ECE Workshop

Department of English
Jacksonville
State University

Handout to Accompany

The

ECE

WORKSHOP

Revised 06/16
I. What is the purpose of the examination?

The English Competency Examination (ECE), a basic writing skills test, is administered by the Jacksonville State University English Department in order to insure that any student who graduates from this university has both attained and maintained writing skills at least adequate to the demands of society at large. A passing grade on the ECE reassures the student, the University, and the student's future employer that an important requirement of university education, the acquisition of literacy, has been successfully fulfilled. In instituting the examination, Jacksonville State University has responded to the requests of many employers and has followed the practice of many institutions of higher learning. The ECE is a University graduation requirement for ALL majors.

II. Who is required to take the examination?

Any student who began study at Jacksonville State University in the fall of 1984 or since must pass the examination in order to receive a degree. There is one exception to this requirement: students who have a previous undergraduate bachelor’s degree from a regionally-accredited college or university. Contact the Director of the ECE for details at ece@jsu.edu. However, it is important to note that no other substitutions for the ECE have been approved by the English Competency Exam Committee.

III. When is a student eligible to take the exam?

Students who have completed English 101 and English 102 and a total of 48 credit hours are eligible. Students are advised to attempt the ECE as soon as he or she is eligible. A wise student will not postpone taking the exam, since waiting until late in one's college career to take the examination may delay graduation. Seniors who wait until the graduating semester to attempt the exam and who do not pass must complete remediation prior to being allowed to attempt the ECE again, which will delay graduation. Students must take and pass the exam NO LATER than the semester BEFORE they plan to apply for graduation.

IV. When will the examination be given?

The examination is given three times yearly in the fall (October), spring (February), and summer (June) semesters. After meeting the eligibility requirements, students will receive an announcement in the Personal Announcement section on the myjsu.edu page notifying them of their eligibility. ECE information and dates can be found online at http://www.jsu.edu/english/ece.html.

Students who will be taking the exam on campus should register following the instructions on the site listed above. Students will be assigned to a room in Stone Center. Registration can be verified by checking the Student Detail Schedule. If the ECE is not listed there, registration was not completed successfully. You should attempt to register again.

Online@JSU students who take 100% of their classes online should contact the director by email at ece@jsu.edu for registration instructions. There is a different registration process for the Online@JSU students who will be taking the exam through Blackboard. Do not attempt to register until you have received the instructions.
V. What is the nature of the examination?

The following instructions, taken in part from an actual examination instruction sheet, provide an adequate description.

A. Length: Be prepared to write a 400-500 word essay. The most common type of essay required is an expository or argumentative essay.

B. Topics: You will be given two topics at the exam, and you may choose one as the topic of your paper.

C. Time Limit: You have a maximum of one and one-half hours to complete your essay.

D. Planning Sheet: No planning sheet and/or outline is required, since only the essay text will be graded. However, good writers organize their thoughts before writing; therefore, planning or making a scratch outline before beginning may prove useful.

E. Materials for Writing: For the campus ECE, use blue or black ink and bring a blue book. You may bring and use a print dictionary or an electronic speller, but no other aids are allowed. A picture ID is also required of each student seated for the exam.

Distance Education students will submit their exam through Blackboard per instructions they will receive from the Director at the time of registration.

F. Student Number: It is important that you write only your student number, not your name, on the front of the blue book. For Online@JSU students a space is provided at the bottom of the screen in Blackboard for the student number. Use of your student number assures (1) objectivity in the grading of your essay, since no teacher will know whose paper he or she is grading and (2) accurate crediting of the examination to your permanent record, which is important, especially important in the case of similar or duplicate names.

G. Grading: Each essay will be graded by two or (in case of disagreement) by three English faculty members on the basis of:

(1) organization and development of the topic

(2) grammatical/mechanical accuracy.

After independent readings by two graders, the results are tallied. If the graders have agreed that the essay is either passing or failing, it is marked accordingly. If the two graders disagree, it is passed on to a third independent reader for a final decision. The English Department makes every effort to give every essay a fair and impartial reading. The grades a student made in previous English classes will not be known to the graders and will have no effect on the evaluation. Failure may indicate that a student has not maintained acceptable writing skills.

