Summary Report, Ad Hoc Committee on Writing
January 26, 2009

In December of 2007, the WVU Faculty Senate created an ad hoc committee on writing. This temporary committee was charged with reviewing how the current writing intensive (or "W") course requirement develops undergraduate writing across the WVU curriculum and to consider other approaches. The original committee was composed of a group of faculty members representing various colleges and disciplines. Over the past year, the committee gathered information in a variety of ways.

Since ad hoc committees are meant to be temporary, we think it is time to bring this committee's year-long work to a close. We recommend that the Senate constitute a new committee in late Spring, 2009, to focus on a pilot (or series of pilots) if the Senate chooses to explore writing portfolios as a possible alternative to the "W" course requirement.

This summary report highlights:

1. Results of faculty and student forums
2. Results of the WVU faculty and student surveys
3. Writing in a national perspective: results of the 2008 National Survey of Student Engagement
4. Writing-across-the-curriculum models in place at other universities
5. Possible ways to strengthen the "W" requirement in its current form by adding more faculty and student support
6. Writing portfolios as a possible alternative to a single "W" course, supplemented with new faculty and student support
7. Recommendation to constitute a new committee, co-chaired by the new AVP for Undergraduate Education and a Faculty Senate representative, to look at portfolio pilots and implementation

The report concludes with a four-page appendix on writing portfolios that includes a FAQ for faculty and drafts of sample portfolio guidelines, sample criteria for evaluation, and a sample rubric.

Faculty and Student Forums

Forums. The first step for the WVU Faculty Senate Committee on Undergraduate Writing was to gather information about faculty and student perceptions about writing instruction through faculty and student forums.

At last year’s faculty forum (January, 2008), the discussion centered on three sets of questions:

1. What are the main goals and objectives of our writing requirement?
2. What are our best existing plans for achieving those goals? Are there new and promising ideas that we should consider?
3. How can WVU ensure a consistent standard for the writing requirement that also respects the diverse needs of various departments in the University?

Existing Requirement. The forum began with a quick review of the existing writing requirements at WVU: English 101 and 102, ideally in the first two years; a writing intensive course in the major, ideally during the junior year; and a capstone requirement that includes a written component in the senior year.

Since the forum focused specifically on the writing-intensive requirement in the major, several faculty members noted that, in addition to helping students continue to practice and improve their abilities to
write clearly, coherently, and correctly, we need to give students opportunities to learn and practice writing in their own discipline since terminology, syntaxes, genres, and styles often vary across the disciplines. Writing is not and should not be the sole responsibility of the English department. Students need to practice their writing abilities throughout their college careers if they are to maintain and strengthen those abilities. In other words, writing is a shared responsibility—and one that includes students taking responsibility, too.

Another faculty member echoed the importance of writing: “One important consequence of writing is that it compels students to think with a depth that they don’t have to in other forms of assignments. The thought process that leads to written work is important. Marginalizing writing jeopardizes the development of critical thinking processes of our students.” Writing is, however, a time consuming process for both teachers and students and the student to teacher ratio has steadily increased. Another faculty member noted that “medium-sized classes have gone from the 30’s to the 50’s—and this means that non-W classes have less writing.” Smaller classes allow for more attention to writing, and smaller classes require additional resources.

This first round of discussion also observed that the writing-intensive requirement should not be a senior-year activity. It’s too often in the capstone, where we should be honing a student’s writing in their discipline not teaching it for the first time.

Promising Ideas. As one faculty member explained, the writing requirement dates back to 1988: “We all believed in the importance of this requirement. It is imperative we pay attention to good communication skills—written and oral. But, we must have resources to do new things.” This observation captures a recurrent theme: faculty care deeply about writing but writing—and responding to writing—takes time. Faculty members offered many good ideas: more writing-across-the-curriculum initiatives; workshops for faculty development; more tutorial support for students; an option to have writing components in several classes (rather than a single writing course); and so forth. Each suggestion, however, would require resources. Some disciplines also note that accreditation standards dictate a full curriculum that allows little flexibility; they remind us to think about how university-wide requirements affect such departments.

