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Mesa College  
Writing Across the Disciplines  
Survey Report

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Fall 2008

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*Prepared by:*  
San Diego Mesa College  
Office of Instructional Services,  
Resource Development, and Research

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## INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Writing Across the Disciplines Survey was to investigate the nature, quality, and assessment of writing assignments given to students across the disciplines at San Diego Mesa College, as well as assess the level of need for services provided by the Writing Center, Bridging Lab, and Supplemental Instruction. The survey project was initiated by the Mesa Writing Center.

## METHODOLOGY

The survey instrument was created in Spring 2008 and administered to faculty from a range of disciplines for feedback. The survey was conducted online via web-based survey software. Survey invitations were distributed via email to all adjunct and contract instructors with valid email addresses on April 8, 2008. Two reminder emails were sent and the survey closed on May 16, 2008 for a five and one-half week administration timeframe. Of the 693 faculty at Mesa College who were invited to participate, 451 faculty responded, yielding a participation rate of 65%.

Only the 394 respondents who stated that they assign writing were asked survey items 2 through 6, which pertain to the types of writing assigned and the areas in need of improvement (see survey instrument in Appendix C). Those who stated that they did not assign writing of any kind to students were not asked to respond to these items. All respondents were prompted to answer survey items 7 through 10 (see Table 1).

## HIGHLIGHT OF THE FINDINGS

### *The Grading of Writing Assignments*

In response to the first question, *Do you assign writing of any kind to students in any of your classes?*, 394 (87%) of the 451 respondents replied “Yes” (see Table 1).

Of the 394 faculty respondents who assign writing, only 350 responded to survey item 2, which asked *In evaluating student writing, do you weigh matters of content (analysis and evidence) as well as form (writing-related concerns) in the assignment of grades?*. The strong majority of the 350 respondents (N = 313, 89%) responded “Yes.” Thus, although coming from a wide range of disciplines, 89% of the faculty respondents indicated that they evaluate student writing assignments with regard to content as well as form (see Table 1).

Of the 380 faculty respondents who answered the first part of survey item 5, *Do you allow revision of an assignment that has already been graded?*, 45% replied “Rarely” or “Never”, 31% responded with “Sometimes”, and 24% said “Often” or “Always”. Thus, the responses weighed more heavily on the infrequent end of the spectrum (see Table 1).

In contrast, of the 366 faculty respondents who responded to the second part of survey item 5, *Do you write comments on students’ papers in regard to the writing itself, aside from issues of course content?*, 12% replied “Rarely” or “Never”, 25% responded with “Sometimes”, and 68% said “Often” or “Always”. Thus, the responses weighed more heavily on the frequent end of the spectrum (see Table 1).

As shown in Table 2, crosstabulation of survey items #2 and #5b reveals that 92% (N = 280) of the 303 faculty (that responded to both questions) who consider both form and content in the assignment of grades do write comments on students’ papers in regard to the quality of writing at least “Sometimes” (24%), if not “Often” (28%) or “Always” (40%).

### *Types of Writing Assigned*

Table 4 depicts responses to the question, *What kind of writing do you assign?*, tallying up all affirmative responses to a “check-box” survey item, in which respondents selected all answers that applied. The most frequently selected type of writing assignment was “Short-answer questions on quizzes or exams” (N = 230, 16%), followed by “Short reports (no longer than two pages) requiring little or no argumentation” (N = 187, 13%), and then “Essays or reports requiring substantial argumentation” (N = 148, 10%).

### *Writing Skills: Areas of Need (Baseline Data)*

Faculty respondents were asked, *In your judgment, how much help do students need in the following areas?: Sentence grammar, Paragraphing, Handling of source materials, and Analytical thinking.* This particular survey item scale was designed to yield baseline data and, in future administrations of the Writing Across the Disciplines Survey, show any gains or losses made over time, with improvement being the goal. The scale was 0 to 7, where 0 meant “No help at all” and 7 meant “A lot of help”. The mean response for all four items was greater than the mid-point of 3.5. In descending order of amount of help needed by students as perceived by faculty, the means were 4.74 for Analytical thinking, 4.47 for Handling of source materials, 4.41 for Sentence grammar, and 4.02 for Paragraphing. Thus, faculty perceived that students were most in need of help with their analytical thinking skills, followed by handling of source materials, sentence grammar, and, finally, paragraphing.

### *Encouraging Students to Use Writing Assistance Services*

The Writing Center provides tutoring services in writing for any Mesa College students who desire assistance with improving their writing or need help with producing successful responses to course writing assignments. The Bridging Lab provides individualized assistance and skill development in writing, reading comprehension, ESOL, math and study techniques. It also offers ESOL support, placement test preparation and counseling, and TOEFL test preparation and counseling. Open enrollment is provided throughout the semester to all Mesa College students and the community. When asked, *Do you encourage your students to use these campus services?*, 281 (65%) responded “Yes” with regard to the Writing Center while 143 (36%) replied “Yes” with regard to the Bridging Lab (see Table 5).

*Faculty Interest in Receiving Writing Assistance Services*

Faculty were asked to indicate their level of interest in receiving writing assistance services from the Writing Center, Bridging Lab, and Supplemental Instruction. Supplemental Instruction provides tutors, educational technicians, instructional aides, or other paraprofessionals who supplement writing instruction with one-to-one tutoring and/or student peer-group facilitation. When asked, *Would you like assistance from one of these campus services for your course(s)?*, 45% responded “Yes” with regard to the Writing Center, 40% replied “Yes” in response to the Bridging Lab, and 45% indicated that “Yes”, they would like assistance from Supplemental Instruction.

