

# **Pedagogical Framework for Integrating Developmental Writing and English Composition Through the Accelerated Learning Program Corequisite Model**

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*Corequisite writing classes are becoming commonplace in developmental education for the model's promise to increase student access to college while providing necessary support for writing fundamentals, applying writing skills in a meaningful context, and developing student success skills. The Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) corequisite model is ideally structured to accommodate research-based best practices that are often difficult to implement in traditional college classrooms. This paper presents an overview of the corequisite approach to developmental writing with an emphasis on the ALP model, proposes a framework for corequisite pedagogy, and discusses how the framework can be applied in context.*

*Keywords: ALP, Accelerated Learning Program, Corequisite, Writing Pedagogy, Remediation, Developmental Education*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Sweeping reform has transformed developmental education across the United States in recent years. Although questioning the ethical implications of developmental education is nothing new (Bartholomae, 1993; Shor, 1997), public scrutiny has increased as data from educational reform groups reveal that preparatory coursework often acts as a barrier to students' college completion (Bailey & Cho, 2010; Levin & Calcagno, 2008). This data prompted a myriad of reforms including the corequisite model of developmental writing. In the corequisite model, students enroll in both a college-level English class and a developmental writing support class. The popularity of corequisite developmental writing has risen, especially after some states mandated reductions in developmental coursework and organizations such as Complete College America and Association of American Colleges and Universities offer high-profile student retention programs that coach college administrators to implement corequisites along with other institutional changes.

Transitioning to corequisite developmental writing comes with many challenges. Corequisite courses require careful logistical coordination among various areas of the college such as scheduling, advising, staffing, etc. (Daugherty, Gomez, Carew, Mendoza-Graf, & Miller, 2018). At many institutions, developmental education reforms have prompted the merging of previously separate departments, creating tension (Doran, 2019). Coordination challenges continue at the course level as the college-level writing class and developmental support class require close alignment. The corequisite model creates unique opportunities for student growth, but adapting to the model requires a nuanced, flexible approach to teaching and learning (Coleman, 2014). In many cases, structural reform has outpaced pedagogical reform.

Rushed reform in response to public pressure is likely to create resistance, especially when faculty are not engaged in key decisions (Warnke & Higgins, 2018). With the rapidly changing landscape of developmental education, instructors with high teaching loads may lack the time to reflect on the purpose of corequisite coursework, review literature in the field, and adapt lessons to include research-based best practices.

This paper proposes a framework of pedagogical implications for integrating developmental writing and English Composition through the corequisite model. Frameworks and theoretical constructs for developmental writing have been previously proposed. Barhoum (2016) proposed a framework for developmental writing that included the most promising practices from validated research relating to program structure, curriculum, andragogy, and student-instructor relationships. The corequisite model of developmental writing reflects all four of these domains when implemented according to research-based best practices (Barhoum, 2016). Adams, Gearhart, Miller, and Roberts (2009) attributed the early success of corequisite developmental writing to mainstreaming, cohort learning, small class size, contextual learning, acceleration, heterogeneous grouping, attention to behavioral issues, and attention to life problems. Later, Adams and McKusick (2014) identified the Productive Persistence Practical Framework as the theoretical underpinning of corequisite success. In this framework, students apply their strengths and use strategies to persist through challenges when they believe they are capable of learning, feel socially tied to the course, believe in the course's value, employ student success skills, and are well-supported.

The framework presented in this paper builds on these previous frameworks by incorporating both cognitive and social best practices in teaching and learning in the corequisite model of developmental writing. The framework is based in part on my experience as a corequisite instructor, training facilitator, and developmental writing program co-chair. The framework is also influenced by numerous presentations and conversations with fellow teacher-scholars at conferences and my dissertation research on an instructor's transition to corequisite developmental writing (Shanahan, 2018). Furthermore, the elements of the framework are supported by literature on teaching and learning, developmental education, and writing instruction.

This paper presents an overview of the corequisite approach to developmental writing with an emphasis on the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) model, identifies the core objectives of the corequisite model, proposes a framework for corequisite pedagogy, models the framework in context, and discusses implementation for the framework.

## **RISE OF THE COREQUISITE MODEL**

Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) was an early developmental writing reformer. Faculty at CCBC realized that the majority of students who took developmental writing were unlikely to continue through college English. In 2007, faculty at CCBC piloted ALP. In the ALP corequisite model, students enrolled in college-level English along with a 3-credit developmental writing class taught by the same instructor. In two years, the ALP program increased the rate of students taking and passing college English 39% to 63% (Adams, Gearhart, Miller, & Rogers, 2009). The success of ALP at CCBC continued to increase student success in college-level writing classes over time (Cho, Kopko, Jenkins, & Jaggars, 2012).