Assessment. Some accreditation reviews do require writing assessment. At least one person at the forum suggested that the committee should “try to distill the common denominators and then allow teaching across the curriculum.” Another faculty member observed that, given the way that writing genres and conventions vary across disciplines, that individual departments “could take more responsibility than they are in having writing assessment as a part of curriculum assessment in their disciplines.” This, however, returned the conversation to the need for more training for faculty, more tutorial support for students who may struggle with writing, and more resources in general to support writing.

Student Forum. The student forum had only three student participants, and two of them were reporters from the Daily Athenaeum. While such a small number is hardly representative, a few ideas echoed ideas that came up in the faculty forums: it would be helpful to have some writing everywhere so that writing gets used over and over; meaningful writing that is tied to the major is helpful; feedback is important.

While we wished for a greater student response, the low turn-out affirmed the committee’s decision to do a survey to get greater student (and faculty) response.

WVU Faculty and Student Surveys

The second step was to survey what writing was being assigned across campus. Our goal was to get a sense of when and where our students are writing. We drew on similar surveys at the University of Denver and at George Mason University in developing our questions. We invited all undergraduates to
respond to a 10-minute online survey and we asked faculty who had taught an undergraduate course in the past year to do the same. Participation for both surveys was voluntary and completely anonymous.

We hoped to get as broad a sampling as possible. The surveys yielded 453 responses: roughly half from faculty (190) and half from students (263). Responses represent 1% of all undergraduates (and thus not statistically valid, but still an interesting snapshot) and about 15% of all faculty. Of the students responding, 46% were from ECAS; of the faculty responding, 51% were from ECAS. Some highlights:

- **Writing Frequently Required by each Major.** Students (mostly seniors responding) say that 95% of the courses in their major require some amount of writing. In a semester, they report writing a total of 30-40 pages. If students typically take four courses a term, this means they write about 8-10 pages per course.

  The frequency of writing reported by students corresponds well with the faculty survey. For most faculty respondents, the classes they described were *not* designated as writing intensive or as capstones yet almost all included at least 10 pages of writing or more. Writing ranged from longer essays and researched reports to letters, memos, proposals, lab reports, case studies, essay exams, and web pages.

- **Value of Feedback and Effective Assignments.** Students say they have learned characteristics of good writing in their disciplines via assignments and feedback from teachers in their majors. The value of feedback was also reflected in the faculty survey where at least a third of the faculty said they offered students a chance to revise their work based on comments on drafts.

- **Traits That Contribute to Good Writing.** Students and faculty were invited to rate 16 traits that contribute to good writing. Both groups listed depth of understanding, clarity, and grammar and mechanics among their top five traits. More than half of the faculty respondents agreed that while correct grammar and usage are important, these traits are secondary to the quality of ideas, organization, and development. Students also listed organization and awareness of audience and purpose while faculty added logical development and the accurate use of citation and documentation.

  - Should the writing requirements at WVU be revised? While the committee regrets not including this question on the faculty survey, we did include it on the student survey. More than half the students thought that there should be more writing (either some writing in every course or more required writing courses); many were content with the existing requirements. Very few wanted fewer required writing courses. Here are the responses:

    - Some writing should be part of every course in the major: 78 (30%)
    - No change needed: 62 (23%)
    - More writing courses should be required: 57 (22%)
    - Fewer writing courses should be required: 42 (16%)
    - Never thought about it: 24 (9%)

A Broader Perspective: Writing and the National Survey of Student Engagement

The WVU surveys showed that both faculty and students value writing—and that both are taking it seriously. But we also wanted to gain some national perspectives on writing. We looked to the 2007-08 National Survey for Student Engagement (NSSE) that was released in Fall, 2008.
The NSSE now includes findings from questions focusing on writing, which were included for the first time in 2007-08. In this survey, over 23,000 students at 82 institutions nationwide responded to questions about the quantity of writing, the kinds of assignments they received, and the frequency of feedback.

The NSSE reports indicate that when students are engaged in learning, they are better able to analyze, synthesize, integrate ideas from various sources, and work through the relevance of ideas in and out of the classroom. These abilities lead students to stay in school, and to get better grades.

