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SURFACE

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Using Writing to Teach

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Using Writing To Teach

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—Tobi and Hilton

Table of Contents

Hilton Hallock, Cultural Foundations of Education and the Graduate School
Tobi Jacobi, Composition and Cultural Rhetoric

>	Chapter one presents the theoretical and pedagogical framework
>	for the text. It highlights the authors' understanding of how using
>	writing to teach influences the classroom environment and learning
>	outcomes.

Payal Banerjee, Sociology

>	Chapter two suggests ways to imagine your syllabus as a written
>	tool for communicating with students and for inviting student en-
>	gagement with course activities. It discusses the design of writing
>	assignments and gives examples of a range of exercises.

Monique Schmidt, English

>	Chapter three encourages teachers to raise student awareness of the
>	purposes, audiences, and central claims of texts by using writing
>	activities. Sample exercises are provided to illustrate ways to use
>	writing to move students into more focused and critical analyses of
>	information and research.

Four: Processes of Composing 40

Tobi Jacobi, Composition and Cultural Rhetoric
Hilton Hallock, Cultural Foundations of Education and the Graduate School

> Chapter four acknowledges the varied processes students experience. It outlines specific classroom activities and exercises for using writing at various stages of composing (inventing, drafting, revising, editing). It raises pedagogical considerations at each stage and names concrete strategies for applying such considerations to the classroom. It also addresses some of the concerns about writing process commonly raised by students and teachers.

Five: Content and Form 52

Dave Steitz, Experimental Psychology

> Chapter five addresses the complex relationship between content and form, purpose and audience. It also recognizes differences in disciplinary expectations. The chapter concludes with an illustration of two forms of academic writing (empirical research papers and analytical essays) and discusses how instructors can assist students in developing these types of assignments.

Six: Responding to Student Writing 64

Cheryl Najarian, Sociology and Women's Studies

> Chapter six identifies the responsibility we face when student backgrounds, difficult or controversial topics, time constraints, and stylistic choices, how teachers respond to student work. It also lays out a set of strategies for addressing such challenges and outlines alternative methods of providing feedback and developing expectations.

Seven: Evaluating Student Writing 76

John Draeger, Philosophy

> Chapter seven offers strategies for developing and revising grading criteria. It also addresses grade distribution/inflation and the power of critical evaluation.

Eight: Promoting Academic Honesty in Writing 86

Kara Bopp, Experimental Psychology

> Chapter eight outlines various types of academic dishonesty in writing and suggests preventative methods such as developing strategic assignments and honor codes. It also offers ways to become aware of and handle instances of academic dishonesty.

Additional Resources 100

Campus Resources 104

> This appendix includes summaries of University services that might be useful to instructors using writing in their teaching. For a more complete description of these and other resources, see the *Student Handbook* or the University website.

About the Authors 108

Alternative Table of Contents

The following index, organized by topic and chapter number, provides a quick reference guide to specific pedagogical issues and classroom practices.

Student Engagement: 1, 2, 6

Student Participation
  Course & assignment design: 2, 6
  In class: 1-4
  In collaborative writing: 2, 4, 5
  Peer review: 3, 4, 6

Syllabus
  Academic Honesty: 2, 8
  Components: 2, 8
  Course: 2, 6
  Design: 2, 8
  Discussion/Recitation/Lab: 2, 6
  Special Needs: 6
  Teaching Tool: 2, 6

Technology
  Instructional media: 4, 5, 8
  Internet/website: 1, 4, 5, 8
  Listserv/e-mail: 4, 6

Time Management: 1, 2, 4, 6-8

Working with Faculty
and TA Colleagues: 1, 7, 8

Writing Abilities: 1, 4, 6-8

Writing in/for Different Media: 1, 2, 4

A Reader's Guide for *Using Writing to Teach*

This text represents a year of research, dialogue, collaboration, and difference between teachers and scholars from at least nine disciplines at Syracuse University. The conversations and resources gathered here are intended to function as a practical and pedagogical tool for using writing in the university classroom. It is written in such a way that readers can use it as a linear text or as a sourcebook for specific questions, concerns, and teaching needs.

Within each chapter, specific symbols indicate a focus on teaching ideas or pedagogical considerations.

My first class as a freshman . . .	Student and teacher quotations open each chapter and represent the diverse voices that have contributed to the book.

Things To

Consider

The broken puzzle pieces mark pedagogical considerations.

Teaching

Ideas

The abstract puzzle marks teaching ideas.

See Chapter X for more information on the current topic.	Notes in the margins indicate a link to another section of the book where a similar topic is presented and/or expanded upon.

Professional development

Additionally, there are a number of ways that the work of this book might be applied and for extended departmental use.

- Professional development workshops on using writing to teach.
- Creation of an online discipline-specific sourcebook.
- Development of discipline-specific/interdisciplinary applications (classroom activities, assignments, etc.).
- Addition to the department resource library.

A Writing Narrative, A Learning Process
Preface

In the summer of 2001, Tobi Jacobi had the opportunity to interview teaching assistants throughout Syracuse University to learn more about how they used writing in their teaching. Her initial goal was to gather information that would help writing instructors better prepare students to do the various types of writing they encounter in the academic setting. The teaching assistants she interviewed described a variety of teaching-with-writing strategies used to enhance both general academic success and discipline or course-specific learning. They spoke eloquently about the power of writing as a pedagogical tool as well as the challenges of designing, managing, and assessing writing activities. Several of the teaching assistants Tobi interviewed expressed an interest in continuing the conversation about using writing in teaching. They wanted to share ideas, learn from other disciplinary perspectives, become more innovative and reflective in their teaching, assist new TAs and faculty, and above all, create effective learning opportunities for their students. This book is the beginning of that extended conversation.

With the support of the Professional Development Programs of the Graduate School, our group of experienced teaching assistants from a variety of disciplines formed the Using Writing to Teach Collaborative and gathered regularly throughout the spring and summer of 2002. From the beginning, we made a commitment to a process and product that were collaborative and interdisciplinary. This approach was very rewarding and often challenging. As we will discuss later, it inspired us to think more about ways that undergraduate students may experience our courses, how they navigate the expectations of disparate disciplines to chart an educational course that integrates knowledge, skill, and personal commitments—and how we use both formal and informal writing activities in our classrooms to make this learning visible. We also learned that, although the jargon of our disciplines might be different, we share many of the same concerns about creative, effective, and student/learning-centered teaching.

Representation from every department of the university would have been unwieldy and impossible. Our group did include TAs from the sciences, humanities, social sciences, and professional schools. We made additional efforts to solicit input and feedback from undergraduate students, teaching assistants, faculty, and alumni, and, in our discussions, we oftenchallenged each other to look beyond our own disciplinary perspectives. This resulted in many exchanges around questions like: "What do *you* mean by *analysis?*" "What counts as text?" and "How could that exercise work in Engineering?". We hope readers will add their own questions and ideas to the conversation through informal discussion with colleagues, professional development sessions in departments, and innovative practice in the classroom.

As we prepare this text for publication, we are overwhelmingly aware of how its collaborative nature has filtered through every stage of its development.   We began with a lengthy discussion about how and why we use writing in our teaching. We selected topics to work on and each took the lead on writing specific chapters. Each chapter draft was shared and critiqued on a listserv and discussed in group meetings. We engaged each other and our students and colleagues in the development of the chapters in order to collect diverse teaching strategies, share resources, and test the application of ideas in different academic settings.

This book is not a "how-to" manual on how to write, how to teach, or how to teach writing. It does not encompass all types of writing or all academic arenas. It is, instead, a collection of ideas, questions, and teaching strategies that can connect writing to learning, enhancing both.

-The Collaborative Authors

Learning to Use Writing to Teach
Chapter 1

I know students come into my class and have a hard time trying to figure out what a philosophy paper is about, as opposed to other kinds of papers. I know what a philosophy paper looks like, but I don't exactly know what other kinds of papers require. Therefore, I have a hard time trying to help them see through and negotiate disciplinary differences.

Students have the ability to express themselves through writing. Writing has such transformative potential for them in terms of being able to articulate themselves, articulate points, articulate positions and beliefs and ideologies and issues of power.

One of the things that I wrestle with is this tension . . . I know that I am comfortable with the written word. I like to read; I like good writing. I have learned from writing. I'm transformed by writing. I have a facility with it. But I also recognize that not everybody does. They have different learning styles; they have different preparations that enable them to be different things. I am really struggling with some of the assignments that I give. Am I asking them to write because that's the way to learn this, or is there a better way for them to learn?

One time I was a TA for a class and worked with one particular student—an international student—and she didn't write what we considered to be grammatically correct. Now, I work in sociology and women's studies, and I'm thinking, "Oh, here I am, the colonizer. You must write this way." I truly did not know how far to take correcting her grammar. It doesn't necessarily have to an international student. That's why I bring up these issues of language and power.

Sometimes the danger with really good writers is that they can be saying absolutely nothing. There was a student who had written a paper. Its argument was problematic and flawed but she did it so well. I was going to reward her just for writing well, and that was a problem.

As teachers and scholars representing multiple disciplines, we recognize the need for exemplary communication skills in the students we work with at Syracuse University. We design and facilitate courses intended to challenge the breadth of students' knowledge and demand that they engage critically with the world around them. Engaged students demonstrate their critical thinking skills through close reading, careful analysis, and writing. As the teacher quotations that open this chapter illustrate, the focus of this book is writing. We seek to articulate some of the ways that writing can function as both a demonstrable product and evolving process of developing such skills in our students. We encourage teachers to rethink their pedagogies and describe practical strategies and exercises for using writing in the classroom. This chapter articulates our ideas about the use of writing in teaching and names the pedagogical implications of applying the strategies and teaching ideas presented in *Using Writing to Teach* in any university course.

Using Writing to Teach: Some Assumptions

As our working group engaged in discussions about the purposes and practices of using writing to teach, we challenged each other to look beyond our own disciplinary perspectives. Eventually, we developed shared understandings about "writing" that shaped the direction of this project. In the context of using writing to teach and learn, we see writing as:

- **Both Process and Product**. We agreed that, in terms of making learning visible, the process of developing and expressing ideas through writing was as important as the end product. As with any pedagogical activity, there is a dynamic and dialectic relationship between process and product.
- **Formal and Informal**. We recognized that writing does not have to take the form of a formal assignment (term paper, essay question on exam, etc.) to be a valuable pedagogical tool. We made an effort to include strategies for using both formal exercises and informal writing activities throughout the book.
- **Interactive**. In our conversations, we returned again and again to issues of audience (writer/reader; teacher/student) and to the potential of writing as an instrument for giving and getting feedback. We also recognized that one reason students struggle with writing is that they have not always received constructive feedback that helps them think critically about what they know and how to improve their writing.
- **More than Assessment** (although useful for that, too). Most instructors use some form of writing to assess how well students have learned course material. As a group, we extend such a model to include the power of writing to generate learning, to encourage students to develop their own voices, and to help students connect what they are learning in our courses with other parts of their education and lives.

- **Different Forms and Media**. Writing assignments are no longer limited to essay questions in blue books or typed term papers (if they ever were!). Students may use writing to create video projects, PowerPoint presentations, and e-mail discussions about class materials. They also have more access to texts of different kinds through resources such as the Internet or electronic databases. The advent of new pedagogical and communications technologies presents many opportunities to be creative in our teaching, and it challenges us to rethink the structures and goals of learning activities.
- **Diverse and Evolving**. Although we are often immersed in standardized forms of academic/professional writing for our own disciplines, we recognize that there are many forms of academic writing. Students often struggle with navigating and integrating these disparate disciplinary expectations, and we can help them by making our expectations clear.

Implications of Using Writing to Teach

Our teaching will recognize the needs of multiple and diverse student learners. Incorporating writing into our teaching can present opportunities for a greater number of students to connect with course materials. As we recognize the emergence of research on alternative learning styles, we have a responsibility to move toward a model of more inclusive education by revising our teaching practices. Using writing in multiple and varied ways can begin to invite students to make meaning in ways that will enhance their understanding and challenge their creativity.

Our methods and classroom practices will be revised and enhanced. This book asks us to examine how writing might enhance how we convey information, design our classrooms, and use our class time. We believe that the time we spend teaching about writing and using writing in our teaching pays off in the quality of work we get from our students. Incorporating writing exercises and activities into the classroom can shift the tone significantly, becoming a method of quickening or relaxing student interaction with course material. A five-minute freewrite can function as a transition between readings or focus an upcoming class discussion. Brief exit notes written in the final moments of class can present a teacher with critical feedback about student understanding, engagement, and challenges. By enhancing our methods of teaching and inquiring, writing can make space for a deepened understanding of course ideas and materials through reflection, synthesis, and analysis.

Our students will be more involved. Writing can engage students both collaboratively and individually by asking them to process information through written media. It can function as a dialogic learning tool between students and their peers, course texts and assignments, and course instructors. Students can interpret and connect what they are learning when writing is incorporated into the classroom with deliberate pedagogical focus.

Teachers and students may experience an increased awareness of learning processes. Using writing to teach can make visible the processes students and teachers go through as they learn. For example, writing exercises that supplement math problems help students and instructors see students' understanding of concepts and problem-solving strategies. Writing can record the evolving process of understanding material through a sequence of short assignments; it can also deepen understanding by functioning as a space for reflection, analysis, and critique. Students can experience this achievement as they complete course work, and teachers will become aware of how their expectations are being met or should be revised as they respond to such texts. Through writing, understanding of material is challenged and deepened, and students are empowered as learners.

Our teaching will support multiple forms of knowing. Writing allows us to experiment with form in ways that can generate new thinking. Assignments that use writing to create dialogue, visual, aural, or web-based projects can move students toward critical thinking through alternative media. Teaching alternative methods of communication through writing exercises challenges our sense of how knowledge is constructed.

Our multi/interdisciplinary links will become more visible. As we use writing to teach, we outline expectations for both writing processes and products. Informal and sequential writing exercises can make the process of acculturating and moving between disciplinary conventions a part of course conversation. The connections between courses and scholarly traditions can become a teaching tool through writing as students grapple with rhetorical strategies, discipline-specific genres, and resource citation rules.

Our teaching and learning will emphasize the evolving nature of literacy. The advanced literacy skills cultivated in university classrooms are ever-changing and blurring. Using writing as a learning tool across university courses prepares our students for the wide variety of communication tasks that lay before them in the workplace.

How Writing Enters Teaching

As the quotes that begin each chapter illustrate, there are great advantages and significant challenges to using writing in teaching. Using writing as a teaching tool presents pedagogical questions and opportunities throughout a course or assignment. This book addresses issues for instructors related to course and assignment design, development, and response.

Design: Chapter 2 discusses the design of course materials and assignments, using writing to promote student involvement and understanding of course objectives and requirements. Chapter 3 presents strategies for fostering critical thinking skills through writing activities for close reading and analysis.

Development: Chapter 4 acknowledges the varied processes writers use and presents strategies for developing academic writing practices. Chapter 5 articulates the relationship between content and form and illustrates the importance of audience awareness in writing and research.

Response: Chapters 6 and 7 focus on the responsibility of responding to and evaluating student writing through discussions of feedback strategies, teacher expectations, and difference. Chapter 8 addresses academic honesty through a discussion of preventative and responsive methods.

"If the secret to writing is "write, write, write," then the secret to using writing in our classrooms is asking students to "write, write, write."
—John Draeger

Writing as a Teaching Tool in Syllabus and Assignment Design
Chapter 2

My first class as a freshman, I didn't know what a syllabus was! First I thought it was some kind of a big project! Of course, I quickly figured it out. To me a syllabus is an outline for the course. The things that I look for in the syllabus are requirements about papers, assignments, due dates, the course schedule, readings and all that. I like a syllabus that is detailed and also gives a description of each project, that way even if I don't start doing the assignment, I can at least think about it ahead of time to get some ideas.

Senior in Policy Studies

A syllabus should be put together with the perspective of students in mind. Ideally, a syllabus should be able to capture students' attention and enhance their interest in the subject. So, one has to make sure that students feel some connection with the subject's theory and people's everyday experiences. The syllabus can draw the student into the subject, as it sets the tone in so many ways. So I ask myself how can I invite the student into the syllabus and into the course?

Teaching Associate/Graduate Student

Assignments are about getting feedback on students' understanding and perception of material.

Undergraduate in Accounting

Course documents such as syllabi and assignment sheets are a traditional part of any university class. They provide information and set the tone for the class. They name learning goals, expectations for student work, and evaluation criteria. They can also be used as teaching tools to engage students' interest and actively solicit participation. By using such texts strategically, teachers can encourage students to take a role in designing the course throughout the semester. Since writing is an interactive process in which both teachers and students participate, the idea of using writing refers not just to student writing, but also the writing teachers do when they craft and use syllabi and assignments. This chapter focuses on ways to encourage student engagement with such documents and presents ideas for crafting texts to promote learning.