Many English departments adopted the ALP corequisite model as news of the model's success spread and pressure to reform developmental education mounted from the public and administrators. Some departments adopted ALP in its original form, and others made changes to structural aspects of the courses while maintaining the corequisite element of the model by placing students into a college-level English class with support. Preliminary findings show promising results for corequisites with adaptations to enrollment, credits, and faculty continuity (Coleman, 2014). However, high-quality, longitudinal research is needed to validate corequisite variations that stray from ALP's defining characteristics.

## **ACCELERATED LEARNING PROGRAM (ALP) CHARACTERISTICS**

The factors that most strongly contribute to the success of ALP include mainstreaming, contextualized writing instruction, a cohort approach, small class size, and deliberate focus on noncognitive skills (Adams, Gearhart, Miller, & Roberts, 2009).

### **Mainstreaming**

Mainstreaming occurs when students who were traditionally placed in developmental education courses are placed into college-level courses instead. ALP mainstreams students into an English Composition class while requiring an additional 3-credit developmental writing support class at the same time. ALP founders identified mainstreaming as highly effective for two reasons. First of all, taking college classes instead of developmental classes helps students feel like members of the college community. Being in a classroom with other “college-level” students validates students’ right to belong in college (Adams, Gearhart, Miller, & Rogers, 2009; Adams & McKusick, 2014). Second, mainstreaming students into a college English class shortens the pipeline to taking credit-level work. Instead of waiting until all developmental coursework is complete to begin credit classes, students in ALP are making progress toward their degree with just-in-time support (Adams & McKusick, 2014; Jaggars, Hodara, Cho, & Xu, 2015).

### **Contextualized Writing Instruction and Support**

Support in the developmental class is directly contextualized to the concepts and assignments from college English. This helps students see the relevance of the foundational writing skills developed in the support class. Corequisite support uses a backward curriculum design and pedagogy, starting with the end in mind and working backward to scaffold relevant learning activities (Walker, 2015). As students work on college-level assignments, sentence-level clarity and essay organization are not merely academic hurdles to jump over. These foundational skills are clearly required for college-level work. Adams and McKusick (2014) credit ALP with showing students the need for foundational skills as they apply these skills in a class required for their program of study.

### **Cohort Approach**

In a true ALP model, half the students in English Composition placed directly into college-level writing. The other half placed into developmental writing, but both sets of students attend English Composition together. The set of students who placed into developmental writing all attend the same 3-credit support class, which typically meets directly after English Composition. ALP has been shown to be successful in part because of the cohort approach in which the same students are in the support class as the English Composition class, and the instructor is the same for both class sections (Adams & McKusick, 2014). The cohort model gives teachers the opportunity to see exactly where student need lies in the college-level writing required for English Composition. With the cohort model, the instructor not only knows the students’ most pressing needs, but has the extended time necessary to work with students on the underlying skills required to address those needs. For the students, being together with the same set of peers for two classes creates more opportunity for creating a sense of community in the ALP classroom.

### **Small Class Size**

Class sizes are small in the ALP model because the cohort of students in the developmental writing class consists of one-half an English Composition class. At CCBC, ALP instructors attributed the program’s success, in part, to the class cap of eight students in the corequisite section (Adams, Gearhart, Miller, & Rogers, 2009). Small classes allow instructors to get to know students well and provide personalized just-in-time support.

### **Attention to Noncognitive Skills**

ALP instructors work with students on developing not only the foundational writing skills necessary to succeed in college-level writing, but also the noncognitive skills required to manage academic work and

outside responsibilities. ALP is successful when instructors are deliberate about embedding student success skills in class activities (Adams, Gearhart, Miller, & Rogers, 2009). ALP instructors also dedicate time to helping students anticipate and address barriers outside of the classroom or college (Adams, Gearhart, Miller, & Rogers, 2009). Incorporating noncognitive skills in the curriculum takes time. The three-credit hour support class provides time for both writing and noncognitive support.

In summary, the key characteristics of ALP are mainstreaming, contextualized instruction and support, a cohort approach, small class size, and noncognitive skill development. These aspects of ALP reflect the core objectives of corequisite developmental writing.

## **COREQUISITE OBJECTIVES**

A clear understanding of the corequisite model and its purpose is the foundation of effective and relevant pedagogy. There are three primary objectives of the corequisite model. Students in corequisite developmental writing classes will (a) learn foundational writing skills; (b) apply writing skills in meaningful contexts; and (c) develop noncognitive skills.

### **Learn Foundational Writing Skills**

Students in corequisite developmental writing classes will demonstrate foundational writing skills. Although placement methods are flawed (Burdman, 2012; Giordano & Hassel, 2016), students in developmental writing classes typically require additional practice in foundational writing skills including sentence clarity, paragraphing, essay organization, etc. Traditional developmental education coursework typically centered around these discrete skills; however, a “skill and drill” approach to teaching basic skills is not effective (Grubb, 2010). Therefore, the corequisite approach was a necessary change. The corequisite model still aims to help students develop basic writing skills, but the additional time and small class size of ALP classes allow instructors to provide more differentiated instruction. Methods of differentiating support may include additional or varied presentation of content, processes for practicing skills, and assignment or activity options for demonstrating learning (Pham, 2012; Santangelo & Tomlinson, 2009). In the corequisite model, the emphasis shifts from teaching decontextualized basic skills to helping students learn foundational writing skills, which are applied in a meaningful context.

