

Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University
(Under Registration)

✦ **PREPARATION** ✦
PROGRAM DESIGN

Final Report

10 May 2004

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 **PREFACE**

This *Preparation Program Design Final Report* is submitted in partial fulfillment of Item IV.F. of the Contract between the Texas International Education Consortium (TIEC) and the Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University (PMU) Founding Committee to facilitate the establishment of the PMU. It was prepared by the TIEC Project Management Team and a team of experts from several TIEC-affiliated universities who are experienced in English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Mathematics, and Learning Skills.

The report *Preparation Program Design* is both a project management document and an operational document. As a management document, it describes the context for the activities of all subsequent curriculum design teams. As an operational document, it is intended to guide the PMU executive leadership, academic officers, and faculty as they integrate the Preparation Program Design into other program curricula of the PMU.

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PREPARATION PROGRAM DESIGN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Item	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
II. PROGRAM DEFINITION	2
A. Purpose	2
B. Vision	2
C. Mission.....	2
D. Student Benefits	3
E. Performance Expectations	3
III. PMU COMPETENCIES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES	4
A. Communication.....	4
B. Technological Competence.....	4
C. Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	5
D. Professional Competence.....	6
E. Leadership.....	6
F. Teamwork	6
IV. GATEWAY TO THE CORE CURRICULUM	7
V. PREPARATION PROGRAM STRUCTURE	8
A. Admission Criteria.....	8
B. Exit Criteria.....	8
C. Sequence of Courses	8
D. Sample Daily Schedule	10
E. Student/Faculty Ratio.....	12
F. General Requirements for Faculty	12
G. Technology Infused Environment.....	13
VI. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM COMPONENTS	14
A. English as a Foreign Language	14
B. Mathematics	21
C. Study Skills and Learning Strategies	26
VII. COURSE SYLLABI	30
A. Course Numbering System	30
B. English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Syllabi	31
<u>Communication Courses</u>	31
PRPC 0011: Low-Beginning Communication Skills	32
PRPC 0021: High-Beginning Communication Skills.....	37
PRPC 0031: Low-Intermediate Communication Skills.....	42
PRPC 0041: High-Intermediate Communication Skills	48
PRPC 0051: Low-Advanced Communication Skills.....	54
PRPC 0061: High-Advanced Communication Skills	60

<u>Writing Courses</u>	65
PRPW 0011: Low-Beginning Writing Skills.....	66
PRPW 0021: High-Beginning Writing Skills	70
PRPW 0031: Low-Intermediate Writing Skills	75
PRPW 0041: High-Intermediate Writing Skills	80
PRPW 0051: Low-Advanced Writing Skills	85
PRPW 0061: High-Advanced Writing Skills	89
C. Mathematics Syllabi.....	95
PRPM 0011: Introductory Alegbra.....	96
PRPM 0012: Intermediate Algebra.....	102
PRPM 0022: Precalculus	108
D. Study Skills and Learning Strategies Syllabi.....	114
PRPL 0011: Theories and Applications of Learning I.....	115
PRPL 0012: Theories and Applications of Learning II	119

PREPARATION PROGRAM DESIGN

I. INTRODUCTION

This report, *Preparation Program Design*, outlines the one-year academic preparatory training program for all students admitted to Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University (PMU). The Preparation Year Program will begin the transformation of these students into members of an energetic, goal-oriented, intellectual community. This community will be comprised of self-directed, analytical learners who use a variety of effective academic skills and strategies and are committed to the learning process. Although it will carry no academic credit, this intensive program will establish a crucial academic foundation – especially in English – necessary for students to succeed in the intellectually rigorous degree programs at the PMU. Essentially, this first year will lay the groundwork for students’ ultimate achievement of the six PMU core competencies in communication, technical competence, critical thinking and problem solving, professional competence, leadership, and teamwork.

Classrooms will be student-centered, highly interactive, and communicative. A well-trained, English-speaking faculty will function as supportive organizers and facilitators as students learn EFL, mathematics, and study skills and learning strategies. All courses will incorporate the use of technology; the study skills and learning strategies courses will provide instruction in specific Microsoft Office software programs and in technology skills that are important to learning, such as Internet searching.

The environment of the entire program will be infused with the PMU’s unique “learning outcomes approach” to education. This approach will be manifested in non-traditional pedagogy, methodology, techniques, and classroom management style. The result will be student-learners and teacher-facilitators who share a commitment to developing higher order intellectual abilities. These students will grow into university graduates who are life-long learners who are able to function and adapt in an ever-changing, technologically interconnected, global community.

During the intensive, highly structured Preparation Year Program, students will be required to attend both daily classes and workshops, where they will complete out-of-class assignments. Each of these environments will be an experience in new ways to learn. In the workshops, faculty and staff will oversee sessions to ensure that students understand the content, employ appropriate learning skills and strategies, and complete all assignments. These experiences will be vital to accomplishing the goals of the Preparation Year Program.

The subject matter, methodology, and structure of the PMU’s unique Preparation Year Program will equip entering students with the academic and personal skills necessary to succeed in a university that sets high standards for all its graduates.

II. PROGRAM DEFINITION

A. PURPOSE

The Preparation Year Program of Prince Mohammad Bin Fahd University (PMU) is a comprehensive, two-semester academic preparatory program, comprised of sequenced classes in English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Mathematics, and Study Skills and Learning Strategies. The program carries no academic credit, yet it is fundamental to the nature of the PMU. In this intensive year of study, students will receive the solid academic grounding – especially in English – that will enable them to succeed in the intellectually rigorous atmosphere that the PMU will create in its degree programs. More importantly, it is during this year that the foundation will be laid among students for the distinguishing set of core competencies that all PMU graduates will be expected to exhibit.

B. VISION

The Preparation Year Program of the PMU will strive to be a unique, preeminent post-secondary academic preparatory program, producing first-year university students who assume responsibility for their own successful learning. The Preparation Year Program will provide identical programs for male and female students. It will strive to prepare academically capable secondary graduates to participate in university studies using the essential principles of critical thinking, reasoning, and problem solving. PMU students will use these principles as both a means of discovery and as a tool for increased understanding in academic and personal contexts. PMU graduates will recognize these principles as broad, extra-academic and life-enhancing abilities.

C. MISSION

The mission of the Preparation Year Program will be to equip high-quality male and female secondary school graduates with the academic and personal skills necessary to succeed in a university based on the principles of personal responsibility and accountability; pervasive analytical/critical thought; attainment of communicative, technological, and professional competence; and strength in both teamwork and leadership. The mission is to produce a uniquely positive addition to the culture of the Eastern Province, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the world.