Creating Syllabi That Use Writing to Learn

The syllabus is commonly designed to outline the course, and it contains key information about course requirements, assignments, and other details, which students frequently use as a reference. However, one can think of the syllabus in other ways when considering how writing can be used to teach. Other than describing the details and requirements of the course, the syllabus functions in two interrelated ways: as a written teaching tool itself and as a method of describing the writing of the course. For example, by including a well-designed, detailed, and reflective course objective section, the instructor can demonstrate how certain written assignments will emerge from the objectives. In the next section, I will discuss how to design a syllabus that can be used as a teaching tool and as a place to describe the writing involved in the course. The following chart shows briefly how a syllabus is commonly conceived.

The Syllabus Can Be Thought of As:	
Outline and Roadmap	• List of assignments, labs, exams & due dates • Chronology of weekly topics & readings • Policies, expectations, & requirements
Contract	• Ground rules between students & instructor • Students responsibilities & requirements • Policies, guidelines, & penalties
Teaching Tool	• Writing used for critical thinking • Interactive space for students' engagement • Reflections and annotations illustrate writing methods for written assignments

Things To Consider

Designing The Syllabus as a Teaching Tool

This section will discuss how the syllabus may be constructed as a teaching tool that can be used to draw students' interest and make them active participants by utilizing some writing-based strategies.

As an instructor, you can effectively set the tone for your course with a carefully crafted and planned syllabus that takes into account some of the questions below. Several aspects of a course, such as student enrollment, backgrounds, and class duration influence which teaching strategies or assignment types will work well and which will not. Although it might sound self-evident, it is crucial these factors be taken into consideration before designing the course and its assignments. For example, a course with a large enrollment may not be ideal for long research papers that require intensive guiding at every step. Similarly, group projects requiring multiple outside-of-class meetings may be difficult for non-traditional working students to manage easily. A course broken up into three 50 minute class sessions per week has to be planned slightly differently than for a course with two 80 minute sessions.

Before You Start Writing Your Syllabus

- *What are the course basics: student preparation, class size?*
- *What are the departmental and assignment requirements?*
- *What exactly is this course about?*
- *What can students to get out of this course?*
- *Do the requirements suit students' diverse needs?*
- *Which features of the course have worked best?*
- *What campus/local resources are available?*

Generally, most syllabi are divided into sub-sections (course objectives, required readings and grade distributions), which outline specific information relevant to the course. These sub-sections can be designed as places where the students are invited to participate and write-in. This way, the syllabus itself can be used as a teaching tool. The following chart shows how different syllabus sub-sections can be used to group pertinent information about the course and draw students in. It also includes some ideas that instructors can use to show students how different aspects of the syllabus are relevant to the course and how students can become active participants in the learning process.

Syllabus Sub-Sections: Purposes and Classroom Uses

Subsection	Pedagogic Purpose	Incorporating Writing
Course Objectives	To define course content. To reflect upon and specify your course goals, objectives, and expectations.	Students can offer examples, questions, statistics and articles on course topics and/or reports and case studies to illustrate course objectives. Students can also specify their own objectives and goals.
Texts and Readings	To include the range of materials covered and to explain how they apply to course goals.	Students *personalize* this section with notes about authors, text histories, and commentaries. These can become course resources.
Assignment Details	To specify goals, objectives, timeline, requirements. (Adding a "tip of the week" note to each description in this section gives students advice on time management, due dates, and work timelines.)	This section can include an assignment progress chart that identifies steps involved towards completion. It can begin to answer questions like these: *What are the tasks involved? What resources are necessary and available? Where will I seek help? How will I budget my time? How will I know if I am on the right track?*
Grading Distribution	To help students understand course progress and evaluation.	Leave space for students to calculate grades. Return to this section throughout the course to remind students and/or revise expectations.
Policies, Expectations, and Plagiarism	To walk students through requirements and explain why each is important in the writing and learning process.	Student can write about the implications of expectations.*Why are these skills important? Why are these policies important? How do they relate to the learning process?*
Participation	To explain why and how class participation is related to the learning, and writing process.	Leave space for students to list comments and questions including ideas not raised in class. Use these in teaching. Ask students why participation is important for learning and writing. Write down how they like to participate. Exchange peer-contact information.

See Chapter 8 for more about academic honesty.

Creating Assignments That Use Writing to Learn

Students often participate in a range of activities and tasks during a course, many of which can be categorized as assignments. Assignments can be formal (papers, research projects, lab assignments), or relatively informal (class discussions, freewrites, group work).

See Chapter 8 for ideas on designing effective assignments.

Any instructor who has written an assignment knows that it is not always an easy task. Despite a teacher's best efforts, students often struggle with understanding the assignment or some aspect of the task involved in it. Instructors may also be torn between giving students latitude to be creative and interpretive in their engagement with the assigned tasks, and giving students precise instructions that are to be followed strictly. In many cases, instructors use a combination of both.

The chart to the right offers some strategies on planning and writing assignments that can be tailored to meet the needs of specific courses and student learners. It also highlights how students can become active participants in the process. Student participation is conceived in two broad ways:

> 1. To get student feedback on and to assess their understanding of the assignment; and
>
> 2. To involve students in the planning and designing process itself, by engaging and empowering them in identifying assignment objectives, appropriate methods, format, and evaluation.
>
> For example, selecting test questions from a broader pool of questions written by students during active reading assignments is one way of engaging them in the design process. For students, part of an assignment might be to come up with appropriate method and format requirement when given a set of assignment objectives. Peer review of written work is another way of including student involvement in the evaluation process.

Elements of Writing and Planning Assignments

Assignment Design	Questions to Consider	Student Participation
Objective: Specify assignment objective clearly.	• *Why this assignment?* • *What is the goal?* • *What will students learn?* • *How does it relate to the course?*	• Ask students to name goals. *How can these be incorporated?* • Ask students if objective is clear. *How do students relate assignments to course and topics?*
Assessment: Specify what will be tested and evaluated (application of formulae, theories, or concepts, etc.).	• *Are questions commensurate with the objectives?* • *Are questions or tasks adequate?* • *How are questions related to the material?* • *Can students give feedback to each other and in how?*	• Ask students if questions are clear. • Ask students to compare questions with assignment objective, and generate questions to prepare problem set or study-guide. Students can participate in evaluation, (group or peer review, self-critique, etc.)
Method: Specify methods and how to plan each step involved in the assignment.	• *What background information is needed?* • *Where to find them?* • *What resources may be used?* • *What will students learn from this method?*	• Ask students to lists steps, materials, skills, time, and methods involved. Given task objectives, students can design an appropriate method. • Ask students about specific needs to achieve these goals.
Format: Specify expected assignment format and presentation.	• *What should a specific product look like? What skills do students need to know and use for this format?* • *Why are the requirements important? How closely should students follow the format?* • *Can students use some other style? How may they be used and why?*	• Ask if students understand the format. Students can participate in format design based on goals and methods. • Ask the class to analyze the assignment goals and write requirements as a group.

Some Assignment Structures and Examples

This section discusses four broad ways of structuring assignments, giving examples from different disciplines. Each method helps students draw on information and present it in different ways.

The Scaffolding Assignment

Scaffolded assignments build upon other course readings and writings to encourage student engagement with and understanding of a course topic. Using a combination of assignments (class discussions, reading notes, freewrites, paper drafts), students move toward the completion of a larger project. There are a variety of reasons for incorporating scaffolding into your teaching. Scaffolded assignments can be used to:

- Estimate possible smaller steps towards larger project or paper. Plan, create, and spread-out each step into several smaller assignments.
- Revise and polish individual pieces of work.
- Incorporate use of different skills.
- Prevent end-of-semester panic.
- Prevent academic dishonesty.

Teaching

Ideas

Scaffolded Assignment from Education

The following assignment sequence illustrates how scaffolding can lead students to engage critically with research materials as they produce an education paper. Students produce a variety of writing—some formal, some informal.

1. Freewrite: *Why am I interested in this issue?*

2. In class or homework written analysis: *What do other researchers have to say about this issue? Exploring education abstracts, finding relevant sources and shaping research question.*

3. Written reflection: *What have I found so far? Note-taking and preparing annotated bibliography.*

4. Summaries of key articles & findings: *How do these speak to class texts and discussion?*

5. Paper outline, with particular focus on research findings for peer review.
6. Draft for peer comments and instructor review.
7. Final paper.

The Reframing Assignment

Writing that reframes class discussions or lab activities can help students to think about and articulate different topics during discussion and/or group activities. Students then can write a more formal piece in which they engage the text or research materials more closely. This kind of assignment makes a strong connection between the more hands-on or discussion-based tasks and their more formal corollary, the written paper. There are two ways to *reframe* student thinking: open-ended questions and focused questions. Reframing assignments can be used to:

- Encourage students to freely *think outside the box* (e.g., open-ended questions).
- Encourage students to engage closely with material (e.g., focused type questions).
- Promote participation in class or out of class.
- Enrich discussion.
- Compare and contrast learning and writing strategies.

Using Reframing of a Class-discussion Leading to a Paper in a Religion Class

The following assignment demonstrates the reframing strategy in a religion class. Students could answer the questions in small groups or individually, through in-class or homework freewrites, and/or in reflective writings that precede the final product.

Teaching

Ideas

Open-ended discussion question:
(Example 1)— *Do you think god exists? Why or why not?*

(Example 2)—*What does it mean to make a free choice?*

Focused question for paper:
(Example 1)—*Explain Aquinas's argument for the existence of God found in the following passage.*

(Example 2)—*Explain why Frankfurt believes making a free choice does not depend on the availability of options.*

The Multi-Media Assignment

Writing that uses multiple media/alternative ways of knowing can give students with different learning styles opportunities to articulate their understanding of the materials by drawing on different assignment formats. Using alternative assignment formats can:

- Encourage creative ways of addressing and presenting certain course topics.
- Provide guided latitude over format and presentation style.
- Break monotony of typical assignments.
- Allow students to engage creatively.
- Encourage different forms of articulation.
- Accommodate a variety of learning styles.

Using Multiple Media/Alternative Formats in a Sociology Class

Teaching

Ideas

The following assignment was given in an introductory sociology course on social problems, and it turned out be quite successful. One group of two students produced their own video documenting how students across the university campus responded to images of women from magazine ads. They screened their video in class, described the production process and had a discussion. Another group wrote and acted out a skit about sexism that had three analytical levels, and another group created a collage of Hollywood images on sexuality and critically responded to these images through a poster presentation. They also wrote detailed reflections about their projects.

Assignment Objective: In this project you will creatively demonstrate your critical analysis of a social problem, and you will address what makes the problem a social problem and how racism, classism, sexism, and homophobia (and other systematic and institutional oppression) influence the problem.

What you need to demonstrate: You should be able to present your topic and adequately describe how your project addresses a social problem, and describe how it comments on the key issues involved.

Method: You can pick any issue and you can choose any one or several forms of media to demonstrate your point. For example, you can make a poster about homelessness, bring in a video about sexism in the media for discussion, make a collage of images of race related violence in society, or act out a skit that is demonstrates your creative thinking and critique about the social issue. You will also turn in a 2-3 page, double-spaced report where you discuss your project in relation to the social problem that you have picked for analysis.

The Translation Assignment

Writing that translates technical or visual work can be used to supplement work done in science labs, ceramic and art studios, or design classes. This type of assignmen can:

- Translate abstract or visual materials into a written report.
- Develop skills important for presenting technical material to diverse audiences.
- Demonstrate conceptual and contextual understanding.

Two Translation Assignments	
Translating technical language in a Ceramics Class	*Translating technical language in a Math Class*
Objective: to write a professional guide to a class art show that presents technical, historical and cultural information.	**Objective:** to write word problems that both demonstrate understanding of mathematical concepts and create exam review materials.
Assignment Sequence: • Select work to highlight in guide and discuss format of guide (print, visual, audio, web-based). • Divide class into writing groups (by perspective, specific artwork, location, etc.). • Ask technical group to write about the art-making process. • Ask the historical group to research and write about some aspect of the genre, form, etc. • Ask the cultural group to research and write about the cultural significance. • Groups present writings and solicit feedback from sample audience. • Students design and produce guide.	**Assignment Sequence:** • Ask students to design a word problem and correct solution for each mathematical concept covered in each unit. • Engage students to exchange and review peer word problems. • Collect, read and comment on papers. Ask students to revise each problem until the solution is correct and the concept is clearly demonstrated through the word problem. • Organize exam or exam review using student-generated word problems.

Teaching

Ideas

Using Writing to Promote Critical Thinking
Chapter 3

Why write if no one is going to read your work? Now I know that I do have a voice.
Katie, freshman in Visual and Performing Arts

Before the semester was half over, I realized practically all the business papers that I had written freshman year were completely full of biases. I had searched for what I wanted to prove, weeded out all the things that disproved my claim, and boasted on all the glorious statistics that supported my theory. More importantly however, I realized that the business sources which I read, the business plans and financial statements, all contained biases within them.
Geoff, junior in School of Management

In class we were instructed to write three things on a piece of paper, two of which were false, and one was true. On my sheet I wrote that: I am Jewish, I have a tatoo on my back, and I listen predominately to rap music. The class reacted just the way I predicted. The majority of the class ruled out rap music because I do not fit the stereotypical role of a rap listener. I was dressed casual and I am white, both of which do not fit the mold of rap fans. This left two options on the board. A few of my classmates chose the tattoo on my back, though I do not seem to have the personality of someone who would have a tattoo. Lastly, by default and through their biases, most chose that I was Jewish. In fact, the third option was true. I do listen to rap music. This emphasized that biases and stereotypes do exist.
Kevin, junior in School of Management

I must admit that I did not previously give much thought to the bias of writers, or readers for that matter. This course taught me to take a deeper look and establish not only what is being said, but also why it is said that way.
Liz, junior in School of Management

Most students do not feel much urgency to become adept at writing and reading critically. They often say, things like:

> "The author didn't mean anything with this word choice."

> "It's random. You're analyzing too much."

> "It's just information. These are facts. There is no bias."

Many students are not trained to do close readings; they gloss over the power of language and remain unaware of its impact and potential for their own use. Critical reading, which entails more than simply reading for main ideas, leads to a better understanding of the material. Most students have never reflected on the idea that writing can be used to convey passions, to persuade, or to achieve in both academic and non-academic communication. Writing *can* serve as clarification of self and world, or as a connector between self and world, but only if students understand the subtleties of the written word. Writing is not just an exercise for class; it's a necessary element in understanding and engaging in life.

This chapter will strive how critical reading and analyzing skills can be enhanced through writing. It will give you some ideas about how to implement those concepts in your class while at the same time teaching students to think critically about the world represented in texts. Through the class dialogues generated by the exercises suggested here, students should see there is a need for them to finesse their critical writing/reading skills in order to use their voices as essential, valuable, and useful tools for success both in and out of the academic setting.

Connecting Critical Thinking to Writing

Writing in the classroom can be used to teach critical thinking through reading and analyzing exercises. When using writing in this manner, one obstacle that often needs to be overcome getting students to believe that writing needs to be critically read and analyzed. Students might not be aware that writing has power, words have meaning, and authors have intent.

What does thinking critically mean? In this sense, it means going beyond the surface meaning of the work. It means that students need to realize that texts they read and ones they write themselves are more than just words strung together. The texts have a connection to and an impact on the world around them. This type of solid thinking and awareness leads to solid writing.

It's helpful to convince students of the importance of writing by helping them become aware of its prevalence. Once they notice how writing bombards them everyday, they are more likely to think critically about it. As an instructor you can show them there is a need for thinking about how pervasive writing is in the world.

Recognizing the Power of Writing

A short exercise followed by a class discussion can illustrate the pervasiveness of writing in our lives or our disciplines.

Brainstorm: Have the class generate a list of types of writing on the board (letters, bills, graffiti, traffic signs, equations, sky writing, etc.).

Develop: Get students to identify the purpose(s) of each type of writing.

Discuss: Have students reflect on the scope, format, and uses of writing in the world or your discipline: *How would the author engage with the world if a specific type of writing or if any writing did not exist? How does being able to read/understand the writing affect the purpose? Who has control over the purpose? The outcome?*

Differentiating Between Reading and Critical Reading

When you give your students a document and tell them to read it, chances are they will come to the next class able to reiterate the main concepts. If you give them the same document and tell them to read it critically, they might come to class and once again, paraphrase the main concepts. However, reading and reading critically do differ. Reading allows your students to paraphrase material. Critical reading allows them to interpret and then move on to analysis. Reading critically involves doing a close read of the work in order to understand why and how the text was created and what purpose the text serves now (culturally, historically, politically.)

Students should be aware that writing generally involves at least two people: the writer and the reader. Being able to read and analyze a text critically will help students with their own writing. A critical read of an article can reveal to the students the author's technique for writing, whether it be persuasive, argumentative, analytical, or informative, and they can apply those techniques in their own assignments.