Here are some highlights from the *NSSE Annual Report* (http://nsse.iub.edu/html/annual_reports.cfm):

- “Results affirmed that when institutions provided students with extensive, intellectually challenging writing activities, the students engaged in more deep learning activities such as analysis, synthesis, integration of ideas from various sources, and grappled more with course ideas both in and out of the classroom.”

- “According to NSSE, students whose faculty assigned extensive, intellectually challenging writing activities “reported greater personal, social, practical, and academic learning and development.”

- “The survey’s findings provide further support for the movement to infuse quality writing experiences throughout the curriculum.”

**Writing-across-the-Curriculum Models at Other Universities**

The committee also reviewed the following peer universities to see how their approach to writing across the curriculum or writing intensive practices compared to or differed from our practices at WVU. The choice of schools was based on intersections between the SREB membership, Carnegie Research listings, and active membership in the Network of Writing across the Curriculum (WAC) Programs:

- **Louisiana State U**: http://appl003.lsu.edu/acadaff/excweb.nsf/index
  6 credits required. “Distinguished Communicator” certificate is available for students, which requires 12 hours of communication-intensive courses.

- **U of Kentucky**: http://www.uky.edu/AS/English/wc/
  6+ credits required. There is a first-year writing requirement plus a writing intensive upper-level course or series of courses. Well established writing center where Peer Fellows (trained undergrad tutors) are available to serve as teaching assistants to faculty teaching a W course.

- **U of Georgia**: http://wip.uga.edu/
  Students must pass Regents’ Writing and Reading Exam. Writing Intensive Program is optional. The Writing Intensive Program trains teaching assistants to support faculty teaching writing intensive classes.

- **George Mason U**: http://wac.gmu.edu
  9 credits required with two at the undergrad level and one writing-intensive course in the major. A well established WAC program and Writing Center provide workshops, peer tutoring in the disciplines, and individual consultations for faculty on writing-to-learn activities, assignment designs, and criteria for evaluation.

- **Pennsylvania State U**: http://www.psu.edu/dept/cew/
9 credits of writing/speaking classes required. The have a well established WAC and their Writing Center includes a graduate writing center.

The survey showed similar writing course requirements (typically 6-9 credit hours of required writing courses, often with two undergraduate writing courses and one writing course in the major). In contrast, however, most of the programs also had well-funded and established writing-across-the-Curriculum centers. These centers provided a host of resources that ranged from faculty workshops, faculty development funding, and guest speakers to extensive tutoring support for students and web resources for both faculty and students.

**More Faculty and Student Support for “W” Courses**

If WVU chooses to keep the current “W” course requirement, we recommend expanding the writing-across-curriculum resources for faculty and the writing center support for students. As one faculty member noted at the January 2008 forum, “When the writing requirement was installed in 1988, there were not additional resources; rather, it was absorbed into our loads. We all believed in the importance of this requirement. It is imperative we pay attention to good communication skills—written and oral. But we must have resources to do new things.” The Ad Hoc Committee would simply note that we must have resources to fulfill the 1988 mandate more fully or to develop any other writing initiative.

Additional resources to support the existing writing-intensive courses would include an increase in “W” course faculty across the disciplines to ensure class sizes of 25 or less for any writing-intensive class, technology support as writing becomes an increasingly technology-based medium, physical space for writing centers in every college, and peer tutors within each college.

**Writing Portfolios as a Possible Alternative to “W”**

The Undergraduate Catalog explains several goals of an undergraduate education. Among them:

> Students should develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills sufficient for life in contemporary society. These skills include the ability to read critically, listen critically, ask appropriate questions, gather relevant information, and apply critical analysis to reach logical conclusions. Central to these skills are mathematical literacy and proficiency in oral and written communications.

> Students should attain proficiency in their major fields. This proficiency should enable them to be competitive in the job market or in admission to graduate or professional schools. (26)

The writing-intensive (“W”) requirement at the 300- or 400-level is one of the ways in which students develop many of these goals. In several majors, however, a single course focused on writing may not be the best way to integrate these goals into the curriculum.