D. STUDENT BENEFITS

Though it will be possible to bypass the Preparation Year Program and enter degree studies at the PMU directly from high school (for a detailed discussion of the university's admissions policies, procedures, and standards, see the report *PMU Admissions Plan*), it is expected that most applicants will attend and benefit from the program. The Preparation Year Program is seen as the first step in transforming entering students who have received largely rote instruction in their secondary educations into mature, life-long learners skilled in communication, technical competence, critical thinking and problem solving, professional competence, leadership, and teamwork.

E. PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

Students who enter the program with an intermediate level of English language proficiency and mathematical preparation up to the level of Algebra should be able to complete the Preparation Year Program in two semesters. However, academic attainment in these subjects will only partially satisfy the requirements for successful completion of the Preparation Year Program. Another integral requirement is that students learn, understand, and implement specific study skills and learning strategies. During this initial year of study, students will be expected to internalize the cognitive, meta-cognitive, and affective skills necessary to achieve the motivation, goals, and high level of personal responsibility for learning that will make them academically and professionally successful.

Students who do not meet the performance expectations of the program within one academic year will have four options:

- A student who nearly completes the program may appeal to a committee of university faculty, admissions officers, and Preparation Year Program faculty for partial admission to the PMU. These appeals will be handled on a case-by-case basis. A student granted partial admission will be required to complete coursework for the Preparation Year Program concurrently with his or her degree studies.
- Students who remain more than one level below completion of six levels of the EFL program, or who have similar deficiencies in Math or Learning Skills abilities, will be given one additional semester in which to complete the program.
- On rare occasions, students who require instruction in Preparation Year Program subjects at the end of a third semester may be granted a fourth semester of work, based upon appeal to the university.
- As a general policy, students who do not meet all criteria for promotion from the Preparation Year Program within three or, at the most, four semesters will be dismissed from the PMU.

III. PMU COMPETENCIES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Throughout the Preparation Year Program, students will be led to assume responsibility for their own learning and to think critically with a purpose beyond the classroom. All learning activities will inherently incorporate teamwork and leadership training. In striving to attain competency in communication, technology, and professional skills, students will engage in goal-oriented learning activities in which they are active participants.

The academic content of the PMU Preparation Year Program is not unique. Other universities also provide pre-university instruction in EFL, mathematics, and study and learning skills. The uniqueness derives from the “learning outcomes approach” that will be used to lead PMU students to achieve six university-defined core competencies. This approach and the resulting methodology permeate and define the curriculum throughout the Preparation Year Program, building a community of student-learners and teacher-facilitators with a shared commitment to understanding and intellectual growth. Progressively, students will develop higher order intellectual abilities that will make them life-long learners. These abilities will enable them to function and adapt in a changing, technologically interconnected, global community.

A. COMMUNICATION

In the Preparation Year Program’s highly interactive, student-centered classrooms, students will develop English language skills to an advanced level in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Since the medium of instruction at the PMU will be English, highly developed EFL communication skills will be crucial for students’ immediate academic success and future professional success.

In mathematics, the constructivist pedagogical approach will require students to work in groups to define problems and reflect on the problems and their solutions orally and in writing.

In study skills and learning strategies courses, the purpose will be to give students practice applying their newly acquired study and learning techniques to their academic classes. Effective communication will be taught as a useful skill and practiced in group activities, individual presentations, interactive writing and listening activities, computer tasks, and reading skills training.

B. TECHNOLOGICAL COMPETENCE

The effective use of technology to accomplish academic goals is required of all students in all Preparation Year Program classes – EFL, mathematics, and study skills and learning strategies. Students in all Preparation Year Program classes will be required to use the following technology tools, with individualized or group training provided by the teacher, as required:

- Word processing (including composing, formatting, editing, and printing a document)
- Electronic mail (e-mail)
- Internet research
- Accessing a class Web site for assignments, test-taking, communication with classmates and the instructor, and other purposes
- Specified educational software
- PowerPoint for presentations at the advanced levels

Specific technology tools will be used in some classes, with individualized or group training provided by the teacher, as required:

- Math: Excel spreadsheets for composing, formatting, basic data analysis and graphing results. Graphing calculators also will be used.
- Study skills and learning strategies: Microsoft Outlook with its features that support time-management skills.

In English and math courses, computer-based learning activities will be seamlessly integrated into instructional techniques without altering the course content. Computer-based activities will enhance learning and make it more effective in the same manner that they will enhance degree studies courses in the PMU's Core Curriculum and academic majors.

Study skills and learning strategies courses, by contrast, will have distinct components dedicated to the learning of computer skills. With a goal toward enhancing achievement in all of their Preparation Year Program courses and later studies at the PMU, students will receive instruction in the Microsoft Office suite of programs (Outlook, Word, Access, Excel, PowerPoint, and FrontPage) as well as instruction in how to use electronic resources on the Internet and in the PMU Learning Resources Center.

C. CRITICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING

The pedagogical approach used by teachers in the PMU's EFL, math, and study skills and learning strategies classes will teach and require students to implement progressively more complex levels of reasoning, analysis, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

- In EFL classes, students will progress step-by-step in listening, reading, and speaking skills from differentiating between the main idea and supporting detail to predicting, inferencing, evaluating a writer's opinion, and synthesizing a variety of conflicting ideas on a single subject. In writing, students will learn to write using a variety of rhetorical modes and to subject information to critical evaluation and ethical use. In researched writing, students will read for multiple perspectives, synthesize

information, and relate the parts logically and coherently as their critical thinking skills grow.

- In math classes, students will work in small groups on investigations and explorations, which are a means of constructing, analyzing, and reflecting on mathematical concepts and problem situations. Analysis and understanding, rather than memorization, will be the pedagogical core in Preparation Year Program mathematics courses. The result will be active student participation.
- In study skills and learning strategies, students will first learn and then demonstrate through the quality of work they produce that they have applied the basic principles of self-management, learning strategies, and a variety of critical thinking techniques to assignments in all their classes.

D. PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE

The content of the Preparation Year Program lays the foundation for a student's success in the remainder of his or her PMU classes. The ability to read, write, listen, and speak with accuracy and critical astuteness will benefit a student throughout his or her academic and professional career. The real-life implementation of effective communication, mathematical concepts, and learning skills and strategies in every academic or professional undertaking will facilitate a student's achievement of competence in all academic and professional areas.