How can you make it apparent to your students that being able to read critically connects directly to being able to write/think well? Start by introducing some different reading strategies and explaining the different kinds of information each one will give them. It's helpful to bring in actual texts for the students to practice each type of reading. After completing a close reading, the students should try to employ writing techniques in their own work.

Being able to read critically is important to your students for another reason. If students cannot read a text critically, they can't separate their own thoughts from those of the author. Therefore, writing papers becomes even trickier and accidental plagiarism could become a classroom issue. Students who merely skimmed the assignment and did not take the time to make a connection between the writing and their own world will make no exciting discoveries of their own. If a student reads the article once, quickly, and did not completely understand it, or did not take the time to question parts he/she did not understand, when it comes time to write the paper, the student may copy the text verbatim or slap in several closely paraphrased quotes out of fear of appearing un-knowledgable.

See Chapter 8 for a more about academic honesty.

Using Writing to Read Critically

Teaching

Ideas

- Write a one sentence summary after each chapter.
- Keep a double-entry reading journal. Record summary and quotations on the right and responses, questions and analyses on the left.
- Develop an annotation system. Underline, circle, or highlight as you read.
- Keep a writing strategy log. Record the kinds of arguments, stylistic choices, and sources that the writer employs.
- Create a concept map (picture, graph, outline) of the reading by identifying the main argument and supporting evidence.
- Write a letter to the author that responds to, argues with, or questions the text.

Using Writing to Prepare Students for Discussion

Before class
• Ask students to write journal or reading responses as homework.
Before discussion
• Ask students to write before discussion. Such informal writing might be prompted by: a question or keyword prompt, a response to the title and content, a summary, identification of the thesis, or the generation of questions.
During discussion
 • Ask students to write during the discussion. This might function as a means of transition between content and rhetorical analysis, a way to invigorate or control a conversation, or a method of bringing more voices into the discussion.
After discussion
• Ask students to write after a discussion. This might be a synthesis of their thinking/learning during discussion, a letter to author/editor, connections to paper topic/process or other reading, etc. This is also a way to make a transition to other class activities, a way to hear from quiet students, or a method for inviting comments on *uncomfortable* material if the class is silent.

Writing Texts for Critical Reading

The objective of the activity below is to produce two student-generated texts which can be read critically in class. By annotating and noting word choice, students will be able to identify the different audiences of the texts.

• Have students give you a topic dealing with a current event.
• Hand out a slip of paper to each student. Some slips will say *rap convention*, and some will say *presentation for the chancellor.* They should not show the slips to other students.
• Instruct students they are to write three paragraphs about the topic they generated. The audience for their topic is either rappers or the chancellor.
• When they have completed the paragraphs, they should switch with a partner.
• The partner reads the paragraphs *critically*, looking at language and content to determine the audience.
• Read several different paragraphs aloud in class and discuss the changes the intended audience made.
• Hand out articles from your discipline and have the students look at the words, sentence construction, etc.
• Have them create a character sketch of the intended audience.

A close reading of texts also leads to an accurate, informed read of the world. Through such a close read, a student can begin to recognize word choices and their connotations. They will begin to see how those connotations can explain the background of the author or give insight about the intended audience. However, making those connections is not a given. Close reading involves being able to analyze. Analyzing involves looking for more meaning. Students often want to give their opinions on subject and are eager to provide arguments about issues without considering all the details. Because analysis requires strong critical thinking, students often do not have the same excitement for it. However, critical analysis stands as one crucial element in both strong writing and reading.

Engaging Students in Critical Analysis

Just as students are not necessarily aware of how prevalent/useful writing is in everyday life, they are also not aware that they already use analytical skills everyday. The same skills that they use to decide if someone is *cool* or not can be used when reading and writing critically. Helping students see that they already possess analytical skills can build their confidence in the writing classroom. Analyzing others' texts also helps them recognize the bias in their own writing.

Helping Students Recognize Types of Claims

Things To

Analysis:
  Is the claim subject centered?
  Does it center around what something means, how it does what it does, why it
    is the way it is?
  Does it stress understanding over judgement?
  Does it explore a question in search of an explanation?

Consider

  An *analysis* of the Diesel brand of jeans would focus on the name-brand jeans themselves. A student paper could focus on why Diesel is worn by certain groups of people, what the name brand Diesel means in comparison to Levi's, what the price of Diesel jeans says, or how wearing Diesel jeans creates a certain image.

Helping Students Recognize Claims (Cont'd)

Argument:
Is it reader centered?
Does the claim attempt to persuade?
Does it say something is better?
Does it say action needs to be taken?

An ***argument*** about Diesel jeans would be written not about the jeans, but for a specific group of people. It would not focus on how or why Diesel jeans are what they are. It would instead persuade a target audience to think a certain way about the jeans.

Opinion:
Is it personal?
Does it center around simple like/dislike, agree/disagree?
Does it not delve in-depth into the question?

An ***opinion*** about Diesel would not try to persuade an audience, but would merely state whether or not the author liked/disliked the jeans. It would use only personal evidence.

Using Writing to Analyze

If your class allows students to see how prevalently writing is used everyday and that they already possess basic analytical skills that can be honed, by the end of the semester they will see that writing/reading/analyzing critically is not something that is only necessary in the academic classroom. Those skills are the ones that nurture the critical thinking people rely on everyday. Your students will leave your class understanding that writing does actually serve a purpose and does not happen in a void. Helping your students understand the nuances in writing and the strategies for reading and analyzing will give them a competitive edge in and out of the classroom.

The following exercises show students that they already use analysis. They provide the students with opportunities to use their analytical skills to closely read and discuss visual and textual images. By having a guided class discussion after each exercise, you can help your students take the ideas generated from the examples and apply them directly to their own writing.

Imagining Alternative Perspectives

The following activity helps students to create different perspectivesto help make students aware of their own perspective on an issue before trying to understand an author's perspective. Before analyzing a text it is often helpful for the students to clearly understand what they think about the subject. By creating an opportunity for students to write in different viewpoints, this exercise helps them discover the similarities and differences in perspectives.

Perspective Classroom Activity

- Have the students randomly pick two names (not of classmates).
- Write the names on the board.
- Under the names, have the class decide the following information for each person: age, marital status, job, education level, place of residence, place of birth, economic level, hobbies, typical clothing.
- Have the class pick a current debatable issue.
- Give the class 15-20 minute to write about the issue from three different perspectives: first, the perspectives of the imaginary people they created and then their own perspective.
- Read some of the perspectives aloud in class and discuss how/why they changed.

Teaching

Ideas

Comparing Perspectives

The next activity emphasizes that all authors write from particular perspectives and with intent. Those factors influence what the authors see and what they put in and leave out of their writing. This is a good exercise to use at the beginning of semester. Generally, students are willing to debate the meanings of the ink blots and often cannot come to a consensus. They will refuse to believe one student's opinion is more *valid* than another's interpretation. With an explanation of how an author is actually a real human also who interprets the world in a certain way, like the students each interpreted the ink blots, this exercise creates a strong parallel to writing/reading. It should help the students see why they might need to analyze the texts they read.

Ink Blot Classroom Activity

- Start off class by showing students five different ink blots
- Each student writes down his/her *answer* (two copies)
- Students exchange with a partner and compare his/her own responses to the other response
- Brainstorm reasons for the differences (such as previous experience, major, age)
- Discuss the colors—Do they affect the interpretations?
- Speculate—Why were these colors used? How would the blots change if the colors excluded were included?

After the ink blot discussion, you can hand out two articles on the same subject but from different sources to show how different authors looking at the same subject can come up with different conclusions. For example, you could find articles about smoking. One article could be written by someone associated with the tobacco companies. The other article could be written by someone associated with the Surgeon General's office. Students should complete a close read looking at word choice, connotations, quotes, information included/excluded.

Analyzing Assumptions

The objective of the next activity is to help students analyze how a cultural perspective—looking at objects/events/world in a certain way—affects the perspective an author presents. Students should be able to discuss the importance of knowing an author's background. They should also see a connection between language and naming, and an individual's view of the world (does not necessarily have to be onions or juggling, but should be some material object that can have multiple/unique uses).

Juggling Onions Classroom Activity

- Bring to class enough onions so that each student can eventually end up with three.
- Hold up onion and on board brainstorm what it is (get names in different languages, get students to come up with alternatives to onion and food—like weapon, toy, decoration).
- Discuss why *food* was probably the first response.
- Can end the activity there, or continue by handing out two more onions to each student and trying to teach them how to juggle.
- Freewrite about their feelings when trying to learn how to juggle onions.

In their freewrites, hopefully they will write about taking risks, experiencing frustration, striving for a set goal, and following a *form*. Ideally, they will also mention that juggling isn't a skill that can be mastered in five minutes. In discussion, make the connection between the exercise and analyzing. Ask the students to come up with other parallels between the activity and writing. For example, all students walk into class with some basic skills (the basic tossing in juggling, maybe complete sentence construction in writing) and in class, those skills will be refined, practiced over and over until at the end of the semester, they have an impressive new skill.

Processes of Composing
Chapter 4

Writing process is putting together ideas and thoughts into some logical order and conveying them on paper. After the initial part, you have to read over the work as an outside party so that you can detach yourself from the work and make sure it makes sense.

John, sophomore in Management

To me, the writing process is an all-at-once thing. It is me sitting down and using all of my ideas to write a paper. The writing process is everything that is involved in writing your paper, be it research, thinking, outlining, proofreading, etc.. I don't like to outline or proofread much, but if I have to I have to.

Derek, junior in Biology

My writing process is different depending on the type of assignment I have—but generally I make an outline of my thoughts, re-arrange and elaborate on them, and then just write.

Katie, sophomore in Photojournalism and Political Sceince

The process of communicating through writing is always a complex and multi-staged experience. Whether composing an academic research paper, working through an analytical mathematical problem, designing a web page, or creating a poem, a process of writing is at work. While much has been written about *the* writing process, we recognize that *many* writing processes are employed when we organize our ideas and communicate them. And as sophisticated readers and writers, none of us have time to engage in every stage of some ideal writing process each time we have a writing task. Such a process doesn't exist; rather (like our students), we assess each situation individually by asking questions like these.

- *What exactly needs to be communicated?*

- *Is writing the best/required way to do that?*

- *What kind of writing should it be?*

- *How much time do I have?*

- *Should most of the time be spent on inventing—or careful editing?*

Each time we write, we make these choices. In the pages that follow, we have named some of the processes that student writers engage in and listed specific activities and strategies that will help students become more deliberate about their communication choices.

Typically, when we discuss writing processes, four stages come to mind: inventing, drafting, revising, and editing.

For some students, writing process looks linear:
      inventing → drafting → revising → editing→→→final product

For others, process is not-so-linear:
inventing ↘   revising → inventing ↘   editing ↘ → final product
      drafting ↗   drafting drafting ↗   revising ↗

And for many students, a writing process isn't visible at all:

        drafting → final product

Students may dismiss the importance of organizing before writing, revising drafts, or proofreading carefully because they have not received constructive feedback on earlier phases of their work. The challenge of designing assignments and classroom activities is to engage these and other types of student writers by demonstrating the value of each phase of the writing process. And, as instructors, we can help students connect their writing with their learning by making the stages of composing visible.

Inventing

Inventing is the stage in a writing process where ideas are born and cultivated through analysis, research, and experimentation. Teachers have devised many strategies to stimulate student learning and understanding of an assignment's goals and final product. Through the use of a variety of inventing activities, teachers can acknowledge and learn from the multiple learning styles that students bring to the classroom. Recognizing the inventing work that students engage in can help teachers understand how student thinking is developing over the course of the semester—and how a curriculum is being taken up in critical and creative ways.

Things To

Consider

As Students Begin To Write

- *What do students need to know/do to start this project?*
- *When should they begin writing?*
- *What strategies do you recommend?*
- *Will class time be spent talking about expectations or will the assignment sheet do this work?*
- *How will they incorporate sources (research, course reading)?*

On the following page are some specific invention strategies. They can be used in class or assigned as homework as a method of generating and developing ideas.

Invention Strategies

Idea maps: Students explore, expand, and develop their topics by mapping (textually, visually, orally) their current thinking.

Idea Round Robin: In a circle, students share (orally or textually) their current thinking. Peers respond by presenting ideas for expansion, counterarguments, resources, etc. This is a useful method of encouraging students to help each other address topics that seem overwritten or *stuck.*

Topic Clusters: With their idea or topic in the center of the page, students create a web by brainstorming as many related ideas (or sources, arguments, oppositions, etc.) as possible.

Freewrites: Applicable at any stage in a writing process, freewriting is the generation of ideas through uncensored writing. It is usually not evaluated—or even necessarily shared.

Paper Outline or Sketch: Students name their depth and breadth of their project by articulating the main components of their projects in as much detail as possible.

Keyword Identification: With or without resources, students name the terms that are important to their project. This is a useful way to emphasize the importance of focused research and topic development since students will also notice the terms that are not on their lists.

Visual Representations: Students complete a draft of the assignment using visual media. Visual work like collages can allow students to experiment with their topic in ways that are limited by text.

Looping: Using a freewrite or written draft, students identify a sentence or passage for expansion. Using that text only, they write again for a period of time. This is repeated several times as a strategy for both narrowing focus and exploring the complexities of a topic.

Dialogue Writing: Using course readings, outside research, or peer perspectives, students draft a focused dialogue on their topic. This is a method for articulating and creating movement between perspectives and can be useful in moving students beyond pro/con understandings of complex issues.

Teaching

Ideas

The purpose of activities like these is to stimulate creative and critical thinking about the issues raised in assignments and class. Many teachers adopt a 'scaffolding' approach to assignments by designing relationships between classroom activities and formal products and by linking each course assignment to the next in anticipation of student learning. This can be incorporated into the ways writing is used as well. Here are a couple of examples:

in-class freewrite →→ topic looping →→ 2 page mini-essay →→
formal research analysis paper

lab report →→ research topic →→ annotated bibliography →→ research report

reading journal →→ keyword identification →→ topic cluster →→
paper outline →→ formal essay

Drafting

Drafting is the stage in a writing process where ideas, resources, and data are examined and organized in order to create a written product. Engaging in a drafting process helps students identify what they want to know or say, what they have learned, and how to most effectively communicate their ideas. Incorporating draft work into our assessment of student learning helps us recognize early on where additional instruction or assistance may be needed.

Things To

Consider

Encouraging Students to Prepare Drafts

- *How do learning styles influence the ways students gather and organize information?*
- *What are the accepted methods for developing claims or arguments in your discipline?*
- *Are the goals of the assignment clear? Could there be multiple interpretations of the assignment?*
- *How do you integrate research and drafting?*
- *What kinds of feedback will students need and get on their drafts?*
- *How does the process of drafting fit into the workload and timeline of the course?*
- *How does draft preparation differ for pedagogical activities such as lab work or collaborative writing?*

Drafts can take many forms. Some drafts are versions of all or part of the written products; others may be more graphic representations of the writer's ideas and data (idea maps, annotated flow charts, storyboards for websites, etc.). Students and instructors can explore the expression of ideas in a variety of forms when we recognize that rough drafts need not resemble the final product, and we often can make more thoughtful, analytical assessments of one aspect of the work by doing focused or partial drafts. Although it takes time, concentrating on the process of drafting can be a valuable avenue for deep learning.

Drafting Strategies that Promote Learning

Getting Started	• Review purpose, audience and voice. • Have students create a basic list of questions or concepts to be addressed. • Have students identify what perspectives or elements of the topic will <u>not</u> be covered in the assignment (and in group work, in their particular parts of the assignment). • Experiment with starting drafts concentrating on a small section of the intended final project or a related previous assignment (journal entry, pre-lab memo on hypothesis, etc.). • Whenever students get stuck by writer's block, lack of supporting information, or a need for more thinking about a point, they can use inventing strategies or simply note the concept or keywords and return to the section later.
Developing a Thesis, Claim, or Question	• Help student distinguish between opinions and positions. • Have students map their ideas or claims are related (chronological arrangements, foundational proof, etc.). • Encourage students to identify the limits of their arguments and the strengths of alternate positions. • When drafting questions or problem sets, challenge students to present multiple solutions.
Incorporating Evidence	• Have students take their lists of questions or claims and identify the resource materials, data, or supporting information relevant to each issue. • Discuss evaluation of sources (accuracy of Internet resources, rigor of data needed to defend analysis, diversity of perspectives, etc.). • Review appropriate citation of sources.

Teaching

Ideas

See Chapter 3 for ideas on teaching claims and analysis.

See Chapter 8 for ideas on teaching resource use.

Drafting Strategies that Promote Learning (Cont'd)	
Organizing Drafts	• Experiment with organization by literally cutting the draft into sections and moving them around. • Have classmates try to recreate the activities (field technique, experiments, personal interactions, etc.) described in the draft to assess accuracy and audience interpretations. • Outline the draft *after* it's written to get a visual representation of the organization of ideas.