VI. When and how will students know their score?

Once the grading process is completed, the results of the examination will be posted to each student's Academic Transcript, for two weeks, which can be accessed through his or her
myjsu.edu account. Students who fail the examination will receive notification through their Personal Announcements on the MYJSU page, including important remediation information. The Office of Learning Skills located in the basement of the library coordinates the remediation that is required for students who did not pass the exam.

VII. What must a student do if he or she fails the examination?

Jacksonville State University is prepared to help any student who fails the examination. The student who fails should enroll immediately in one of the following approved options to improve his or her writing:

1. Successfully complete the tutorial program offered by Learning Services. More information on Learning Services can be found by going to the webpage at http://www.jsu/learningservices/ece.html.

2. Earn a grade of "C" or better in an upper-level (300 or above) writing course. The courses that can be taken for remediation are EH322 (Technical Writing), EH 344 (Advanced Composition) and EH 415 (Advanced Expository Writing). The course must begin after the semester of the most recently attempted ECE. The class must be completed successfully prior to another attempt. Be sure to advise the instructor at the beginning of the class that you are taking the class for remediation. Also, after completing the course, please send an email to ece@jsu.edu to advise the director that you have taken the course for your required remediation so that you can be cleared for the exam.

3. If campus students need information concerning off-campus remediation, please contact Susan Sellers, Director of the ECE.

4. Online@JSU students who take 100% of their classes for their degree through Blackboard should contact Cindy Foster by email at cfoster4@jsu.edu to discuss online remediation options.

Each option requires that the student will write a minimum of six passing essays. These essays must be designated as passing by a certified grader through an approved form of remediation. Once the student’s remediation is verified as being complete, he or she is then eligible to attempt the ECE again.

Note: All forms of remediation are valid for only two semesters after the completion date. The ECE should be attempted during one of these two semesters. If it is not, the remediation must be completed again. The purpose of the requirement is to ensure the greatest chance of passing for the student.
Writing Better Timed Essays: A Simple Plan

Students who must write timed essays are understandably anxious to begin their tasks, but in their rush to put pen to paper, they often ignore a very important part of the writing process: planning. A student who rushes to write may begin with a "hot" idea but may flounder after exhausting it and be unable to think of an idea that relates or sensibly follows. As a result, he may repeat himself in an attempt to fill up the imposing blank space on his paper, write a shorter essay than is required, or create an essay that has a strong beginning but a weak ending. Another writer who is deluged with ideas but who also writes his essay spontaneously may incorporate points that are not in chronological or logical sequence. His good ideas are lessened by their confusing presentation. Both writers can benefit from prewriting planning. They may even save time by cutting out unproductive, anxious pursuits such as searching for ideas in mid-paper. With practice, a student can learn to focus and plan quickly.

All steps of the writing process are important, so study them carefully. Notice that four of the six steps involve basic planning. Here are six simple steps to writing better expository or argumentative essays.

**Six Steps for Essay Writing**

1. **Focus.** Read the topic questions carefully. Which one interests you? This topic is your wisest choice because your enthusiasm or knowledge will be reflected in your writing. However, after you choose, you should still proceed with caution. If the topic question that appeals to you contains an unfamiliar word, look up its meaning in the dictionary before continuing. Confusion over the meaning of an important word can result in a paper that does not address the intended topic. For example, one writer mistook the word "feminism" for "femininity" and wrote a paper that failed in its primary objective--to be on the specified subject. Also make certain that you know exactly what your topic is asking of you. Are you to argue for or against a point of view, compare and contrast, compare or contrast, explain using examples? Some questions may have more than one part; determine what you must do to satisfy the requirements of your topic. Once you have chosen wisely and explored your mission, write down the main idea of your paper or the purpose of your paper in sentence form at the top of a planning sheet. (Your planning sheet can be a "scrap" sheet of paper, the instruction handout given to you at the ECE, or the inside cover of your blue book.) If you have the topic clearly in mind at the beginning, your paper will likely be correctly focused. Now, make a commitment to your chosen topic and the task at hand. Concentrate, putting all other distractions aside.