*Respondent Demographics: Credit Hours Taught*

In response to the item, *How many credit hours are you teaching at Mesa?*, 23% of faculty respondents indicated that they taught 0.5 to 3.0 units, 29% taught 3.1 to 6.0 units, 16% taught 6.1 to 9.0 units, and the largest percentage, 32%, taught 9.1 to 18.0 units (see Table 5).

APPENDIX A. TABLES

*Table 1*  
The nature and grading of writing assignments

		Count	%
Do you assign writing of any kind to students in any of your classes?	Yes	394	87%
	No	57	13%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>100%</b>
In evaluating student writing, do you weigh matters of content (analysis and evidence) as well as form (writing-related concerns) in the assignment of grades?	Yes	313	89%
	No	37	11%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>100%</b>
Do you allow revision of an assignment that has already been graded?	Never	81	21%
	Rarely	93	24%
	Sometimes	116	31%
	Often	56	15%
	Always	34	9%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>100%</b>
Do you write comments on students' papers in regard to the writing itself, aside from issues of course content?	Never	16	4%
	Rarely	28	8%
	Sometimes	92	25%
	Often	92	25%
	Always	138	38%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Table 2*  
Crosstabulation of survey items #2 and #5b

		#2. In evaluating student writing, do you weigh matters of content (analysis and evidence) as well as form (writing-related concerns) in the assignment of grades?							
		Yes		No		Total			
		N	%	N	%	N	%		
#5b. Do you write comments on students' papers in regard to the writing itself, aside from issues of course content?	Never	6	2%	10	33%	16	5%		
	Rarely	17	6%	6	20%	23	7%		
	Sometimes	73	24%	10	33%	83	25%		
	Often	86	28%	2	7%	88	26%		
	Always	121	40%	2	7%	123	37%		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>100%</b>		

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**Table 3**  
Writing skills: Areas of need

		N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Dev.
In your judgment, how much help do students need in the following areas? Please respond on a scale of 0 to 7, where 0 means "No help at all" and 7 means "A lot of help".	Sentence grammar	382	0	7	4.41	1.636
	Paragraphing	376	0	7	4.02	1.687
	Handling of source materials	373	0	7	4.47	1.725
	Analytical thinking	374	0	7	4.74	1.649

**Table 4**  
Types of writing assigned

	Count	%
Short-answer questions on quizzes or exams	230	16%
Short reports (no longer than two pages) requiring little or no argumentation	187	13%
Essays or reports requiring substantial argumentation	148	10%
Multi-paragraph in-class writing	127	9%
Longer, research-supported reports (longer than two pages) requiring little or no argumentation	124	8%
Single-paragraph in-class writing	123	8%
Critiques	119	8%
Kinds of writing not described here	116	8%
Research-supported argumentative essays	106	7%
Descriptive text for assignments that may or may not accompany other media or physical objects	80	5%
Online discussion	63	4%
Annotated bibliographies	47	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,470</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 5**  
The need for services

		Count	%
Do you encourage your students to use these campus services?	Writing Center	Yes	281 65%
		No	154 35%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>435 100%</b>
Do you encourage your students to use these campus services?	Bridging Lab	Yes	143 36%
		No	254 64%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>397 100%</b>
Would you like assistance from one of these campus services for your course(s)?	Writing Center (The Writing Center provides tutoring services in writing for any Mesa College students who desire assistance with improving their writing or need help with producing successful responses to course writing assignments.)	Yes	188 45%
		No	226 55%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>414 100%</b>
Would you like assistance from one of these campus services for your course(s)?	Bridging Lab (The Bridging Lab provides individualized assistance and skill development in writing, reading comprehension, ESOL, math and study techniques. It also offers ESOL support, placement test preparation and counseling, and TOEFL test preparation and counseling. Open enrollment is provided throughout the semester to all Mesa College students and the community).	Yes	161 40%
		No	239 60%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>400 100%</b>
Would you like assistance from one of these campus services for your course(s)?	Supplemental Instruction (The term "supplemental instruction" typically signifies tutors, educational technicians, instructional aides, or other paraprofessionals who supplement writing instruction with one-to-one tutoring and/or student peer-group facilitation.)	Yes	179 45%
		No	217 55%
		<b>Total</b>	<b>396 100%</b>

*Table 5*  
Credit hours taught

		Count	%
How many credit hours are you teaching at Mesa?	0.5 to 3.0	100	23%
	3.1 to 6.0	128	29%
	6.1 to 9.0	71	16%
	9.1 to 18.0	139	32%
	Total	438	100%

## APPENDIX B. OPEN ENDED RESPONSES

All comments are verbatim and have not been edited except to protect the identity of a specific person or place.

ADVICE TO SERVICES
All of the tutoring options should be located in one tutoring center with hours for day and evening students.
Do you all send out an automated generated email informing students at the beginning and during their semester coursework to remind them of the services offered like the one's mentioned above? I think if everyone got a brief email before classes began and during the first couple weeks of school, it would help everyone and remind them of these services. And for those who don't need it, they could simply delete the email.
I do not refer students for help since I teach an online course. Perhaps if an online assistance program could be developed, it might benefit my students as well.
I have a suggestion regarding the tutoring... the stickers that students can ask us for if they request tutoring... if in addition, there was a way where we could submit lists of students who might need help or would benefit from it (but do NOT seek it on their own), whether it be on the grade sheet, or some other form submitted at the end of the semester. Essentially, so we can identify for the school who has problems. I'm frustrated that for now the only way is if they request the tutoring help, and we provide them with the sticker
I would like to see it [the Writing Center] offer more on MLA format and works cited. One of the biggest challenges I have, and most fellow instructors seem to have, is that the students have difficulty citing their work. They are just not taught citing, or not taught it well in high school.
If you could include a flyer in instructors' mailboxes at the beginning of the semester reminding us of these services - which I'm sure you already do - that would be most helpful.
In order to help students of modern languages (other than English) Mesa College has to provide more tutoring support for those languages. The tutoring center, K-210-B, and the Language Laboratory, I-207-L, provide VERY LIMITED support for writing. The budget to hire language tutors must be increased.
It would be helpful for the writing center to provide students with help building outlines.
The college catalog states that m100 has a prerequisite of an English writing class, however year after year the semester schedules omit this important disclaimer. Information about the Writing Center, Bridging Lab, and Sup Inst should be posted on the board in G101.
COURSE SEQUENCING / PRE-REQUISITES / GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
I think college level English skill should be required before students are allowed to take any other courses.
I think the SDCCD should have a writing requirement for graduation whereby every class has a writing component within it.
I wish the high school exit exams tested the student's ability to think, reason, and organize their thoughts on paper.
It would be helpful to establish a link between Mesa College and local feeder high schools to provide the schools with information about the level of writing expected of college students.
Because of the difficulties in basic English and communication we see in our Biology courses, my department supports the implementation of higher-level English prerequisites for these courses.

