

Letters Principle for Online Teaching: Communication

Per AP4105, practice intrusive, instructor-initiated instructor-student communication strategies that consistently and meaningfully monitors and supports active student participation during the semester, addressing the affective domain (students' lives outside the classroom space)...

Provide regular and personalized written, audio, and/or video feedback on students' work. [read more](#)

Welcome to a Discussion with Time for Application

This recorded discussion is one episode in a sustained look at our Letters' Principle for Communication in Online Teaching. Thank you for joining us! We want this to be an interactive experience, so prepare to find opportunities to explore your own teaching, share ideas, and build plans in a shared, Google Doc space. Collaboration is the goal!

Chad and I will kick things off. We hope you'll join in often. We've scheduled time and curated space for hands-on application, so even if you interact with this discussion later, you can access the Google Doc and contribute your communication practices (listening is FLEX eligible; Letters faculty who contribute to the Doc may claim remuneration).

Our Principle for Communication with students covers many important practices: from curating open spaces to creating clear, multimodal assignment prompts. Today, we look at feedback on drafts as a venue for rich dialogue with students about their writing.

Feedback on Writing Can Be a Conversation

1. What kind of work are you responding to these days, and how are you feeling about the process?
2. How do you establish and sustain a culture of conversation in your class?
3. How can your feedback on drafts start a conversation with each of your students? Where would that conversation take place and what would make the convo meaningful?

Our Plan

30 minutes: framing discussion
30 minutes: hands-on content designing
20 minutes: open discussion

What does a conversation around feedback look like?

Purpose and Affordances	Modes and Tools	
Affirmation/Encouragement - You did this!! - You got this!!	Text	Annotations
Collaboration - Writers and readers make meaning together - Ask students to ask questions for feedback	Handwritten?	Audio
Mid-process Check-ins - understanding: sound, reading-based positions - structure: thesis & paragraph cohesion - basic reqs: words and sources and forms	Video	A thing worth points?
Shared habits and values - what is your favorite way to share writing? - let's practice	A conference	Canvas' Assignment Comments
"Fixing" Writing vs Seeing Growth - questioning the "formative" - layering: global then local	ScreenPal (for Chrome)	Google Comments
Feedback Voice, Less Academic Voice video, audio, personal	Lisa's Gift	^^^Reject/ Accept
What about those who can't/won't engage - when we are co-creating - when practice "intrusive" strategies	[add more...]	[add more...]
Labor of Making Conversation - sharing feedbacking - engaging feedback	[add more...]	[add more...]
Timely Feedback - How many days after submission? - How many days before submission?	[add more...]	[add more...]
Feedback Threads like Hiding the Gun draft 1 comments set up draft 5 convos	One of my future goals is teasing out how we can apply that Week 1 convo on convos in the async space. How do we structure/sequence? What does this look like exactly?	

Plan Your Feedback Convo with Students

curry dibs this space

How can your feedback on drafts start conversation with each of your students? Where would that conversation take place and what would make the convo meaningful?

Describe or Plan your Feedback Convo	Analyze, interrogate, and dream
ENGL 202 “lens” papers: 1800 words, 2-3 sources Lens Draft Feedback • partial rubric (sources, inquiry, conventions) • highlight claims, examples, summary • Post It-size comment (paragraph/3-5 minute video) Time in Class to Look at Feedback • 20-30 minutes • General tutorial then help each other • Repeat in 2 weeks Class Convos about “Rules” (worth points) • Before workshop, share an “Englishy rule” • During class warm-up, read and comment on “Englishy rules” • S2022 doc with student names redact Analysis Draft Feedback • partial rubric (organization, inquiry, conventions) • highlight examples, analysis, transitions • Post It-size comment (paragraph/3-5 minute video) Peer Review Convos (worth points) • We don’t give each other feedback • We read and make observations in drafts • Then we share how those observations affirm strengths and/or inspire us to strengthen moments <i>in our own</i> writing Final Draft Feedback • full rubric (organization, cohesion, sources, inquiry, conventions) • Highlight positions in analytical/cohesive structures • Post It-size comment (3-5 minute video) Respond to Feedback Assignment (worth points) 1. What’s one comment you found helpful? 2. What’s one comment you plan to work on or that you found unclear? 3. How will you revise and resubmit? Or what feedback will you apply forward to the next essay project?	Submit a draft every 2 weeks, 5 weeks per paper (some overlap) Students get feedback every two weeks - <10 days after submission Where we have convos: • In class • In workshops • In Canvas Not everyone responds in convos I can’t control that but how do I structure engagement so non-responses are not penalized? I still have a lot of academic words in my rubrics Partial rubrics help with this; student annotations or paraphrases of rubric language would be cool ScreenPal for Chrome has been a game changer for video feedback Embeds in any textbox); share screen/cam/both; 5 minute limit;