2. **Brainstorm.** In timed writing you have no resources except your own feelings, knowledge, or experience. Take a few minutes to discover more of what you know about the topic. On your planning sheet, jot down key words or phrases that can represent points, reasons, details, examples, steps, experiences, or feelings that pop into your mind about the subject. Do not evaluate these at this time; just get them on paper in an abbreviated form. It is not necessary to take time to write complete sentences. You are getting down on paper a nice long list of possible sub-topics and support for your main idea.
3. **Refine.** Evaluate the list you made while brainstorming. Eliminate any weak or inappropriate ideas; then, group ideas that are closely related. Assign each group of ideas a name and choose at least three of the group or category names as main points to support a thesis about the topic. Take care to create a thesis and points that directly relate to the topic question.

4. **Outline.** Although you do not have time and are not required to create a long, formal outline, a brief, "scratch" outline can help a writer. Here is one kind of informal outline for an expository or argumentative essay.

   **Thesis:** Your central idea or purpose

   I. The first supporting point that chronologically or logically follows.
      
      A.  
      B.  } details, examples, illustrations, etc.; from brainstorming
      C.  

   II. Second point that supports the thesis
      
      A.  
      B.  } details, examples, illustrations, etc.; from brainstorming
      C.  

   III. Third point that supports the thesis
      
      A.  
      B.  } details, examples, illustrations, etc.; from brainstorming
      C.  

   Conclusion: A summary statement

Notice that the paper's outline is being developed in chronological (time) order or logical (topic) order. You might choose to put your best point first and provide a strong beginning or save it for last so it will serve as the climax of your paper. Do not sandwich it between two weaker points, where it will lose its impact.

5. **Write.** Follow the plan you created in step four as you now write the actual text of your paper in your blue book. You should be able to write with confidence, for your planning has provided you with a clear direction and an outline containing the orderly arrangement of your best ideas on the subject. Remember that an essay has three basic parts: introduction, body, and conclusion. Your suggested outline reflects this arrangement. In the introductory paragraph, you certainly want to include your thesis statement (main idea), written directly and clearly. This guiding sentence lets your reader know where you are headed. You may also want to include other elements in your first paragraph. Many good writers like to begin with an attention-getter and then lead into the thesis statement.
A thought-provoking question, a story, a personal experience, a quotation, a vivid description, or humor are some common attention-getters. Your reader may need some background material before you begin your written discussion; you can choose to put this material in the beginning paragraph with your thesis. When you begin the actual discussion of your topic, you are writing the body. Write a separate paragraph for each sub-point that supports your thesis. Within each separate body paragraph, include a topic sentence that introduces the idea of each paragraph; then develop the idea thoroughly, using all the details, examples, and illustrations on your outline. As you write, choose appropriate, concise, and vibrant language. Think of your reader as you write and help him see in his mind's eye what you are detailing or describing. How can you help him understand what you are writing? In addition, use transition words such as "next," "also" and "finally" to lead the reader smoothly from one paragraph to another or from one idea to another. When you have written the introduction and the body, provide a last paragraph that summarizes or concludes your paper. This paragraph brings your paper full circle and completes it. If you have been trying to convince or persuade or inform, this last paragraph allows you an opportunity to reiterate your main point, to "drive it home." A trial lawyer addresses the jury in an opening statement and states his point, "My client is innocent." Then he explains why, step by step, in the trial itself, bringing out facts, witnesses, and corroboration which support his client's innocence. Finally, he provides a closing argument in which he summarizes and reiterates, "You must find my client 'not guilty.'" The order you are following in writing an expository or argumentative essay is quite similar, so state your points with emphasis for an effective ending. (Many students prefer to write the essay text on every other line of the blue examination book, leaving the blank line as space for writing in corrections in step 6.)

6. Proofread. Proofreading is one of the most important steps. Read over the paper once to satisfy your "ear"; in other words, read to determine if your paper sounds clear and sensible. Then, proofread with your "eye," looking carefully for errors in grammar, mechanics, and spelling. Search specifically for errors that have occurred frequently in your other writing. If you have had problems with subject-verb-agreement, search out each subject and verb in each clause that you have written and check to see if both subject and verb agree in number. Sometimes when a writer is nervously or hastily proofreading, his mind will fill in an omitted word that is not printed on the page or "correct" mistakes. As a result, the proofreader misses these errors. Try using a blank sheet of paper to block out everything except one line. Force your eye to read each word. After you have proofread one line, move the blank piece of paper down below the next line and scan it with great care. Continue this process with each line of text on each page, and you will see more possible errors. Make neat corrections as you proofread, but do not take time to make a totally new copy.