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<p>So, until we require that students entering the system show ability to speak, read and write English fluently, the services you suggest may be inadequate. Perhaps, it is better that all students entering are automatically tested and then assigned appropriate levels of courses. Even though we can require pre-requisites, departments are loathe to do that because it affects numbers and in turn affects the number of classes we can offer. My Health 190 sections are generally students who are close to graduating with a BA or have graduated and these do not require help. When a Mesa student is referred to this class, it is too hard for them to survive in it academically. Again, the class has no pre-requisites for the reasons stated.</p>
<p>Some students have a very difficult time with the English language, and should really be in the Biology classes until they can communicate more effectively. We had an English prerequisite for Biol-107 a number of years ago, but it disappeared. I'd like to see it return.</p>
<p>STUDENTS ALSO SHOULD BE TAKING ENGLISH CLASSES THEIR FIRST SEMESTER SO THEY CAN SUCCEED IN THEIR WRITING ASSIGNMENTS ELSEWHERE AND SUCCEED IN ALL COURSES.</p>
<p>Students need classes in English as a prerequisite to Economics classes.</p>
<p>The college catalog states that m100 has a prerequisite of an English writing class, however year after year the semester schedules omit this important disclaimer. Information about the Writing Center, Bridging Lab, and Sup Inst should be posted on the board in G101.</p>
<p>Unless students are held in High School until qualified to graduate, regardless of social uproar, we are doomed as a competitive society. Colleges in the interim, should devote large resource commitments to remediation. Note: correcting this problem will trample current concepts of "Political Correctness". There is no compromise with error: it is not a stylistic choice, and must not be accomodated or excused. The same comments, more strongly phrased, apply to basic math skills. How this is going to be "sold" to the Me Generation is another problem, and absent a unified front across all educational levels, I see no solution. Currently, the basic skills level of the majority of my students, at Mesa and Grossmont, is nothing short of shameful. And their smug acceptance of it indicates an insoluble problem. Unless and until we involve their egoes, their self-images, in correcting their illiteracy and innumeracy, nothing will change. Only bitter shame has the goading power to effect change. Absent that ancient goad, we get what we have now: amiable consumers, unfit for any meaningful work. The thing about dirty jobs is: you tend to get dirty doing them. We currently have a generation of underachievers who have never been given an honest appraisal of how poor their performance is. Solving this problem will require more courage than I have perceived in the system.</p>
<p><b>EFFECTIVENESS OF SERVICES</b></p>
<p>1. The wrote yes for wanting help from the Bridging Lab. They are excellent for helping my English 43 students with grammar especially.</p>
<p>All these additional instruction services and tutoring centers help students. Regardless of the taught discipline, writing skills are essential to all. Initiatives like this survey are greatly appreciated.</p>
<p>I find the Writing Center and Bridging Lab very helpful.</p>
<p>I get more positive feedback about the bridging than the writing center from my students</p>
<p>I regularly ask the library to come in or for my classes to go there to learn how to do library searching and referencing. I've also asked the writing center to come in to do presentations this semester. This entities are always more than accommodating and are helpful, but these students are coming to Mesa more and more prepared. I have to ask, does high school prepare them for anything?</p>
<p>I schedule the Writing Center in the first weeks of my class to make the students of the services. Thank you, Great Job!</p>