E. LEADERSHIP

The study skills and learning strategies classes in the Preparation Year Program will lead students to develop the personal qualities that characterize effective leaders: a strong work ethic, self-discipline, integrity, the ability to set reasonable goals, self-motivation, the acceptance of responsibility and accountability, and an understanding of teamwork skills.

It is anticipated that positive practice in the controlled environment of the Preparation Year Program will give students confidence to employ these qualities in broader academic, professional, social, and community situations.

F. TEAMWORK

The Preparation Year Program's highly interactive, student-centered community of learners demands, encourages, and rewards effective, synergetic teamwork in all classes. Small and large group work will be absolutely basic to the instructional methodology that will be used in the Preparation Year Program. (Examples include math investigations and EFL skills class discussions and presentations.) The pervasive use of small and large group activities will be designed to develop academic and personal skills such as courtesy, respect for diverse

opinions, skill in critical discussion and in consensus building, and the ability to clearly and precisely state or write one's opinion.

IV. GATEWAY TO THE CORE CURRICULUM

From the Preparation Year Program, students will enter degree studies in one of the PMU's three colleges, Engineering, Information Technology, or Business Administration. During their first year in the university and before beginning their major course work, however, students will pursue work principally in a series of core courses.

The courses in the PMU Core Curriculum will be the logical extension of work that will begin in the Preparation Year Program. It is therefore vital that the Chair, the Associate Chair and the faculty of the Preparation Year Program understand the direction their students will take once they enter degree studies and work closely with their counterparts in the Core Curriculum. It also will be important to coordinate all their efforts through the Dean of Core Curriculum and Preparation Year and, ultimately, through the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs.

The PMU University Core courses, which will be required of all students, will include University Core and Assessment Capstone courses.

The University Core will include the following:

- Written Communication
- Writing and Research
- Oral Communication
- Technical and Professional Communication
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Professional Development and Competencies
- Leadership and Teamwork

The Assessment Capstone series will contain three courses designed to measure students' success in achieving the designated PMU learning outcomes.

- First semester, second year – an orientation to learning outcomes expectations, the development of a learning portfolio, and the assessment process.
- First semester, third year – a more intensive treatment of learning outcomes, the portfolio, and assessment leading students to the final capstone experience.
- First or second semester, fourth year – a comprehensive project covering all PMU learning outcomes under the direction of the student's college faculty.

As noted in the report *Core Curriculum Design*, the faculty of the Preparation Year Program must be fully aware of the objectives and expectations of the Core Curriculum.

V. PREPARATION PROGRAM STRUCTURE

A. ADMISSION CRITERIA

The majority of students entering the PMU Preparation Year Program will be graduates of the secondary school Science Stream in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. However, students of other nationalities and from other countries also will be admitted if they have received equivalent secondary school preparation. The typical class in the PMU Preparation Year Program is expected to enroll approximately 1,100 students, 600 of whom will be male and 510 of whom will be female.

All students applying for admission must submit a satisfactory overall average on the General Secondary Education Certificate and satisfactory scores on standardized tests. (For further details, see the report *PMU Admissions Plan*.)

The admissions process will ensure that every student admitted to the program possesses the EFL facility to perform at least at Level 1. The Chair and Associate Chair of the Preparation Year Program will work closely with the university's Director of Enrollment Management and the PMU Admissions Committee to establish the criteria to be used in determining these abilities.

B. EXIT CRITERIA

At the end of the Preparation Year Program, students must successfully pass the PMU-administered final exams with a grade of 70% in each of the program's three components of EFL, math, and study skills and learning strategies. Students also must achieve a satisfactory score on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or an equivalent standardized test that assesses speaking, listening, reading, and writing in English. An overall IELTS score of 6.0, with a minimum score of 5.0 on each test component (or equivalent score from another test), will be required.

IELTS is considered to be superior to the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) in measuring student achievements and productive abilities in English, particularly at lower skill levels.

C. SEQUENCE OF COURSES

The Preparation Year Program classes build upon one another in a sequence. Students must internalize the subject matter, skills, strategies, and analytical attitudes of lower level classes before they can successfully participate in and benefit from higher level classes.

The "ideal sequence" noted below in EFL, math, and study skills and learning strategies will allow a well-prepared, highly motivated, and intellectually active student the opportunity to complete the Preparation Year Program in one academic year. Upon completing the

program, the student will be appropriately prepared for success in the Core Curriculum and major classes that will follow.

SEQUENCE OF COURSES				
Subject	First Semester		Second Semester	
EFL 8-week modules offered in six selected levels [Ideal sequence in bold]				Level 6
			Level 5	Level 5
		Level 4	Level 4	Level 4
	Level 3	Level 3	Level 3	Level 3
	Level 2	Level 2	Level 2	
	Level 1	Level 1		
Math	Introductory Algebra		Intermediate Algebra	
			Pre-Calculus	
Study Skills and Learning Strategies	Theories and Applications of Learning I		Theories and Applications of Learning II	
Computing Skills	<p>Computing skills to be continuously developed and integrated across all courses.</p> <p>The Microsoft Office suite of applications (Outlook, Word, Access, Excel, PowerPoint, and FrontPage) as well as instruction in how to use electronic resources such as the Internet will be introduced during the first semester and continued in more detail during the second semester of the study skills and learning strategies courses.</p>			

D. SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE

Students enrolled in the PMU's intensive Preparation Year Program will spend a minimum of fifty-three hours weekly attending classes and independently completing homework and assignments off campus. In the workshop study sessions, students, will complete out-of-class assignments and receive additional tutoring. The typical number of hours students will spend in class and in workshops is shown in the table Typical Class Load, below.

TYPICAL CLASS LOAD				
SUBJECT	Daily In-Class Contact Hours	Weekly In-Class Hours	Weekly Out-of-Class Study Hours	Weekly Total
EFL	4 (2 hours of each: writing/grammar, communication)	20	20	40
Math	Two 2-hour classes weekly	4	4	8
Study Skills and Learning Strategies	Three 1-hour classes weekly	3	2	5
TOTALS	<i>5- 6 hours</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>53</i>

Throughout the Preparation Year Program, students will be required to attend daily homework and study skills workshops and labs. Faculty and staff of the Preparation Year Program will oversee these sessions to ensure that students understand the content, employ appropriate learning skills and strategies, and complete all out-of-class assignments. For students who need assistance with their academic subjects, supplemental tutoring will be provided.

Students in the PMU Preparation Year Program will receive mandatory EFL language software assignments that must be completed in a timely manner in order to stay on schedule.