The Senate ad hoc committee on writing thus proposes two options that could satisfy WVU’s upper division writing-intensive (“W”) requirement.

Please note: We recommend additional faculty and student resources for either option.

1. **Completion of a “W” course within the major.** This option affirms the existing requirement for a single course taken at the 300-level or above that requires 20+ pages of polished, revised writing that forms the basis for 50% or more the final grade. The committee does, however, recommend
additional resources to support faculty teaching “W” courses. (See the previous two sections on WAC, Writing centers, etc.)

**OR**

2. **Completion of writing portfolio within the major.** This option represents a new approach based on portfolio requirements in place at other schools. (See especially the model at Carlton College: [http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/writingprogram/](http://apps.carleton.edu/campus/writingprogram/)) The portfolio would consist of a sampling of 3-5 papers from several WVU classes submitted by the end of the junior year. The portfolio would total 20-30 pages of polished, revised writing. Students would be in charge of choosing the writing they want faculty to evaluate (based on their written work at WVU), and would introduce their choices with a reflection on their experience as college writers. This 2-3 page reflective essay (the only new piece of writing required) asks students to make a persuasive argument that the pieces in the portfolio document their abilities as writers *in a major*. Faculty members within the discipline would review portfolios twice a year. This option would require ongoing faculty development support for training and portfolio reviews. It would also require additional writing center support for students.

The portfolio option assumes that students will write in nearly every course on subjects and in forms that will vary according to discipline, level of the course, and professors’ goals for each course.

In a separate report, we have detailed how this portfolio approach might work in practice. To balance the need for brevity with a bit of additional detail, we refer you to the one-page portfolio FAQ sheet attached to this report, as well as to a sample checklist and rubric for a quick sense of what the portfolio would include and how it might be evaluated.

For now, the committee proposes that a few departments or colleges pilot the portfolio approach.

The Ad Hoc Committee would like to note that the ePortfolio alternative should not be viewed as a mechanism to increase class size. There are significant operational costs associated with the ePortfolio, including increases in faculty workload time incurred while serving as readers. We also anticipate that there will be an increased use of technical staff time for supporting the application within departments. Other ongoing costs will include faculty and student training costs, systems costs, and the cost of offering a one credit course that introduces and teaches the portfolio concept to the students. The ePortfolio alternative will need to be funded in such a way as to ensure that it is an equally successful, yet fully viable alternative to our GEC W requirements.

**Recommendations**

As we take stock of the initial charge to the Ad Hoc Committee on Undergraduate Writing, we have accomplished the goal of exploring several options.

Since ad hoc committees are meant to be temporary, we think it is time to bring this committee's work to a close.

1. **We recommend that the Senate Executive Committee accept the Ad Hoc Writing committee's report and distribute it to the Senate for information.** At that point, the Ad Hoc Writing Committee's work concludes.

2. **We recommend the Senate Exec Committee ask for a Senate vote on whether or not to explore the feasibility of a writing portfolio as an alternative to the existing "W" course requirement.**
3. If the Senate agrees to explore the feasibility of a writing portfolio as an alternative to the existing "W" course requirement, then we recommend that the Senate form a new subcommittee to pursue pilots and implementation of the portfolio approach, and that this subcommittee will include one to two senior administrators to represent financial and operational administrative support of the project. The committee should include at least one member of the 2008-09 Ad Hoc Committee on Writing for continuity.

Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Undergraduate Writing, December 2007-January 2009

Valérie Lastinger, Chair, 2008-09
Sandy Baldwin
Laura Brady
Bojan Cukic
Keith Garbutt
Virginia Kleist
Martha Lake
Cy Logar
Mary Beth Mandich
Beth Nardella
Janet Snyder
Mary Stamatakis
Lisa Weihman
Cheryl Torsney, *ex officio*
APPENDIX: WRITING PORTFOLIO OPTION

FAQ FOR FACULTY (based on the Carlton model)

Proposed Undergraduate Catalog Description: “The portfolio would total 20-30 pages of polished, revised writing, comprised of 3-5 papers from WVU classes (at least two in the major) and submitted by the end of the junior year. Students would be in charge of choosing the writing they want faculty to evaluate (based on their written work at WVU), and would introduce their choices with a reflection on their experience as college writers. This 2-3 page reflective essay asks students to make a persuasive argument that the pieces in the portfolio document their abilities as writers in a major.”