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<p>I've just received and graded 35 term-papers at Mesa and another 45 at City College. I encouraged Mesa students to use the "Mesa Writing Center." Students who ventured to the actual Mesa Writing Center returned with basic grammar flaws when City College didn't when using the City English Writing Center. Over-all content quality was similar between the two campuses' papers. I had previously believed that Bridgeman was the "Mesa Writing Center." I was not aware of the distinction between the two. I think I'll recommend the Bridging Lab to the students as my investigations between the two, today, found out that the Bridging Lab stresses basic Grammar.</p>
<p>keep up the great work you are doing to support our students.</p>
<p>Sometimes I get feedback that the center was helpful, sometimes (usually for those students who want someone to write their paper for them) not.</p>
<p>The Writing Center is an excellent resource to have on campus.</p>
<p><b>FACULTY QUALIFICATIONS TO ASSESS WRITING</b></p>
<p>I DON'T THINK ENOUGH FACULTY ARE WILLING OR TRAINED TO ENCOURAGE REVISION. I THINK MORE FACULTY SHOULD BE MADE AWARE OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WRITING SKILLS TO OUR STUDENTS WHO OFTEN AREN'T GETTING THE HELP THEY NEED.</p>
<p>I rarely correct writing and grammatical errors due to comments made by English faculty that faculty in other areas were not qualified to do so! Please advise if this has changed.</p>
<p>I would like to have a workshop for faculty on a review of grammar and what to look for when students write papers.</p>
<p><b>FACULTY STATUS/WORKLOAD</b></p>
<p>A differential load of four composition classes instead of five for a full load would improve teaching and learning.</p>
<p>For Q9 my FTEF + .360. I'm not sure if I answered the credit hours question properly.</p>
<p>I am an adjunct professor teaching off campus.</p>
<p>I am only an adjunct and have been teaching more at City College than Mesa. This semester all I did was the CD 270 - Work Experience at Mesa and it did not require any serious writing skills from my students and so that is why I did not fill out the questionnaire before now. Sorry about that.</p>
<p>I start with about 150 students each semester in my classes (6 sections of 24, 24 hours a week of class time).</p>
<p><b>FEEDBACK REGARDING SURVEY</b></p>
<p>Also, I attempted to answer this survey several times on line, but it did not function. This is the first time it has worked.</p>
<p>I am not sure what Q8 really means.</p>
<p>I'm glad this survey is out there. As an English teacher, I wasn't sure how to answer the form and content question. If you mean, do I take both into consideration, then yes. If you mean, do I assign percentages or give separate grades for form and content, then no. Also, I think students need a lot of help with writing, whether they come prepared or unprepared. Everyone just needs varying levels of help. And I do not mean to indicate that students lack skills or do not have potential by saying this.</p>
<p>Initiatives like this survey are greatly appreciated.</p>
<p>Interesting Survey. How will you use the results? Will you publish the results of the survey on line?</p>
<p>Regarding Q8: It is unclear to me if you are asking if I would like in-class support, or out-of-class access for my students.</p>
<p>Since we teach many levels of English and the writing thereof, some of these questions have to be more discrete, for some students in higher levels have less grammar problems, etc.</p>
<p>The first question is difficult to answer because it depends upon the student's level of ability, and varies</p>

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widely.
The questions seem a bit oblique to be of much use to actual English professors . . . but who knows?
<b>GRADING OF WRITING ASSIGNMENTS</b>
Due to the course I teach, I do not grade them on their writing ability yet am glad to know their are the above mentioned services for those students that need help and/or would like to improve their writing ability.
I am interested in my providing my classes as subjects for any on-going campus research regarding students' basic skills in writing. I am also formulating ideas for measuring my own students' progress in writing skills over the course of a semester as a Professional Development project.
I don t like to grade it, or assign it.. I do not give a rubric for it. Its a small part(10 PTS ) of the Final.
I have always pointed out errors in writing and encourage them to seek any assistance with this skill. Unfortunately, the content of speech courses do not allow a tremendous amount of time to be spent helping with writing. We focus on organizational patterns and thought structure but grammar and other issues are secondary and usually only get addressed after the student hands in the work. This can often have a dramatic impact on their grade, i.e., if I can't understand it, I can't really grade it.
I look for clarity of thought/understanding/analysis, AND readability.
I try to focus on content and meaning when grading rather than teaching English.
I usually do not grade the writing quality of posts in online discussion topics.
If you mean, do I take both into consideration, then yes. If you mean, do I assign percentages or give separate grades for form and content, then no.
My assigned papers are entirely optional extra credit assignments (for a science class), so they are graded as credit/no-credit. This greatly mitigates how I grade them. If they did not adequately follow the guidelines, they are given it back to fix until they receive credit.
My comments on short essay assignments and longer historical book reviews are extensive, and intended to correct and instruct the mechanics of writing. 50% of my comments are focused on the logical development of a summary and the critique of that summary. I also emphasize the connection between the mechanics of writing and the successful development of a logical argument that is credible and convincing to the reader.
The term paper project is... NOT specifically graded on ability to write as would be graded in an English composition class.
There is a research paper requirement in my class where I provide feedback on rough drafts. However, very few students avail themselves of this opportunity. I am considering making a rough draft mandatory so that I can provide feedback as to spelling, grammar, etc.
Thought I do not grade my student's papers based on grammar, spelling, punctuation, I do comment on sentence structure, etc. if it is distracting from reading the content of the paper.
<b>LINK BETWEEN WRITING AND OTHER SKILLS</b>
Also, in my 101 section, I see the need to teach reading and comprehension skills as much as writing.
Encourage the pedagogy of critical thinking across the curriculum.
Facts can be looked up, the the thinking process needs to be taught.
I have also observed that many of my students either do not read at all voluntarily, or do not read enough. Reading, after all, is an integral part of the process of learning writing.
Our library research databases are excellent. I believe it is important to teach my advanced students how to use primary sources from the library databases to support argumentative essays with evidence, especially for those students who will transfer to four-year schools, as they will need library research skills to keep up with classmates who already attend the four-year school.