Revising

Revising is the stage when ideas are reviewed, changed, expanded, and/or abandoned. Revision often occurs once a tangible draft of the assignment is composed, though it can happen at any stage. Engaging in revision can help students learn to look critically at their work and imagine more clearly how their work might be read and understood.

See Chapter 6 for ideas on giving effective feedback on drafts or developing peer review activities.

When You Ask Students to Revise . . .

• *Should students revise? How? What is your goal in asking them to revise?*

• *Will they be focused on content revision or written organization and style?*

• *Will revisions be based on your recommendations, peers' or their own intuition?*

• *How do should students understand the purpose and audience for the project?*

• *Do students have a clear sense of revision or peer response guidelines?*

• *Do students understand what kind of paper you want (empirical, analytical, personal essay, research report, etc.)?*

Using Writing to Teach

Revising in the Classroom and On Their Own

Revising Ideas for the Classroom	*Revising Ideas for Students*
Reading Aloud: Read a draft aloud to a partner or have partner read draft aloud to author.	**Abstract:** Write an abstract for your paper; be concise about the claims you want to make. Then reexamine your paper to see how you accomplish this.
Focused Peer Exchange: Ask author to write main concerns on top of draft and underline main claims; ask peer to read through the draft, summarizing the function and claim of each paragraph as she reads. She should also summarize the paper in a paragraph on the back.	**Peer Exchange:** Take home two peers' papers and make comments according to class guidelines. **Reverse Outline:** Using your draft, create an outline of your paper. Begin by naming the purpose of each paragraph.
Class Listserv: Send excerpts and share resources.	**Claim Significance:** Rank the significance of your claims. *Does your organization make sense? Are you communicating in the most effective way?*
Expansion Freewrite: Read a peer's paper and mark areas what more information/detail would be effective. Explain the need in the margins.	**Coding:** Use different highlighters to delineate your claims, descriptions and research.
Targeted Revision: Bring in and work on only one section of the paper.	**Selected Revision:** Concentrate on specific areas of improvement like clarifying claims, transitions, etc.
Keywords: Identify keywords for the papers. Authors can then decide if this is what they intend.	**Imagined Audiences:** Imagine two different readers—one who would support your claim and one who would oppose it. *What kinds of reactions would they have to your paper?*
Translation: Translate papers into another genre or form. For example, try turning a research paper into an editorial or transforming lab report into a public health announcement.	

Editing

Editing is usually the final stage of a writing process and refers to the careful attention we give every aspect of a piece of writing before delivering it. Such practices may include attention to organization, language choices, grammar, punctuation, genre, and form. Helping students to apply editing strategies after completing most of the content drafting and organization of the assignment will help them understand how written content and form are dependent upon one another. Through the practice of editing strategies students can learn to recognize that carefully edited writing is the result of deliberate stylistic choice.

Things To

Consider

See Chapter 7 for ideas on establishing expectations.

When You Ask Students to Edit . . .

- *What does it mean to edit? Do students understand your definition?*
- *What do you value most in the editing stage?*
- *What is an 'A' paper? How can students achieve this?*
- *What issues of grammar, punctuation, structure, style, etc. do you notice most in student writing?*
- *How have you helped students learn about such issues? What resources do you ask students to use to create polished texts?*
- *Do students understand how strong editing skills might move beyond the scope of your class?*

Why Teach Editing?

Strong editing skills will allow students to:

- Develop an eye for detailed, analytical writing.
- Recognize clear and thorough research and analysis.
- Accept, use, and give peer and teacher feedback.
- Get distance from initial writing stages.
- Recognize the value of alternative perspectives.
- Revisit work with the audience in mind.
- Concentrate on how language constructs meaning.
- Write in any field or profession.

Editing in the Classroom and On Their Own

Editing Ideas for the Classroom	*Editing Ideas for Students*
Hold an editing workshop. Distinguish between *global* and *local* editing. Using a sample paper (print, overhead, or web-based), ask students to suggest editing changes. Ask them to focus on global issues (organization, clarity of ideas, etc.) as well as local ones (sentence structure, grammar, punctuation) as they review peer work.	**Purpose:** Reread the assignment. *What is being asked for? What is valued? How does your work satisfy the assignment? What is most effective? least? What would you do with another week?*
Develop class criteria for editing. Ask students to identify what will make the assignment successful. Develop a criteria list and ask them to apply it to their work. Use a sample to demonstrate.	**Style:** Look closely at grammar, punctuation, and sentence length. *What does this say about you as a writer? What do you value in your writing style? Is this evident in your writing?*
Hold an "audience" workshop. Ask students to name their intended audiences on back of their papers. Exchange work and have students respond through the persona of the intended reader.	**Language:** Look closely at language. *What choices have been made? How are you represented in the paper? How do you balance your words with your research? What is the role of jargon and/or slang? Are you using inclusive language?*
Editing vs. Proofreading workshop. Ask students to name the differences between editing and proofreading by distributing a sample piece of text. Help them distinguish between the two by situating editing as a more global activity that looks at how sentence level concerns impact and are impacted by form and organization. Proofreading, on the other hand, attends to the specifics of spelling, grammar and punctuation. Note: these terms are fluid and should be defined in each class!	**Alternative Perspectives:** Examine the multiple perspectives on the issue. *How did others take up your ideas? How can you use feedback that you don't necessarily agree with to understand the way you've presented your ideas?*
	Audience: Examine your audiences. *Who are they? What do they value most? How will they experience this writing? How should they respond to it?*

The Challenges of Focusing on the Process of Writing

Student Concerns

Challenge: *The purpose of having a draft due isn't clear. I don't understand what's supposed to go in each draft.*

> **Teaching Strategy:** Make expectations clear. If multiple drafts are required, concentrate on specific areas for each one (thesis development, editing, etc.).

Challenge: *I never do drafts. It doesn't help me to write things over and over—and my schedule is too busy.*

> **Teaching strategy:** Remind students that drafting is not about doing things over and over. It's about improving based on feedback and reflection. When possible, build peer review of work into course and give yourself time to respond to student drafts.

Challenge: *I'm not a good speller. I just use the computer to check my work.*

> **Teaching Strategy:** Technology makes it much easier for us to research, revise and edit work, but it can't do everything. Students should be encouraged to develop editing and proofreading strategies (if not skills!) such as reading work aloud, perhaps with a partner, reviewing a paper after putting it away for a while, and editing typed rather than hand-written work.

Challenge: *I don't know where to start.*

> **Teaching Strategy:** Remind students that they do not have to begin at the beginning of written work. They may be more comfortable starting with a middle section of a report or with memos to themselves about ideas to develop, questions they have about the topic, or goals of the project. You may have noticed that activities in one section of this chapter are similar to exercises in other sections. Writer's block can occur at every stage of the composing process; the inventing, drafting, revising and editing strategies described in this chapter can be used at any time to help students take a fresh look at their work.

Teacher Concerns

Challenge: *It's difficult to make space when there's so much content to cover. There isn't much time for students to write in a 50-minute class.*

> **Teaching Strategy:** Writing activities can be brief or lengthy, formal or informal. Some written work may be assigned as homework. Writing activities that promote critical thinking during class may be a quick as writing exit notes to you about one the most important thing they learned that day or a question they have at the end of the class period.

Challenge: *Responding to drafts is difficult. I'm not sure how much time to spend on comments; I don't want to make the same comments I would on a final draft.*

> **Teaching Strategy:** When students submit drafts for review, ask them to identify what they are struggling with and/or the particular concerns or portions of the assignment that they want feedback on, and concentrate on these areas of feedback.

> **Teaching Strategy:** Develop a template for responding to student work based on the elements of the assignment.

Challenge: *What counts as "text"? We don't do much work with printed text in my field anymore. How does the writing process change when other media are involved?*

> **Teaching Strategy:** Define *text* with your class. As communication technologies evolve, academic work may take the form of websites, documentaries, computer-aided lab reports, sculpture, audio recordings, etc.

> **Teaching Strategy:** Discuss the nature of the medium in which students are working. What are the protocols for giving feedback through e-mail or websites? Will drafts of material posted on websites be accessible to the public?

Content and Form
Chapter 5

The instructor needs to be clear and concise on what he wants and expects.
Angela, junior in Psychology

It's a little nerve-racking to begin a research paper, but once it is started it's amazing how things just work out. I wish when instructors assigned research papers they would have a framework/time table for us to go on, instead of leaving that to us.
Jessica, senior in Psychology and Communication Disorders

I sometimes wish professors would talk more about what they wanted and how they want it done so that there are no grading surprises at the end, when there's nothing you can do about it.
Lora, senior in Psychology

Using writing in the classroom, either as an instructor or student, requires a clear understanding of its purpose and the subsequent form it should take. A conscientious instructor should outline the requirements for a paper, especially if that paper will be graded based upon those specific guidelines. Without a clear understanding of expectations for the assignment, neither the instructor nor the students will be able to determine whether or not the paper has fulfilled its ultimate purpose. It is the instructor's responsibility to discuss and illustrate writing expectations, whether it is for a physical science such as biology or chemistry, a social science such as sociology or psychology, or a humanities course such as writing or philosophy.

All too often instructors shy away from assigning writing projects because of the time commitment necessary to grade them or the ease of administrating multiple choice exams that can be scored by a computer. Instructors may be reluctant to assign projects if what is expected of students cannot be conveyed clearly; students may be intimidated by assignments when they do not understand the purpose, audience, or structure of the writing project. The purpose of this chapter is to equip instructors with better abilities to articulate and demonstrate the characteristics of scientific and analytic writing. With this in mind, examples will be given from various disciplines typically encountered in a university setting. The chapter will address the following topics:

- Establishing a Purpose and Audience in Writing
- Collaborative Authoring
- Recognizing Different Forms of Writing
- Teaching Specific Forms: Two Examples
- Empirical Papers: Definitions and Ideas for Teaching
- Analytical Essays: Definitions and Ideas for Teaching
- Additional Resources and Recommended Readings

Integrating Form and Function

Content refers to the information or ideas being reported, analyzed, or argued within a writing assignment, irregardless of that writings' purpose. Form refers to the decisions authors make about how to report, analyze, or argue that information.

Establishing a Purpose and Audience in Writing

Before writing a paper, one must first consider its purpose. When writing in order to fulfill course requirements, students are typically writing for academic purposes in which the work will be read by researchers and/or instructors. While instructors generally focus their teaching on their specific field of expertise, students do not have that same luxury. Students are required to negotiate multiple disciplines with various instructors who feel their approaches to teaching and course requirements are the most beneficial and important. Often, instructors may forget that students are faced with many writing assignments, all with a different focus and purpose. It is the job of the instructor to realize this and to be clear and specific about the requirements, as well as purpose, of an assignment.

Related to considering the purpose of writing is understanding exactly who the audience will be. Is a paper being written to convey information to individuals who would be familiar with the topic, such as course instructors? Perhaps the writing will read by laypeople who may not be familiar the content of the paper. This will determine whether or not jargon will be used, the amount of detail described, as well as whether or not the writing contains a more personal perspective on the part of the writer. If language is being used within a paper that only a small percentage of readers will understand, the work will be seen as unapproachable by most readers. I always ask of my students never to assume anything of me as I read the paper. This forces the writer to write clearly and with great detail. If a student writes with the assumption that an instructor will know what he or she is writing about, critical information may be left out of the paper. It is not an instructor's responsibility to piece together a student's argument or theory in their writing.

It is acceptable to show passion for a topic in order to convey to others why something is personally important or socially relevant, particularly if writing for the general public. A research paper about the chemical properties of an element should be written objectively and will be found interesting when read by scientists who already display an interest in that particular topic. Instructors should ask students to always be conscious of who will be reading the paper or writing assignment while trying to place themselves outside of the work as they ask if it is fulfilling its purpose for the intended audience.

Collaborative Authoring

Collaborative learning presents an ideal situation for the understanding of the use of writing in its various forms and purposes. Students can collectively identify the form,

purpose, and effectiveness in writing samples, as well as create new writing projects of their own. Collaborative writing does suffer from a few shortcomings such as the need for more time to complete group work, dependence upon all group members for exercise completion, and the potential group conflicts. However, group work allows for more creative and thorough analysis of previous work and a more beneficial interpretation of writing and its purpose.

Deciding between collaborative authorship and individual authorship is related to purpose and learning objectives. Often, an individual may not possess the experience or knowledge to write about a specific topic that must be included in a writing project. Perhaps it would be possible to find an individual with this experience who can contribute to the breadth and richness of the writing. A writing project can be designed by an instructor with the ultimate goal of producing some form of writing perhaps describing an experiment or an interpretation of a literary work from a multi-disciplinary perspective. Collaborative work can also lead to the development of positive interactions and exchanges that help each of the writers on a social level. Assignments that document the functioning of the group and encompass a participant's analysis of the group processes can be a component of the group's final product or grade.

Recognizing Different Forms of Writing

Once the purpose and audience of a writing assignment or project has been made apparent, it becomes necessary to decide on the form that the writing will take. This is not to say that these are all independent processes or methodical steps; they should be considered simultaneously in order to attain the best final product possible—a product which fulfills the requirements of the instructor as well as purpose of the writing. We choose among various forms of writing in order to ascertain a purpose in our writing. That purpose can be as short-sighted as getting a good grade on an assignment, but is often much larger in scope. Writing can be used to express strong opinions about a topic, convey intimate experiences to a reader, present new research findings and theory, or demonstrate an understanding or familiarity with a particular subject. The following table provides a summary of various types of writing, their purposes, and example forms used by instructors.

The most basic form of writing is similar to what would be seen during a news report. News reports are generally intended to present a problem or information about a particular topic. The information is presented in a very approachable manner, with very limited, if any, use of jargon. News reports are intended to inform the public, and therefore information is presented in a way that most people can understand and often begin to think about it critically. Often, news reports are intended to garner interest in a topic

Writing Forms and Functions				
Writing Type	**Audience**	**Purpose**	**Process**	**Forms**
Reflective	Academics Public	To have students draw upon and describe personal experiences and opinions.	React Reflect Respond	Journal entries Reaction papers
Drawing Upon Sources	Academics Policy-Makers Professionals Public	To have students summarize and synthesize opinions, ideas, theories, and data.	Compile Paraphrase Summarize	Abstracts News reports Research Summaries
Interpreting	Academics Policy-Makers Professionals	To have students analyze, infer causality, reach a conclusion, form an opinion.	Interpret Think/Write Critically	Documented Arguments
Observing Experimenting Testing	Academics	To have students design experiments, collect and analyze data, make observations, present information, offer conclusions and/or new theory.	Observing Synthesize/ Analyze results Think critically	Lab reports Observation logs Scientific reports

(Adapted from *Longman's Writer's Companion)*.

or perhaps spur on debate about a socially important issue, so writing must be understandable by the vast majority of readers.

The next form of writing maintains a practical focus while implementing more of a theoretical perspective, both in its writing as well as its ultimate purpose. Professional reports present a theoretical focus for researchers and a practical focus for policy-makers and practitioners. Often professional reports take the form of summary papers pertaining to the same topic, combining work from several different authors. Professional reports present information in a manner similar to that of news reports, but are written for a specific audience using language particular to a specific field.

Academic papers ask questions, reframe histories, explore philosophical questions, propose new theoretical ideas, and present novel research findings. A writer may be able to put forth new theory, or at least general ideas related to the focus of the research through the presentation of data, research findings, previous theory, etc. For example, a course

in research methodologies in psychology may require an empirical paper while an African American studies class might require a critical analysis. In either case, previous theory must be discussed and findings or conclusions stated and supported. Often, however, these papers do not display the detail and intricacies of full reports.

Full reports provide the reader with sufficient information literally to replicate a study. Furthermore, full reports are typically those papers submitted for review by professional colleagues. Therefore, these papers display great attention to detail and deeper understanding of theoretical implications, as well as research design limitations, which could be called into question by peer reviewers. A paper written at this level is not often expected in undergraduate courses.

It is important to remember that the use of writing must not be limited only to disciplines such as social science or humanities. The understanding of mathematics and physics can greatly be enhanced through the use of well-designed writing projects. For example, students can be asked to describe a formula or a law in their own words. This use of a more familiar language can help a student to better understand the meaning and purpose of a formula or law. Students can be asked to write about their observations of a naturally occurring phenomenon, or of a carefully controlled laboratory experiment. Have students express in their own words what they see and why it is occurring, based upon formulas or laws. Viewing formulas and laws as unbending may spark great creativity when an observation or experiment does not occur just as it should. Students can write creatively and offer possible explanations for what is occurring around them. Too often natural occurrences go unnoticed. Requiring students to reflect upon these events through writing may help to foster greater understanding of more rare or complicated phenomenon.

Teaching Specific Forms: Two Examples

Through careful planning and attention to detail, an instructor can give appropriate guidance to students and subsequently alleviate students' anxiety about the writing process. Focus will be placed upon the writing of empirical research papers and analytic essays. These are merely general categories or writing and are by no means offered as descriptors of all forms of academic writing. They are offered as a starting point for describing and teaching the writing process and can be modified for your own discipline.

