

English/Writing Faculty Assessment Report, 2013-2014

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Writing faculty applied for funding to create a rubric for either WR 115 or WR 121 and their yearly assessment project, which involves reading a substantial sampling of essays against some kind of evaluation tool. In the past, we've undertaken trait scoring, focusing on a particular outcome (for instance, "think critically" as it relates to course goals), but we haven't used a holistic rubric during these assessment sessions.

As part of the rubric creation, we planned on updating our course outcomes but realized, given the fact that one of our parent organizations, The Council for Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) was in the process of updating their outcomes for first-year composition (FYC), to be finalized Fall 2014, and the Oregon Writing and English Advisory Committee (OWEAC) would, likewise, be revising their recommendations for our writing sequence—WR 115, 121, 122, 123, and 227—we decided to wait on the revision of our course goals and concentrate on crafting a rubric based around descriptors of student writing as these descriptors fit into two CLOs: "communicate effectively" and "think critically."

We engaged with assessment work during the normal course of our monthly meetings. Faculty involved initially included Siskanna Naynaha (composition coordinator), Sarah Lushia, Will Fleming, Heather Ryan, Kate Sullivan, Aryn Batley, and Jose Chaves. Gail Stevenson attended some early meetings but could not carve time out of her schedule to continue the work. Chaves stepped off the committee winter 2014, and Fleming withdrew spring term due to time constraints and other employment responsibilities. CD \$\$ alone was insufficient to ensure PT faculty participation, and FT faculty involvement was inconsistent given other work responsibilities.

Given that the majority of faculty involved in this assessment work had FT status and paychecks, we decided to ask Heather Ryan to do the work of collating and finessing our initial rubric construction so that she could claim the CD hours.

During conversations about our rubric, we lamented what we see as common student misconceptions about writing classrooms and decided to craft supplemental materials for a (primary) student audience. These documents would explain faculty expectations around attendance, critical reading (reading not just for information but for analysis/inference), peer

writing workshops, the necessity of revision within the writing process, and discussion and participation guidelines for class time. We see these documents as functioning as “how-to” guides for students and as tools for faculty in familiarizing themselves with course expectations. Eventually, they will “live” on our department website and be available to the general public (we also expect they will be housed on the Assessment page).

In order to connect these documents to CLOs, we chose to foreground words and phrases that occur in the CLOs themselves and the criteria under each CLO’s definition. These narratives, then, function as translation tools: helping students to understand the relevance of CLOs within the composition classroom and enabling them to decode faculty expectations for behaviors and performance.

These supplemental documents will be shared with the faculty at large Fall term, 2014, where we expect they will be endorsed/adopted by the department.