### **Apply Writing Skills in Meaningful Contexts**

Students in corequisite developmental writing classes will apply writing in meaningful contexts. Because corequisites are contextualized to a credit-bearing English Composition class, the writing work directly correlates to progress toward a degree, which makes the material more relevant and motivating for students (Adams & McKusick, 2014; Walker, 2015). Traditional developmental writing classes may be dismissed by students as a burdensome requirement to complete before getting to the program courses that count toward a degree. Corequisite writing support can help students see the value of developing writing skills as related to their academic and professional goals.

### **Develop Noncognitive Skills**

A key component of corequisite instruction is a deliberate focus on noncognitive skills (Adams & McKusick, 2014; Adams, Gearhart, Miller, & Roberts, 2009; Coleman, 2014). Corequisite classes, particularly the three-credit ALP model, provide the time and space to anticipate and address noncognitive issues head-on. Student skills include time management, study skills, avoiding procrastination, school/life balance, and staying motivated. Corequisite classes are designed to offer just-in-time support based on individual student needs, which often include noncognitive skill development.

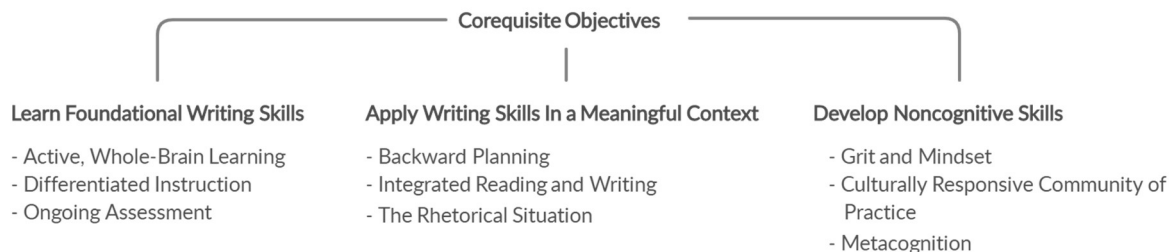
## **PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR COREQUISITE PEDAGOGY**

Based on the objectives outlined in the previous section, effective corequisite classes are designed to help students establish foundational writing skills, practice those skills in meaningful contexts, and develop



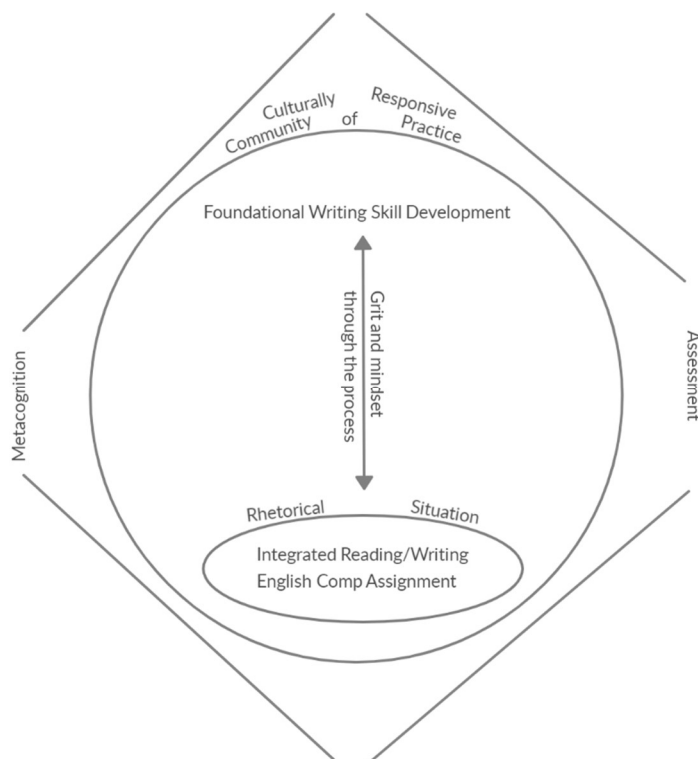
noncognitive student success skills. These goals can be further broken down into sets of best practices for corequisite pedagogy (See Figure 1).

**FIGURE 1  
COREQUISITE OBJECTIVES AND BEST PRACTICES FOR PEDAGOGY**



The elements of this proposed pedagogical framework are recursive and interconnected, rather than linear. Further mapping the connections between these best practices creates a framework for corequisite pedagogy (see Figure 2).

