

# Managing the grading (and responding) workload

**Dilger @ ICAP Convocation, Spring 2020**

# Responding: Expectations

Briefly:

*"Provide useful, relevant, and timely written feedback that helps your students become better writers."*

Does this mean:

- Respond to every part of every writing assignment?
- Addressing all errors?
- For every student?
- In equal amounts?
- Regardless of time commitment required?

## **NO.**

*Attend the workshop to learn more.*

Remember this slide from Convocation?

# NO.



(the art of saying it)

“Many veteran readers find the experience of responding to student writing to be one of constantly deciding **not to comment on less important issues**. Such restraint allows you to focus your energies on just a few important points and also tends to yield **a cleaner and more easily intelligible message** for students.”

—Nancy Sommers, *Responding to Student Writing*

# Today's workshop

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- Read some writing and talk about how we'd respond
- Discuss ways to think about grading & responding
- Practical suggestions:
  - Response itself
  - Managing workload
  - Designing for response

# Activity

Let's read the reflective memo in portfolio P048 (pp. 1-3).

Assume it's a first draft.

How would you respond?

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**Purdue, response, and you**

**“Provide useful, relevant, and timely written feedback that helps your students become better writers.”**



# ICAP outcome #4

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**Provide constructive feedback to others and incorporate feedback into their writing.**

- A. Effectively evaluate others' writing and provide useful commentary and suggestions for revision where appropriate
- B. Use comments as a heuristic for revision
- C. Produce multiple drafts or versions of a composition to increase rhetorical effectiveness
- D. Learn and apply collaborative skills in classroom and conference settings



## Written Communication

- **Knowledge of Conventions**
  - Produce texts which use appropriate formats, genre conventions and documentation styles while controlling tone, syntax, grammar and spelling
- **Processes**
  - Demonstrate and understanding of writing as a social process which includes multiple drafts, collaboration, and reflection
- **Critical Thinking/Reading/Writing**
  - Read critically, summarize, apply, analyze, and synthesize information and concepts in written and visual texts as the basis for developing original ideas and claims.
  - Demonstrate an understanding of writing assignments as a series of tasks including identifying and evaluating useful and reliable outside sources.
  - Develop, assert and support a focused thesis with appropriate reasoning and adequate evidence.
- **Rhetorical Knowledge**
  - Compose texts which exhibit appropriate rhetorical choices, which include attention to audience, purpose, context, genre, and convention.
- **Engaging Electronic Environment**
  - Demonstrate proficiency in reading, evaluating, analyzing, and using material collected from electronic sources (such as visual, electronic, library databases, Internet sources, other official databases, federal government databases, reputable blogs, wikis, etc.).



## Written Communication

- Clear expression of ideas in writing; includes grammar, organization, and structure. Varying levels and types of writing skills are required for different jobs. The ability to convey ideas concisely and coherently is important.
- Demonstrates understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses on all elements of the work.
- Uses appropriate and relevant content to explore ideas and/or demonstrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's understanding, and shaping the work.
- Demonstrates attention to and successful execution of organization, content, presentation, format and stylistic choices in writing.
- Demonstrates use of credible, relevant resources to support ideas that are situated within the discipline and genre of writing.
- Uses language that effectively communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency.

“Demonstrate an understanding of writing as a social process which includes multiple drafts, collaboration, and reflection”

Purdue general education standards (or lack thereof)

# Response is learned!

By us, and  
by our students too

Difficult

Helpful

Timeconsuming

Teachable

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# Selected transfer metaphors

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1. Transportation or movement (Perkins & Salomon 1988)
2. Travel / boundary crossing/guarding (Reiff & Bawarshi 2011)
3. Application (Robertson et al. 2012)
4. Transition (Beach 2003)
5. Integration (Nowacek 2011)
6. Generalization (Beach 2003; Frazier 2010)
7. Repurposing (Roozen 2010; Wardle 2012; Yancey, Robertson, & Taczak 2014)
8. Negotiation (Donahue 2005; Reiff & Bawarshi 2011)
9. Recontextualization (Nowacek 2011)
10. Assemblage (Yancey, Robertson, & Taczak 2014)

# Activity

## Metaphors

What are the metaphors we use to think about responding to writing?

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# Challenges

# Thinking about students

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1. What do these papers tell us about the learners?
  - a. About what they know?
  - b. About what they need to know?
  - c. About what are they doing well?
  - d. About what do they need to work on?
2. If you could only reinforce two or three things either way – what would you pick? Why? How?

# Thinking about ourselves

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1. How do we respond at different stages of writing?
2. How does that change with our roles?
3. What information would help you respond to these papers?  
Why?
4. How would you help these writers...
  - a. in an instructor-facilitated conference?
  - b. to turn to a consultant in the Writing Lab?
  - c. in a consultant-facilitated Writing Lab session?
  - d. If responding in writing?



# Activity

## Challenges

How does responding to writing challenge us?

Our students?

Our relationships with our students?

If working with an example is easier – let's use the draft in P048 (p. 22-29).

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# Practical suggestions

# Sommers: Six best practices

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1. Make some positive comments.
2. Comment primarily on patterns—representative strengths and weaknesses.
3. Write in complete, detailed sentences.
4. Ask questions.
5. Use a respectful tone.
6. Write legibly (in any ink but red).

# Managing the workload

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1. Begin responding soon after assignments are submitted.
2. Read all student work before starting to make comments.
3. Use a timer to limit response time per student.
4. Make comments with a pencil, so you can erase.
5. Return student work as soon as you're ready. You don't have to wait until feedback is ready for every student.
6. As previously discussed: when you feel it would be better to defer response to conference with a student – do it.

# Designing for response (1/2)

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1. Assign the **shortest possible** length. Quality beats quantity every time.
2. **Test your assignments** with other readers before distributing them to students
  - a. Take your assignments to the **Writing Lab** for feedback from consultants experienced with 106 writers – or 106 students themselves!
3. Assign a **prior review** (e.g. a [self-evaluation](#)) to help you respond.

# Designing for response (2/2)

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4. **Describe your approach** to providing feedback.
5. **Build response into assignments** and other apparatus; don't make it seem like an optional part of students (or your) writing processes.
6. **Talk about response** with students:
  - How do they prepare to share their writing for a review?
  - How do they respond to reviews – both short and long term?

# Activities

1. Pick ONE of your challenges. How can you mitigate it?
2. Pick TWO responding metaphors to balance. Write one sentence to describe each one.
3. Pick ONE response friendly design strategy. Adapt a current assignment.



**Thank you!**