Empirical Papers: Definitions and Ideas for Teaching

The next portion of this chapter will be devoted to describing the typical parts of a research, or empirically based, paper. The guidelines that will be presented are merely suggestions, but they can contribute to the creation of an interesting and well written research paper. This will provide a framework for both instructors as well as students. For instructors, these ideas will aid in the teaching of what should be accomplished by each section of a paper. For students, these criteria will aid in the writing of a research paper and may serve to take some of the anxiety out of the process of presenting often complicated material.

Things To

Consider

When Teaching Empirical Papers . . .

Remind students to:
- Keep in mind the purpose of each section as well as the overall goal and purpose of the paper. Remember: Form follows function.
- Use proper formatting APA, MLA, etc., as applicable.
- Assume nothing of the audience or instructor. Just because the instructor may know the field, students should not ignore or neglect detail in their writing.

Remind yourself as the teacher to:
- Remember what it was like to be a student.
- Make the expectations for the paper clear to your students.
- Make the process of writing clear and approachable to instill a sense of comfort and confidence in students.
- Reinforce the idea that quality of writing is enhanced by a clear understanding of assignments.
- Be confident that students' understanding of the purpose and form of the paper will improve the quality of their writing.

The Abstract

The abstract serves as a very short summary of what is presented in the paper. Constructing a brief and interesting synopsis can be quite challenging. The abstract should provide readers with just enough information to decide whether they should continue to read the work.

An abstract should:
- Be written last—it is a summary of the entire paper.
- Be no more than 200 words (or length specified by publications, etc.).
- Include brief theory, hypothesis, methods, results and conclusions.
- Serve as a teaser for what is about to be read.

The Introduction

The introduction of a research paper includes a review of the research in which the study is grounded, the researcher's hypotheses, and a rationale for the research. Students often want to know exactly how many references are needed in the introduction, and it is helpful to emphasize quality, rather than quantity of sources. It is also important for instructors to discuss whether or not sources such as websites, Internet journals, or magazines can be used. While this might not necessarily be a good idea when submitting work for publication, I always ask my students to convey to me their interest in the particular project. They should be able to articulate why they are conducting a particular project and why they think it is important and interesting to do.

An introduction should:
- Display synthesis of previous research, not summation.
- Typically put forth a single cohesive theory based on interpretation of pertinent research.
- Provide theoretical background for the research.
- Clearly state the hypothesis or hypotheses.
- Articulate why a project is being conducted or a review of the literature is being performed.

The Methods Section

The methods section should include enough detail for readers to be able to evaluate and replicate the study. Of course, the level of detail provided may depend on the purpose and audience of the writing project. Scientific advances based on study replication depend on readers being able to reproduce the same study exactly. Again, I always tell my students to assume nothing of the reader or of me as the instructor. I may know the purpose of their work, the design of the study, and the methods used, but I ask them to forget that they have spoken with me about these topics. This is not to say that they should write out every detail that happened during data collection, but the audience should be able to reproduce the study if so inclined.

A method section should:
- Be detailed.
- Allow for precise study replication.
- Justify the methodology used.
- Outline elements of the study's design (sampling procedures, statistical analyses, etc.).
- Be specific about materials and equipment used (paper-and-pencil questionnaires, computers, statistical or data management software, etc.).

The Results Section

The results section of empirical research papers should present data. For some empirical papers, this means numbers, with words around them. It is not quite this simple, but you get the idea. Students often provide interpretation or opinion of results in this section, when it is intended for the reporting of statistical conclusions in numerical form or other concise representation of findings. It may be helpful to discuss with students different ways to represent data (text, tables, etc.).

A results section should:
- Provide data or proof or findings.
- Avoid additional interpretations or conclusions.

The Discussion Section

The discussion section of a paper can be considered, at a basic level, to be the opposite of the results section. The discussion is a presentation of the study's conclusions, supported numerically. Relevant theory and pertinent studies are revisited and the new results are presented in comparison to them. Writers are faced with the challenge of trying to describe the place of their work within previous work in the field. A discussion section should conclude with an offering of the limitations of and problems with the current work. Students may be uncomfortable pointing out the potential shortcomings of their own work, so you might point out that it is better for them to acknowledge these issues themselves than to wait for instructors or reviewers to do it for them! Finally future directions or questions for future research may be described.

A discussion section should:
- Provide conclusions supported with data.
- Relate the current study to relevant literature.
- Provide theoretical or methodological limitations of the research.
- Offer future directions and goals of the project.

The most beneficial method for teaching how to write each of these sections is to have students actually do it. Instructors can provide numerous good and bad examples of each, but the only way to teach, for example, synthesis versus summation, is to have students actually practice this type of writing.

Analytical Essays: Definitions and Ideas for Teaching

Analytical essays are very different structurally from empirically based papers. However, some of the intellectual tasks—evaluating a claim, using supporting evidence, situating a question in a larger body of literature—are similar to what is done in the sections of research papers. Just as in a research paper, analytical papers have recognizable components. However, the structure of these papers varies according to disciplinary conventions and the purpose of the writing activity.

There are some common elements to analytical writing. The introduction should include a thesis statement as well as the central points that will be explored in support of the thesis statement. A thesis statement is a sentence that summarizes the writer's primary argument or contention. The body paragraphs will address, in detail, each of the supporting arguments for the thesis statement. These arguments should included an explanation of the argument or point, as well as detailed illustrations and examples, all while clearly relating each point back to the thesis statement. The limitations of the author's position should also be addressed.

See Chapter 3 for more on teaching analysis.

The conclusion should advance the thesis and supporting points in a new way, a way that clearly and concisely ties everything together. The conclusion should demonstrate exactly how your analysis has enabled you to reach your general conclusions about the topic as well as the implications of these conclusions.

Strategies for Deepening Analysis

Any argument or analysis is strengthened by acknowledging the limits of one's own position and the merits of alternative claims or interpretations. Students can practice critical analysis of their own positions through peer and self-assessment of their work and through structured discussion of the positions being presented. Of course, this is easier when their positions are clear.

Critical reading exercise: From a collection of readings (perhaps on a related topic), ask student to select the article they most disagree with and identify the claims in an article in brief sentences. Ask students to write on the merits of the arguments identified by addressing questions such as: *When would the author's suggestions work? To whom does the author's argument apply? What is the "kernel of truth" in which the position is grounded?*

Debates: Ask students to debate in groups the merits of alternative positions on an issue. Effective debates require teams to anticipate what the other groups will say. You might assign students to position they would not ordinarily take so that they work to accurately represent different perspectives.

Peer review: Have students exchange papers and critique each others arguments. Feedback may be given through comments on drafts, one-on-one questioning, or comments on a feedback form.

Visual representation: Some claims can be presented in visual forms (flowcharts, idea maps, etc.) that enable us to look critically at the structure and application or limits of an argument. Ask students to map out the various perspectives of their sources, identifying similarities and differences.

Staking a claim: Before students begin researching their papers, have them write a one-page statement describing their topics and their current positions/beliefs. These essays can later be used to examine the differences between their opinions and claims supported by evidence.

Form Follows Function

This chapter can be summarized as "form follows function." Various forms of writing have been described, all of which serve a specific purpose and are intended for a certain audience. Once an instructor has clearly outlined the purpose of writing and for whom that writing is intended, the form that the writing will take should ultimately lead to fulfilling that function or purpose. However, this cannot happen until an assignment or project is clearly presented to students. I have heard numerous instructors complain that a writing assignment was not completed correctly, or did not fulfill its purpose. I always wonder if it truly was the fault of the student or perhaps poor direction and instruction on the part of the instructor. When a student understands why and for whom something is written, the final product will almost always come closer to reflecting the expectations of the instructor and result in a more interesting and concise piece of writing.

Responding to Student Writing
Chapter 6

Constructive criticism is always key. Be objective and motivating. If you believe in me, I'm sure to believe in me too.
Carisa, senior in Communications

Giving examples or rewording something I have written instead of just saying it's wrong is the best way. Show me a better way instead of just telling me I'm wrong.
Ashley, sophomore in Television, Radio, and Film

At UC Berkeley the instructors gave each student a one to two page evaluation of their essays. It followed a certain format. First, the instructor would repeat what they thought your argument was. Then, they would point out the strengths of the essay. Then, they would give you a point by point synopsis of how the essay could be stronger. This is the method I use now, when I give feedback to students. I found it to be extremely helpful, in terms of both letting the student know that you understood their work, and that you can be trusted to give good feedback.
Diana, Ph.D. student in Religion

I think the most essential hurdle to surpass in improving writing is being able put your work out there for criticism and being able to accept that criticism without taking it on a personal level. I always remind myself that all great writings were once pages of incomprehensible and incoherent dribble. If you doubt this, just ask any great writer.
Marcel, Ph.D. student in the School of Information Studies

We have all been students and teachers in some way, shape, or form and, as the quotations on the facing page illustrate, we know what we like best and least in the form of feedback. When considering how to respond to student work, it may prove useful to reflect on what we have found helpful for our own work and then to make some decisions about how we will respond as teachers to our students. Importantly, we need to be aware that students can learn best when we provide feedback while fostering both a challenging and supportive learning environment in our classrooms. This chapter provides a guide for thinking about how to respond to student work; developing strategies to maximize time and effectiveness of comments; giving constructive feedback; negotiating understandable expectations; and respecting the diversity of learning styles and backgrounds of our students. The end of this chapter also poses some questions to encourage reflective teaching. Embedded within these sections is a continued discussion of how feedback includes more than comments on papers. Feedback can be given through electronic mail, in person, or on a listserv; it can also be facilitated through peer review or encouraged by having students respond to their own work. We can successfully engage students and teachers in their writing and learning by using some of these and other techniques.

What and How to Respond to Student Work

When responding to student work, it is important to ask yourself questions like: "What is the focus of my response?" or "What am I responding to?" What follows is a discussion of three key areas that often come up with regards to this topic: issues of grammar vs. content, differences in our classrooms, and dealing with difficult issues. While keeping these things in mind, I will discuss some of the ways in which we can actually respond to student work.

Grammatical Issues vs. Content

How much attention do I pay to grammatical issues versus content when reading a paper? The answer to this question, of course, it varies by discipline as well as instructor and by the general view of what constitutes a well-written paper. Although you may feel that grammar may not be something that your discipline or department as a whole focuses on, you should ask yourself how you, as a teacher, want to respond to this topic and do some reflecting of your expectations on this issue. Generally speaking, most instructors find it easiest to focus on content and to highlight grammatical mistakes more loosely; however, different disciplines may require that one pay even greater attention to grammar. The way a paper is written (style, grammar, spelling) is linked to the content and often times (although not always) to the strength of the main argument. Perhaps more importantly, the way a paper is written also relates to the power of com-

munication and how an author effectively conveys his or her perspective to various audiences. Thus, when responding to writing, instructors serve students best when they comment on a blend of all of these aspects of the paper. Certainly how and what you respond to will be up to you and will develop as you continue in your teaching career. Managing your time in giving feedback also comes with practice and will be discussed later in this chapter.

Differences in our Classrooms

You may have students in your classroom whose native language is not English, who have a learning or other disability, who use slang in their papers, or who graduated a particular high school which emphasized a certain way of writing. None of these situations produce better or worse writers; however, we work in a setting where at times we must conform to certain notions of the *correct* ways to write. As you work to find your style in responding to student writing, consider the needs of individual students and acknowledge and honor differences in a broad sense. You must also think about what you will comment on when framing your responses. Your role an educator is to strike a balance between getting students to think about academic discourse while also allowing and being open to different styles and modes of expression and communication. In this way, you will be challenging your students and making them aware of certain modes

of communication while simultaneously showing your support for the variety of cultures, abilities, voices, and perspectives that our students bring to the table. A great way to do this is to be honest with your students and to have a discussion with them regarding your expectations and/or include a policy in your syllabus.

Writing activities may also raise issues specific to certain disabilities. Some students have physical and cognitive difficulties with writing, but writing activities and assignments can be constructed to allow these students to demonstrate their learning. It is important, and required by universities, to include a statement of accomodation in your syllabus:

> ***Special Needs:*** Students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, which may affect their ability to perform in this class, are strongly encouraged to contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester. Adaptations of teaching methods, exams, and class materials may be made as needed to provide for equitable participation.

Most importantly, you must know your students. This sounds like a simple task, but I have found that sometimes students who have special needs and/or have a fear of writing will not approach you until later in the semester as they do not want to be seen as receiving special treatment in the course or be labeled as different. It is of the utmost importance to be approachable and flexible so that these students will feel comfortable learning in a safe and inclusive environment that values and honors differences. Refer students to the Writing Center or the Office of Disability Services for further assistance.

Dealing with Difficult Issues

When giving assignments, we sometimes don't think about the impact they may have on our students. For example, in a women's studies, sociology, or English courses or in courses that look at statistics, laws, or policy related issues, we might ask students to comment on an article or novel that discusses rape. This topic as well as other topics such as abortion, hate crimes, eating disorders, how power works, and others may cause students to react in certain ways. Some may have had a friend or family member with a similar experience or they may have had experience with the topic themselves. You may get a variety of responses such as: a student may not be able to do the paper because of the discomfort they feel, a student may write a paper telling you of their experience, a student may write an incredible paper using theories you've discussed in class to analyze the topic, etc. What is important is that, as responsible educators, we have an obligation to anticipate and respond to these issues as much as possible.

I am not arguing that you change the way you give assignments, but what is important is to be prepared for some of the responses that you might get and to be reflective about your responses since they have an impact on students' lives. Usually, what works well is to respond to these types of issues in person so that you may communicate more effectively with your student. Depending on the issue at hand, you may want to consult with the chairperson of your department or faculty teaching mentor so that they may guide you on how to most responsibly respond. Lastly, as most of us are not trained professionals in this area, we should not attempt to provide professional assistance. It is sometimes appropriate to suggest that your student schedule an appointment with a counselor or psychologist. In these instances, it is important that the utmost confidentiality be used, however, if you feel that the life of your student or another person is at risk, you should contact the appropriate persons immediately.

How Should I Actually Respond?

I don't like getting e-mails. In my class last semester my professor did everything on e-mail. I didn't like that because you can never really understand what EXACTLY they are talking about, nor can you see it.

—Cristie, sophomore in Management

I prefer longer responses which I seldom receive. A lot of times TAs are in a hurry to get papers back to students and they don't spend enough time on feedback. When you receive a longer response, it makes you feel like the TAs spent time reading your paper and this feedback can be very beneficial to you as a writer.

—Sarah, sophomore, Public Relations

As these quotations highlight, there is no right or wrong way to respond to students. So how do we think about how to respond to their work? Generally speaking, a blend of both positive and constructive feedback works best, while giving specific attention to where exactly students can improve. Consider the following questions before responding to students. I have also highlighted some of the pros and cons with regards for each of these response strategies.

Should I write my comments on their papers or attach a separate sheet of typed feedback?

Writing comments on the paper may prove faster in some instances and more personal to some students, but it also may not give some students the length of feedback that they need. Typed comments may be a faster and better way for some to give feedback (depending on how fast you type and how legible your handwriting is!) and provide the student with a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses of their work, but it may seem too formal for some students and teachers. A combination of both of the above is sometimes preferred. How you develop your own personal style will, of course, change over time and with your teaching experiences. Another way to think about how you actually respond is to ask yourself: *How do you want your students to use these responses? Do you want them to edit what you have suggested and resubmit it? Do you want them to reflect on how their work fits in with the larger literature? Is your goal to get them to think of their work in new ways?*

Should I send feedback via e-mail or meet with my students?

In the new age of information technology, it is important to use technology to our benefit while also recognizing that there are certain limitations to its use. As the student of

the quote at the beginning of this section asserts, there is something to be said for meeting with a student as well as providing comments over email. A combination of both is preferable when providing students with feedback.

Should I use red ink, another color, or pencil?

Sounds like a silly question, right? Some are of the opinion that it does not really matter, but others prefer to avoid the authoritative connotations of red ink. Others like grading in red ink as it gives them the air of authority that they feel they need. Still others comment on issues of grammar in pencil and comment on issues of content with pen. One teacher, in an effort to save time and encourage student input, puts a red question mark next to a comment that needs further elaboration. The students are then told that if they have such a mark in their essays that they may come visit him during office hours to discuss what it means. After such a discussion, the student may or may not receive full credit for their answer. Where you stand on this will undoubtedly be influenced by your experiences as a student and teacher. What I encourage you to do is to think critically about why you choose the pen you choose and what difference (if any) that makes to you and your students. If you are facilitating a peer review where students provide each other with feedback, you might want to have a class discussion devoted to giving and receiving peer feedback.

Should I use a student's name when providing comments?