**FIGURE 2  
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF COREQUISITE DEVELOPMENTAL WRITING PEDAGOGY**



The conceptual framework of corequisite developmental writing pedagogy includes foundational writing skills development. In corequisites, foundational writing skills development can be viewed as both leading to and stemming from the Integrated Reading/Writing English Comp Assignment. Foundational writing skills are best developed through active, brain-based teaching methods. Adams and McKusick (2014) described active learning in corequisites as replacing extensive lecturing with more collaborative

work and activities. Brain-based teaching methods involve engaging various areas of the brain to strengthen synaptic connections between neurons in the brain and reinforce learning. Zull (2002) identified four main areas of the brain to engage in learning: sensory areas, an interpretation area, the front integrative cortex, and motor areas. In terms of developing foundational writing skills, the sensory areas are used as students “see” and “hear” models of college writing; the interpretation area synthesizes prior knowledge with new information and detects patterns; the front integrative cortex allows students to formulate and explain their own ideas; and the motor areas are used in application and practice activities. The next section of this paper will give examples of active, brain-based instruction in context.

Students’ strengths and needs in foundational writing skills vary widely in developmental writing classes. Differentiated instruction can provide each student with appropriate support. Differentiation is based on student readiness, interest, and learning profiles (Santangelo & Tomlinson, 2009). Instruction can be differentiated by adjustments to content, process, product, and learning environment (Santangelo & Tomlinson, 2009). For developmental writing instructors, differentiation in the corequisite class might mean offering different materials for explaining concepts, supporting exploration of individual writing processes, allowing various means of demonstrating mastery of core objectives, and creating a learning environment that offers a degree of flexibility and student choice. These aspects of differentiated instruction will be applied through examples in the next section.

Ongoing, formative assessment is necessary for effective differentiated instruction. Active, brain-based methods of instruction offer many opportunities for instructors to gauge student understanding as students practice and apply concepts. The nature of corequisites involves a recursive cycle of assessment that moves between a formal writing assignment in English Composition and the development of foundational skills in the developmental support class. In Figure 2, assessment is shown as encompassing the entire framework. Instructors assess students’ basic writing skills along with the appropriateness of student writing for a specific context and the development of students’ noncognitive skills. Assessment leads to targeted, differentiated support.

Contextualized writing practice occurs in the corequisite model as students apply basic skills to college-level writing assignments. Backward planning, integrated reading and writing, and the rhetorical situation are elements of context-relevant assignments. Backward planning refers to starting with the end in mind and working backward to plan the supports needed to accomplish end goals. The corequisite class employs the backward-planning technique as the support class provides scaffolds for English Composition work. Even within English Composition, backward planning can be a helpful concept to ensure that students are provided with the tools and practice needed to successfully demonstrate college writing skills. In Figure 2, backward planning is represented by the bidirectional arrow between skills and the English Composition assignment.

Integrated reading and writing is another key element of contextualized writing. Students can see how writing has an impact beyond the classroom when they read authentic texts. An integrated pedagogical approach involves connecting reading and writing tasks that develop students’ critical thinking, synthesis, and evidence skills. Figure 2 shows an integrated reading and writing English Composition assignment as a central element of the corequisite pedagogy framework.

The rhetorical situation helps students see reading, writing, and critical thinking as key elements of effective communication. Bitzer’s (1968) model of the rhetorical situation includes the purpose for writing, the audience, the author, and the context. As students consider these elements in class readings and their own writing, they are thinking critically about written communication as a meaningful act in academic settings and beyond. In Figure 2, the integrated reading and writing English Composition assignment is embedded in a clear rhetorical situation.

The proposed framework of corequisite developmental writing pedagogy also includes elements related to developing students’ noncognitive skills. Grit and mindset, a culturally-relevant community of practice, and metacognition are included in the framework. Grit is defined as persisting through challenges over the long term (Duckworth, 2016). Mindset refers to one’s beliefs about learning and intelligence. Growth mindset is the belief that intelligence can be developed through effort (Dweck, 2008). Grit and growth mindset both emphasize the value of hard work and persistence as keys to effective learning. These

noncognitive characteristics are developed as students persist through challenging assignments in English Composition and development of foundational writing skills. In this model, missteps are an opportunity for learning, especially when combined with a culturally responsive community of practice and metacognition.

A community of practice is a group of individuals, some “masters” and some “novices,” who work together to perform an activity, which enhances the development of both masters and novices (Lave & Wenger, 1991). A culturally responsive community of practice is one in which “teachers assist students in mastering academic knowledge and skills, cross-cultural learning, and relational expectations” (Gay, 2018, p. 85). The cohort nature of the ALP corequisite model builds a community in which students have opportunities to share insights in their areas of strength and experience while also accepting guidance from others with different strengths and perspectives.

Metacognition, thinking about one’s thinking, oversees the entire framework as students are prompted to frequently reflect on their contributions to the community of practice, their foundational writing skill development, their attitudes and persistence toward learning, the fitness of their writing for its rhetorical situation, and the extent to which their writing fulfills the requirements of a college-level writing assignment. Metacognition, like assessment, encompasses the entire framework because it is ongoing and influences all teaching and learning processes.

