Differentiation Section

University of Wisconsin sailing students are tech-savvy with a robust amount of Internet resources and access at their disposal. Many students are English Language Learners (ELL) or have prior sailing experience before joining the Hoofer's Sailing Club. In the student-centered Advanced Tech course considerations are made for ELLs and a skills assessment is needed to keep the challenge appropriate for students. In the latter case, a pre-assessment is added to the course where students rate their abilities and experience. The pre-assessment also addresses the former by asking students to indicate their native language and proficiency with oral and written English.

Level of Challenge is important to help students 'raise their game'. If the course is too difficult some students may opt-out. Likewise, if the course is not challenging enough then advanced students will get nothing from the learning activities. The pre-assessment permits the instructor to reflect on responses and assign students with similar abilities to study teams and the appropriate mix of problem-solving scenarios. Scenarios with varying levels of complexity ensure that all students, irrespective of their current knowledge, are appropriately challenged.

English Language Learners (ELLs) are the biggest group requiring differentiation at the Hoofer's Sailing Club. Chinese, Russian, Portuguese and Spanish speakers constitute a large percentage of the club membership. To address this audience, UW Hoofer Sailing Club will:

1) Provide links to Google and other services which translate written form between languages

2) Pair students with same native languages in synchronous work using pre-assessment

3) Provide students with one-on-one access to sailing club mentors who share the same native tongue.