How much time should you spend on each step?

Steps 1-4 - approximately 10-15 minutes

Step 5 - approximately 60 minutes

Step 6 - approximately 10-15 minutes

Time adjustments may have to be made to fit your particular skills and needs. For example, if you are a poor proofreader, you will need to allow extra time for that step. Try memorizing the key words in the six step plan: Focus, Brainstorm, Refine, Outline, Write, Proofread. These can
be your six steps to writing better timed expository or argumentative essays.
THE ENGLISH COMPETENCY EXAM: A SUGGESTED TIMETABLE

BEFORE THE EXAM

1. Go to your myjsu.edu page to register for the exam. Under “Select a Term,” select the current ECE term that is listed. Proceed with registration. You will choose the date that you prefer to take the exam; you will be assigned to a room in Stone Center. On your personal calendar, write down the time and room assignment. You can check your Student Detail Schedule to find the ECE listed, if you registered properly.

2. Read all the materials or handouts about the exam made available to you through an announcement in your Personal Announcement section of Banner or the ECE link at http://www.jsu.edu/english/ece.html.

3. Attend an ECE workshop. Workshops are offered in the fall and spring semesters, but not for the summer ECE in June. Ask questions to clarify any information you do not understand.

4. Review what you know about your writing strengths and weaknesses from previous coursework. You may benefit from writing a practice essay within a ninety-minute time period and having a friend with good language skills, a tutor at Learning Services, or a teacher, read and comment on your skills. Consult a basic handbook for more extensive information or for help on writing problems not covered in this booklet.

5. You may purchase a blue book at the campus bookstore or in the English Department on the day of your exam. Also, bring a reliable blue or black pen, a good dictionary, and your photo I.D. card. A watch can also be helpful.

6. Arrive a few minutes early prior to time for the exam.

AT EXAM TIME

1. Follow the teacher's instructions carefully. Ask questions if you do not understand.

2. Read and follow all the written instructions given to you.
3. Make note of the time and check your watch occasionally to see if you are pacing yourself appropriately.

4. Choose your topic wisely. Focus on it and it alone.

5. Relax and brainstorm to discover everything that you know about the topic; jot down notes as ideas come to you.

6. Group and organize your notes into a scratch outline with a central idea or thesis and logically ordered supporting points or information.

7. Write your 400-500 word essay as legibly as possible. You will likely not have time to write a rough draft and a final copy.

8. Proofread your exam at least twice and make all needed corrections. Do not be overly concerned if you must "scratch out" a word, phrase, or sentence in order to make a correction.

9. Check to see if your student number on the front of your exam is correct and clearly written, and turn in your exam when time is called. Note: Do not rush through your exam in order to leave a little early. Invest your time wisely during the exam and avoid spending time later in remediation due to a hastily written, failed exam.

AFTER THE EXAM

1. Results of the test will be posted to the students’ Academic Transcript for approximately two weeks after the grading process has been completed. If you failed the exam, you will receive a message in your Personal Announcement section on your myjsu page, which will also include important remediation information.

2. If you passed, you will have satisfied the ECE requirement. If you did not pass, read the remediation information carefully and choose the remediation plan you prefer. You must contact Learning Services to arrange for the remediation.

3. If you failed, begin your chosen remediation program as soon as possible. When your remediation program has been completed, you will be allowed to attempt the exam on the next scheduled exam date. All forms of remediation are valid for only two semesters after the completion date. The ECE should be attempted during one of these two semesters. If it is not, the remediation must be completed again. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure the greatest chance of passing for the student.

Learning Services offers remediation to JSU students. This office is located in the basement of Houston Cole Library. The webpage for this office is http://www.jsu.edu/learningservices/ece.html.

The information in this section reflects both practical suggestions and official requirements for students taking the English Competency Exam. Passing the examination on the first attempt is certainly possible - most students do so. However, following the suggestions here may give you some test-taking strategies and relieve anxieties about the exam.
Certain errors in writing are considered more serious than others; these errors are frequently referred to as "major errors” or "target errors" by English teachers. English faculty who grade the ECE follow grading guidelines issued by the English Department; these guidelines include a checklist of these “major errors.” Identifying and correcting these errors are essential for success on the exam. Review the following list and consult a good English handbook if further explanation or review is needed prior to taking the exam.

