

EMORY UNIVERSITY
2015-2017 Assessment Report for Educational Programs
Assessment Period Covered: September 1, 2015-August 31, 2017

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| Program: First-Year Writing | Date Submitted: October 2, 2017 |
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INTRODUCTION

Emory College has three courses that fulfill the undergraduate first-year writing requirement (FWRT). Forty-five to fifty sections of the following courses are offered each academic year, with roughly half of the sections being offered in each semester.

1. *ENG 101 Expository Writing*—Intensive writing course that trains students in expository writing through a number of variable topics.
2. *ENG 181 Writing about Literature*—Intensive writing course that trains students in techniques of writing and literary analysis through writing about literature.
3. *CPLT 110 Introduction to Literary Studies*—An introduction to literary studies, combined with an intensive writing approach. From the broad perspective of world literature, consideration of topics such as desire, language, and identity.

During the past two academic years, graduate teaching associates (GTAs) from the English PhD program have taught 42% (32 out of 77) of the sections of ENG 101 and 181, with the rest taught by instructors, lecturers, and tenure-track faculty in English. Each academic year, between four and seven sections of ENG 101 are taught with an ESL designator by academic staff from the ESL Program in the Office of Undergraduate Education. CPLT 110 is taught exclusively by GTAs from the Comparative Literature PhD program. Specifics of semesterly teaching assignments, course enrollments, and assessment data collection appear in Appendix A.

Two years ago, the First-Year Writing Program commenced a proof-of-process attempt to score and assess the writing portfolios of undergraduates, as well as to determine which types of direct and indirect measures might best support assessment of the First-Year Writing Program outcomes. The first portion of this proof-of-process attempt was a pre-pilot (2014-2015) involving three full-time instructors who taught a total of seven sections of ENG 101. All three instructors had prior experience teaching FWRT, but had varied experience using portfolios and reflection.

For the past two years (AY 2015-2016 and 2016-2017), the Writing Program has conducted assessment using a modified version of the process employed during the pre-pilot (detailed in “Methods” below). Our student learning outcomes are adapted directly from those developed and endorsed by the Council of Writing Program Administrators, our national professional organization (<http://wpacouncil.org/positions/outcomes.html>).

I. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

For undergraduate learning

Outcome 1: Rhetorical Composition. Students compose texts in multiple genres, using multiple modes with attention to rhetorical situations.

Through composing a variety of texts and using a number of composing technologies, students demonstrate an understanding of audience, purpose, and constraints. They use and adapt generic conventions, including organization, development, and style.

Outcome 2: Critical Thinking and Reading Resulting in Writing. As they undertake scholarly inquiry and produce their own arguments, students summarize, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the ideas of others.

Students may encounter the ideas of others in a variety of texts generated both inside and outside the classroom: print, visual, aural, oral, spatial. Students learn accepted and ethical ways to integrate other texts into their work, rightly handling citation and adaptation. Students use writing as a critical thinking tool.

Outcome 3: Writing as Process. Students understand and practice writing as a process, recursively implementing strategies of research, drafting, revision, editing, and reflection.

In learning about their own writing process and doing guided reflective writing about that process, students learn to critique their own and others' works. They also become aware that it usually takes multiple drafts to create and complete a successful text.

For graduate-student pedagogy

This outcome is closely related to a learning outcome developed in 2013 for the English PhD program. Its inclusion in our assessment springs from our tight integration with that program and with the Comparative Literature PhD program for the purpose of teacher training.

Outcome 4: Graduate teaching associates (GTAs) reflectively design and teach courses in first-year writing that are informed by current scholarship in rhetoric and composition and professional standards.

Through training in required courses in theory and practice, GTAs design and revise multiple times two different courses under the mentorship of a specialist in rhetoric and composition. Mentoring continues with syllabus reviews, classroom visits, and pedagogy sessions during the year of their teaching.

II. ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

A. Methods

Undergraduate Learning: Direct Measures

While writing assessment has often been conducted via essay-testing and timed writings, programs have discovered many problems with these assessment practices (White & Wright, 2015), such as:

- Problems with validity that arise from assessing with a single impromptu writing sample.
- Absence of opportunities for reflection and revision.
- Absence of context or audience for writing.
- Culturally insensitive, banal, or otherwise inappropriate writing prompts. (pp. 128-129)

Portfolios, which involve multiple pieces of each student's writing from the entire course, may resolve many of these issues. Furthermore, the portfolio and reflection letter, as Reynolds and Davis (2014) note, "are the closest that most assessment practices come to a meaningful, authentic picture of what students have learned and how they have engaged in that learning" (p. 5). We envision the writing portfolio as the chief direct measure of student performance in the first-year writing program.

In the year prior to the period covered in this report, raters scored entire portfolios—which was complex and time-consuming, and created confusion for raters who were considering numerous artifacts while trying to assign overall scores. As a result of our experiences in this 2014-2015 pilot, we shifted our assessment to a "Phase-2 Method" for portfolio scoring (White and Wright, 2015). Phase-2 scoring is a process by which a program determines how well students enrolled in its courses are achieving learning goals. The Phase-2 approach requires that

- The program has a set of learning outcomes shared by faculty.
- Each student in the program composes a letter to portfolio readers (see Appendix B for the prompt we used across sections of first-year writing) arguing that she or he has achieved those outcomes.

Phase-2 assessment lessens the burden of reviewing a large number of portfolios by allowing the raters to assess reflective portfolio letters, rather than every artifact in the portfolio. The assessment effort "focuses on references in the [reflective] letter to work in the portfolio as evidence for the argument in the letter" (White, 2007, p. 181-182). Raters, then, use a rubric to evaluate the students' arguments about their learning, including how well they marshal evidence from their own work.

At the end of each academic year (2015-2016 and 2016-2017), we gathered raters together for 4 full days to score the reflection letters. Each day began with raters scoring sample portfolio letters followed by discussions about how they decided upon their scores. This activity served as a preamble to establishing common agreement about how to score similar cases in the portfolio letters over the day to come.

Raters scored each reflection letter across 14 benchmarks divided among the 3 learning outcomes:

- 1A** effectively addresses multiple genres/types of writing
- 1B** explicitly addresses course/program learning outcomes
- 1C** discusses his or her attention to audience in the portfolio artifacts
- 1D** employs appropriate organizational strategies
- 1E** explicitly addresses organizational choices in the artifacts it discusses
- 2A** utilizes an effective controlling idea/argument/thesis
- 2B** forwards thoughtful claims and analysis regarding his/her own writing
- 2C** supports claims with sufficient evidence
- 2D** contextualizes evidence appropriately through the use of “quote sandwiches” or framing and analysis
- 2E** illustrates how the course subject/theme influences their writing/thinking
- 3A** articulates his or her own writing process
- 3B** analyzes how revision improved individual artifacts in the portfolio
- 3C** is clean, grammatical, and readable
- 3D** conveys writerly ethos (the reader feels a measure of trust for the writer)

Each benchmark received a score of 0 for “does not meet expectations,” 1 for “meets expectations,” or 2 for “exceeds expectations.” Raters were encouraged not to be generous in their scoring and to see these scoring sessions as different from grading students in their classes, where they might “read between the lines” or weigh mitigating factors into their scores and give students the benefit of the doubt.

Undergraduate Learning: Indirect Measures

In our initial report from the 2014-2015 pilot, we assessed whether students in **both pre-pilot and non-pre-pilot FWRT courses** believed they made progress in the areas of process and critical thinking, reading, and composition. We did this by using Questions 19 and 20 from the standard Emory Course and Instructor Evaluation Form administered to students in all first-year courses. We used the same two questions for the current assessment period:

- *Question 19: “Being able to assess or critique ideas and arguments.”*
- *Question 20: “Being able to integrate and synthesize information.”*

Furthermore, three questions were added to the evaluation packets:

- I feel more confident in my ability to incorporate the ideas of others in my writing than I did at the beginning of the semester.

| No change | Some | Mostly | Yes |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- Because of this class, I understand my own writing process better.

| No change | Some | Mostly | Yes |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- What have you learned in this class that you believe will help you tackle future writing projects? (open-ended)

Graduate Pedagogy: Direct Measures

As indicated in the Introduction, many sections of FWRT are taught by GTAs. Much of the assessment conducted during the pre-pilot (AY: 2014-2015) was formative and included only seven FWRT sections taught by three full-time faculty instructors, not GTAs.