Some feel that this helps to personalize the process of providing feedback; others prefer to show that they are grading papers anonymously and not paying particular attention to who wrote the paper. Both models can work, but I encourage you to reflect on this as you find your own teaching style. Also, consider how you might respond to students via a class listserv and how to encourage them to respond to each other and let them have a say in establishing online feedback guidleines.

Strategies to Maximize Time and Effectiveness of Comments

Teachers use a variety of feedback models as a way to maximize time and effectiveness of comments. This section will outline and provide brief examples of five different types of feedback: using a grade rubric, peer review, mid-semester conferences with the instructor, a poster conference in class, and group feedback. Each of these exercises is a way to provide feedback to your students in a constructive way and some of them are an excellent way of trying to make your classroom a collaborative space. In each of these examples you can also ask your students: What do you want feedback on?

Teaching Ideas: Example Comments Using a Grading Rubric
Assignment Two Evaluation Form

Name: *Brian*

Criteria	Possible Points	Your Score
Introduction: Is the introduction clear and does it state how the paper will be organized? Comments: *Nice organization. I like how you set up the reading telling him/her what you will do in your paper and how you will link it to themes of the course.*		
Summary of articles used for assignment: Are the four articles summarized effectively? Comments: *Summary of Smith article needs reworking. What are her major points and what is she trying to argue? How does that link up with other texts in the course? See me if you need help with this.*		
Links to other course texts: Does the student use the four articles to analyze other course texts? Comments: *Again, Smith article needs further clarification. How is her analysis of power relevant here? How does she draw on other authors perspectives of power?*		
Organization, Grammar, Spelling, and use of Language: Is the paper well organized and is the student conscious of grammar, spelling, and language? Comments: *Excellent! A great improvement from assignment 1.*		
Conclusion: Is the conclusion clear and does it revisit and wrap up some of the major themes of the paper? Comments: *Well thought out conclusion and formulated analysis.*		
Total:		

Overall Comments:
Brian your paper is well-organized and written and makes some nice connections to the major themes we ve been talking about in class. You need to fine tune where I ve noted in your paper, particularly in the summary of your fourth article and how it links up with the course. Overall, great job!

Grading Rubric with Comments

Grade rubrics are often used by professors who work with one or more teaching assistants in an effort to maintain consistency in grading and evaluating student work. They are also a useful way to show students the strengths and weaknesses of their work. What exactly is a grading rubric? The best way to understand a grade rubric is to see an example. The example on the facing page provides an example of how to make comments using a grading rubric. It could be used to evaluate a student's paper and be attached to the last page of the individual's paper. Overall, comments on a grading rubric usually take the following forms:

- Questions are particulary useful if what you are grading is a part of a longer project
- General comments on style, technique, and argument.
- Open ended responses.

Peer Review

Another example of how to maximize time and the effectiveness of your comments while also allowing for greater collaboration in the learning process is to do a peer review. The peer review process is one that engages students as both active teachers and learners of their work and holds them accountable for their own learning experiences.

Peer Review Activity

General Instructions:
- Instruct students to bring 3 copies of their drafts
- Break them into groups of 3.

Step 1: Prediction Activity
Read ONLY the first paragraph of the draft. Based only on what you read, predict what the writer will discuss in her draft. Possible questions to consider:
- *What is the focus of this paper?*
- *What main and mini (primary and secondary) claims will she discuss?*
- *Who is her audience and how does she address it?*
- *What writing strategies does/might she make?*

Respond to these questions (or others) in a paragraph or two. Spend a few minutes discussing predictions in groups and give the predictions to the writer.

Teaching

Ideas

Step 2: Backwards Outlining

Read through the rest of the draft. Construct an outline by identifying the main points made in the essay draft and arranging them in an outline format. Briefly respond to the following questions at the end of the outline and give to writer.

 • Consider how the outline is organized. Does it make sense? What suggestions do you have for revising?
 • Consider the outline's coverage. Does the writer include enough information? Too much? What would you add or remove to make this paper more effective? Why?

(Source: Tracy Hamler Carrick, CCR PhD student, Syracuse University)

Other Forms of Feedback

Other examples of providing feedback include having students participate in mid-semester conferences with the instructor and a poster conference that occurs within the classroom. When choosing a response method, be sure to consider where students are in the writing process.

 Mid-semester conferences are an opportunity for each student to check-in with the instructor so that they may receive feedback in a verbal and one-on-one format. Students with different learning styles and preferences can benefit from this type of feedback in addition to the written feedback that they get on their papers and exams. It is often helpful to have students submit work to be reviewed before the conference.

Poster conferences within the classroom are another way in which students can benefit from verbal feedback from both the instructor and their peers. Creating a poster and brief presentation on their research for the course, gives students the opportunity to ask for feedback on their work in a constructive way. Also, it forces students to define and articulate the main points, structure, resources, etc. of their projects, even if the work is still in progress.

 Group feedback—addressing the class as a whole when you return papers either in the classroom or via a listserv—is one quick way of providing feedback. In this way, you can make suggestions for improvement for the next assignment by highlighting some of the things that students did well and recommending how they

can improve. By seeing what their peers are doing, students can also learn from each other in this way and may view their learning more collaboratively. This feedback method is efficient for providing feedback on common concerns, but it is no substitute for individual guidance.

Online feedback in the form of email, web boards, or other web programs are another opportunity for giving student written feedback.

It is important to mention here that you will be balancing your own role as both a student and a teacher and through trial and error you will find the most effective way to provide students with valuable feedback in a timely fashion. Part of this is learning to set boundaries for your students. For example, I do not respond to student requests for feedback on a draft before a paper is due unless they get it to me at least twenty-four hours ahead of time. I tell my students this ahead of time so that they know what and when I will respond. Another way might be to stop reading emails at five o'clock or a time that you see suitable so that you may also complete your own work. This helps both you and your students become better managers of time while still giving and re-ceiving constructive feedback. This leads us into our next section of this chapter, which explores how to give and encourage others to give (in the case of a peer review) useful constructive feedback.

Giving Useful Constructive Feedback

How do you know when something is both useful and constructive? Students are oftentimes preoccupied with the grade they receive and not the written feedback as a whole. Because of this, some instructors actually choose not to give an official grade on papers until the final grade for the course, which the university requires them to submit. This method may or may not work well depending on what other types of feedback you arrange to do in your classroom. Overall, I recommend that a good way of knowing whether you've given students useful constructive feedback is to ask them.

One way in which you can see if you are providing your students with useful construc-tive feedback is to take about fifteen minutes of class time mid-semester and ask them to do a free write about what they like about the feedback they have gotten so far in the class and what they would like to see more of in their experience. You will have to make clear that you are not soliciting whether or not they are happy with their grade thus far, rather you are asking them how you can help them to better succeed in your course. If you choose, you can have them do this in an anonymous way so that they will feel more free to write what they really want to say regarding this topic. Another strat-egy is to informally ask students when they come to office hours how they have felt

about the feedback they have received. In this way, you can begin to engage students in this discussion and also get them to express their needs.

Developing Understandable Expectations and Delivery for Feedback

A key to knowing how to give useful and constructive feedback is to discuss expectations at the beginning of the semester. One thing that I do with my students on the first day of class is to give them a handout, which clearly states my office hours, how to contact me, and perhaps most importantly, my expectations of them. I also have a space for them to tell me their expectations of me, which they can write on the handout and then I write on the board. Finally, I have them do expectations of each other as a class and write those on the board as well. This is particularily useful if the syllabus is designed and distributed by another instructor. This method has worked incredibly well and can be revisited mid-semester if necessary. Importantly, this tool is a way of setting the stage for discussions that will be challenging and analytic in nature without targeting specific people for their values and perspectives. It sets the tone that everyone in the room brings a valuable contribution to the class and that we need to both actively listen and speak in order to fully participate in the learning process.   Above is an example of the handout that I give.

Cheryl G. Najarian
Teaching Associate
Feminisms in an International Context, Spring 2002
Office Hours: M 1:15-3:15 and by appointment
Office Location: 208 Bowne Hall
Office Phone: 443-3484

Email: cgnajari@maxwell.syr.edu

My Expectations of You:
   • Be on time.
   • Come prepared.
   • Think critically/Be respectful.
   • If you need assistance, please ask.
   • Do your best.
Your Expectations of Me:
   •
   •
   •
Your Expectations of Your Colleagues:
   •
   •
   •

Certainly, this style might not work for everyone; however, it may be a useful place to start. It might also be possible for students to write about the expectations that they have of themselves for the course. I have found that students like the idea that they have some ownership of the classroom space and that their opinion was solicited and valued.

Since a major goal of this chapter is to encourage interdisciplinary conversations among teachers about how to respond to student writing, a challenge becomes how to model how to do this while speaking to such a diverse audience. As stated at the beginning of this chapter, we have all played the role of students and teachers at one time (and most of us are doing both simultaneously!) and so I will conclude this chapter with a list of questions for us to think about as we respond to or facilitate peer responses to student writing. There is, of course, no perfect way to respond and much of what works we learn through trial and error, but here are some questions to keep in mind as you develop your own teaching style:

- What do I want my students to take with them when they leave my class?

- When responding to student writing or facilitating responses to student writing, what strategies can I use that will best foster a challenging and supportive learning environment?

- How can I encourage my students to be both active teachers and learners in the writing process?

- What are the boundaries for my classroom? Am I open to having students write about and learn from experiences in the field, personal experiences, or other experiences that may come up?

- What are the different methods of feedback that I can give and facilitate my students to give to each other with regards to writing?

- Do I share my own research with my students as a way of describing how receiving feedback on my own writing has shaped my current perspective on an issue?

Responding to student writing is a major responsibility of a teacher. By being reflective about how we do this or encourage our students to do this enriches the learning experiences for students and teachers alike.

Evaluating Student Writing
Chapter 7

I don't really have a clue how to write a good paper. All I really know is what good writing sounds like to me. I don't really know what teachers are looking for.
                    Bill, senior in Geology

One can find out what teachers expect by trial and error. Through error, you ask questions. The trick is to ask the right questions. Some teachers make you dig. You will never know what they expect until you get feedback.
                    Shaneeva, junior in Pre-Med

Teachers should be clear in what they want. Teachers shouldn't be ambiguous in their question in an effort to make students think for themselves and then punish them if they don't meet all the teacher's expectations. Students listen to the teacher and try to answer the question according to what they think the teacher is looking for.
                    Mark, senior in Political Science

This chapter has two goals. The first is to dispel the myth that the difference between good and bad writing will be obvious to us and our students. The second is to provide tools for articulating your own grading strategy. This chapter will raise more questions than it will answer, but we hope they will stimulate your thinking on evaluating student writing. There is certainly no need to answer all of these questions all at once. As with other skills, grading gets easier with time.

Formulating a grading strategy involves thinking about a cluster of issues. You'll want to consider how writing fits into your course, course grade, and class assignments as well as the sorts of skills you hope students will learn. You'll also want to consider how much you value features of good writing such as coherence, originality, persuasive argumentation and complete sentences. Because student writing rarely exemplifies all these, you'll want to consider the relative weight of each. You might, for example, ask whether cleanly depicting course material is worth more than an inchoate attempt at formulating an original idea.

What do you value most in student writing?

How would you rank the following scenarios in which a student . . . ?
___Correctly represents the issues, has something to say, and says it well.
___Correctly represents the issues, has something to say, but doesn't say it well.
___Correctly represents the issues, has nothing to say, but says it well.
___Correctly represents the issues, has nothing to say, and doesn't say it well.
___Misrepresents the issues, has something to say and says it well.
___Misrepresents the issues, has something to say, but doesn't say it well.
___Misrepresents the issues, has nothing to say, but says it well.
___Misrepresents the issues, has nothing to say, and doesn't say it well.

Things To

Consider

Writing and the Course as a Whole

Evaluating others begins with a look within. We can't expect students to live up to standards if we haven't clearly formulated them ourselves. *How does writing fit into your course as a whole? Will students be asked to write papers, lab reports, or weekly journals? Will all of their written assignments be graded? How much of the total course grade will each assignment be worth?* If you are not the lead instructor for the course, you may not have much choice in the matter. However, it is still important that you understand how writing fits into the larger course objectives as well as how student grades will be determined.

Writing and Other Course-Related Skills

Depending on your course objectives, you might ask students to summarize large research trends or analyze a particular passage from an assigned text. Writing allows students the opportunity to practice these skills and gives us an opportunity evaluate their progress. Using a variety of assignments can often be an effective way of testing different skills. Short assignments might be used to evaluate a student's ability to illustrate a particular concept, while longer assignments might be used to evaluate a student's ability to provide a sustained argument supported by several kinds of evidence. Whatever the course objective, it is important that students understand which skills they are being asked to exercise. What we find valuable in student writing will depend on our answers to questions like those posed below.

Things To Consider

What skill are we asking students to utilize?

Are students being asked to DEMONSTRATE their knowledge of course materials?
Are students being asked to SUMMARIZE research or an assigned text?
Are students being asked to ANALYZE a particular argument, research study or point of view?
Are students being asked to ARGUE for their own conclusions?
Are students being asked to EXPLORE the abstract connections among seemingly unrelated ideas?
Are students being asked to ILLUSTRATE abstract concepts with their own concrete examples?

Re-visiting the Importance of Clear Assignments

While none of us wants to admit it, we sometimes receive sloppy essays because we asked sloppy questions. If a question is vague, student responses will follow suit. It is important that we ask the exact question we expect students to answer. If we want to invite students to do some creative research, we might ask them to write a paper on advances in communication technology. If we want students to consider a particular aspect of the topic, we might ask them to discuss the role of fiber optics in the late twentieth century communications revolution. Asking broad a question allows students explore topics of interest. Focused questions can prevent students from lapsing into a series of unrelated ramblings. Whatever your course objective, if you want a focused essay, then you should ask a focused question. In any case, it is important that you let students in on what you would consider satisfactory completion of the assignment.

In formulating paper assignments, you might try outlining the ways you would answer the question. This often helps weed out ambiguities. Unfortunately, you may also need to consider how you'd grade an essay written on a poorly asked question. You might, for example, choose to grade the student's answer in relation to the question they took themselves to be answering.

Revising Our Expectations

Depending on the sort of assignment involved, you may want to modulate your grading expectations. Spelling mistakes and incomplete sentences may be acceptable in a weekly journal, but unacceptable in a long term paper. Good short papers may be the ones that synthesize course material or raise a thought provoking question. Given the nature of the assignment, it would be unreasonable to expect sustained analysis or argumentation. On the other hand, a long paper may be woefully inadequate if it rehashes course material or simply raises a number of questions. Because what counts as *good writing* will depend on the nature and purpose of the assignment, you will want this to be reflected in your grading strategy.

Allowing students to re-write papers can be beneficial to those willing to put forth the effort. If you allow students the opportunity to re-write some or all of their papers, you will want to decide how these will be graded. *Can the new essay replace the previous grade? Will they be averaged? Are there upper limits to the grade a re-write can receive (e.g., no re-write can receive an A)? Should you penalize students who do not make a serious attempt at revision (e.g., does no more than check the spelling and re-submits the paper)?*

See Chapter 4 for ideas on drafting and revising.

Priming the evaluative pump.

Things To

Consider

- *How important is the timely completion of the assignment?*
- *How important are the margins, spacing, fonts, and color of the paper?*
- *Must the paper have a clear introduction, body and conclusion?*
- *How important is correct punctuation, spelling, and proper sentence structure?*
- *How important is ease of expression, word economy, and clever phrasing?*
- *How important is correctly representing course materials?*
- *How important is it that the writing demonstrate good research techniques?*
- *How important is it that the writing demonstrate original thinking?*

Teaching Ideas: Sample Evaluation Form

Name:

Criteria	Possible Points	Your Score
Focuses on the topic at hand Comments:		
Provides supporting adequate evidence and examples Comments:		
Exercises relevant skills (e.g., summary, analysis, research, or original thinking) Comments:		
Demonstrates effective use of correct grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and paragraph organization. Comments:		
Final Score		

Developing Criteria for Evaluation

We are often called on to evaluate problematic bits of writing. We must decide how to respond to obvious factual inaccuracies like "Hitler caused WWI by killing Poland's King Ferdinand" or awkward attempts at clever phrasing like "George Washington took to the reigns of power like a little girl to a tricycle." Identifying these as problematic is one thing; deciding what to do about them is another. Your response will depend upon what you consider good writing.

There are no clear and easy answers to these questions, but reflecting on them can help you balance these different concerns. You might even assign numerical values to various aspects of good writing. Charts like the one on the facing page can be especially useful in conveying your grading expectations to your students. If teaching assistants are grading student work, these charts can help insure consistent grading across the course as a whole. Even if you believe grading to be a more holistic assessment of a student's written work, it is still a good idea to ask yourself what you take good writing to be.

Grading: The Act Itself

I don't know how to define it, but I know it when I see it.
Justice Potter Stewart

Insuring Fairness

Because there are so many demands placed on our time, we cannot put off grading until a day we feel like reading student work. Sometimes we have to grade when we are tired or in a foul mood. And despite our best efforts, some students will rub us the wrong way. While we might not be able to change these realities, we can be aware of their effects. When grading the work of a student we don't like, it is important that we be aware of the ways such feelings might influence our judgment.