How does the Portfolio Option fulfill the “W” requirement? The Portfolio Option assumes that your students write in nearly every course on subjects and in forms that vary according to discipline, level of the course, and professors’ goals for each course. The portfolio gathers a broad range of a student’s writing. At the same time, it allows the student to select, emphasize, and present the writing in the manner that best represents the student’s abilities as a writer in the major.

What are the benefits for your students of the Portfolio Option? The Portfolio Option integrates writing with your student’s experience and expertise of writing in the major. The portfolio also acts as a credential. A completed portfolio can be used in applications for jobs, graduate studies, or other career pursuits. In this way, the Portfolio Option fulfills the intention of the Writing Requirement, as described in the WVU Undergraduate Catalog: “Students should attain proficiency in their major fields. This proficiency should enable them to be competitive in the job market or in admission to graduate or professional schools.”

What are the benefits for faculty of the Portfolio Option? The Portfolio Option requires students to take responsibility for building upper-division writing skills. They are in charge of selecting and presenting their writings. At the same time, by reviewing portfolios, faculty will gain a shared sense of the role of writing in their discipline and across the university. Since the student portfolios link writing directly to the discipline, faculty receive regular and direct feedback on how students learn disciplinary knowledge through writing.

How should your students prepare for the portfolio? The Portfolio Option fosters an awareness of writing as an integral activity throughout undergraduate education. Your students will be advised about the Portfolio Option upon electing a major, and will continue to be alerted to the requirements of the Portfolio Option until they prepare and submit their portfolio. College-wide help sessions and writing centers will provide concrete recommendations for preparing a successful portfolio.

What is the “reflective essay” included with the portfolio? Students use their reflective essay (the only new piece of writing required in the portfolio) to establish their voices, to lead their readers through their portfolios, and to make an argument. The reflective essay is an opportunity to prepare the reader with context for individual writings in the portfolio and with insight into the student’s development as a writer.

How do we guarantee the authenticity of student portfolios? Every paper in a portfolio is uniquely coded. The interaction between students and faculty required to complete the authentication form also gives students a chance to talk about the portfolio with their teacher. Finally, the authentication forms help ensure that each entry has been written by the student who is submitting that work for credit.

How will the portfolios be reviewed? Portfolios will be reviewed by a faculty review board representing the college or discipline. Members will be paid a stipend and serve as consultants to address questions from students or faculty in their college. Evaluative criteria will be based on characteristics common to most writing across the disciplines, with allowance for flexibility within disciplines. Criteria will be available to the students to keep in mind as they select portfolio work and write the reflective essay.

What happens if a student’s portfolio does not pass the review? Those who do not pass will complete a non-credit, one-semester-hour, writing tutorial in their major. Students may be asked to revise some or all of the material in the portfolio, or they may be asked to work with a teacher on new papers for the next term. Once students completed the extra work, their degree will show a “pass” for the “W” requirement.
DRAFT OF WRITING PORTFOLIO GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are currently in DRAFT form. They are meant to outline the students’ processes for developing their portfolio collection and the faculty members’ processes for evaluating the portfolios from their majors. We have based most of these guidelines on the Carleton College model (in place since 1999).

Number of Entries. Students would submit no fewer than three and no more than five papers or projects for their writing portfolio. This style of portfolio is called a “best works” portfolio because students choose what they deem to be their best work.

Total Length. The total number of double-spaced pages in the entire portfolio should not be fewer than 20 pages (5,000 words) nor more than 30 pages (7,500 words). Page totals do NOT include the reflective essay, title pages, bibliographies, or appendices.