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<p>Scientific writing should also be a component of the evaluation. Students need to learn about professional boundaries in written expression as they often use text messaging communication approaches in their writing.</p>
<p>The students more and more are not able to do critical thinking or critical writing, as well as admit to not having good reading comprehension skills. Over the past several years I have tried to encourage them to enroll in one of the critical thinking/writing courses.</p>
<p><b>NATURE OF ASSIGNMENTS</b></p>
<p>All my students are musicians. I do encourage them to write music ... transcribe solos, melodies, chords and rhythms.</p>
<p>As part of my Speech 103 courses, I require students to demonstrate and/or to learn how to do academic outlines, research to support key speech points plus regular written/essay self critiques of their speeches.</p>
<p>For each research or critical analysis writing assignment, whether it may be a required or optional assignment, I always have clearly written protocols attached to the syllabus. I go over each protocol when each assignment is given, and discuss each handed in assignment with each student.</p>
<p>I assign term papers and require the students to give brief presentations of the papers contents to the class and answer questions about the presentations. These follow up exercises allows me to determine whether a student wrote the paper or copied the paper and attached their name on it.</p>
<p>I do not give writing assignments, but my exams do contain essay questions.</p>
<p>I have a practical applications class - the only assignment(s) that concerns any writing are tests.</p>
<p>I have my students provide an extensive outline for their Informative and Persuasive speeches. I ask for good organization, logic, evidence and sources.</p>
<p>I have my students write a paragraph or two summarizing the chemistry concepts learned and analyzing the results obtained from each lab experiment. The grade this portion of the lab leans mainly on content.</p>
<p>I have my students write a 10-15 page term paper. Even with my in-class discussion and Term Paper Handout, many students have a hard time following simple instructions.</p>
<p>I teach a hands on lab with no writing required.</p>
<p>I use long form essays on exams.</p>
<p>I usually teach logic class which has no writing assignments.</p>
<p>Lastly, as an FYI, for the Business Law term paper that is heavily weighted in the class graded matrix, the writing paper is more in the "IRAC" legal style than essay.</p>
<p>most of my writing assignments are bonus research papers or mandatory math autobiography-type writings....</p>
<p>My classes are quite different, so it is hard to lump them together for this survey. BIOL 107 students write lab summaries and answer short essay questions on exams. Some cannot put together a sentence or paragraph. BIOL 210B students write lab summaries, critique research articles in reports, and answer lengthy essay questions as well as short answer questions on tests. BIOL 210B students have more difficulty with synthesis and analysis. I require the weekly lab summaries for all students to give them more writing practice. It is simply to pull their thoughts together about the topic. Students balk at first but then get better and better and enjoy the exercise (esp 107 students). I feel compelled to have my 210B students (BIOL majors) read and critique scholarly research articles to get the exposure to good science and good science writing. This is a different kind of writing exercise.</p>
<p>My course is not for credit. This is too bad as it used to be a credit course. Subsequent to its downgrading, students have begun to take the course less seriously.</p>
<p>My Math151 course is taught off campus through ACP. The writing assignment is a long expository assignment explaining techniques from the class.</p>

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<p>My students' main exposure to writing in math is in applying a six step procedure to working application problems. The six steps are: (1) Read the problem carefully, picking out and writing down the information given. Then identify and write down what the problem is asking the student to find. (2) Define the variable(s) in writing;ie, choose a letter and write down what numerical quantity it represents. (3) Write an appropriate algebraic equation relating the given information with the unknown. (4) Solve the equation algebraically. (5) State the answer completely with the proper units, making sure the answer is what the problem asked. (6) Check the answer in the original statement of the problem to see if it is correct, or at least reasonable.</p>
<p>My writing assignment is a one time summary of their Final Project. It is done at home and turned in with project.They know weeks in advance. Must state theme ,why it inspires them;fabrics and colors chosen and how fits theme,,resulting market appeal. I give them a list of points to cover. Sometimes I show an example. Often when I show an example they use it like a template and use the same structure and phrasing and just fill in the details of their project,so I dont like to do that. It must be at least two paragraphs,word-processed ,with correct punctuation and grammar and spelling. They receive comments on it the last day . I assume at this level they know how to write two paragraphs about their inspiration.</p>
<p>My writing assignments usually involve analyzing and discussing current newspaper articles and editorials vis-à-vis the text and classroom discussions. The venue for writing is a take-home exam... I teach micro and macroeconomics.</p>
<p>Regarding Q6: Some of the writings are optional assignments for extra credit.</p>
<p>Students are expected to write concise Chemistry Lab Reports.</p>
<p>The classes listed above are Basketball Theory Classes which requires some in class writing mostly related to the analysis of playing the game of basketball.</p>
<p>The students are required to write only one essay toward the end of the semester, on a topic of their own choice, as long as it is relevant to the course. This is the first semester I make this into a requirement. The purpose is to add variety to the methods of assessment, which are mainly concentrated on problem solving. Hopefully, this will also generate more interest on the subject matter. My answers to Q4 are based on a small sample from a previous semester, when the topic was fixed.</p>
<p>The term paper project is designed to give students practical experience in researching a technical topic (computer network-related).</p>
<p>We write essays, annotated bibliographies, and short answer responses about 6-8x/semester. For the first time, I have a student with almost no English writing skills &amp; would have sent him to the writing center or for additional help, but I don't have time to get him hooked up into the system. This is my 1st class teaching at Mesa since 2 yrs ago so I've forgotten who to contact. Otherwise, I've had a lot of students who competently write their ideas.</p>
<p><b>NEED TO IMPROVED PLACEMENT</b></p>
<p>Also, some students are placed in our classes by counselors, rather than by their level scores, however they acquired those. As well, for English, we need a better testing method, one that has a writing sample, at least. These factors and others all impinge on student success in writing and critial thinking, thus, student outcomes and success in other classes.</p>
<p>Better assessment and follow up.</p>
<p>I do have an ESL student who seems to have slipped through the testing. I wonder how that happened. He is very bright but little knowlege of correct grammer and correct writing skills. I was helping him but he dropped. I think he is going to take someone else to try to outwit the system. hmmm.</p>
<p>Improved placement is needed for students in composition courses.</p>
<p>It seems to me that each semester a few (that is, certainly more than one) students slip through either entrance assessment, or are improperly promoted beyond ENG051. Too often I find students in my 100- and 200-level classes who do not quite grasp the difference between an adjective and a noun.</p>