We should also avoid the temptation to overvalue the work of students we like or the ones making helpful contributions in class. As a general rule, it is important to give equal amounts of time to each paper. After you've finished grading all the papers, you might consider sorting them into piles according to the grades they received and then scan each one insure that your evaluation is fair and consistent.

If you are working with other teaching assistants, you might try exchanging one paper from each of your sections (delete students' names), grading the sample papers, and comparing grades and responses before you begin to evaluate the other papers from your sections.

Time Saving Strategies for Evaluating Papers

- Comment on errors only on the first few times they occur. Filling the paper with red ink can also make students reluctant to read the comments at all.
- Reserve critical comments on grammar and structure for the first page and comment on content thereafter.
- Distribute a list of errors common to papers in the class and refer students to this sheet. If paper comments are typed, feedback can be cut and pasted from a master list.
- Use abbreviations: AWK – awkward, FRAG – fragment, W/C – word choice.
- Read papers through once to assign a grade and through a second time to make comments (the time expended on the second reading is more than made up for in the effectiveness of comments).
- Skim through papers prior to grading and sort into piles of 'strong,' 'adequate,' 'weak.' This can help insure consistency, but also can highlight common mistakes and make more efficient use of your efforts. (Of course, these papers need not stay in these piles).

Grade Distribution

Some instructors know how grades will be distributed before they even look at student papers, while others prefer to let grades fall where they may. You might consider whether you are striving for a particular grade distribution. *Do you plan to end up with a Bell curve? Are you willing to allow everyone in class to fail? Does the best paper in class automatically receive an A? Are you willing to allow everyone to receive an A, provided you believe they deserve it?* Typical debates over grade inflation focus on the number of As received. According to some, the number of Bs received can be quite large so long as the number of As is kept to a respectable minimum. Others feel that Cs should be given to average work. You should be aware of any department policies concerning grade distribution or even an informal push to deflate grades. If you are a teaching assistant, you may want to ask the lead instructor whether any overall grade distribution is expected.

Two Vices: Grade Inflation and Unrealistic Expectations

Being an easy grader may seem like a ticket to popularity. There is, however, little evidence to suggest that giving out high marks actually generates better teacher evaluations. Many students lose respect for teachers who give them higher grades than they believe they deserve. Some even appreciate challenging teachers (even if they never admit it). Furthermore, because many of us cannot imagine receiving anything less than an A, we naturally assume that students have these expectations as well. In reality, many are satisfied with a C. As one student put it, "A 'C' is still passing, isn't it?" Whatever the temptation to inflate grades, we are charged with being fair and judicious.

There is also the opposite sort of error teachers should try to avoid. Many of us are used to applying harsh academic standards to our own work. However, we should not lose sight of the fact that students have not benefited from our years of training. We should modulate our expectations accordingly. Even if a freshman essay could not make it through the rigors of a peer-edited academic journal, it could still be a good freshman essay. The dangers of grade inflation have received the press they deserve. It is wrong to expect too little of students. However, it would also be wrong to expect too much of them. This is yet another invitation to consider what counts as good writing as well as what we can legitimately expect of our students.

Evaluating Effort versus Evaluating Results

Some students will struggle to produce effective writing no matter how much effort they expend. Others are capable of excellent writing but will fail to live up to their potentials. *Should the former group be rewarded for their efforts and the latter group penalized for an opportunity lost? Are we evaluating results or their effort? Should all students be judged by similar standards? If a freshman and a senior produce an essay of similar quality, should they be judged similarly? Should the fact that English is not a student's native language figure into an assessment of that student's work?* While there are no easy answers to these questions, you might want to think about how these issues might influence your grading practices.

Evaluating the Unpopular

We often encourage our students to think for themselves. This can result in them defending extremely unpopular views. *How should we respond to a student who argues that women are inferior or that the Holocaust never happened?* If a paper does not satisfy the written requirements, then it can be faulted for failing to meet the letter of the assignment. This is another reason to make sure writing assignments give students no more discretion than we intend. *However, what if a student thoughtfully and eloquently defends a controversial (or even reprehensible) position? Do they get credit for being thoughtful and eloquent? If they lose points, is it for being unpopular or wrong?* Contrast this case with a student who tows the politically correct line without a second thought. *Do they get credit for being politically correct or for being right?*

If the aim of an assignment is to engage the issues thoughtfully , then it should not matter which side of an issue a student takes. After all, we are evaluating the adequacy of their reasoning and not the individual positions they choose to defend (or this is what we tell ourselves). Unfortunately, evaluating the quality of their arguments and thus the adequacy of their reasoning is bound up with the sorts of reasons we find credible. In the same way the *National Inquirer* is unlikely to count as a good research resource, unpopular arguments may strike us as being implausible. While this may be unavoidable, it is important that we be aware of the sorts of assumptions that we are making and the ways our own scholarly commitments influence our judgment.

Criticizing, encouraging, and empowering

As many of us are painfully aware, writing isn't easy, and each of us has room to improve. Teachers should temper their criticism with constructive feedback. When students receive low marks, it is important to diagnose the problem. Students may be struggling with the writing process itself. Or they may be struggling with how to manage their time (e.g., they threw the paper together the night before). You might also consider allowing students to re-write papers and thus reward those willing to work on improving their written work. In any case, teachers must strike a delicate balance between being critical of a student's work and encouraging improvement. We should also remember that using writing to teach can empower students in the classroom and beyond. Other teachers are a great resource—ranging from informal discussions about what you do in the classroom to formal mentoring.

Promoting Academic Honesty in Student Writing
Chapter 8

Don't do what I did! In less than six days, I exchanged personal integrity for dishonesty, sacrificed my reputation by attempting to take the easy way out, and in so doing derailed my ride towards an education, a Syracuse University diploma, and a successful future.
> Suspended Syracuse Univeristy student
> (from *Arts & Sciences Resource Guide)*

I know a lot of people that plagiarize off the Internet and from people that had the class the previous year, and they continue to do it because they never get caught.
> Senior in Psychology

It's demoralizing to think that students might be taking advantage of you, and it's awful to feel like a detective . . .
> Jane Halonen, Ph.D., James Madison University
> (from *APA Monitor,* Feb 2002)

As teachers we expect academic honesty in our classrooms, in our departments, and in our schools. Yet forty to seventy percent of all college students have reported cheating at some point during their academic career (Gross-Davis). The Center for Academic Integrity estimates that about seventy percent of professors handle at least one case of plagiarism a year (Murray). Advancements in technology such as Internet paper-mill sites or the copy and paste functions of the computer have made it easier to plagiarize. Therefore, it is appropriate to examine methods of prevention and evaluation in order to manage and control potential events of academic dishonesty.

Prevention is the best way to attenuate the occurrence of plagiarism in writing. It is your job as a teacher to make it as difficult as possible for students to cheat in your classroom. Yet, most professors' attempt at prevention is a simple threat in their syllabus at the beginning of the semester, and nothing more. In this chapter we will consider many strategies for preventing academic dishonesty.

Things To Consider

Ways to be proactive about plagiarism

Educate yourself regarding the TYPES of plagiarism that exist.

Understand the REASONS behind academic dishonesty.

Create an ENVIRONMENT that supports academic honesty.

Establish your own RULES and make them CLEAR to the students.

Spend time on a DISCUSSION and EXERCISES regarding academic honesty.

Teach RESOURCE USE and CITATION rules.

Design ASSIGNMENTS strategically.

Types of Academic Dishonesty in Writing

Many forms of academic dishonesty exist in writing. It is important that we continually find ways to prevent unwanted situations by building classrooms that promote honesty for the sake of a better education. The first step to prevention is knowledge. You cannot prevent something if you do not know about it. It is also important to begin by educating yourself about Syracuse University's policies and procedures in order to understand your rights in advance of any problems. Often as a teaching assistant, your advisor will assist you or will take control in a situation of academic dishonesty. Familiarize yourself with situations in which you do and do not have discretion.

Regardless of your authority, you should take some time to think and record your own definition of academic dishonesty. The definitions vary, but typically plagiarism is defined as submitting a piece of writing as your own when the words or ideas belong to someone else. Consider the fact that plagiarism exists on a continuum from inadvertent laziness to knowledgeable cheating. Different types of plagiarism may occur more or less frequently with different types of writing. Some blatant types of plagiarism include:

- Downloading a free paper off the Internet (see Termpapers.com for list of sites);
- Copying an article from the Web or on-line source;
- Copying a paper from a local source (from a student enrolled in the course previously);
- Cutting sections of several sources and pasting them together in order to create paper.

These forms of plagiarism often occur with the student fully aware that there is wrongdoing. These papers often jump out at you as an *obviously too good to be true* type of paper, but remember that even C papers could contain plagiarized sections. Word-for-word plagiarism is the most typical type of academic dishonesty; it can be in the form of paragraph, sentence, phrase, or unique term lifting, anywhere that writing is copied without quotations or references. Also typical is plagiarism of ideas or theories without referencing the source. This can often occur when it is difficult to distinguish between common knowledge and the need to quote. Without a discussion with the student, it is often difficult to know if students are purposefully copying or if the error is due to inadvertent citation errors. Other examples of academic dishonesty in writing are:

- Quoting less than all words of a passage;
- Referencing a source they have never seen first hand;
- Using previous academic work as a new product (recycled paper);
- Faking a citation;
- Incorrect or lack of a citation of an on-line reference.

By understanding the difference between plagiarism, paraphrasing, and direct citation, you can begin to set upon your own definition of plagiarism. This definition will be used to create an environment of honesty in your classroom, as well as to direct your attempts to prevent, and, if necessary, react to the continuum of dishonesty.

Understand the Reason

Why and how do students come into situations that are considered dishonest? Just as the definitions of dishonesty are on a continuum, so are the reasons. There are often behavioral signs that you can learn to recognize that will prevent an academic dishonesty situation from occurring. For example, ensuring equal access to research materials and sources or making students feel that they can succeed in class without dishonesty can prevent academic dishonesty. Understanding and continually reminding yourself of these reasons will help you to create an optimal situation in your classroom that will promote academic honesty. Some examples of how to do this are provided in the following sections.

Some reasons that students plagiarize

- *Don't know they are cheating*
- *Shortest route to be finished*
- *Pressure for good grades*
- *Citation errors*
- *Topic doesn't interest them*
- *Don't care about academic honesty*
- *Peer pressure to help a friend*
- *Poor time management*
- *Fear that writing is inadequate*
- *Don't know how to find resources*
- *Consider situation unfair/too demanding*
- *Thrill of rule breaking*

(source: adapted from Harris, 2002)

Things To Consider

Create an Environment of Academic Honesty

Take some time to consider the type of environment you would like to create in your classroom. Most of us desire an environment that is open, supportive, and safe. The environment should not be any different regarding academic honesty. There are several ways to create an atmosphere in your classroom that supports academic honesty. Many teachers present their academic honesty rules through a harsh, threatening note in their syllabus such as:

Plagiarism and cheating will NOT be tolerated. Students shall exhibit honesty in all academic endeavors and adhere to the rules stated under the heading of Academic Standards in the *Syracuse University Bulletin: Academic Rules and Regulations.*

By doing so, students may understand that they will be severely punished for incorrect behavior, and may be afraid to ask if they do not know or understand the policy. In this environment it is not atypical to find papers with too many quotes! One way to create an environment that supports academic honesty is to allow for a discussion regarding rules of honesty.

Syllabus

Most likely the syllabus will be the first time you present your academic honesty policy (see following section to make decisions regarding your rules). The syllabus can be used as a chance to begin a conversation about academic honesty. Instead of the typical syllabus statement try instead to provide students with a list of what is and is not acceptable in your classroom. The information provided in the academic honesty statement is intended to clarify what you as the teacher expect of them and what they can expect from you. Consider any specific situation that may arise in your class and try to address what is/is not allowed. If nothing else, add,

At any time you ever have any questions or concerns regarding academic honesty or other policies in the class, please come and talk with me.

Teaching

Ideas

The Do's and Don'ts of Academic Honesty	
What to do:	**What not to do:**
Do help each other	**Don't** cheat, lie, steal
Do ask questions	**Don't** use papers that you did not write
Do edit and rewrite your writing and others	**Don't** make up fake quotes
Do take care when citing sources	**Don't** paraphrase without source credit
Do use sources wisely	**Don't** procrastinate
Do discover your own voice and opinions	**Don't** use another's ideas as your own
Do enclose quoted material with quotation marks	**Don't** forget to cite web sites and speeches
Do cite direct source of quotation	**Don't** be afraid to talk to the teacher!

(source: Bedford Martins Web Site:<bedfordstmartins.com/technotes/techtiparchive/ttip102401.htm>.)

Academic honesty contract

Some professors include a contract at the end of their syllabus containing academic honesty rules and signed at the beginning of the semester by all students in the course. The contract can contain a short statement regarding what is and what is not allowed in the classroom as well as a space for the student to sign and date the contract. Specific rules regarding collaboration and take-home assignments and exams can be stated explicitly on the contract as well.

Academic Honesty Contract

A Contract to Uphold Academic Honesty at Syracuse University

I, being a student of Syracuse University, have read and understand the information contained in this Resource Guide. I agree to uphold the Syracuse University Compact and, in so doing, to maintain the highest standards of personal integrity and academic honesty in all endeavors. I understand that any violation of these principles is likely to result in sanctions from course instructors, the Student Standards Committee of The College of Arts and Sciences, and/or the Dean of Arts and Sciences. These sanctions may include but are not limited to receiving an "F" in the course, administrative withdrawal from the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion from the University.

_____
Signed

_____
Date
(Please sign and return this copy)

(Contract example from Syracuse University's College of Arts and Sciences Web Site: <http://www-hl.syr.edu/advising/honestyguide.html>.

Teaching

Ideas

Honor code

A similar method of prevention and education is the use of an honor code in your classroom. Instead of creating the rules yourself, you and your students can come to agree upon a constitution regarding academic honesty through collaboration. The rules can be formally written into a code of conduct document. A ceremony can be held in which each student signs and dates the document. Both the contract and honor code create an environment in which students understand that academic honesty is an important component to a working classroom. These formal possibilities make students aware that there is room for open discussion while at the same time suggests the gravity of academic honesty.

Establish Your Rules

What do you do if you catch a student cheating? There are many plausible situations to consider. If you are a TA, remember that you may not be fully in control of the rules, but you can still control how you will respond to the situation, and you should be prepared to consult with your advisor and other teachers. Even with years of experience and all the preparation you can imagine, each situation is different and needs to be considered on an individual basis. Since the penalty must fit the offense. Since academic dishonesty exists on a continuum, the penalties must as well. In addition to considering what you will do for situations on the opposite ends of the continuum, many teachers will consider the number of offenses when developing penalties for academic dishonesty. For example,

> Plagiarism will result in an F on the paper with no possibility of make-up or other credit, and the second act will result in an F for the course.

There are three common penalties when an act of plagiarism is found:

1. Fail the course,
2. Fail paper, but not course (some also require signature of confession), and
3. Rewrite the paper and be penalized by a full grade.

Institutions and professional associations may dictate other consequences as well. Each penalty has its own pros and cons. When developing your own rules, talk to other faculty who also are trying to use writing more effectively in their classroom by preventing academic dishonesty. Remember to incorporate the specific situations that students will encounter in your class, such as if students will be allowed to collaborate and in what capacity it is or is not allowed. It is also important to consider your policy on citation of information from the Internet and your position on make-up exams. Regardless, it is important to make the penalties of academic dishonesty clear and specific to your students from the beginning of the course. Some teachers feel that it is helpful to show students an awareness of Internet sites that sell papers. Others disagree, fearing that it could provide students with more resources for cheating in the future. Making your

Internet Paper Mill Sites

The paper store: http://www.paperwriters.com/intro.htm
LazyStudents.com: http://LazyStudents.com
Genius Papers: http://www.geniuspapers.com/index.htm
Evil House of Cheat: http://www.cheathouse.com/
Research Papers Online: http://www.ezwrite.com/
All Free Essays: http://allfreeessays.com/
School Sucks: http://schoolsucks.com

students aware that you do not tolerate dishonesty will dissuade them from attempting it in your classroom; at the same time, making it explicit that asking questions and discussions of honesty are welcomed at all times will promote an open and honest environment.