1. **Fragment** - A fragment is an incomplete sentence and may consist of a single word, phrase, or dependent (subordinate or relative) clause. Here are some examples and corrections:

   a. The television weather forecaster predicted freezing temperatures and snowfall. Today. (word)
      
      **Correction:** The television weather forecaster predicted freezing temperatures and snowfall today.

   b. Eager for a day away from the rigors of the schoolroom. Jubilant children listened to the wintry forecast. (phrase[s])
      
      **Correction:** Eager for a day away from the rigors of the schoolroom, jubilant children listened to the wintry forecast.

   c. Because soft, wet snow fell thickly throughout the night. Residents awoke to find their grey lawns and streets transformed into a gleaming playground. (dependent clause)
      
      **Correction:** Because soft, wet snow fell thickly throughout the night, residents awoke to find their lawns and streets transformed into gleaming white playgrounds.

   Many fragments can be corrected by joining them to a complete sentence or by supplying missing parts. Remember that each sentence must have a complete thought and a subject and a predicate (verb).

2. **Fused Sentence** - A fused sentence is the joining of two or more grammatically complete thoughts (independent clauses) without any appropriate punctuation and/or conjunction between them.

   a. Elephant seals were once in danger of extinction they were hunted extensively for their great store of oil-rich blubber.

      **Corrections:** Elephant seals were once in danger of extinction. They were hunted extensively for their great store of oil-rich blubber.
      
      Elephant seals were once in danger of extinction because they were
Elephant seals were once in danger of extinction, for they were hunted extensively for their great store of oil-rich blubber.

Fused sentences can be separated properly by inserting a period and a capital, a semicolon, a subordinating conjunction (such as because), or a comma and a coordinating conjunction (such as and, or, for, so, nor, but, yet) at the point where the fusion occurs.

3. **Comma Splice** - A comma splice is the incorrect use of a comma to separate two complete sentences (independent clauses).

   a. George Seurat painted pictures in an unusual way, each object on his canvas was made up of tiny, separate, colored dots.

   Correction: George Seurat painted pictures in an unusual way; each object on his canvas was made up of tiny, separate, colored dots.

   b. A successful Broadway play, *Sunday in the Park with George*, was based on his life and work, however, his name is still unfamiliar to many people.

   Correction: A successful Broadway play, *Sunday in the Park with George*, was based on his life and work; however, his name is still unfamiliar to many people.

When sentences are closely related in meaning, replace the misused comma with a semicolon. Other correction techniques include insertion of a conjunction (either coordinating or subordinating) after the comma or replacing the comma with a period and a capital. Do not become confused by transitional words (conjunctive adverbs such as nevertheless, however, otherwise, therefore, for example, etc.). These words do not function as conjunctions and usually require a semicolon before them when they are placed between two complete sentences as in b above.

4. **Subject-Verb Agreement** - The subject-verb agreement error occurs when a singular subject is matched with a plural verb or a plural subject is matched with a singular verb. Subjects and verbs must agree in number. Remember that many nouns which end in “s” or “es” are plural in number, whereas verbs which end in “s” may be singular in number. In other words, nouns (often subjects) and verbs may form their plurals in opposite ways.

   Example: The dog (singular) barks (singular) or Dogs (plural) bark (plural).

   a. Each of the scientists studying the feasibility of a manned spaceflight to Mars are to report directly to a special presidential advisory committee.

   Correction: Each of the scientists studying the feasibility of a manned spaceflight to Mars is to report directly to a presidential advisory committee.

   b. The cost of such a space program or the apparent lack of life seen in photographs of the planet are frequently cited by critics of the plan.

   Correction: The cost of such a space program or the apparent lack of life seen in photographs of the planet is frequently cited by critics of the possible
Locate the subject and verb in every clause you write, determine the number (singular or plural form), and make any needed changes. Be alert for compound subjects (the agreement rules vary for these types of subjects), subjects that may come after the verb, and subjects of indefinite number (everybody, anybody, family, number, group, etc.).