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There should be (and I thought there was) a screening for language proficiency.
<b>NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS</b>
A large part of the problem is that many of the students in my courses are non-native speakers/writers. Sentence structure, vocabulary, and spelling are all problems. This in turn takes away from the student's ability to express critical thinking in a logical, coherent manner.
Each term, I may have 10% who are ESL and cannot read college level texts. To assign this level of student a written paper almost guarantees their failure.
I also assume if English is a second language they know by habit to get the work reviewed first. I tell them it will be graded like an English paper. It helps students who barely speak English ,because it forms their thoughts into sentences and they are allowed to refer to it during the presentation. I do not preview it before that.
I have many high school and English as a Second Language learners. These two populations have the most difficulty with grammar, writing and grasping college level concepts.
Major writing problems in my classes include students who insist on using bullets or single-word answers, non-native English speakers who can't understand questions or respond in the time allotted, and 210B students who cannot write a detailed and cogent essay.
MOST OF OUR STUDENTS HAVE VERY POOR READING, WRITING AND SPELLING SKILLS, ALSO MANY OF THEM ARE SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS. THEY WOULD BENEFIT FROM ANY HELP THEY COULD GET. I AM NOT SURE HOW MOTIVATED THEY ARE TO AVAIL OF THE SERVICES OFFERED ON CAMPUS.
Some of my Asian and Mexican students have poor language skills and consequently do not have success in the course.
<b>QUALITY OF STUDENT WRITING</b>
Truthfully , on all the campus where I teach, I am appalled by most students writing level.
Also, I think students need a lot of help with writing, whether they come prepared or unprepared. Everyone just needs varying levels of help. And I do not mean to indicate that students lack skills or do not have potential by saying this.
Based on the overall quality of the writing I see at Mesa, I feel it is important to allow the students opportunities to practice articulating their thoughts and feelings in written form.
Do you encourage your students to use these campus services? TO what extent??? I mention it to the WC and BL. I forward the Writing Center's e-mails I receive. I have no way to track whether my student use these resources. ALL I KNOW, the quality of my student's writing has significantly DECREASED. I use CPR in my chem100 and 231L courses
For the first time, I have a student with almost no English writing skills & would have sent him to the writing center or for additional help, but I don't have time to get him hooked up into the system. This is my 1st class teaching at Mesa since 2 yrs ago so I've forgotten who to contact. Otherwise, I've had a lot of students who competently write their ideas.
Generally the students are a mixed bag. Some come to the classes with a decent level of writing skill, others clearly need more specific training in basic grammar, and mechanics.
I also feel that many students need to have basic computer skill tutorials to learn to utilize the basic word processing options available to them (spell/grammer check). Student spelling is horrible and proof-reading is something I strongly encourage.
I am generally pleased with the quality of the students' submittals although their grammar and spelling could be better.
I am generally pleased with the quality of the students' submittals although their grammar and spelling could be better.

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<p>I find it laughable that we are wasting time with SLOs such as critical thinking when our students write incomplete and run-on sentences, misspell despite tools such as spell check, and make syntax errors. I think that we would do our students a better service with less concern for fancy SLOs and more concern for grammar.</p>
<p>I find that many students are unable to write full sentences. Paragraph writing is almost impossible for them. They only write one to eight sentences for a 2-3 page essay. There is supposed to be an English requirement for Bio 107.</p>
<p>I have noticed a huge improvement in lab report discussion writing this semester. This is mainly due to an extended section in my syllabus concerning this part of the lab report. Many students still have difficulty in answering short essay questions on exams.</p>
<p>I have noticed more students who are coming into our program who already have BA or MA degrees and they have a higher caliber of skills.</p>
<p>I think many students are not aware they have writing difficulties. It is unlikely more than 1 of my 38 students would voluntarily attend even though about 7 need help. 9 of the 10 students who've withdrawn needed writing (and reading?) help.</p>
<p>I think that students are currently struggling with basic writing concepts. They generally grasp the "idea" but often write the way they speak and generally do not have an understanding of basic academic writing. I have noticed a dramatic decrease in the average student's ability to write effectively. I would strongly support any measures available to help enhance these skills.</p>
<p>It is hard to believe the assignments students hand in are from college students.</p>
<p>It is very difficult with large classes to assign a lot of writing because students are generally ill prepared.</p>
<p>Major writing problems in my classes include students who insist on using bullets or single-word answers, non-native English speakers who can't understand questions or respond in the time allotted, and 210B students who cannot write a detailed and cogent essay.</p>
<p>Many of mine have never written a research paper, let alone learned how to cite reference sources and create a works cited page. These students are completely unprepared for college-level writing, and some tell me that they simply avoid courses that require expository writing when choosing their classes and degree programs.</p>
<p>Many of my students lack the skills they need in basic math and comprehension. I go over problems in class and assign homework, but too many students do not seem to be able to retain information and apply what they learned to different questions.</p>
<p>Many students have poor written and oral English skills prior to enrolling in class. Some of them require use of a dictionary while taking tests.</p>
<p>MOST OF OUR STUDENTS HAVE VERY POOR READING, WRITING AND SPELLING SKILLS, ALSO MANY OF THEM ARE SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS. THEY WOULD BENEFIT FROM ANY HELP THEY COULD GET.</p>
<p>My ENGL 101 courses have an incredible range of abilities. Some students are ready to learn structure and research strategies and others barely speak English.</p>
<p>My Health 101 sections require the help. Due to the lack of ability in many students, assigning written work becomes problematic. To assign this level of student a written paper almost guarantees their failure. My Health 190 sections are generally students who are close to graduating with a BA or have graduated and these do not require help. When a Mesa student is referred to this class, it is too hard for them to survive in it academically.</p>
<p>My students' writing competency varies greatly from grade school to graduate level.</p>
<p>Obviously, as an English teacher, writing is at the core of all of my classes. I think there is a wide range of writing abilities. The problem is the lowest level (ENGL 043) really, really have lots of problems that often cannot be addressed in just a 3 unit semester. 5 units or two semesters would be better.</p>