This framework is intended to guide instructors’ course design and pedagogy. It is impossible to identify the best practice for every situation an instructor will encounter in a corequisite class, but if an instructor makes decisions based on a conceptual framework with clear connections to the objectives of the model, sound pedagogy follows. The next section offers examples of how the framework can be used to inform course design and instruction in corequisite developmental writing.

## **FRAMEWORK IN CONTEXT**

The framework of corequisite developmental writing pedagogy is built on the premise that a strong corequisite class starts with a strong English Composition class. The course objectives of a typical English Composition class require students to create texts for various audiences and purposes, including academic essays, while synthesizing information from multiple texts and employing rhetorical strategies. In addition to preparing students for the types of academic essay writing required for college classes, English Composition instructors often emphasize the relevance of writing skills in contemporary communication through approaches such as genre studies (Bawarshi & Reiff, 2010), multimodal composition (Lutkewitte, 2013), or community-based writing (Deans, Roswell, & Wurr, 2010). Despite research supporting these approaches, developmental writing classes have traditionally been slow to shift the focus beyond discrete skill development to include writing in meaningful contexts (Grubb, 2010). Instead, developmental writing classes traditionally encouraged formulaic, decontextualized academic writing structures. The corequisite model provides students in developmental classes support for foundational skills while engaging with writing assignments that are more likely to be meaningful, complex, and relevant.

Let’s start with an integrated reading/writing English Composition assignment to explore the framework for corequisite developmental writing pedagogy in context. To help students apply writing skills in a meaningful context, the instructor uses backward planning, integrated reading and writing, and the rhetorical situation. For a concrete example, imagine an English Composition unit about popular culture. The culminating assignment in the unit is an analysis of a student-selected “text” (a movie, show, song, book, game, etc.) from pop culture. The analysis should be primarily composed of written material, but the student is given some flexibility in purpose, audience, and genre. Students will demonstrate the course learning outcomes as they incorporate at least one class text into their analysis and apply the rhetorical strategies most effective for their selected audience, purpose, and genre. Backward planning moves from outcomes to assignments to supporting materials and lessons. As the class prepares for the assignment, students will need to understand and practice the following: the rhetorical situation, rhetorical analysis, genre, synthesizing ideas from class texts with their own, and the difference between summary and analysis. English Composition course materials include textbook readings on analysis and the rhetorical situation, supplemental readings on pop culture analysis, several pop culture “texts” for analysis practice, and

examples from several genres used to share analysis of pop culture texts (essays, blogs, reviews, etc.). In-class English Composition lessons will include discussions of unit materials and activities to practice the supporting skills required for the unit assignment. The corequisite class continues to employ backward planning to provide additional just-in-time support for English Composition work.

Integrating reading and writing during course design serves several purposes as related to the framework for corequisite pedagogy. First of all, integrated reading and writing involves models of writing in various genres, which helps students see writing created for an authentic rhetorical situation, adding to the meaningful context for learning writing skills. In the hypothetical pop culture unit, students analyze the rhetorical situation of sample texts to prepare for their own analysis assignment. In addition, an integrated reading and writing approach promotes whole-brain learning as students see models for their own writing (motor areas of the brain); synthesize information from readings with their own ideas (interpretation area); explain the ideas in readings and articulate their positions on issues in the readings (front integrative cortex); and actively work to create their own texts on similar topics or in similar genres (motor areas). Integrating reading and writing also helps foster a culturally relevant community of practice and promotes metacognition. Shared texts give students in the class a set of common knowledge to refer to, which is expanded through class discussions in which students with varied experiences and perspectives share ideas. Students are also more accurately able to be metacognitive about their own writing when they can compare the moves made in readings to moves made in their own writing. Integrated reading and writing is beneficial for all English Composition students, but the additional support provided by the corequisite class provides opportunities to scaffold the underlying skills required for success on the unit assignment.

In the framework for corequisite developmental writing pedagogy, foundational writing skills are developed in close connection to the work of English Composition through active, whole brain learning, differentiated instruction, and ongoing assessment. English Composition class activities highlight the analysis skills required for the pop culture analysis assignment, which limits the time instructors can spend with the whole class on foundational writing skills. The corequisite course provides the extra time required to focus on academic writing skills. In the pop culture assignment, for example, students are required to incorporate a class text into their analysis. English Composition activities address the skill of synthesis, but the instructor notices that students still falter in creating clear sentences that comment on course materials. To practice the sentence-level skills in the corequisite class, the instructor has students write one-sentence paraphrases of key ideas from class readings. Then, the instructor has students write their own one-sentence responses to those ideas. Once students have a set of simple sentences to work with, the instructor presents a lesson on sentence combining with coordinating and subordinating conjunctions. Students mix and match their one-sentence paraphrases with their one-sentence ideas to create compound and complex sentences. An active-learning exercise like this helps students understand structural sentence-writing skills while also creating sentences that could be used in the upcoming unit assignment.