The program’s structured workshops should provide adequate time in a supportive environment for homework completion and study. Additional time required to complete daily out-of-class assignments must be scheduled and managed by the student.

TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE					
TIME	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5
7:30	EFL	EFL	EFL	EFL	EFL
8:30	EFL	EFL	EFL	EFL	EFL
9:30	SSLS	Math	SSLS	Math	SSLS
10:30	EFL	Math	EFL	Math	EFL
11:30	EFL		EFL		EFL
12:30 Lunch Break					
1:30	Workshop	EFL	Workshop	EFL	Workshop
2:00	Workshop	EFL	Workshop	EFL	Workshop
2:30	Workshop	Math lab	Workshop	Math lab	Workshop
3:00	Workshop	Math lab	Workshop	Math lab	Workshop
3:30	Workshop	Workshop	Workshop	Workshop	Workshop
4:00	Workshop	Workshop	Workshop	Workshop	Workshop
4:30	Workshop	Workshop	Workshop	Workshop	Workshop
Remaining hours of work to be completed off campus and after hours.					

E. STUDENT/FACULTY RATIO

In order to enhance opportunities for class participation and individual attention, the student/faculty ratio in the PMU Preparation Year Program's EFL, math, and study skills and learning strategies classes will be kept as low as possible.

Though the ratio for guided workshops may be slightly higher, these sessions also must keep the relative numbers low. Sessions for tutoring and completing out-of-class assignments are fundamental to transforming secondary school graduates into focused, self-disciplined, responsible learners. Workshops therefore must have a student/faculty ratio that realistically allows opportunities for as much individual attention as students require.

SUBJECT	Optimum In-Class Ratio	Optimum Workshop Ratio	Maximum In-Class Ratio	Maximum Workshop Ratio
EFL	15/1	20/1	17/1	25/1
Math	20/1	20/1	25/1	25/1
Study Skills and Learning Strategies	20/1	22/1	25/1	27/1

F. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR FACULTY

For the Preparation Year Program to be successful, all faculty in the program must understand, believe in, and successfully implement methodology, techniques, and classroom management that are skills-based, student-centered, communicative, and interactive.

This responsibility begins at the top of the organization, with the Dean of Core Curriculum and Preparation Program. The dean is charged with providing vision, creativity, and excellence to the program, designing and implementing the academic plan, developing and implementing the curriculum, and supervising instruction. Daily functions of the program are overseen by the Chair (for male students) and Associate Chair (for female students) of the Preparation Year Program, who recruit faculty and provide academic leadership for the program. (For a full description of the duties of the dean, the chair, and the associate chair, see the report *PMU Organization*.)

Requirements for teaching faculty in the components of EFL, math, and study skills and learning strategies are provided in Section VI. Overview of Program Components.

It cannot be over-emphasized, however, that the teaching faculty must possess the appropriate abilities and attitude, receive forward-thinking supervision, and be provided with superior instructional tools in order for the Preparation Year Program to succeed. As noted above, (Section II. Program Definition), the academic subject matter of the Preparation Year Program is not unique. The uniqueness of the PMU Preparation Year Program lies in the philosophical underpinning, which manifests itself in pedagogy, methodology, techniques, and classroom management style.

Faculty members are likely to be familiar with and accustomed to using traditional methods of teaching before they are hired. Therefore, all faculty members, no matter what their prior qualifications, must actively participate in intensive teacher training before they begin their teaching duties. This training must commence before the opening of the initial year of the Preparation Year Program. Furthermore, it is the recommendation of this report that all faculty either be native English speakers or have achieved native-level proficiency.

For many faculty, this change will be challenging and will require training, guidance, and support from the staff of the PMU Teaching Development Center. It is important that this division of the university (to be described in the report, *Teaching Development Center*) provide training for faculty of the Preparation Year Program before the opening year of the program.

G. TECHNOLOGY INFUSED ENVIRONMENT

Though the Preparation Year Program will be a non-credit curriculum outside the degree studies programs at the PMU, its students will have full access to the same technology-infused environment as the rest of the university. (See the report *Information Technology Strategy*). In fact, the students' use of the university IT infrastructure from the very beginning of their PMU experience will be an integral part and a defining characteristic of the university's learning-centered environment.

Students in the Preparation Year Program will be required to have laptop computers, from which they will be able to access the university's ubiquitous wired and wireless access to information, communications, and services. High speed networks, smart classrooms, online learning resources, dormitory connections, common access labs, print and file sharing, industry standard productivity and security software, helpdesk and technical support all will be part of the Preparation Year Program experience.

All students will have access to a Web-based interface that will provide a gateway for accessing campus services online. Through the university's courseware management system (CMS) students will be able to engage in both independent learning tasks and team-based projects. The CMS will enhance student-to-student, student-to-faculty, and faculty-to-student communication with discussion forums, file exchange, e-mail, chat, video services, and whiteboard sharing. Students will be able to use the CMS to build portfolios of their work. Faculty will be able to use the CMS for online grading and student tracking. (For further information on the course management system proposed for the PMU, see the report *PMU Infrastructure Specifications*.)

VI. OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM COMPONENTS

This section discusses the course sequencing, student placement, scheduling, desired outcomes and other details that apply within each of the three components in the Preparation Year Program: EFL, math, and study skills and learning strategies.

A. ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The goal of the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) component is to prepare students for success in the English-medium environment of the PMU by developing strong English-language skills in academic reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Classes will be student-centered and interactive, with a communicative, integrated-skills approach. The EFL component will be extremely intensive and fast-paced.

1. Course Sequencing and Completion Criteria*

The EFL course sequence will consist of two parallel tracks, PRPC (Communication Skills, including reading, vocabulary, listening and speaking) and PRPW (Writing Skills, including writing and rhetoric, grammar, spelling, and research). Students will be enrolled concurrently in PRPC and PRPW at the same level. Students entering at Low-Intermediate (Level 3) should be able to complete the program in four eight-week sessions.

The EFL component of the Preparation Year Program will consist of 12 courses.