5. **Verb Tense or Form** - A verb tense error can be the result of an omitted regular verb ending, such as _ed, _ing, or perhaps _t. The misuse or misspelling of the verb forms of an irregular verb (example: _go, went, has gone) can result in a verb form error.

   a. Elizabeth Browning asks her husband, poet Robert Browning, to take seriously her interest in the supernatural and to take part in seances led by a medium.

   Correction: Elizabeth Browning asked her husband, poet Robert Browning, to take seriously her interest in the supernatural and to take part in seances led by a medium.

   b. However, Mr. Browning thought the mediums were charlatans and eventually refused to hear about their claims and antics.

   Correction: However, Mr. Browning thought the mediums were charlatans and eventually refused to hear about their claims and antics.

Some verb forms are particularly troublesome. Review the use of lie, lay, sit, set, rise, and raise.

6. **Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement** - A pronoun must agree in number and gender with its antecedent, the word to which it refers.

   a. Each male church member in the little band of Pilgrim settlers could vote for their choice of candidates in the election of a governor or leader.

   Correction: Each male church member in the little band of Pilgrim settlers could vote for his choice of candidates in the election of a governor or leader.

   b. However, everyone was not allowed to vote for their choice; women and non-churchmembers were excluded.

   Correction: However, everyone was not allowed to vote for his or her choice; women and non-churchmembers were excluded.
Determine the antecedent of each pronoun to check its agreement. Many antecedents can also be pronouns, for example, everyone in \( b \) above. Many of these pronouns which end in one, body, or thing are considered singular.

7. **Misplaced or Dangling Modifiers** - A misplaced modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that is awkwardly placed within a sentence. A dangling modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that has no logical word to modify in a sentence.

   a. By whistling and singing as he journeyed home through the darkness, ghosts and specters were not seen by Ichabod Crane.

   Correction: By whistling and singing as he journeyed home through the darkness, Ichabod Crane felt safe from ghosts and specters.

   b. Hearing the menacing sound of approaching hoofbeats, Ichabod's heart lurched in his chest.

   Correction: Ichabod's heart lurched in his chest when he heard the menacing sound of approaching hoofbeats.

Shift the positions of misplaced modifiers so that they are nearer to the words they logically modify; correct dangling modifiers by providing omitted words for them to modify. These two errors can cause confusing, awkward, or even unintentionally humorous sentences.

8. **Spelling** - Three different misspelled words on a page may indicate a major spelling problem. Simple words that are misspelled may attract more notice than more sophisticated but misspelled words.

   a. Some scientists today believe that certain huge dinosaurs had too brains, one in they're heads and another located on or near they're spines to help move they're heavy tails.

   Correction: Some scientists today believe that certain huge dinosaurs had two brains, one in their heads and another located on or near their spines to help move their heavy tails.

Students taking the exam are permitted to use a dictionary or an electronic speller. Bring one to the exam and use it.
Sample ECEs and Proofreading

PROOFREADING EXERCISE/STUDENT EXAM

Directions: Read, edit, and critique the following themes written by students taking the ECE. What are the strengths or weaknesses in organization, grammar, or mechanics? When you locate proofreading errors, try to determine what kinds they are, how to correct them, and whether or not they are considered serious errors. Refer to the "Proofreading Checklist" for help. After editing this theme, compare your proofreading with the proofreading of your peers or the evaluations at the end of this section. Did you see errors that others did not? Did you overlook errors that are considered to be serious? Finally, critique your own proofreading ability. Are you an accurate editor, or do you need to learn more about the errors you overlooked before taking the ECE?
Topic: Discuss the figure in history whom you admire the most.

There are many great men and women in history. But the one that I admire the most is Thomas Jefferson.

The main reason I admire Jefferson is he was a major influence on this budding nation, the United States. Jefferson wrote the "Declaration of Independance" and helped in the writing of the "Constitution". He was an idealist that knew reality. This is brought out in the issue of slavery. Slavery to Jefferson was wrong, but he did have slaves. The idea of abolishing slavery appealed to him. At that day in time, however, slavery was widely accepted and was an inexpensive form of labor. Jefferson was a large landholder and even though it was against his deals, for practical purposes he owned slaves.