Using the same assignments and texts from English Composition to reinforce foundational writing skills also promotes whole-brain learning as students can draw from their prior knowledge and make connections between the two classes. In English Composition, students start to build neuronal connections related to the topic and writing. For learning to stick, students need to return to concepts and continue firing those same neural pathways (Zull, 2002). It's impossible to plan ahead for all the foundational writing skills each group of students will need in the corequisite, but instructors can use the framework to develop active, brain-based learning activities to support basic sentence, paragraph, and essay-writing skills.

Because each group of corequisite students is unique, differentiating instruction is a best practice for developing foundational writing skills and providing support for the complex reading, writing, and thinking tasks required for English Composition. For example, let's say students learned about the rhetorical situation in English Composition and worked in small groups to analyze and verbally report on the rhetorical situation of a pop culture text. The instructor planned to follow up during the corequisite class by having students write out the analysis to provide just-in-time support for foundational writing skills. Corequisite class sessions often start with a check-in during which students unpack what they learned during English Composition and identify needs for further clarification or practice. Active learning tasks and differentiation generally follow. During the corequisite check-in, some students report feeling confident

about their ability to analyze the rhetorical situation while others struggle to put the pieces together. The small corequisite class size allows instructors to gauge student understanding and adapt as necessary to provide just-in-time support. In this case, the instructor could move forward in a variety of ways, but using the framework's focus on differentiated instruction and active learning helps make the most of the situation. For example, the instructor might realize that students need a stronger conceptual understanding of the rhetorical situation and change the writing activity from application to explanation. In this scenario, the instructor might have pairs of students work together to write an explanation of each element of the rhetorical situation. The explanations could then be put into a master document and revised and edited as a whole group during the next class session. In another scenario, the instructor might continue with the written analysis activity but pair students based on their conceptual understanding of the rhetorical situation so each group has at least one student who is able to model the analysis while others in the group may be able to bring their strengths to the writing aspect of the activity. The possibilities for providing further skills development are endless, but in any case, instructors aim to provide each student the type of support they need and the opportunity to actively practice developing skills.

Ongoing formative assessment helps corequisite instructors differentiate instruction and create active learning opportunities for students. For example, ongoing formative assessment in the English Composition pop culture unit includes reading notes summarizing and responding to analyses of pop culture texts, class discussions of pop culture texts, class activities to create short analyses texts, etc. As students begin their individual analysis assignments, the writing process provides opportunities for formative assessment as students prewrite to determine a topic and generate ideas, outline to organize ideas, draft their analysis, revise for clarity, and edit. Through all of these assignments and writing stages, corequisite instructors look for individual student strengths and concepts or skills that need further support. For example, perhaps several students in the corequisite class did not complete or struggled with the summary/response reading notes that were assigned as English Composition homework. Instructors can follow-up in the corequisite class. Maybe students indicate in the beginning of the support class that they found the reading too complex or didn't know how to explain the ideas from the reading. In that case, the instructor might initiate a collaborative reading and summarizing activity to further identify and support reading comprehension and summary difficulties. Or, perhaps students reported struggling with the homework because it was too boring or they had too many other responsibilities outside of school that prevented them from completing the assignment. In that case, follow-up activities in the support class could address noncognitive skills.

The framework for pedagogy in corequisite developmental writing classes addresses noncognitive skills through applying the principles of grit and mindset, creating a culturally responsive community of practice, and metacognitive reflection. Corequisite classes mainstream students into college level work in part because students in traditional developmental education classes were not persisting through multiple levels of prerequisite coursework. The reasons for the lack of persistence are varied and nuanced, but persistence, or grit, through college coursework is an underlying goal of corequisite developmental writing. Growth mindset – the belief that individuals can improve and learn with effort – is the cornerstone of grit. Why persist if there is no chance of improving? To develop a growth mindset and instill grit in students, corequisite instructors can praise students for their efforts and academic risk-taking (Dweck, 2008). For example, sentence structure errors tend to increase when students shift from narrative writing to more nuanced argument and research-based writing (Lunsford & Lunsford, 2008). The corequisite class is a place to celebrate mistakes as opportunities for learning. A corequisite instructor might mark several sentence structure errors in a student's essay with a quick note: "I think I see what you're saying here but I stumbled on the sentence structure. Let's take a look at these together in class." The student with this note might mention it in the opening reflection that begins the corequisite class and be willing to share the sentences with the class as an opportunity for everyone to discuss sentence structure. Or, the student might prefer to work individually with the teacher. In either case, the message is positive and affirming while also promoting improvement through continued effort.

