



The W:
From the
inside
Out

Welcome

Session Overview

Series 1

Part A: Writing to Think, Writing to Learn

- Role of the W Course
- Role of the TA
- Role of the low-stakes assignment

Part B: W Design

- Strategies for Low & High Stakes Assignments
- Role of the rubric

Low-stakes activity

Think about the following questions and write a response for each:

1. What kinds of writing do student do in your course?
2. How does each kind of writing help them learn?

What is a W Course?

Criterion 1:

Students have opportunities to use writing as a way of learning the content of the course and are taught to write in the forms and for the purposes that are typical of disciplines and/or professions.

Cont...

Criterion 2:

Examples of writing within the **disciplines** are used as a **means of instruction** about typical structures, modes of reasoning, styles of address, and the use of technical language and of evidence.

Cont...

Criterion 3:

Students receive appropriate **feedback and response to their writing that is based on **explicit criteria** and is directed at improving the quality of their writing.**

Cont...

Criterion 4:

Revision is built into the **process of writing** for formal assignments, usually in terms of revisions of the same paper, or alternatively, in revisions accomplished through successive similar assignments.

Cont...

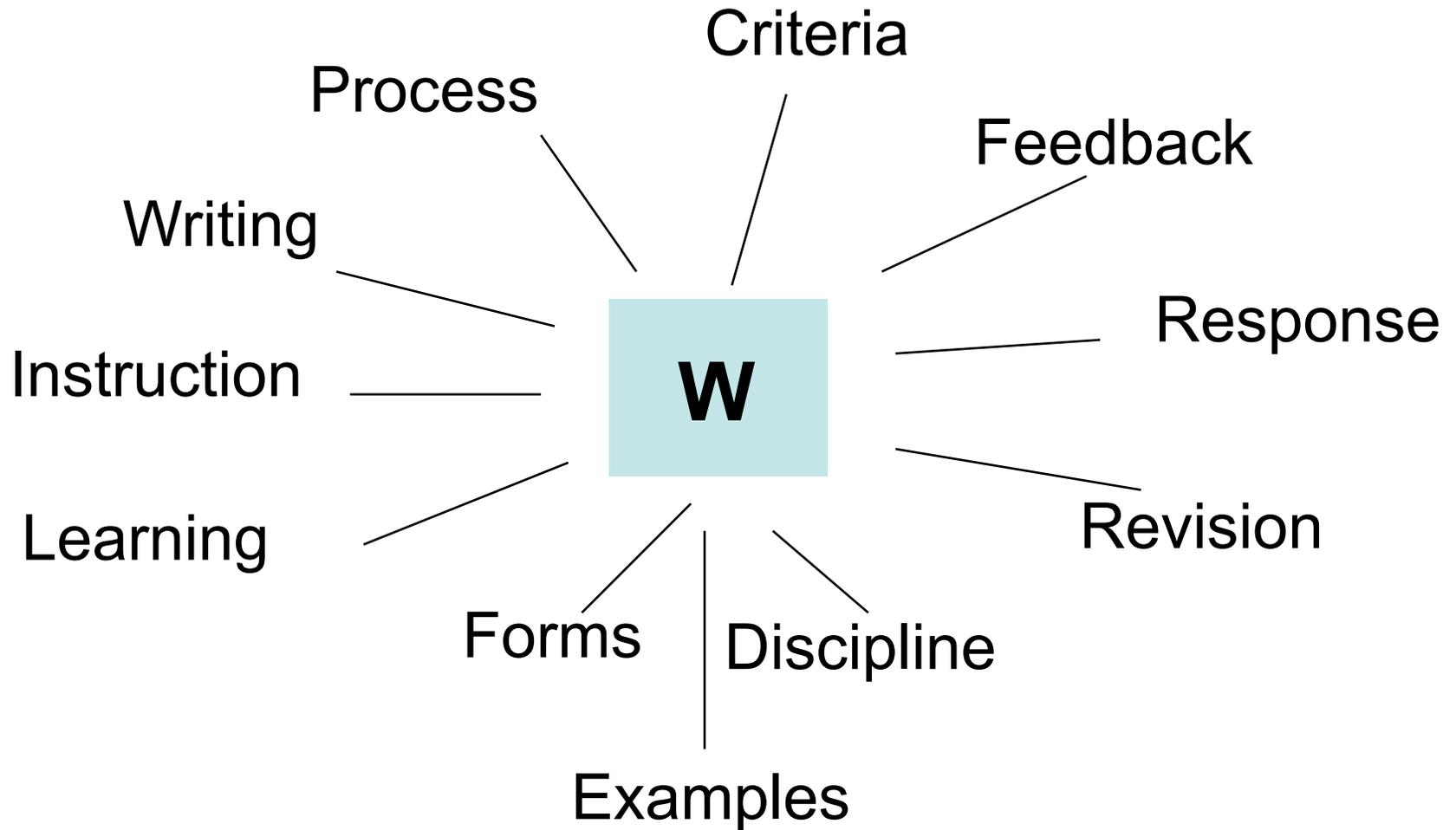
Criterion 5:

At least half the course grade is based on written work for which students receive **feedback (see Criterion 3).**

Low-stakes activity

- Jot down the key terms, ideas or concepts in the W Criteria?
- Using your own words, in 3 sentences or less, write a short description of a W course.

Word cluster



Demystifying the W

Not:

- A (remedial) English course
- A grammar/punctuation course
- An essay writing course
- A How-To-Write course

Why do we teach WID?

Students use writing to

- Think about and explore course content
- Gain understanding of their discipline
- Reflect on their understanding and learning
- Demonstrate understanding of course concepts
- Practice professional, discipline related writing

How do we teach WID?

- Low-stakes writing
 - Short assignments/activities
 - 0-5%
 - Require little or no feedback
- High-stakes writing
 - Larger, formal, discipline related assignments
 - 15% - 50%
 - Require feedback/response and revision

Who do students write for?

An Audience.

Audience shifts according to the goals of the assignment:

- Low-stakes--Student as audience
- High-stakes--TA/Instructor as audience
- High-stakes--Professional audience

Writing is the process of composing a message that understands the expectations of and meets the needs of its audience.

Role of the student?

- Active Reader
- Active Listener
- Engaged Audience/Responder

- Learner
- Writer

What is our Role?

W facilitators are

- Teachers
- Writers
- Coaches/mentors
- Models
- Engaged Readers
- Interested Audiences

Our role cont..

- Provide students with the learning tools they need to be successful
- Provide students with the feedback they need to improve
- Do both in ways that allow Instructors/TAs to deliver their courses effectively and efficiently

Suggestion

Quick writes: Start, transition or end your class or tutorial with a low stakes activity that

- Contextualizes and leads to a discussion of a key concept
- Demystifies or illuminates the concept
- Encourages student reflection
- Establishes your expectations for understanding

Part B: W design

Provide students with the learning tools they need to be successful

Activity

Writing Effective Assignment Instructions

In this activity you will:

- Consider assignment instructions from the perspective of two different audiences.
- Engage in a low-stakes writing activity.
- Determine qualities of effective assignment instructions.

Effective Assignment Instructions

What are some qualities of effective assignment instructions?

-
-
-
-
-
-

Effective Assignment Instructions

- Write with your audience in mind.
- Anticipate your reader's questions.
- Be specific (instructions, grading, expectations).
- Consider What/Why/How
 - What is the task?
 - Why are you asking them to do this? (Relate to course and unit objectives or outcomes).
 - How should it be done? (What are the grading criteria?)

Grading Assignments

Discussion:

What is your process for grading papers and assignments?