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Week 1 - Establish a Culture of Conversation 1. Small Groups: Why is it important to have conversations about your work vs. me telling you what needs to be “fixed”? Why don’t more teachers have conversations with students? Why do they just grade you? And why am I using air quotes when I say “fixed”? What does this suggest? 2. Regroup & Discuss 3. Individual Reflection: How do you like to receive comments about your work? What modes do you prefer? Written, audio recording, video recording, in person, other? Depends on the assignment? Why do you prefer these modes? What does useful feedback look like? 4. Regroup & Discuss 5. Small Groups: What is something you absolutely love talking about and why? Why am I asking you this question? 6. Regroup & Discuss 7. Overview: Share Promise Grading system, why I use it, how to set up grading logs, how to respond to Canvas comments and continue conversations.	Overall, the bigger and more promising issue I see emerging from today’s convo is how we—and by we I mean both us as colleagues, but also in collaboration with our students—establish and sustain various class cultures. This applies to conversations about work (Chad), using technology (Jake), asking questions (Shelli), etc.

8. **Practice:** Give students a chance to respond to my practice comments in class, together, huddled around a single laptop, in a completely unserious way. Encourage them to have fun with audio and recording tools. Maybe even have a recording contest to see who can leave the funniest message.
9. **Challenge:** How do I sustain this culture so students continue to engage?

Limit Academic-Sounding (Rubric) Words

- Avoid monstrous rubrics that repackage the COR and offer alienating language.
- Invest in the human, affective words first
- Follow with limited COR-based language, possibly via streamlined checklist (see below)
- Begin a conversation and create opportunities to sustain the conversation

Rethink the Words We Share via CREPE

- **C**elebrate the achievement
- **R**ecognize moments
- **E**ngage via question(s)
- **P**rovide resources/context
- **E**nd with affirmation and invitation

Benefits of CREPE

- Begins to address labor challenges tied to ungrading
- Rethinks the possibilities of template language and personalized feedback
- Can be adapted and delivered via audio/video recording, depending on student needs ([ScreenPal](#) offers new timesaving screencasting possibilities)

Sample CREPE Response

Thao!

(Celebrate) Big congrats on completing your vid analysis. For reals: that was no small feat! In addition to analyzing your letter, you also had to address technical and creative issues. In other words, there's much to appreciate here.

(Recognize) For instance, I love how balanced the majority of your slides looked. Your audience slide with the dog pic is a solid example of striking that perfect balance between the image, text, and blank space.

(Engage Via Questions): Did you happen to give Jackson your letter? Any luck? I really hope he was open to your suggestion based on what you shared.

(Provide Resources) In terms of growth possibilities, please see the checked boxes below. If you need to revise your vid analysis because you received a "1," you should take care of this asap and email me when your revision is ready to be reviewed. To submit a revision, you'll need to use this form:

<https://forms.gle/EWtTNDYLH7kZch1q7>

(End with Affirmation/Invitation) Don't hesitate to check in if you have questions about any of these comments. Seriously, I'm always here to help. And I look forward to updates on Jackson's progress!

Take care,

Professor Tsuyuki

CHECKED BOX = GROWTH OPPORTUNITY

- ☐ Min and Max Time - 4-5 minutes
- ☐ Analyzed four moves
- ☐ Address the Why - Analysis effectively explains why moves are used based on the specific audience, demonstrating a clear understanding of the audience and why moves are appropriate

[x] Heavy Text - Notice how you're using complete sentences on slides 8 and 9. What are the essential ideas? How can you condense and offer bullet points?

☐ Reading off slides vs. narrating at times (does not apply to evidence quotes)

☐ Crowded slides

☐ Font is quite small at times

☐ Font is quite large at times

[x] Color/Contrast - How could you rethink the font color on slide 4 so there's more contrast between your font and background?

☐ Visuals

☐ Line spacing

☐ Element spacing

[x] Empty Space - How could you eliminate the empty space on slide 6? How might you add a visual, adjust the font size, and/or break lines and relocate the text?

☐ Delivers ideas clearly and at a steady pace without significant gaps

☐ Filler language (like, uh, um, etc.)

☐ Slide typos and/or inconsistencies

☐ Late submission

☐ Concluding thoughts

☐ Other

How do we keep students engaged throughout the semester?

ASK to EAT:

- Access
- Student
- Knowledge to
- Engage,
- Affect, and
- Transport to the Material

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Shelli dibs this space

How can your feedback on drafts start conversation with each of your students? Where would that conversation take place and what would make the convo meaningful?

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Small assignments (process ones) - Comments in speed grader Paper drafts - drafts : comments in google docs (in speed grader I say see google doc for feedback) - Final drafts : comments in speed grader (nothing on the actual draft). The comments are identifying some strengths and then a “Keep working on X and Y in future writing” Some of this gets repeated between students who are struggling with similar elements - Longer paper draft : I have students do 2 annotations per page of what they are thinking or trying to do at whatever that spot is, so when I am in there giving feedback, I am responding to their thoughts and concerns. So many times, my response is to put that comment in the actual body of the paper because it explains so much or is doing significant analysis work. ← I really like this version of student directed feedback. Metacognition - I have done individual assignments and as a single google doc. If there are 3 in one week, I might comment on one. - Benefits to the individual assignments : Quicker, easier to access. They respond more to the comments I make through speed grader - Benefits to the google doc : I get a quick recap of all of their thoughts as I scroll down to the new entries. Discussion Boards - No feedback - This is not my space. This is their space to dialogue and explore their ideas. I will incorporate elements of the discussion board in other assignments, but I don’t engage there.	