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Please, do not bombard me with email in response to my answers. I do believe that my students are consistently below an acceptable standard of writing. I am not able to spend any more time on email stuff as the district email portal is already being abused with information sent to me that has zero to do with my students, their success, or any other valid material which is useful to me. Please contact me by phone for any assistance.
Some students need a lot more help with their writing skills, while others do very well.
Students need better foundations in writing.
The writing of students is beyond hopeless. One key reason is that they have nothing to say and they find it hard to form thoughts where none exist. The problems I see are systemic and were created (or were unaddressed) long before we ever see saw them.
The writing on some of the final research papers submitted is atrocious.
These students are in a year long program which requires a substantial amount of reading and writing and very good study skills. Many students do not have these skills and struggle with the program.
This entities are always more than accommodating and are helpful, but these students are coming to Mesa more and more prepared. I have to ask, does high school prepare them for anything?
Too often I find students in my 100- and 200-level classes who do not quite grasp the difference between an adjective and a noun. I have also observed that many of my students either do not read at all voluntarily, or do not read enough. Reading, after all, is an integral part of the process of learning writing.
While I can certainly excuse ESL students for their poor grasp of the language, I cannot fathom why we have so many functionally illiterate students enrolled.
<b>QUESTIONS REGARDING SERVICES</b>
Just that a portion of my writing assignments are for online classes and I don't know if the writing center offers help online or if you have to come onto campus.
Q8 - I'm not sure what assistance these services offer for the course.
Since this is my first semester, I need to learn more about the campus services.
<b>RECOMMENDING SERVICES</b>
Do you encourage your students to use these campus services? TO what extent??? I mention it to the WC and BL. I forward the Writing Center's e-mails I receive. I have no way to track whether my student use these resources.
I already refer students to the Bridging Lab and Writing Center.
I do not know what you mean by help from the writing center or bridging lab. I did not even know there was a Bridging Lab. I inform students of these services and do not know if they are using them. Even when I have offered extra credit to come to my office hours or to use the tutoring services, fewer than 10% do so. Because of the difficulties in basic English and communication we see in our Biology courses, my department supports the implementation of higher-level English prerequisites for these courses.
I do not need in-class support, but I frequently refer my students to both campus services.
I do recommend that they use the Tutoring Center and make use of the tutors in the Language Laboratory.
I encourage students whose handed in assignments or testing reveal they may need assistance from one of our campus resources to help them. I also offer my assistance.
I generally advise students to get the help from the writing center or other sources only when they seek my my assistance. But I can take the initiative and include this information in my syllabus and other student resource link in all my online classes so that students will have this information readily available.
I let my students know about student services on campus at the beginning of the semester by having the students do a treasure hunt to learn about different services for students (bridging lab is one of the

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questions).
I not encourage enough use of student avaiallbe services such as the Writting Center. Students require consistent reminder and reinformcement of support services in order for the most beneficial results. Mentioning it two or three itmes in class to students a semester might not be enough. Also, I am not clear on what the "tutoring codes" (given to instructors fopr each registered student) entitles students to in the way of support.
I regularly ask the library to come in or for my classes to go there to learn how to do library searching and referencing. I've also asked the writing center to come in to do presentations this semester.
I suggest in my written comments to students with very poor skills that they seek out the writing center.
I suggest to students that they avail themselves of the Writing center's services. My material is so difficult to squeeze into 16 weeks that I cannot spare in-class time for writing skill improvements. I do invite the online librarian into class to hone research skills for my honors students research project, individually tailored to their topics. I used to take all classes to the LRC computer room to have the librarian teach them but more and more students seem to know those basics already.
I will recommend the Writing Center and Bridging Lab more often.
In regard to question 8, I send my students for help, but I do not need in-classroom visits.
My students are reminded to avail themselves to the Writing Center and the importance of being able to write well is stressed.
Now that I know about the writing center I will make my students aware of its existence.
Regarding Q8: It is unclear to me if you are asking if I would like in-class support, or out-of-class access for my students. I do not need in-class support, but I frequently refer my students to both campus services.
The assistance all of these campus services provides relies on the student voluntarily coming to them. I promote the use of these services in each of my classes every semester, but whether the students make use of them is unknown to me. So, I'm not sure how these services would assist me.
This is my first semester teaching at Mesa, so I was not familiar with the services offered by the Writing Center. I'll recommend your services to my students in the future.
<b>REQUEST FOR SERVICES</b>
Any assist you have that I can use to teach these students how to learn would be appreciated.
I s there a person I could schedule to come and talk with my classes?
I use turnitin.com to help me prevent plagiarism in my classes. I found this tool very helpful. Maybe we could have somebody from the Writing Lab come in at the beginning of the semester to give a little talk to students in order to get rid of the fear.
I would find it very helpful to have a representative from one of the labs present one of the first days of fall semester for my 280 class.
I would like assistance/resources in how to help my ESL students with essay questions.
I would love to have a guest speaker come to my classes and give an hour demo on writing.
I would love to have a guest speaker come to my classes and give an hour demo on writing. I am not able to spend any more time on email stuff as the district email portal is already being abused with information sent to me that has zero to do with my students, their success, or any other valid material which is useful to me. Please contact me by phone for any assistance xxx-xxx-xxxx Thank You
Is is possible to invite staff from the Writing Center to speak to the class. Let students know there's "no shame" in seeking help.
<b>STUDENT USE OF SERVICES</b>
All my classes are on the UCSD campus, therefore my students go to tutoring on UCSD campus