Grading and Rubrics

The role of the rubric in the W course:

- clarifies instructor expectations
- facilitates the marking process
- promotes consistent grading
- helps students focus their work
- provides clear indication of areas for improvement

Rubrics

- WHAT is a Rubric?
 - Holistic vs analytical
- WHY would you want to use a Rubric?
 - Benefits
- HOW can you design and use a rubric most effectively?
 - 4 key stages: reflect, list, group/label, apply
 - OR goal, process, evidence, characteristics

Sample – Analytical Rubric

RUBRIC FOR ASSESSING LAB REPORTS

not intended for grading purposes

NOTE: it is assumed that all lab reports will be word-processed

	1	2	3	4	Score
	Beginning or incomplete	Developing	Accomplished	Exemplary	
Abstract/Summary	Several major aspects of the experiment are missing, student displays a lack of understanding about how to write an abstract	Abstract misses one or more major aspects of carrying out the experiment or the results	Abstract references most of the major aspects of the experiment, some minor details are missing	Abstract contains reference to all major aspects of carrying out the experiment and the results, well-written	
Introduction	Very little background information provided or information is incorrect	Some introductory information, but still missing some major points	Introduction is nearly complete, missing some minor points	Introduction complete and well-written; provides all necessary background principles for the experiment	
Experimental procedure	Missing several important experimental details or not written in paragraph format	Written in paragraph format, still missing some important experimental details	Written in paragraph format, important experimental details are covered, some minor details missing	Well-written in paragraph format, all experimental details are covered	
Results: data, figures, graphs, tables, etc.	Figures, graphs, tables contain errors or are poorly constructed, have missing titles, captions or numbers, units missing or incorrect, etc.	Most figures, graphs, tables OK, some still missing some important or required features	All figures, graphs, tables are correctly drawn, but some have minor problems or could still be improved	All figures, graphs, tables are correctly drawn, are numbered and contain titles/captions.	
Discussion	Very incomplete or incorrect interpretation of trends and comparison of data indicating a lack of understanding of results	Some of the results have been correctly interpreted and discussed; partial but incomplete understanding of results is still evident	Almost all of the results have been correctly interpreted and discussed, only minor improvements are needed	All important trends and data comparisons have been interpreted correctly and discussed, good understanding of results is conveyed	
Conclusions	Conclusions missing or missing the important points	Conclusions regarding major points are drawn, but many are misstated, indicating a lack of understanding	All important conclusions have been drawn, could be better stated	All important conclusions have been clearly made, student shows good understanding	
Spelling, grammar, sentence structure	Frequent grammar and/or spelling errors, writing style is rough and immature	Occasional grammar/spelling errors, generally readable with some rough spots in writing style	Less than 3 grammar/spelling errors, mature, readable style	All grammar/spelling correct and very well-written	
Appearance and formatting	Sections out of order, too much handwritten copy, sloppy formatting	Sections in order, contains the minimum allowable amount of handwritten copy, formatting is rough but readable	All sections in order, formatting generally good but could still be improved	All sections in order, well-formatted, very readable	

Sample – Holistic Rubric

Grade	Criteria
A (21 - 25 pts)	<p>Your assignment presents a strong and concise thesis statement, and arguments that are coherent, organized, and connected by clear transitions. A typical assignment in this category exhibits the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies and analyzes salient features of the argument, and supports arguments and claims with credible evidence.• Engages with concepts and ideas in course readings, using the concepts to interpret the ads. Focuses analyses on relationship of ads to broader representations of the specific theme.• Provides a concise and engaging introduction, and concludes with a clear, concise summary of the arguments.• Writes with clear sentence and paragraph structure, and uses language that clearly and effectively conveys ideas.• Writing is free of spelling and grammatical errors, and all references are cited using proper APA conventions.
B (17 - 20 pts)	<p>Your assignment presents a good thesis statement, and arguments are coherent, organized, and connected by clear transitions. A typical assignment in this category exhibits the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies and analyzes relevant features of the argument, and supports arguments and claims with credible evidence.• Refers to concepts and ideas in course readings in relation to the ads. Shows some analysis of the relationship of ads to broader representations of the specific theme.• Provides a concise and engaging introduction, and concludes with a clear, concise summary of the arguments.• Writes with clear sentence and paragraph structure, to convey ideas with reasonable clarity.

Session 1B Activity

Design or modify a rubric for an assignment in your course.

- WHAT criteria are you assessing?
- WHY are you assessing it?
- HOW will students demonstrate mastery?

Wrap-up Discussion

Feedback for Us!

Here is your final low-stakes activity:

What parts of the workshop did you like?

Which specific areas were most helpful to you and why?

Which areas were less useful and why?

How can we improve our next workshop?

Thank you for your generous listening.