Key	Title	Level
PRPC 0011	Low-Beginning Communication Skills	1
PRPC 0021	High-Beginning Communication Skills	2
PRPC 0031	Low-Intermediate Communication Skills	3
PRPC 0041	High-Intermediate Communication Skills	4
PRPC 0051	Low-Advanced Communication Skills	5
PRPC 0061	High-Advanced Communication Skills	6
PRPW 0011	Low-Beginning Writing Skills	1
PRPW 0021	High-Beginning Writing Skills	2
PRPW 0031	Low-Intermediate Writing Skills	3
PRPW 0041	High-Intermediate Writing Skills	4
PRPW 0051	Low-Advanced Writing Skills	5
PRPW 0061	High-Advanced Writing Skills	6

** NOTE: For an explanation of PMU course numbering, see section VII.A., Course Numbering System.*

2. **Communication Skills**

PRPC 0011 is a foundation course for low-proficiency EFL learners. It introduces these students to basic reading skills, vocabulary acquisition, speaking, and listening for comprehension and response. Students must earn a 70% cumulative grade after eight weeks to move to PRPC 0021.

PRPC 0021 builds on the foundation course for high-beginning EFL learners. It consolidates basic reading, vocabulary acquisition, speaking, and listening skills. Students must earn a 70% cumulative grade after eight weeks to move to PRPC 0031.

PRPC 0031 is a low-intermediate course in which reading, vocabulary, speaking, and listening activities become more analytical and academic. Students must earn a 70% cumulative grade after eight weeks to move to PRPC 0041.

PRPC 0041 is a high-intermediate course in which reading, vocabulary, speaking, and listening activities continue to be analytical and academic in focus. Students must earn a 70% cumulative grade after eight weeks to move to PRPC 0051.

PRPC 0051 is a low-advanced course in which reading, vocabulary, speaking, and listening activities begin to prepare students for university-level English language use. Students must earn a 70% cumulative grade after eight weeks to move to PRPC 0061.

PRPC 0061 is the high-advanced reading, vocabulary, speaking, and listening course in which students reach a degree of communicative competence appropriate for university-level work in English. Students must earn a 70% cumulative grade after eight weeks to successfully complete this course and move on to degree studies at the PMU.

3. Writing Skills

PRPW 0011 is a foundation course for low-proficiency EFL learners. It introduces students to the basics of English grammar, spelling, and mechanics, and to simple paragraph composition. Students must earn a 70% cumulative grade after eight weeks to move to PRPW 0021.

PRPW 0021 builds on the basics with a strong foundation in English grammar and an introduction to the writing process, as well as continued focus on spelling and mechanics at the high-beginning level. Students must earn a 70% cumulative grade after eight weeks to move to PRPW 0031.

PRPW 0031 is a low-intermediate course that introduces the fundamentals of academic writing and consolidates major grammatical concepts. Students must earn a 70% cumulative grade after eight weeks to move to PRPW 0041.

PRPW 0041 is a high-intermediate level that focuses on essay writing, basic research and documentation, and complex sentence structure. Students must earn a 70% cumulative grade after eight weeks to move to PRPW 0051.

PRPW 0051 is a low-advanced course in which students develop their essay writing, research process, and sentence structure skills in preparation for university-level work. Students must earn a 70% cumulative grade after eight weeks to move to PRPW 0061.

PRPW 0061 is the high-advanced writing course in which students increase the sophistication and accuracy of their writing and develop their research skills in preparation for the transition to the PMU. Students must earn a 70% cumulative grade after eight weeks to successfully complete this course and move on to degree studies at the PMU.

4. Placement

Students' initial instructional levels will be determined by a placement test administered before the beginning of the first eight-week session. It is recommended that the program faculty write its own test or that the PMU acquire a test developed in-house by a

university or an independent EFL program. This is due to the length of time required for grading commercially available standardized tests. A test that can be graded immediately by the Preparation Year Program faculty will enable instruction to begin without delay.

The placement battery in such a test should consist of tests in four areas: listening comprehension, grammar, reading and vocabulary comprehension, and writing. The recommended composition of each test is as follows:

- Listening: 100-word listening dictation
- Grammar: 50-item multiple-choice test
- Reading/Vocabulary: 50-item multiple choice test
- Writing: 30 minute writing sample on assigned topic

The grammar and reading/vocabulary tests should be scored as percent correct, while the listening test should be scored with the number of words correct out of 100. The three scores together should allow for a possible total score of 300. An average and range of scores should be established to define the beginning of each level of instruction in the EFL component.

RECOMMENDED SCORE STRUCTURE, EFL PLACEMENT*						
	<i>Level 1</i>	<i>Level 2</i>	<i>Level 3</i>	<i>Level 4</i>	<i>Level 5</i>	<i>Level 6</i>
Total Required	51-95	95-135	136-180	181-220	221-255	256-300
Listening						
Typical Score	24	45	59	72	83	88
Typical Range	13-35	35-56	51-68	62-84	76-90	78-98
Grammar						
Typical Score	26	34	53	68	84	86
Typical Range	18-34	25-44	43-62	56-80	76-91	78-94
Reading / Vocabulary						
Typical Score	24	34	50	69	81	90
Typical Range	17-31	26-43	37-62	58-80	72-90	82-98

*Based on sample independently developed EFL test programs.

The writing sample portion of the test should be holistically scored by EFL faculty trained in the use of Profiles for Placement Composition Grading. These profiles describe the rhetorical, syntactical, grammatical, and mechanical expectations for the beginning of each EFL writing skills level.

After grading is complete, EFL faculty will use the test results to place students into the appropriate level for their communication and writing classes. Cut-off points and placement guidelines for each level will be established, but the variations in students' skill levels will require that faculty also use their professional judgment. Each student must have the same level of placement for communication and writing classes.

5. Course Scheduling

EFL courses will meet for 20 hours per week during each eight-week session. Communication Skills class will meet for one two-hour block each day with one instructor. Writing Skills class will also meet in a two-hour block with a different instructor. Computer instruction and computer-based homework assignments will generally make use of the students' laptop computers in a normal classroom setting, though occasional visits to a computer laboratory also may be scheduled.

6. University Learning Outcomes

EFL Component courses will be student-centered and highly interactive. Each course will provide a strong emphasis on many skills that are directly related to the PMU competencies and learning outcomes of communication, technological competence, critical thinking and teamwork. These competencies are addressed in the Preparation Year Program in the following ways:

a. Communication

- Speaking: pair and group activities, pronunciation, informal and formal presentations.
- Listening: conversational and academic listening, academic note taking skills.
- Reading: predicting, understanding main ideas and supporting details, making inferences, distinguishing fact from opinion, learning vocabulary in context.
- Writing: organization and development of ideas, self- and peer-editing skills, research writing conventions, awareness of audience and levels of discourse.

b. Technological Competence

- Word processing: submitting assignments in specific formats, using the tools of Microsoft Word.
- E-mail: submitting completed assignments through electronic mail.
- Internet research: finding and evaluating Web-based information.
- PowerPoint: using technology to make formal presentations.

c. Critical Thinking

- Analysis: active study of information read and heard.
- Synthesis: oral and written consolidation of multiple sources of information.
- Argumentation: logical thinking, awareness of audience and levels of discourse.

d. Teamwork

- Extensive pair and group activities: developing consensus, responsibility for group outcomes, conflict management.
- Peer review of work: constructive input, acceptance of feedback, modification of ideas.

