grades at RV level 4, 5 and 6

2.2.2 Students’ RV grades at class level 5 and academic achievement at USC

Due to the small number of students that attended Level 4 classes, as in the case of GW classes, the analyses for students’ academic work and RV grade levels focus on level 5 and level 6. Unlike GW classes and as Table 9 and Figure 9 show, students’ average GPA and average scores from English 101 and 102 courses do not seem to have a correlation with the grade levels that they earned from their level 5 classes. First of all, the performance level at USC of grade B students was not lower in terms of GPA and mean grade from English 102 than grade A students, except for the mean grade from English 101, although it follows a normal trend that grade C students were assigned the lowest scores. What is most weird was the case of D-F group of students that got the highest GPA and an intermediate level of grade from English 101; however, it is not so meaningful because the group has only one student available for both the measures. Second, the score for the D-F group was ignored for the same reason; the comparison of students’ grade levels and their scores from English 101 do not show a clear correlation, due to the absence of significant difference between grade B and grade C students. Overall, the grade levels at RV level 5 classes have much less power in predicting the performance level of students in college.

Table 9. Level 5 Students’ RV Grades vs. Average GPAs and Scores from English 101 and 102

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| EPI RV Grades | GPA | English 101 | English 102 |
| 5a | 3.27 | 3.25 | 3.50 |
| 5b | 3.39 | 2.79 | 3.50 |
| 5c | 2.78 | 2.67 | 3.25 |
| 5d-5f | 3.85 | 3.00 |  |

Figure 9. Level 5 Students’ GPA and Grades by EPI Levels and Grades

2.2.3 Students’ RV grades at level 6 and academic achievement at USC

Like RV level 5 students, students at RV level 6 did not show a linear correlation between their grade levels at EPI and their academic measures about GPA and grading scores from English 101 and 102, as Table 9 and Figure 9 show. Students’ average GPA and average scores from English 101 and 102 courses do not seem to have a correlation with the grade levels that they earned from their level 5 classes. First of all, the performance level at USC of grade B students was not lower in terms of GPA and mean grade from English 102 than grade A students, except for the mean grade from English 101, although it follows from a normal trend that grade C students were assigned the lowest scores. What is most weird was the case of D-F group of students that got the highest GPA and an intermediate level of grade from English 101; however, it is not so meaningful because the group has only one student available for both the measures. Second, the score for the D-F group was ignored for the same reason: the comparison of students’ grade levels and the scores from English 101 do not show a clear correlation, due to the absence of significant difference between grade B and grade C students. Overall, the grade levels at RV level 5 classes have much less power in predicting the performance level of students in college.

Table 10. Level 6 Students’ RV Grades vs. mean GPAs and Scores from English 101 and 102

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Proportions of GW levels | English 101 | English 102 | English 101 |
| 6a | 3.44 | 3.22 | 3.77 |
| 6b | 3.29 | 3.42 | 3.39 |
| 6c | 3.51 | 3.32 | 3.4 |
| 6d-6f | 2.93 | 3.06 | 3.5 |

Figure 10. Level 6 Students’ RV Grades vs. mean GPAs and Scores from English 101 and 102

2.2.4 Students’ academic achievement at USC and RV class levels

As Table 11 shows, the comparison of the average GPAs and scores from English 101 and 102 between level 5 and level 6 students across different EPI grades did not show a unidirectional pattern of differences. Figure 10, Figure 11, and Figure 12 show that the mean GPA, the score from English 101, and the scores from English 102 respectively were higher in some cases or lower in other cases for level 5 students than level 6 students and in some cases in parallel between the two level students. This means that students’ difference in class level doesn’t have any correlation with their academic performance level in college and cannot have any predictive power for students’ academic ability.

Table 11. The Comparison of Level 5 and Level 6 Students’ RV grades and academic work

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| RV grades | RV levels | GPA | English 101 | English 102 |
| A | 5 | 3.27 | 3.25 | 3.5 |
| 6 | 3.44 | 3.22 | 3.77 |
| B | 5 | 3.39 | 2.79 | 3.5 |
| 6 | 3.29 | 3.42 | 3.39 |
| C | 5 | 2.78 | 2.67 | 3.25 |
| 6 | 3.51 | 3.32 | 3.4 |
| D-F | 5 | 3.85 | 3 | 2.75 |
| 6 | 2.93 | 3.06 | 3.5 |

Figure 11. The Comparison of Level 5 and Level 6 Students’ RV grades and GPA

Figure 12. The Comparison of Level 5 and Level 6 Students’ RV grades and English 101

Figure 13. The Comparison of Level 5 and Level 6 Students’ RV grades and English 101

2.3 Former EPI students’ academic work at USC and grade levels in EPI SL classes

2.3.1 Distribution of Former EPI students’ grades at level 5 and 6

The distribution of students’ grades at SL classes was not so different from the other two types of classes (GW and RV). As shown in Table 12 and Figure 4, all the students attended level 5 and level 6 classes with an exception of 3 students at level 4. The biggest proportion of students got a B grade: 16 and 46 students from class level 5 and level 6 respectively and the next biggest groups were grade A students both at level 5 and at level 6, followed by the other two grades.