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Also, most students with whom I try to address reading/writing issues do not want to be perceived as getting extra help and do not take advantage of Mesa's resources - I can't require them to go, but maybe it's a thought.
However, I doubt many of them take advantage of the service.
However, the lab closes before either of my classes start, and since my students are at work before that, my students are unable to use the Bridging Lab. It would be wonderful if the BL stayed open longer. 2. I don't know what Q9 means. I'm a full-time English professor.
I AM NOT SURE HOW MOTIVATED THEY ARE TO AVAIL OF THE SERVICES OFFERED ON CAMPUS.
I teach in the ACP offering classes on SDUSD high school campuses. As such, access to on-campus Mesa services such as the writing center and bridging lab are problematic.
I teach one class to at a high school, so although the writing assistance could be useful if I were on campus, there is no way for my students to use these resources.
I think many students are not aware they have writing difficulties. It is unlikely more than 1 of my 38 students would voluntarily attend even though about 7 need help. 9 of the 10 students who've withdrawn needed writing (and reading?) help.
Let students know there's "no shame" in seeking help.
Regarding Q8 -- I do try and send students to get assistance but I am not sure if they follow through.
Some students need a lot more help with their writing skills, while others do very well. I have a suggestion regarding the tutoring... the stickers that students can ask us for if they request tutoring... if in addition, there was a way where we could submit lists of students who might need help or would benefit from it (but do NOT seek it on their own), whether it be on the grade sheet, or some other form submitted at the end of the semester. Essentially, so we can identify for the school who has problems. I'm frustrated that for now the only way is if they request the tutoring help, and we provide them with the sticker
Students rarely take advantage of the Writing Lab even though I strongly encourage them to use it.
The class that I referred to in this survey is an online course. Therefore, the students who need help are not willing to come to campus for help.
<b>THANKS AND APPRECIATION</b>
Thank you for asking about our courses
Thank you for your interest and support.
Thank you for your interest. I appreciate this chance to give feedback.
Thank you, the teaching experience at Mesa is wonderful, and the students are great!
thanks
<b>WRITING ACROSS DISCIPLINES</b>
All the writing I assign is done in French of course, so limited.
From the feedback that I get from students, they are not asked to write very often in their other classes.
I currently teach a culinary arts lab for non-majors. Next time I do teach this course I will assign some type of mandatory writing project since it is so important.
I didn't originally respond to this survey because it is my understanding that the Writing Center is for improving students' skills in English and I teach Spanish.
I didn't originally respond to this survey because it is my understanding that the Writing Center is for improving students' skills in English and I teach Spanish. I do recommend that they use the Tutoring Center and make use of the tutors in the Language Laboratory.

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I have included writing assignments in CISC181 and CISC152. I believe that writing skills are important and relevant to any course. Regardless, many students in both CISC181 and CISC152 commented that the writing assignments were onerous, and since I suspected that retention may have suffered because of the writing requirement, I removed the writing assignment from CISC181 and I am contemplating removing it from CISC152 also. Retention seems to have improved slightly with CISC181, but I cannot be certain that it has anything to do with the removal of the writing assignment.
I have required writing assignments in my lecture and lab courses since the "writing across the curriculum" initiative.
I teach a class in Web Page Creation. There is very little writing required. Most of the students seem to have a good grasp of basic English.
I teach an introductory course to a new language, therefore vocabulary and grammar in the foreign language is an important component of what students study. What writing is done is at the sentence level, and simple paragraphs. In later courses I expect paragraphing and analytical thinking to become important.
I teach an foreign language.
I teach Japanese. Most of the questions are not applicable in teaching writing in Japanese.
I teach math so most of this I just can't answer. The only class I have students write in is Math Study Skills (Math 41). And even that is just short journaling that is not graded for grammar at all.
I teach one course in statistics, and the only writing assignments I make are for stat problems.
I teach Spanish, and some of the questions don't apply to my classes.
I teach Spanish, so I assign writing in English and Spanish. I feel better prepared to assist them in Spanish, but there are times when they do informal writing on cultural topics and the lack of grammar and the amount of mistakes hinders understanding their paragraphs. It's not an English class nor am I an English professor, but I feel that they need to communicate in English besides Spanish. I frequently have those students re-do their paragraphs with assistance to receive full credit.
I teach Italian, so the room for analytical writing is much smaller in this type of language class, especially at the beginning level.
I try to teach good math, the best math ideas one can teach. Writing assignments are not, in my opinion, the most effective way to do this...
I'm teaching a foreign language (Italian 102), so I think most of the questions above don't apply to my class.
I'm teaching foreign language (Chinese). Although writing is part of the curriculum requirement, it's not the same as English writing. To my students, grammar and vocabulary are wighted much more than analysis/critique. Hope this is helpful.
In Humanities courses I rarely comment on "the writing itself" while in English courses I always comment on the writing as well as the content.
My course is keyboarding - about 80 hours of practice with specific exercises designed to promote speed and accuracy, as well as lessons in document formatting. Writing assignments are outside of the scope of this course.
My courses are computer applications. The writing isn't applied. Thanks for offering.
My responses are about a foreign language, so they might not apply in the same way that first language writing is evaluated.
My students are learning a second language: Spanish. If they have strong skills in their first language those skills will transfer. I see that those students with the lowest Spanish skills have low literacy in English. Any help they get in English writing will be of value across the curriculum.
Regardless of the taught discipline, writing skills are essential to all.

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Some of my previous responses seem strange due to the fact that I teach a language other than English and the L2 of my students does not allow many of the writing samples cited here.

Teaching writing in a foreign language is very challenging. In the beginning level, I start with words, then phrases, then sentences, and finally, paragraph writing. Most of it is informative and descriptive. At the intermediate level, it is still very similar but there is more higher order thinking skills. In the third level, that is where I introduce analytical thinking, arguments, and providing evidence. However, there is always partner work and group work.

The writing that takes place in my math courses is very minimal. It consists of interpreting the numerical answers in a sentence or two.

this is a drawing course, no writing required.

Writing in/of Mathematics is not what we normally think of in this context; however, it is the type of writing I am speaking of. FYI: I teach only off campus in the ACP Dept.

Writing is a crucial part of students education. I encourage and support any effort to enhance the writing experience of all students across the curriculum.