7. Student Assessment

Assessment in the EFL component will serve the dual purposes of providing students with feedback on their mastery of new structures, skills, and academic techniques, as well as assessing their competence in English for progression to the next level of instruction. This will be accomplished through the administration of weekly quizzes, periodic major tests and comprehensive final exams as well as the student's completion of projects, writing assignments, oral presentations and other homework assignments. In addition, because language learning is an interactive and recursive process, weight will be given to in-class participation.

8. Instructional Strategies

Instruction in the EFL component will be student-centered and highly interactive, grounded in the communicative approach. Teachers will act as resource persons and facilitators, providing comprehensible input, appropriately and increasingly challenging tasks, and meaningful content and contexts in a safe and controlled environment. An eclectic selection of methods and techniques will be used to provide a variety of learning experiences and accommodate a variety of learning styles. Both inductive and deductive learning will take place.

An integrated skills approach will ensure that the language is not presented in isolation, but as a whole. Courses will also provide appropriate focus on the development of specific skills, particularly those necessary for success in an academic environment.

An essential part of the instructional strategy will be the extensive use of pair and group work. Through cooperative learning, students strengthen their communication, critical thinking, and teamwork core competencies.

9. Textbooks and Resources

The textbooks recommended for the EFL component have been demonstrated to support the communicative approach, eclectic methods, and interactive focus of the curriculum. By extension, they also support PMU core competencies and learning outcomes. Because EFL courses will be divided into eight-week sessions, some of the textbooks will be used in two or more consecutive levels. The specific book titles and the chapters to be covered in each level are listed in the course syllabi (Section VII.B. of this report).

10. Faculty Responsibilities and Qualifications

Faculty assigned to teach the courses in the EFL component will have the primary responsibility for these courses, including planning and coordination, maintenance of academic standards, record-keeping, monitoring student progress, holding office hours, and meeting with the teacher assigned to the “other half” of the curriculum. The communication skills instructor and the writing skills instructor of a given level should plan to meet weekly to discuss the course. Since the curriculum will be standardized, faculty must adhere to the curriculum and teach at the appropriate level.

Faculty should have native-speaker proficiency in English, demonstrated either through being a native of an English-speaking country or by a score of 8.5 or above on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test, jointly managed by University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations (Cambridge ESOL), British Council and IDP Education Australia.

In addition, faculty should have an M.A. degree or equivalent in Teaching English as a Foreign/Second Language (TEFL/TESL), applied linguistics, foreign-language pedagogy, or a related field as well as two years of teaching experience, preferably in a communicative-centered program.

Willingness to undertake professional development activities necessary to learn how to implement a student-centered, communicative classroom environment and sensitivity to Arab culture also are necessities.

B. MATHEMATICS

The goal of the Mathematics Component of the PMU Preparation Year Program is to enhance students' understanding of mathematics in the English language as well as to prepare them for the study of college-level mathematics. Students entering PMU may possess some of the pre-requisite skills to do college-level mathematics, but they will need additional practice to be competent in college-level mathematics in English. The instructional strategies and assessments for these preparatory mathematics courses are designed to give students a necessary review of pre-college mathematics as well as to provide practice in speaking and writing about mathematics in English.

1. Course Sequencing and Completion Criteria*

The mathematics component of the Preparation Year Program will consist of three courses.

Key	Title
PRPM 0011	Introductory Algebra
PRPM 0012	Intermediate Algebra
PRPM 0022	Pre-Calculus

PRPM 0011 is designed to introduce students to thinking mathematically in the English language. This course is required for all entering PMU students. Students must earn a grade of "C" or better in PRPM 0011 to continue in PRPM 0012 or PRPM 0022.

PRPM 0012 is an extension of PRPM 0011 for students intending to major in Interior Design or one of the programs offered by the College of Business. PMU students in these fields who have successfully completed PRPM 0011 will enroll in PRPM 0012 during the second semester of the Preparation Year Program. Students must earn a grade of "C" or better in PRPM 0012 to enroll in college-level mathematics courses.

PRPM 0022 is a pre-calculus course for students intending to major in one of the programs offered by the College of Engineering (excluding Interior Design), and the College of Information Technology. PMU students who wish to pursue studies in these fields who have successfully completed PRPM 0011 will enroll in PRPM 0022 during the second semester of the Preparation Year program. Students must earn a grade of “C” or better in PRPM 0022 to enroll in college-level mathematics courses.

** NOTE: For an explanation of PMU course numbering, see section VII.A., Course Numbering System.*

2. Placement

Upon entering the PMU Preparation Year Program, all students will take a standardized mathematics placement exam. Students scoring 45 or higher on the ACT COMPASS Algebra Test; or 40 or higher on the ACT ASSET Elementary Algebra Test; and a Band 6.0 or higher on the IELTS English proficiency test or equivalent (with a minimum of Band 5.0 on each test component) may bypass PRPM 0011, and take PRPM 0012 or PRPM 0022 depending on their intended major.

Whether or not a student achieves advanced placement, he or she must satisfactorily complete either PRPM 0012 or 0022 to continue into the college credit programs of PMU.

Testing material may be obtained by contacting ACT at the addresses indicated below:

ACT COMPASS, Customer Services (70)

2727 Scott Blvd., P.O. Box 1008, Iowa City, IA 52243-1008

Phone: (319) 337-1376 Fax: (319)337-1467

E-mail: compass@act.org

www.act.org/compass (Computer based test)

ACT ASSET Program, Customer Services (70)

2727 Scott Blvd., P.O. Box 1008, Iowa City, IA 52243-1008

Phone: (319) 337-1376 Fax (319) 337-1467

E-mail: asset@act.org

www.act.org/asset (Pencil and paper test)

3. Course Scheduling

The mathematics courses in the Preparation Year Program will each meet six hours per week – two two-hour in-class blocks, and two one-hour out-of-class or math laboratory blocks. Math laboratories will consist of supervised study time in which students may use their personal laptop computers. Laboratories may be scheduled for normal classroom settings or occasionally in a computer lab.