To further motivate students to persist through struggle, corequisite classes should foster a community of practice. A community of practice provides newcomers with support and resources as they become full participants in a field. Communities of practice decenter a structured "teaching curriculum;" instead, a

“learning curriculum” unfolds as students seek guidance in their efforts to legitimately contribute to a new field (Lave & Wenger, 1991). One way to uncover the student’s “learning curriculum” is through an opening reflection in the corequisite class. In this reflection, students can report their understanding of English Composition concepts and assignment expectations. Students can ask specific questions or identify broad areas of confusion. Some corequisite instructors use a written reflection and others lead a verbal, group debrief at the beginning of class. When questions arise, corequisite instructors can refer back to elements of the framework to guide their responses and actions. As we have seen elsewhere in this extended example, students engaging in the pop culture unit may show a need for further resources and practice in areas such as conceptual understanding of the rhetorical situation or structural, sentence-level skills. As active, differentiated exercises are developed, the framework reinforces the principle that learning involves doing. Easy answers and repeated explanations from the instructor are less effective than opportunities for students to discover answers for themselves as they learn with and from peers.

A culturally responsive community of practice can help create an environment in which students regularly engage in sharing perspectives, asking questions, receiving support, and giving support. A culturally responsive environment is created through a culture of caring (Gay, 2018). Culturally responsive caring in the classroom includes attending to person and performance, legitimizing individual voice and visibility, and prompting effort and achievement (Gay, 2018). The ALP model’s small class size and continuity of instructor through both English Composition and the support class help instructors develop relationships with students, and the cohort model allows students to develop connections with each other (Adams, Gearhart, Miller, & Roberts, 2009). The corequisite class provides time and space to talk through and share each student’s progress on English Composition writing assignments at various stages. For example, in the pop culture unit, the corequisite class may generate ideas together by sharing excerpts of each student’s chosen pop culture “text” and discussing why the text is an interesting rhetorical and cultural artifact. While the English Composition class is too large to discuss each student’s topic, the corequisite class provides the time to give each student a voice and each chosen topic visibility. This discussion brings out the personal aspects of the assignment without only focusing on the written performance. The discussion of each student’s topic and progress at various stages in the writing process also holds students accountable for effort and achievement as the group is interested in the topic and looks forward to discussing development of the assignment and sharing finished products.

Creating a culturally responsive community of practice also involves checking personal biases about student motivation and ability and taking into consideration the external factors that students experience. Although mindset and grit are valuable and necessary skills for success, teachers need to be careful to avoid making the assumption that students who do not succeed simply lack motivation or the willingness to work hard enough when real social, emotional, and cognitive barriers exist for students (Goodman, 2018). Instructors note that the corequisite model provides them opportunities to form stronger relationships with students, which helps when it comes to addressing challenging life issues that interfere with academic success (Adams, Gearhart, Miller, & Roberts, 2009; Walker, 2015). One way corequisite instructors might promote relationship-building with students who seem to be faltering academically is following up with students through a lens of genuine curiosity. The corequisite format offers opportunities to have informal conversations with students who are missing work and ask, “I haven’t seen this assignment from you yet. What’s up? Is everything okay?” Students with hardships outside of school are not obligated to disclose any personal information to teachers, but establishing a trusting relationship may help students feel more comfortable communicating about the barriers they face. Corequisite instructors should know the college and community resources available to help students with academic and non-academic issues. Some corequisite instructors even have students identify these resources early in the semester and create a class resource bank.

Constant monitoring and adjustment is necessary to maintain a culturally responsive classroom community of practice. Metacognition is the process of reflecting on one’s cognitive processes to shape future actions. In the framework of corequisite developmental writing pedagogy, metacognition functions on several levels, thus encompassing all the elements of the framework. On one level, a corequisite instructor is continually thinking metacognitively about the efficacy of instruction and assessment practices

being used. Assessment and metacognition are on the same plane of the framework as they reinforce one another. For example, when students turn in drafts of the pop culture assignment, the instructor might assess that more students than usual seem to need additional support in organizing their ideas through structural elements of the text. Reflection on the learning activities preceding the draft may reveal that more class time was spent on conceptual aspects of the assignment rather than structural aspects because it was assumed those would be more challenging. Or, reflection might reveal that the instructor was feeling distracted on the day structure was explained, resulting in rushed explanation of organizational text features. Metacognitive reflection and assessment influence just-in-time support and actions to take in future classes.

On another level of metacognition, the instructor also continually models the cognitive processes involved in reading and writing complex texts. In instructor modeling, there is no need to orchestrate teaching moments; reading and writing are complex, and the instructor will need to pause and work through choices and challenges, creating authentic instructional opportunities. Instructors may hesitate to write in real time with students for fear of making mistakes, but students develop stronger writing and self-regulatory skills when watching a demonstration that includes mistakes being made and corrected rather than watching a mastery version of the same task (Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2002). Students benefit greatly from seeing an instructor's thought process. A corequisite instructor may choose to write one or two of the essays with the class to model the entire writing process, or a few selected assignment elements can be modeled. For instance, a corequisite instructor can write an introductory paragraph for the pop culture unit assignment in class with students' input. Students might suggest various lead-ins and consider which would work best and why. If the instructor struggles, for example with wording the thesis statement, students can make suggestions. In the case of the thesis, the instructor would likely consider each suggestion and how various wordings would impact the focus of the essay. This exercise would reinforce the idea that the thesis statement drives the focus and organization of the writing that follows. Modeling mental processes shows students how writers think and act, which helps them begin to think, act, and see themselves as legitimate writers.