Reflective Essay. Faculty readers would count on this essay to prepare them to read a student’s portfolio, so this essay would be an additional example of the student’s persuasive writing abilities. Students would use their reflective essays (the only new piece of writing required in the portfolio) to establish their voices, lead their readers through their portfolios, and make an argument. Students reference the other essays they have submitted to the portfolio as evidence to demonstrate convincingly their abilities as a writer within a specific discipline. The reflective essay would typically be two-to-three pages long (500-750 words).

Eligible Papers. Submissions may come from any WVU course for which students complete an appropriate writing assignment except for English 101, English 102, and English 103. (These courses already fulfill an initial writing requirement.) Students should try to include the assignment prompt in addition to the paper. Each submission should:

- Be at least 750 words in length (approximately 3 pages)
- Be consistent with the demands of the discipline for which it was written
- Connect ideas within and between paragraphs
- Demonstrate control of the conventions of standard written English

Authentication. Every paper in a portfolio is coded for the student’s ID, the course, term taken, instructor, and the original assignment to give the readers some context and to ensure that each entry has been written by the student who is submitting that work for credit.

Optional Revisions before Submission. Since all writers benefit from revision, students would be encouraged to revise course papers before including them in their portfolio (and to include drafts).

Submission/Registration Timeline. To encourage regular writing and awareness of writing, students should be advised of the portfolio requirement as soon as they select their major. To make consistent progress toward a strong portfolio, students should be encouraged to deposit their first submissions by the time they earn 75 credit hours (mid-way through the junior year). Students would register for Writing Portfolio Credit during the semester they intend to submit their portfolio for evaluation (typically the end of their junior year). If students have not registered and submitted a portfolio by the time they earn 88 credit hours, a registration hold would be placed on their records.

Submission and Evaluation Timeline. Portfolio deadlines for each semester are the Monday of the last week of classes for Fall and Spring semesters, and the second Monday in July for summer term. Fall semester portfolios would be scored between terms by faculty teams from each major or college, with pass/fail grades posted on STAR/BANNER before classes begin in January. Spring semester portfolios would be scored at the end of the semester, with pass/fail grades posted on STAR/BANNER in late June. Summer portfolios would be scored by faculty teams from each major in late July, with pass/fail grades posted on STAR/BANNER before the start of Fall term.
DRAFT OF EVALUATIVE CRITERIA FOR WRITING PORTFOLIOS

The following is a working draft of characteristics common to most writing across the disciplines. The criteria are meant to be general enough to allow for flexibility among subjects, forms, and disciplines while still emphasizing the most common rhetorical tasks that every student should be able to demonstrate before completion of an undergraduate degree.

Note: Some student papers are likely to exhibit several of these criteria, which is why as few as three papers may be sufficient to demonstrate proficiency.

These criteria would be available to the students so that they could keep these points in mind as they select the work they submit and as they write the reflective essay in which they explain their choices and demonstrate how the papers in their portfolio demonstrate these criteria.

1. Focus/Organization/Structure. Students should be able to demonstrate their ability to focus on a purpose, respond to the needs of different audiences, and use conventions of format, structure, and tone/formality appropriate to the rhetorical situation.

2. Analysis. Students should be able to demonstrate their ability to analyze or interpret (for example, numeric data, texts, performances, etc.).

3. Evidence. Students should be able to demonstrate their ability to find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize appropriate primary and secondary sources, and integrate their own ideas with those of others.

4. Conventions. Students should be able to demonstrate their knowledge of genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraphing to tone and mechanics. They should also be able to demonstrate appropriate means of documenting their work and be able to control such surface features as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

5. Revision. Students should be aware that it usually takes multiple drafts to create and complete a successful text and, thus, should be able to demonstrate their ability to develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proof-reading.

