Higher Ed Jargon Reduction Exercise

Purpose of the Tool

The following exercise may be used with staff members to conduct a jargon reduction audit, so that students and other audiences may more effectively navigate the college website, newsletters, handouts, and other written materials.

Directions

• Ask IT Department staff to identify top 10 college webpages with highest volume of traffic

• Brainstorm all student- and parent-facing material that generates a high volume of in-person traffic

• Provide staff with print copies of webpages identified by IT staff and additional self-identified webpages

• Ask staff to complete the following tasks:

1. **Reduce multisyllabic words:** Underline all words with more than two syllables. Identify and replace them with shorter words (even if this requires using multiple words in the place of one multisyllabic word)

2. **Remove passive voice:** Ask staff to highlight all language in passive voice; rephrase sentences to be in active voice

3. **Group related information:** Condense all text that pertains to the same topic in a specific area and use white space to separate it from information pertaining to another topic

4. **Translate jargon:** Use the results from the Higher Ed Terminology Translation Exercise (page 40) to replace jargon (where appropriate) with translations for a non-higher education audience (this step is especially effective when completed with new employees unfamiliar with higher education jargon)

Higher Ed Jargon Reduction Exercise (cont.)

Example:

Original Text:

Take the College Placement Test

After you have been admitted to the college, you must take the **college placement test**. Schedule your test by going to www.eabcc.edu or by calling. If *you have* successfully completed a **college-level** English or math course from another college or have taken EABCC placement testing at an earlier date, you may qualify for an <u>**exemption**</u> from all or part of the test. In order to be <u>**eligible**</u> to participate in a specific academic program and/or enroll in **credit classes**, students must achieve a **minimum score** of 33 out of 120 on the reading portion of the test.

Gunning Fog Index Score: 12.65

Revised Text:

Take the College Placement Test

If you are an admitted student, you must take a test that measures what classes you are ready to take, called "Placement Tests." It's important to prepare for this test because it could impact how fast you can graduate if you place into classes that do not count towards your degree. To enroll in classes that do count towards your degree, you need score at least 33 out of 120 on the reading section.

You'll need an appointment to take the test. You should schedule it by going to www.eabcc.edu or by calling (XXX-XXX-XXXX).

There are two reasons you may not need to take the test.

1) If you completed and passed an English or math course for college credit at another school

2) If you took the placement test at EABCC in the past

Gunning Fog Index Score: 8.79

Key:

Passive Voice

Jargon

<u>Multisyllabic</u>