On a third level, a corequisite instructor also prompts students to be metacognitive about their own thought processes. At times, the instructor leads this metacognitive reflection. For example, students are usually prompted to think about their understanding of English Composition concepts and activities in a reflective debrief at the beginning of the corequisite class. At other times, the activities students engage in with peers prompt them to expose their cognitive processes. Group writing activities require students to navigate the writing process aloud as they share ideas, draft, and review with input from each group member. Peer review also has the potential to prompt metacognitive thinking. Corequisite instructors can encourage metacognitive peer review by starting with a writer's reflection about the writing process, strengths in the writing, and the types of feedback requested from reviewers. During the peer review, students prompt each other to metacognition when asking questions about the intentions behind parts of the writing. Students practice metacognition by explaining their thinking and writing.

Corequisite developmental writing instruction requires a delicate balance of structure and flexibility (Coleman, 2014). Experienced instructors can anticipate which aspects of writing assignments will be challenging for students and prepare activities to promote success in those areas. However, it is impossible to predict all the opportunities for learning that will be revealed when students are challenged to engage in complex, meaningful writing tasks. At times, students will need support in foundational skill development. Sometimes, students will need to connect their learning to meaningful contexts. At other times, students will require noncognitive support. The framework for corequisite developmental writing pedagogy is intended to guide instructors as they prepare for and navigate the constantly shifting dynamics of the corequisite class.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK**

Implementation of the framework for corequisite developmental writing pedagogy includes training, ongoing support, and reflection. Models for training faculty to teach corequisite classes vary. Community College of Baltimore County offers multi-day training in a twenty-five-hour ALP Faculty Institute (Adams,

2016). Other colleges offer limited training or no formal training at all (Coleman, 2014). While the format and intensity of training may vary, faculty new to teaching corequisite classes should understand the key objectives of the corequisite model and the best practices for helping students meet those objectives. The framework presented here offers a model for linking those best pedagogical practices to both the corequisite model's purpose and front-line implementation.

Ongoing support for faculty new to teaching the corequisite model is essential. Faculty questions about a new instructional model evolve as faculty begin teaching in the new model. Even when training on a reform model addresses issues of pedagogy and student learning, faculty tend to focus on the structural aspects of course planning before the class starts and shift their focus to student learning when they start to teach in the new model (Bickerstaff and Cormier, 2015). Therefore, opportunities for conversations, collaboration, and professional development should be offered regularly before and after the corequisite model is place.

Training and support are necessary, but implementing a pedagogical approach is ultimately a highly nuanced and personal process. Reflection is a key part of teaching and learning. The framework proposed in this paper emphasizes reflection and the normalcy of mistakes as a path to growth. Those principles apply not only for students transitioning to college writing but also for instructors transitioning to corequisite developmental writing instruction.

## CONCLUSION

As colleges continue to reform developmental education, the corequisite model for developmental writing is becoming more commonplace. As the structural reform takes place, a pedagogical shift also occurs. The corequisite class cannot be designed and taught like a traditional developmental education class. The framework for corequisite developmental writing pedagogy presented in this paper offers a starting place for making decisions about teaching and learning practices in the corequisite model. The framework was discussed in context and recommendations were made for implementation. However, limitations exist and further research is needed to improve upon the pedagogical framework.

The framework presented in this paper was created based on the ALP corequisite model, which includes a cohort of students in the same English Composition and developmental class, the same instructor, and a three-credit hour support class with a small group of students. Many schools are adapting the model and finding preliminary success (Coleman, 2014). However, the key features of ALP make possible several elements of the framework for corequisite pedagogy. Corequisite instructors who have less class time, higher enrollment, or who don't teach both the developmental and college-level class may find the framework for corequisite pedagogy presented here unfeasible or in need of adaptation.

Furthermore, the framework was designed with face-to-face classes in mind. The Coronavirus pandemic of 2020 resulted in many corequisite classes moving online. The possibility of continued online corequisite offerings is unclear at this point, but a framework for corequisite developmental writing instruction online would likely include additions or adaptations to the conceptual model offered in this paper.

There is more work to do in understanding and providing effective developmental writing instruction. The elements of this framework are research-based best practices, but further research should continue to drive pedagogy. More information, in particular, is needed about differentiated instruction, the neuroscience of learning, and culturally responsive teaching in the corequisite writing classroom.

Corequisite developmental writing holds the promise of increasing student access to college while supporting academic and student success skills. However, structural changes alone won't fulfil that promise. Instructors with a strong sense of purpose and pedagogy will.



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