4. PMU Competencies and Learning Outcomes

In keeping with the student learning outcomes desired by the PMU, the Preparation Year Program will emphasize the study of mathematics as significantly more than a rote list of concepts or skills. Courses in the program will be student-centered and will promote exploration into quantitative methods. They will demonstrate that these methods are useful in life experiences. The courses will actively strive to build a community of learners with a commitment to understanding and intellectual growth. This community will develop as teams focus on solving mathematical problems through reading, writing, conversation, and analytical thinking skills. Key to the format will be what has been termed the “social construction of knowledge.” (DeMarois, McGowen, and Whitkanack, 2004)

The program also will place emphasis on technology, through the use of the graphing calculator and Excel spread sheets. The learning outcomes addressed in the Preparation Year Program’s mathematics courses, therefore, cover communication, technological competence, critical thinking and problem solving, teambuilding, and leadership.

5. Student Assessment

Assessment in the mathematics courses in the Preparation Year Program will focus on two factors: assessment of mathematical competencies, and assessment of the PMU core competencies. Therefore, the assignments both in and out of class will be combinations of traditional as well as alternative assessments designed to measure these competencies.

The constructivist pedagogical approach taken to mathematics in the PMU Preparation Program will require unique methods of assessment to accompany its advanced instructional methods. Both will closely follow the techniques established in the recommended text for the math curriculum (*Mathematical Investigations* and *Applying Algebraic Thinking to Data*, by DeMarois, McGowen, and Whitkanack. For full descriptions of these books, see individual courses syllabi in Section VII.C. Mathematics of this report). Assessment methods, as established by these texts, include the following activities:

- **Investigations** – A series of inquiry exercises that discover mathematical concepts and develop answers to questions through class activities are the cornerstone of the course. Students will work in teams to complete Investigations given in the text. Attendance during the Investigations and completion of the Investigations are critical for success.

- Explorations – Each section of the text ends with a set of Explorations. Each Exploration begins with a request that the student builds and maintains a glossary of key words and phrases. Completion of the glossary is critical since understanding mathematical vocabulary plays a key role in developing mathematical power. Completion of all Explorations will be expected.
- Concept Maps – Concept Maps are visual methods of displaying knowledge of a given concept. Critical components of a Concept Map include a central concept, a set of related concepts, and links between concepts demonstrating relationships.
- Reflections – Reflections require students to reflect on what they have learned in the given section and preceding sections. Most require the student to write a paragraph or two discussing an important mathematical idea.
- Unit Problem Sets – There will be three cumulative problem sets. They will be distributed during the fifth, ninth, and fifteenth weeks of the semester.
- Journals – At the beginning of each week, students will submit a journal entry that requires analysis the concepts they learned the previous week.
- Final Exam – Students will sit for a comprehensive test designed to measure the mathematical skills covered in the course.
- Portfolio – Students will be required to keep a notebook (typically, a three-ring binder) containing all their work for the semester, with the exception of the Investigations and glossary, which will be completed on pages provided in the text. The binder will include completed Explorations, Concept Maps, Reflections, Journals, Unit Problem Sets, and in-class assessments. These documents, along with the completed Investigations and the glossary, will be the primary evidence for the student’s grade.

6. Instructional Strategies

The mathematics courses in the Preparation Year Program will promote a pedagogical approach based on a constructivist perspective of how mathematics is learned. As a means of making sense out of problem situations and mathematical concepts, students will learn mathematics by working in a social context to construct mathematical ideas and reflect on these constructions.

The students will work on investigations and explorations in small groups, talk with members of their group, and then reflect on the problems and solutions either orally or in writing. The instructor will serve as a facilitator helping students synthesize understanding of major concepts. Assigned activities then measure student achievement of the concept objectives.

7. Textbooks and Resources

The textbooks listed in this report are highly recommended. The content, and more importantly, the pedagogy used in these texts explicitly supports PMU student learning objectives. The instructors' manuals will provide excellent tools such as fully worked-out solutions to explorations, review exercises in the text, sample group and individual skills exams, resources for alternative assessment, suggestions for conducting a lab period, and techniques for fostering good writing in lab reports.

Such materials will be extremely valuable for all faculty teaching these courses, but especially for those who have little or no experience with student-centered approaches to learning.

Specific texts are listed in course syllabi (Section VII.C. of this report).

8. Faculty Responsibilities and Qualifications

Faculty assigned to teach the mathematics courses in the Preparation Year Program will have the primary teaching responsibilities for these courses. These will include selecting placement instruments and texts, preparing course syllabi, planning in-class team activities, constructing student assessments, keeping grade records, supervising laboratory sessions, and holding regular office hours.

The faculty should hold a master's degree in mathematics with at least two years teaching experience at the college level. Prior experience in teaching under-prepared college students and experience in cooperative learning and alternative forms of assessment will be preferred.

Since one of the goals of the program's math curriculum is to teach students to think about mathematics in English, preference will be given to faculty who are either native English speakers or have achieved native-level proficiency as demonstrated by a band score of 8.0 or higher on the IELTS, with minimum component test scores of at least 7.5.

Willingness to undertake professional development activities necessary to learn how to implement a student-centered, communicative classroom environment and sensitivity to Arab culture also are necessities.

C. STUDY SKILLS AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

The goal of the Study Skills and Learning Strategies curriculum will be to develop self-directed, self-motivated, analytical students who employ a variety of effective learning skills and strategies in all their academic courses and who are committed to the learning process. This commitment may require students to engage in academic behaviors that may not have been learned prior to their higher education experience at the PMU. While the absence of comparable academic experience may be a challenge, it can be overcome if students have a genuine desire to learn. Research shows that “the desire to learn” is the greatest motivator and predictor of success.

1. Course Sequencing and Completion Criteria*

The study skills and learning strategies component of the Preparation Year Program will consist of two courses.

Key	Title
PRPL 0011	Theories and Applications of Learning I
PRPL 0012	Theories and Applications of Learning II

PRPL 0011 is the first semester introduction to study skills and learning strategies necessary to succeed in a learning-centered, higher education academic setting. It will be required for all entering PMU students. PRPL 0011 will be taught in English and will require EFL proficiency at Level 3. For students placed in EFL Levels 1 or 2, a special section of PRPL 0011 will be created. All students must earn a grade of “C” or better in PRPL 0011 to enroll in PRPL 0012.