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JahB dubs this space

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Metacognition: “Get on the Balcony through Journal Writing” Journal writing is both a conversation between the student and me as well as an opportunity to pose questions for clarification. My Journals provide ownership to the student. My early journals usually ask students to reflect about who they are as a student using our topics of Culture Involuntary/Voluntary and The Three Selves. I provide feedback through affirmations or connections to the items they name. I think this assists students with seeing that I was once (and still am) a student. Some My Journals are designed for students to get to know me. I ask them to pose a question about anything at all. I answer these questions honestly and start a dialogue about similar interests or culture. Group Discussions Group discussions are usually based off student examinations or interpretations of a source. Students work to develop a response then respond to a classmate. Revision Feedback	Ungrading I’m in the beginning stages of thinking about how “ungrading” fits my course. I arrived at my rubric this year and hated it for once. I think the language is “meh”. I’m ready to throw it out. Rubric categories of Advanced, Proficiency Basic, <i>Below BASIC!</i> I’ve flirted with the idea of something more me like Padawan; Jedi; Master Jedi Group Discussions I’ve worked to highlight student work to encourage students through announcements to return to the Group Discussion to continue the discussion. I wonder if I do this to connect it to the second half of class they will actually respond.

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Tony dibs this space

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Interested in improving conversation in asynchronous space. Ideas I love: - Shelly's multiple "small stakes" assignments. - Can I embed these as "discussions" throughout week? - Chad's tone-setting first day work - Is there a way to embed this into an introductory discussion board + follow-up video...? - Folks' multimodal approaches (video analysis audio feedback, etc.) - Perhaps embed a mid-week "showcase summary" sort of thing....using padlet maybe....Students can summarize concepts, readings, ask clarifying questions, etc. Everyone would be "on the stage"...other students could click and watch/listen (Would capture "conversation")	The weekly "showcase page" could serve as a metaphorical "classroom"...could create that online space that brings students together....and it could be very low stakes and allow for both sharing expertise and asking questions.

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Jose dibs this space

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Don't feel like I'm adding much beyond what everyone is doing @ large, but here's a general description = • Plan the semester for 3 essay projects + my recurring Scholarship Research & Personal Statement Project • Each Essay project entails 1 CRAAS Homework assignment for both analyzing writing strategies HOW-WHY (variety of readings = magazines, newspapers & reports, book excerpts) • CRAAS = Critical Reading, Annotation, ANALYSIS, Summary = all core skills building • budget 3 weeks for rough drafts, peer exchanges & dialog, + use volunteered drafts for in-depth annotation-analysis • 3 rough drafts, from THESIS-Purpose to Main Points for analysis-discussion,	Budget ample time & opportunity to share drafts & ideas, conversation, moving beyond the basic surface-level observations

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Katharine dibs this space

How can your feedback on drafts start conversation with each of your students? Where would that conversation take place and what would make the convo meaningful?

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Right now I'm using Achieve writing tools for providing feedbacks on drafts, doing peer reviews, and providing "final" comments. There are good aspects, but, as with everything, there are problems, too. One of the things I like is that I can assign draft goals for each draft, and Achieve then provides easy templates and links to resources related specifically to those goals. I also like that students have to answer reflection questions that I create in order to submit their essays, so their reflection responses are right there on the screen as I respond to their drafts. So, if I ask them to tell me what they want feedback on, it's right there with the draft, making it easy for me to know what I should focus on in my feedback. I don't like the formatting tools in Achieve, though, as they cause a lot of problems. I'm not sure I love using a rubric, either, which is built into their system. I've never loved rubrics. They feel too canned to me, and they don't respond to the soul of an essay. What do I want to build for the future: more of a question and answer system for conversing with the student. I want to make sure they are getting the feedback that they want, not the feedback that I want to give. They so often say they want feedback on "everything," but, as we all know, that doesn't work. It's too much for them to focus on. More targeted feedback on one or two aspects is more beneficial. I also want to get more reflection on the feedback itself. Too often students barely look at it. I want to continue to develop effective systems for this.	

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ME Always • Rubric • Marginal notes ○ Questions ○ Resources ○ Response (to what is written) ○ Grammar/composition • Endnote ○ Summary ○ Identify what's working ○ Identify what to work on ■ 1 local–sentence/par level ■ 1 global/critical thinking/argument/claims Occasionally • Voice comment • Turnitin “comments” • Zoom conference Students: Ask questions Metacognitive reflection of revision	Revision Plan Assignment Summarize feedback Evaluate feedback Identify areas of revision Reflect on revision choices Create screencast pre and post revision addressing the above areas