For more detail, please see the attached sample rubric.
## SAMPLE WRITING PORTFOLIO RUBRIC (DRAFT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus, Structure, and Organization (F/S/O)</th>
<th>Superior</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Needs Improvement</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• F/S/O revolves around themes threaded throughout the essay.</td>
<td>• F/S/O supports a common theme threaded throughout the essay.</td>
<td>• F/S/O reflects a theme, but is not fully developed or is unevenly developed (sometimes lacks focus or sense of purpose).</td>
<td>• F/S/O seems random or incomplete.</td>
<td>• F/S/O seems random or incomplete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Essay is developed to advance the analysis or thesis.</td>
<td>• Essay is developed with evidence to support analysis.</td>
<td>• Demonstrates less audience awareness.</td>
<td>• Does not organize ideas.</td>
<td>• Does not organize ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Organization and structure are purposeful, demonstrate audience awareness.</td>
<td>• Demonstrates audience awareness.</td>
<td>Structure may be formulaic or unsophisticated (e.g., stilted topic sentences that repeat ideas).</td>
<td>• Conveys little or no focus or sense of purpose and audience.</td>
<td>• Conveys little or no focus or sense of purpose and audience.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Links ideas with smooth and effective transitions.</td>
<td>• For the most part, effectively links ideas, but transitions may occasionally be unclear or ineffective.</td>
<td>• Links some ideas, but transitions are often missing or unclear.</td>
<td>• For the most part, does not structure or order paragraphs.</td>
<td>• For the most part, does not structure or order paragraphs.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Analysis or Interpretation</th>
<th>Analysis is engaging and goes beyond the ordinary or obvious.</th>
<th>The analysis summarizes the work to the extent needed to clarify main points but does not retell the work.</th>
<th>A competent summary, but little analysis.</th>
<th>Virtually no analysis</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Demonstrates depth and complexity and shows that the writer has used writing to think through issues.</td>
<td>• Analysis is thorough and shows that the writer has tried to engage significant issues.</td>
<td>• Analysis that is present needs to be developed more fully.</td>
<td>• There may be an overly-detailed summary or the writer may fail to summarize as needed to explain points.</td>
<td>• May miss the purpose of the assignment entirely</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Deepens the reader’s understanding of the work or related works.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Thorough evidence from all sources required by course/assignments.</th>
<th>Evidence from all sources required by course/assignment.</th>
<th>Missing some evidence to support and/or illustrate writer’s analysis.</th>
<th>Virtually no evidence provided.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Incorporates evidence purposefully, and acknowledges the original context.</td>
<td>• Evidence generally acknowledges original context, and supports and/or illustrates writer’s analysis.</td>
<td>• May not fully acknowledge original context.</td>
<td>• Evidence may be used inappropriately or out of context.</td>
<td>• Evidence may be used inappropriately or out of context.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Evidence is detailed and vividly supports and/or illustrates the writer’s analysis.</td>
<td>• Writer considers key terms, ideas, and contexts, although a few points could be developed more fully.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The writer defines and explains key terms, ideas, and contexts.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Conventions (of standard written English, documentation)</th>
<th>Makes virtually no grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors.</th>
<th>Makes only a few grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors; these are not distracting to the reader.</th>
<th>Makes occasional grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors that are distracting to the reader.</th>
<th>Makes frequent grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors that are distracting to the reader.</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Consistently uses correct citation format to document references and sources</td>
<td>• Identifies and documents most sources appropriately</td>
<td>• Sometimes uses incorrect citation format to document references and sources</td>
<td>• Sometimes uses incorrect citation format to document references and sources</td>
<td>• Sometimes uses incorrect citation format to document references and sources</td>
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<tr>
<th>Revision</th>
<th>Changes attend to substance as well as surface details.</th>
<th>Revisions serve to develop ideas.</th>
<th>Superficial editing corrects punctuation or spelling, but there are few changes to substance.</th>
<th>No evidence of revision to develop ideas, respond to audience needs, or to correct problems.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Revisions develop ideas and evidence; respond more fully to the rhetorical situation.</td>
<td>• Revisions are appropriate; minor errors are not distracting to the reader.</td>
<td>• Demonstrates little effort to develop ideas or evidence for a specific audience and purpose.</td>
<td>• Format conventions continue to be inappropriate, incorrect, or missing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Consistently uses format conventions appropriate to assignment, audience, and purpose.</td>
<td>• Writer attends to editing details; any remaining errors are minor.</td>
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<td>• Writer attends to editing details and polishes writing conventions.</td>
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