PRPL 0012 is the second semester continuation of PRPL 0011, building on the foundations of the learning principles taught in the first semester. Enrollment in this course is open to all students who have successfully completed PRPL 0011 and who have been placed in EFL Level 4 or above. (Students in EFL Levels 1, 2, or 3 during the second semester will repeat PRPL 0011 during this semester and take PRPL 0012 during a third semester, after they attain Level 4.) All students must earn a grade of “C” or better in PRPL 0012 to advance to degree studies in the university.

Completion of PRPL 0011 and PRPL 0012 will require that students have demonstrated, through the quality of the work produced, that they have applied basic principles of self-management, learning strategies, and critical thinking, and that they have mastered basic computer skills necessary for participation in university-level classes.

** NOTE: For an explanation of PMU course numbering, see section VII.A., Course Numbering System.*

2. Special Section

The skills learned in PRPL 0011 form the foundation for success at the PMU and therefore must be mastered by all students. To ensure that each student has this opportunity, a special section of the course will be created for students in EFL Levels 1 and 2. This section will teach the same material using lower levels of English with, if necessary, limited instruction in Arabic. Placement in the regular or lower-level sections of PRPL 0011 will be determined by the student's performance on the program's EFL placement test, which will be administered to all students entering the Preparation Year Program.

3. Course Scheduling

Study skills and learning strategies classes will have three class-contact hours a week. Two additional hours of out-of-class work will be assigned for completion during mandatory, supervised homework and study skills workshop sessions. Workshops will not require specialized computer laboratories or equipment. They will be scheduled in normal classrooms with students making use of their personal laptop computers.

4. University Learning Outcomes

Successful students become successful professionals because they have developed habits of pro-active, responsible behavior. In study skills and learning strategies classes, students will be introduced to behavioral skills that – if applied to their academic and personal lives – will ensure that the students achieve the competencies required of all PMU graduates.

The study skills and learning strategies taught in these courses, therefore, will be applied daily to assignments and learning activities from the students' EFL and math courses in the Preparation Year Program.

Ultimately, students will bear most of the responsibility for their learning. However, they will be guided during the Preparation Year Program by faculty who will help them develop the following competencies through specified class activities:

a. Communication

- Listening and speaking: class discussion, group activities, presentations.
- Writing: journals, group reports, restructuring exercises.

b. Information Technology

- Use of multiple software applications in daily work assignments.
- Use of technology for presentations.

c. Critical Thinking

- Study and implementation of diverse learning strategies that require analysis, reasoning, and other critical thinking skills.
- Test preparation skills: use of analysis, prediction, inferencing, and other skills to prepare for tests.

d. Leadership

- Work ethic: accurate completion of all daily assignments, productive behavior in the math labs and daily workshops.
- Integrity: academic honesty, high quality of work product, the ability to establish values.
- Self-directed learning: goal setting, responsibility for one's own learning.
- Self-management: time management, healthy habits, self-control.

e. Teamwork

- Small and large group activities.
- Conflict management: group work assignments, class discussion.
- Constructive criticism: group work assignments, class discussion.
- Consensus building: group work assignments.
- Shared responsibility for completion of group tasks and larger projects.

5. Student Assessment

Assessment in the study skills and learning strategies classes will be based on a variety of skill-set evaluations, daily and weekly assignments, and appropriate and active in-class participation. Although there will be periodic quizzes, assessment will be based principally on students' effective application of learning strategies in their EFL and math courses, overseen and observed by faculty during workshop study sessions.

In addition, students will be graded on their acquisition of effective organizational skills as demonstrated in their use of a variety of time-management tools. Faculty will reinforce and support these skills as students complete work in the required study workshops.

6. Instructional Strategies

Instruction will be learner-centered. Faculty will introduce students to skills that will improve the students' self-management and their ability to learn quickly and effectively. Class discussion and individual and group tasks will ensure student understanding.

Instruction also will be designed to consistently apply study skills and learning strategies to real-life situations. Students in PRPL 0011 and PRPL 0012 will apply learning strategies, management or communications skill-sets to their actual EFL and math assignments. These courses will integrate the use of software that will lay the foundation for more advanced technology competencies required in the university major fields of study.

a. Individual Work

Restructuring: application of a new learning strategy to content homework; time and task management assignments.

b. Group Work

Discussion related to class topic followed by oral or written group reports; class presentations.

c. Meetings with Faculty

Pro-active academic behavior requires that students meet with faculty as often as necessary to ask questions, clarify concepts, and maintain positive relationships.

d. Participation

Students' daily attendance in class will be expected. Attendance at workshop study sessions will be required. Class and workshop times must be dedicated to serious study. Credit for attendance will not be given if the students' activities are not academic.

e. Writing

Students will keep a daily electronic journal that will be e-mailed to faculty. Written restructuring exercises will be submitted electronically as well.

7. Textbooks and Resources

The assigned textbooks focus on college survival skills. The specific titles are listed in course syllabi (Section VII.D. Study Skills and Learning Strategies).

8. Faculty Responsibilities and Qualifications

Faculty who teach the study skills and learning strategies courses in the Preparation Year Program will have the primary teaching responsibilities for these courses, including preparing course syllabi, planning in-class activities, constructing student assessments, keeping grade records, supervising workshops and overseeing student's restructuring activity (the application of learning skills to real content), meeting with students, and holding regular office hours.

The faculty should hold a master's degree, preferably in psychology, counseling, educational counseling, or a related field. They should have at least two years' teaching experience at the college level and must be knowledgeable concerning computer-assisted learning. Prior experience teaching under-prepared and/or EFL college students and experience in cooperative learning and alternative forms of assessment is preferred.

Preference will be given to faculty who are either native English speakers or have achieved native-level proficiency.

Willingness to undertake professional development activities necessary to learn how to implement a student-centered, communicative classroom environment and sensitivity to Arab culture are necessities.

VII. COURSE SYLLABI

A. COURSE NUMBERING SYSTEM

A common system for naming courses will be applied throughout all academic programs at the PMU. The system is structured as follows:

Each course title begins with four letters that indicate the subject matter of the course. In the Preparation Year Program, they are the following:

- PRPC (EFL communications)
- PRPW (EFL writing)
- PRPM (mathematics)
- PRPL (study skills and learning strategies)

The letters are followed by four numbers:

- First digit indicates the year. For the Preparation Year Program, the number is 0.
- Second digit indicates credit hours. For the Preparation Year Program, the number is 0.
- Third digit indicates the level in a sequence. EFL courses, for example, extend from 1 to 6.
- Fourth digit indicates the semester: 1 indicates first semester or a course that is only one semester long. 2 indicates second semester of a two-semester course.