Table 12. Distribution of Former EPI Students’ grades at SL level 4, 5 and 6

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Class Level | Grade | Number of Students |
| 4 | 4a-4f | 4 |
| 5 | 5a | 8 |
| 5b | 16 |
| 5c-5f | 8 |
| 6 | 6a | 32 |
| 6b | 46 |
| 6c | 11 |
| 6d-6f | 10 |
| Total | | 135 |

Figure 14. Distribution of Former EPI Students’ grades at SL level 4, 5 and 6

2.3.2 Students’ SL grades at class level 5 and academic achievement at USC

As in the other two class types, the analyses for students’ academic work and RV grade levels focus on level 5 and level 6, due to the small number of Class 4 students. Interestingly, unlike both the GW and RV classes, students’ average GPA and average scores from English 101 and 102 courses seem to have three different types of correlation with the grade levels that they earned from their level 5 classes. As Table 13 and Figure 15 show, students’ GPA do not differ across grade levels, the scores from English 102 shows a robust positive correlation with grade levels, while the scores from English 101 displays a negative correlation with grade levels. If the two English courses pursue a similar teaching objective, this reversed pattern of correlation between the two English courses would not be easy to explain. One possible reason is that the size of the groups, especially the 5c-5f group (the data from just 4 out of 8 students), is too small.

Table 13. Level 5 Students’ SL Grades vs. Average GPAs and Scores from English 101 and 102

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade | GPA | English 101 | English 102 |
| 5a | 3.33 | 2.79 | 3.71 |
| 5b | 3.49 | 3.15 | 3.4 |
| 5c-5f | 3.53 | 3.5 | 3 |

Figure 16. Level 5 Students’ SL Grades vs. Average GPAs and Scores from English 101 and 102

2.3.3. Students’ SL grades at class level 6 and academic achievement at USC

Unlike SL Level 5 students, SL Level 6 students did not show a negative correlation between their grade levels and their GPA and the scores from English 101 and 102. The scores from English 102 showed the strongest correlation but had an exception of the case of grade D-F students. The other 2 measures (GPA and the score from English 101) seem to show a weak correlation with students’ grade level at SL classes but had a big exception of grade C students’ highest GPA in the case of GPA or no difference in mean scores between grade B students and grade C students in the case of English 101. Overall, the grade levels at SL level 6 classes do not have very weak power in predicting the performance level of students in college.

Table 14. Level 6 Students’ SL Grades vs. Average GPAs and Scores from English 101 and 102

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grade | GPA | English 101 | English 102 |
| 6a | 3.31 | 3.41 | 3.6 |
| 6b | 3.23 | 3.18 | 3.43 |
| 6c | 3.64 | 3.25 | 3.17 |
| 6d-6f | 2.93 | 3 | 3.39 |

Figure 16. Level 6 Students’ SL Grades vs. Average GPAs and Scores from English 101 and 102

2.3.4 Students’ academic achievement at USC and SL class levels

Like the case of RV classes, as Table 15 shows, the comparison of the average GPAs and scores from English 101 and 102 between level 5 and level 6 students across different EPI grades did not show a unidirectional pattern of differences. Figure 17 and Figure 18 show that the mean GPA and the score from English 101 respectively were higher in some cases or lower in other cases for level 5 students than level 6 students. The scores from English 102, as Figure 19 shows, were not different between the two levels. This means that students’ difference in class level doesn’t have any correlation with their academic performance level in college and cannot have any predictive power for students academic ability.

Table 15. The Comparison of Level 5 and Level 6 Students’ RV grades and academic work

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| SL grades | SL levels | GPA | English 101 | English 102 |
| A | Level 5 | 3.33 | 2.79 | 3.71 |
|  | Level 6 | 3.44 | 3.22 | 3.77 |
| B | Level 5 | 3.49 | 3.15 | 3.4 |
|  | Level 6 | 3.29 | 3.42 | 3.39 |
| C-F | Level 5 | 3.53 | 3.5 | 3 |
|  | Level 6 | 3.17 | 3.08 | 3.33 |

Figure 17. The Comparison of Level 5 and Level 6 Students’ RV grades and English 101

Figure 18. The Comparison of Level 5 and Level 6 Students’ RV grades and English 101

Figure 18. The Comparison of Level 5 and Level 6 Students’ SL grades and English 102