Discussion of Academic Honesty

In addition to a lesson on resource use and citation rules, an open discussion regarding academic honesty allows for students to ask questions regarding what is okay and not okay to do. If given an opportunity many students will ask about collaboration. Let the students know that you value good writing individual and collaborative—and discuss the implications of collaborative writing projects. The discussion should always suggest that questions are welcomed at any time but that blatant disregard for academic honesty is never tolerated. There are several ways to organize the discussion some of which are:

- Discuss the range of plagiarism distinguishing between mistakes and deliberate cheating.
- Examine the philosophical reasons why plagiarism is unfair to peers and oneself.
- Discuss the benefits to citation such as the ability to strengthen writing by revealing the knowledge of using and synthesizing sources.
- Discuss tips to avoid problems such as time management issues.
- Discuss the difficulties of writing by letting them know that you understand the anxiety and frustration involved in the writing process.
- Discussion regarding information that counts as common knowledge.
- Discussion of implications of academic dishonesty.
- Allow for a question and answer period after dispensing the academic honesty policy.
- Discuss how to properly cite web sources and how to properly locate information on the Internet.
- Utilize several exercises available to discuss academic honesty (see "Academic Honesty Classroom Exercises" on the next page).

Teach Resource Use and Citation Rules

While it is necessary to provide explicit definitions, many teachers forget that many students do not know or understand the parameters of academic honesty. Therefore, if you expect academic honesty in your classroom, it is sometimes necessary to spend time, with a lesson or a handout, teaching and/or refreshing knowledge regarding how to use sources responsibly. If you are going to require a research paper, a handout explaining how to find resources can ensure equal access to materials. Beyond teaching pure citation rules, you can also teach students good habits, such as including citation

Academic Honesty Classroom Exercises

Teaching

Ideas

Exercise 1: Questions

Ask students to write down their answers to questions you pose about academic honesty. Then allow for a discussion regarding each question.

Sample questions: *What is your definition of academic honesty? Do you agree with the policy as stated in the syllabus? Any questions about the policy?*

Exercise 2: Sample paragraph

Ask students to read a sample paragraph and writing based on the original paragraph. Then ask students to determine the correctness or level of plagiarism for each writing sample. The writing samples can include examples of quoting (in)correctly, paraphrasing (in)correctly, and arguments cited (in)correctly. You can also ask students to re-write the incorrect passages.

Exercise 3: Cartoon

Go to www.antiplagiarism.com and use Harris' cartoons as a handout for a class discussion regarding academic honesty.

Exercise 4: Mini-case studies

Ask students to discuss specific academic dishonest situations, such as a group work or problem set situation in which honesty is uncertain. (see Hurd & Hallock, in press)

Exercise 4: Harris' (2001) *The Plagiarism Handbook*

See Harris' book for several exercises to help with correct quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing.

Exercise 5: University of Puget Sound's exercises for citing sources

(See <http://library.ups.edu/research/guides/intelown.htm> for exercises on citation)

information when taking notes for a paper. Students should be made aware of rules without being scared of the prospect of completing a paper or feeling required to quote unnecessarily. Spend time recommending tutoring services and writing centers on campus so that the students can receive help throughout the semester. Finally, remember to set a good example in your own writing, lectures, and notes! Students learn from your actions as well as your words. Citation styles are continually changing, so it is important for you and your students to take advantage of formatting handbooks (available on-line at apastyle.org, or mlaformatting.com). Whether you use MLA, APA, or another formatting style, always encourage consistency. Students come from different academic backgrounds and have experience with different citation rules. By reviewing

citation rules in your class the students will be made to be aware of their responsibilities as resource users.

Designing Good Assignments

Another effective preventative measure is to create assignments that make academic dishonesty impossible or extremely difficult to accomplish. Several options are suggested on Harris' website and book. Listed below are suggestions for crafting a good assignment, whether it be a research paper, an essay, or a short-answer quiz .

Set-up suggestions:
- Require in-class writing assignments in order to develop writing skills, as well as to get a sense of the students' ability.
- Make assignments clear with specific expectations.
- Focus the assignments so they are closely tied to course goals/topics.
- Encourage topics that provoke thought and analysis more than mere fact-listing.
- Encourage topics that students are intrinsically interested in pursuing.
- Provide choices in terms of the topic or the type of paper.
- Require specific components (e.g., use source from 2002, course text book, or incorporate information provided such as a data set, an article, or an interview).
- Limit sources used (e.g., require references to be up-to-date).
- Provide students criteria for how you are evaluating their performance.
- Change assignments and revise paper topics each time you teach the course.

See Chapter 2 for more tips on designing assignments.

Process suggestions:
- Require students to hand-in highlighted cited text.
- Require students to come in to office hours to discuss topic, and how they plan to organize and present their ideas or research.
- Require writing steps (hand-in topic/problem, bibliography/references, photocopies of articles, outline, rough draft, annotated bibliography, draft, and final draft.
- Require students to hand-in final version with earlier drafts (in order to check if previous suggestions and comments have been taken into account in the final version).

Evaluation suggestions:

- Require oral reports. Have students narrate their whole process of research and writing.

- Have students complete an in-class meta-learning essay. Have students answer questions such as, *"What did you get out of the assignment?", "What problems did you face and how did you overcome them?", "Where did you locate most of our sources?", and "What is the most important thing you learned from the assignment?".*
- Check their writing thoroughly. If they know you are going to read their papers closely, they know the chance of getting away with plagiarism is unlikely (Tip: If you have a big class, ask students to submit their papers electronically so they know you may send papers through a plagiarism detector program).

Alert! Alert! Dishonesty Detected!

Okay, you've tried to prevent academic dishonesty, but you THINK you have found an instance of it anyway. First, try not to take it personally. It happens to most of us, but how you deal with it can be just as important to prevent future instances.

How to Detect Academic Dishonesty

- Look for clues such as: mixed citation styles, lack of references or quotations, unusual formatting, off topic, datedness, anachronisms, anomalies of diction, anomalies of style, web name/URL on corner (Harris).
- Search for paper or phases from paper on-line through search engines such as: Google (Reference > Education> Educators > Plagiarism > Detection), AltaVista, Northern Light, or Fast Search.
- Use a plagiarism detector such as: Turnitin.com ($, free trial period), Eve2: canexus.com/eve/index.shtml ($), Glatt: plagiarism.com ($), integriguard.com: (1) HowOriginal.com (free), (2) PaperBin.com ($), wordchecksystems.com ($), Digital Integrity: findsame.com ($).

The Internet has made available papers for downloading, but also has detection tools to recognize those papers (some companies provide both). New scams arise daily. There are also several legal issues related to detection software use. Periodically checking the web and academic publications, such as the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, can provide up-to-date information (see <http://chronicle.com/free/v48/i36/36a03701.htm>).

Using Writing to Teach

What To Do (and Not To Do) If You Suspect a Problem

If you suspect you have found a circumstance of academic dishonesty, you should take action as soon as possible. The first step you should take is to talk to an advisor, an experienced colleague, or the department chair, and then review the school's rules and regulations and due process procedures since policies are different within each college. Consider the culture of your department and the specific situation. You may know your student better than your department chair. Your knowledge of your student can provide some direction regarding how you will handle the situation. Second, you (or you and a faculty member) will need to talk with the student. This can be a difficult and uncomfortable situation, but preparation and consideration can make it as calm and directed as possible. It is not necessary to deal with the problem alone. If you are uncertain of what to do, ask for assistance. Remember the student is entitled to due process and confidentiality. Do not treat the student as a criminal, but instead show a mix of sympathy and concern as well as sternness for the seriousness of situation. The following is a list of some things to consider in a situation of academic dishonesty.

- Consider if you feel comfortable talking with the student alone (which can make the student feel less threatened) or with an advisor or colleague in the room (which can protect you and the student from any misunderstanding about the situation).
- Set an appointment to talk to the student.
- Have a copy of plagiarized document in hand for the meeting and any information you have that has prompted concern for the situation.
- Objectively explain problem as you see it (e.g., "There seems to be many errors with citations. Do you know citation rules?").
- Ask open-ended questions such as, "Is there anything you want to tell me about your paper?"
- Try to avoid words such as *cheating* and *plagiarism.*
- Listen. Give the student a chance to explain their paper (i.e. the process they went through to do it, or where they got the idea to write it).
- If the student responds with only denial, ask questions about the content, terms, and interpretations of the paper.
- If the student admits to dishonesty, give him or her a chance to explain the reason why they were dishonest.
- Be ready for tales of hardship and extenuating circumstances (suggest counseling center, if appropriate) and learn to recognize legitimate and unacceptable excuses.
- Also be ready for judgment calls since plagiarism is always a matter of

degree.
- State your policy again and explain what happens next.
- Remember to document the meeting and any conversations for your records in order to protect you and your student.
- If necessary, take official action according to your discretion and rules of the school (see action chart at <http://thecollege.syr.edu/advising/AS_Resource_Guide/Actions.htm>).

Writing functions as a primary currency in academic communities. As teachers and scholars, we can use writing to promote active participation and engaged learning by incorporating it into our teaching practices in both formal and informal ways. The relationship between writing and academic honesty is complicated by the advent of emerging technologies and collaborative pedagogies. The globalization of information means that our students can access new forms and kinds of knowledge; it also means that written materials are available for misuse. Similarly, innovative teaching methods challenge us to rethink our understanding and evaluation of 'student work' as we embrace multiple ways of learning that include collaborative classroom practices.

As we have discussed throughout this book, we continue to develop strategies and practices for engaging students through writing, and we invite you to use, adapt and transform the ideas presented here as you apply them to your own classroom. The active and open exchange of ideas that is so valued by members of the academic community—and the collaborative authors of this book—depend on a culture of engaged learning. All members of this community—both teachers and students—can contribute to it by recognizing our roles as proactive agents in the learning process.

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Campus Resources

This appendix includes summaries of Syracuse University services that might be useful to instructors using writing in their teaching. For a more complete description of these and other resources, see the *Student Handbook* or the University website.

Center for Support of Teaching and Learning (CSTL)
400 Ostrom Avenue
443-5472
http://cstl.syr.edu/

CSTL provides a variety of support and consultation services for faculty and teaching assistants. Staff members work with instructors on pedagogical concerns such as assessment, designing syllabi, and using technology in teaching. Their website links to online and other resources for teachers.

Counseling Center
111 Waverly Avenue
443-4715
http://students.syr.edu/depts/health/counselcenter.html

The SU Counseling Center provides assessment, short-term treatment, referral, and emergency consultation services for full-time students with concerns including: family and relationship problems, substance abuse, depression, anxiety, and homesickness. There is no cost for the services. Students are encouraged to make their own appointments, but instructors may refer students to the Center. For more information about making referrals, see: http://students.syr.edu/depts/health/counselcenter/refferal.html.

Faculty Academic Computing Support Services (FACSS)
272 Newhouse II
443-2604
http://www-fcms.syr.edu/Services/Facss.htm

FACSS assists faculty and graduate students with teaching responsibilities with courseware development, multimedia presentations, and other uses of technology in research and teaching. They offer workshops and training, instructional media and web support, and consultation services. A computer lab is available for instructors in 272 Newhouse II. See http://www-fcms.syr.edu/facdev/workshops.htm for a current list of workshops.

Using Writing to Teach

Learning Resource Center

111 Waverly Avenue, Suite 220
443-2005
http://sumweb.syr.edu/ssr/lsc/index.htm

The Learning Resource Center provides individual tutoring, facilitated study groups, and study skills (time management, note-taking, etc.) workshops for undergraduate and graduate students. Faculty can request study skills workshops for their classes. There is an hourly fee for individual tutoring and study group services. Tutoring request forms are available online.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Resource Center

750 Ostrom Avenue
443-3983
http://students.syr.edu/depts/lgbt

The LGBT Resource Center provides support services, resources, referrals, and educational programs for students, faculty, staff and parents who have questions or seek support related to issues of sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. Instructors can consult with staff about curriculum development, bias-related incidents in the classroom, and university and community resources.

Office of Disability Services

804 University Avenue, Suite 309
443-4498
http://sumweb.syr.edu/ssr/dserv/index.htm

The Office of Disability Services assists students who have disabilities access services and accommodations that enable them to participate fully in educational opportunities and student life. Staff members are available for consultation with instructors who have questions or concerns regarding the application of an accommodation to curriculum, program of study, or course work. A summary of University building accessibility is also available on their website.

Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA)

105 Schine Student Center

443-9676

http://students.syr.edu/depts/multicultural/index.html

The Office of Multicultural Affairs provides programs and support services that promote a learning environment that honors diversity. Instructional resources available through OMA include a diversity resource manual, programming grants, peer education workshops, and a university-wide diversity calendar.

Professional Development Programs of the Graduate School

207 Bowne Hall

443-1856

http://gradsch.syr.edu

The Graduate School sponsors a variety of professional development programs for graduate students. The TA Program provides teaching assistants with an orientation to issues related to college instruction, teaching strategies, and University resources. English Language Proficiency Services are available for graduate students referred by their departments. The Future Professoriate Project and Preparing Future Faculty Program work with academic departments to assist students interested in enhancing their teaching, academic citizenship, and research skills in preparation for faculty careers. For more information about these programs, contact the TA Program or your department. Other professional development programs include consulting services for teaching assistants and workshops on topics such as using technology in teaching, developing a professional portfolio, and innovative pedagogies.

University College

700 University Avenue

443-3261

http://www.suce.syr.edu

University College serves part-time students throughout the academic year and all students during summer sessions. Students taking courses through University College can access the resources listed here as well as complementary services (academic advising, writing consultants, etc.) provided by University College. Instructors teaching courses through University College will receive a faculty handbook that describes instructional responsibilities and resources, information on teaching adult learners, student services, policies, and staff contact information.
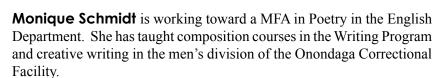
The Writing Center
101 HBC
443-5289
http://wrt.syr.edu/thewritingcenter.html

The Writing Center is a resource for students interested in developing their writing skills and for instructors who want to learn more about writing pedagogy. Consultants will work with students at any stage of a writing assignment, including brainstorming, first drafts, organizations, and editing. They can also help student improve critical reading and thinking skills. Writing consultants will not: write a paper for a student; proofread a student's papers (though they will work with students on their proofreading and editing skills); or dispute or question the grade a teacher has given a student's paper.

Writing Center consultants will work with instructors who are interested in using more writing in their teaching. Faculty can refer students to the Center, either individually or as a class. For more information about the referral process, see: http://wrt.syr.edu/wc/faculty.html. Consultants are also available for in-class workshops or presentations.

About the Authors

"I love writing even more than before—it's potential to spark thought and reflection, solidify self, and change perspectives continually amazes me. It definitely is a skill we need to introduce to our students, have them feel comfortable and adept in order to to maneuver through academia."

Monique Schmidt is working toward a MFA in Poetry in the English Department. She has taught composition courses in the Writing Program and creative writing in the men's division of the Onondaga Correctional Facility.
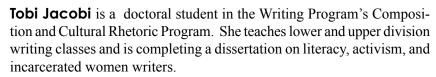
"I had used writing in my classes before, more than I had realized or thought about. I always sort of took my understanding of writing and the teaching of it for granted. I found it difficult to put practice into words, especially for multiple disciplines."

David Seitz is a fifth year doctoral candidate in Experimental Psychology studying the effects of aging upon memory and cognition. He has taught introduction to psychology and research methods.

"Writing is the act of speaking, talking, reading, thinking, and listening. Using writing to teach is the act of making that process visible and public. Writing this book has made me realize how important it is to recognize the connections among disciplines."

Tobi Jacobi is a doctoral student in the Writing Program's Composition and Cultural Rhetoric Program. She teaches lower and upper division writing classes and is completing a dissertation on literacy, activism, and incarcerated women writers.

"Writing is how we come to know what we know and also how we come to know ourselves."

Cheryl Najarian is a doctoral candidate on leave in the Department of Sociology and Women's Studies Program. She's also taught the lab section of the oral communications course for international students. Cheryl is working on a dissertation on both the mothering and paid work experiences of deaf and hard of hearing women.

"Writing is one way that students can express themselves and be comfortable—but also challenged. In addition, in our book we talk about how teachers are also participants in that process."

Payal Banerjee is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology. She has taught Social Problems and her research is in the area of immigration of South Asian high-tech workers in the US.

"It's exciting to be part of a community of people willing to engage in friendly debate, supportive conversation, and enriching dialogue about teaching and learning."

Hilton Hallock is a doctoral candidate in Cultural Foundations of Education and Associate Director of Professional Development Programs in the Graduate School. She has taught in the Higher Education Program and Cultural Foundations of Education.

"On the surface, it looks like each discipline brings with it different standards and methods of inquiry. Certainly, each of us brought out own favorite "buzzwords" to the table (analyze, criticize, etc.). However, for all those apparent differences, each of us was trying to engage students, challenge their intellects and invite them to improve. I was constantly struck by the degree of sameness in difference."

John Draeger is a doctoral candidate in Philosophy. He has taught courses in ethics, epistemology and metaphysics. He is writing his dissertation on emotion and moral theory.

"Before the project I thought about writing as more of an evaluation tool; now my advice would be much more about how to use writing to support teaching and learning."

Kara Bopp is a doctoral candidate in Experimental Psychology. She has taught introduction to psychology, cognitive psychology and statistical methods.