Another example is in the words he wrote "All men are created equal". This is very idealistic. Jefferson did see that all men, meaning humans, were not created equal. There were the upper and lower classes, intelligent and ignorant people, blacks, Indians, chinese, and whites, and there were were women who, at the time, were not considered in any way an equal to a man. Jefferson knew and saw all of these drastic, realities, but he kept on dreaming. Dreams that helped make this country a strong, world power.

I also admire Jefferson for his many accomplishments. Building a beautiful home, Monticello, writing the Declaration of Independance, being a foreign ambassator, becoming President, and his most important contribution to the United States of America, the Louisiana purchase. The United States did not want to become an empire. In fact the people did not want the government to expend the land size at all. That would mean there was more land to protect
and the army would have to go and do this protecting. If there was an army then the government would be more powerful and the government was not suppose to be powerful. The people had to have power over the government, therefore there would be no expansion of the country. Even with all of this against him and going against his own anti-colonial beliefs, Jefferson made the Louisiana Purchase which doubled the present size of the United States. This land is now the most agriculturally productive land in the world today. Also there are vital resources for the economy and industry found in this area. We gained all of this for less than half its value all because of Jeffersons wise insight of the future.

This brings me to my third and final reason for admiring Thomas Jefferson. This is his vast intelligence. Jefferson was an architechlectual genus, a literate and intellectual writer, and a brilliant statesman. He drew the plans for his house and created many secure passages and hideaways amid one of the most beautiful, decorous houses of the time. Jefferson was a bit lazy at times. He had built a huge grandfather clock in the upstairs, but when the clock wound-down the weights would lay on the floor and the clock would stop prematurely. Instead of getting some help to raise the clock he cut holes in the floor so that when the clock wound-down the weights went through the holes and the clock continued running. Maybe this was not laziness but instead a unique twist in Jeffersons personality.

Thomas Jefferson is a man to be respected. For his accomplishments as a man, a writer, a statesman, and as a President. Among the men an women of history Thomas Jefferson holds a prestigious place of honor.
SAMPLE ECE STUDENT ESSAY NO.2

**Topic:** Did your high school prepare you adequately for college?

Looking back to my high school days I feel assured that I was adequately prepared to face the challenge of college. Through the help of my teachers, my advisers, and my classes, I know I can fulfill all my goals of a higher education.

The most important aspect of my education was my teachers during my senior year. These men and women gave me the desire to read, study, and learn all I could about history, science, and math. These were the people who showed coming to class everyday could be more than "just a drag" and that what was taught would stay with me forever. Also, I realized at that point in time that studying was not a chore, but that it could be "fun" and interesting at the same time. Since then, I read all I can so that I will have a larger knowledge base for myself and my mind.

Also, my classes were very demanding of my time and my thoughts; therefore, I was compelled to study more and become a high achiever. During my senior year, I was fortunate to be offered the opportunity to take several college preparatory classes in math, history, and science. By enrolling in these subjects which demanded much of my time I was prepared to face the grueling demands of many college professors. Since studying became a daily routine, when I arrived at college, I was able to settle into a normal pattern of studying for college exams without much difficulty.

Lastly, through the help and guidance of my adviser, I was able to select a career choice and a school to attend. My adviser spent many hours trying to pair my likes and abilities to a
career that would be fulfilling and feasible. After great consideration the two of us selected nursing as my life's goal and career. Once this was done, my adviser looked into the advantages of many of the schools in the South and decided that Jacksonville State offered the most that would fit my needs. Therefore, without the guidance and judgment of my adviser I could still be sitting at home or working at Jacks not knowing what I wanted out of life.

Therefore, I can look back to my high school years and be confident that I was definitely prepared to face the grueling grind of college. Though I may not make the Dean's List each semester, I can look at my work and have a strong feeling of accomplishment and pride. Yes, I was prepared for college and the challenge of tomorrow.
EVALUATION OF ESSAYS

Student Essay No. 1 - Fragments, comma splice, verb form, pronoun reference, punctuation, capitalization, and many spelling errors make this essay a clearly flawed exam. The content contained some interesting facts about Thomas Jefferson, but these were not organized or presented to their best advantage. The English faculty rated this essay as "failing."

Student Essay No. 2 - Comma, apostrophe, pronoun reference, and other errors can be found in this essay; however, they are not errors generally regarded as serious ones. Also, the organization is generally clear. Though this essay could be improved, the faculty agreed to rate it as "passing."