Since the pilot, assessment has involved FWRT sections taught by GTAs. Writing-Program faculty mentor GTAs as the GTAs develop their composition pedagogy. These mentoring activities include:

- Reviewing and commenting on each syllabus to ensure it includes learning outcomes derived from the CWPA Outcomes Statement and fulfills the requirements forwarded in the syllabus and assignment-sheet checklists (see Appendix C for checklists).
- Observing and providing feedback for at least one class period taught by each GTA (see Appendix D for example of completed feedback form).

B. Results

This section contains the results of our assessment work. Please note a slight difference in the way we have handled the data for Undergraduate Learning and Graduate Pedagogy: for Undergraduate Learning, we address how we are using assessment results to improve the first-year writing program in the “Analysis” section that follows this “Results” section. For Graduate Pedagogy, we have addressed the use of assessment results to improve the program in the tables where we summarized results.

UNDERGRADUATE LEARNING (OUTCOMES 1-3)

Method of Assessment:

Final portfolio reflection with two required prompts (the first of which appears below):

“Describe the assignments you composed in this course that allowed you to practice the skill of writing for an audience. Make sure to discuss what you learned in those assignments. Also, consider the challenges of writing to different audiences and how you managed those challenges.”

Response to prompt will show evidence that the student writer understands and articulates the different genres and/or literacies in his/her portfolio.

The table below summarizes scoring results across *all* four semesters (Fall 2015 – Spring 2017). A total of n=1,078 portfolios were scored. Detailed scoring results from each semester, as well as a report of performance on indirect measures, appear below. As a reminder, a score of 0 indicates “does not meet expectations,” 1 indicates “meets expectations,” or 2 indicates “exceeds expectations.”

| Method of Assessment | Mean \pm SD | Median | Mode |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1A | .78 + .48 | 1 | 1 |
| 1B | .58 + .55 | .5 | 0 |
| 1C | .59 + .55 | .5 | 0 |
| 1D | .77 + .41 | 1 | 1 |
| 1E | .52 + .48 | .5 | 0 |
| 2A | .70 + .44 | 1 | 1 |
| 2B | .87 + .44 | 1 | 1 |
| 2C | .76 + .51 | 1 | 1 |
| 2D | .54 + .53 | .5 | 0 |
| 2E | .71 + .53 | 1 | 1 |
| 3A | .79 + .47 | 1 | 1 |
| 3B | .62 + .55 | .5 | 0 |
| 3C | .98 + .29 | 1 | 1 |
| 3D | .90 + .47 | 1 | 1 |

Outcome 1: Rhetorical Composition

Direct Measures

The following tables show detailed results for each of the four semesters. Possible scores include “0” does not meet expectations, “1” meets expectations, “2” exceeds expectations.

Method of Assessment: 1A

Portfolio Assessment Rubric: Learning Outcome 1A Under *Rhetorical Composition*—“Effectively addresses multiple genres/types of writing.”

Benchmark goal of 1 or above, where 1 is “meets expectations.”

| Term | N | Mean \pm SD | Median | Mode |
|-------------|-----|---------------|--------|------|
| Fall 2015 | 256 | .80 \pm .52 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2016 | 339 | .90 \pm .45 | 1 | 1 |
| Fall 2016 | 237 | .76 \pm .47 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2017 | 246 | .60 \pm .44 | .5 | 1 |

Method of Assessment: 1B

Portfolio Assessment Rubric: Learning Outcome 1B Under *Rhetorical Composition*—“Explicitly addresses course/program learning outcomes.”

Benchmark goal of 1 or above, where 1 is “meets expectations.”

| Term | N | Mean \pm SD | Median | Mode |
|-------------|-----|---------------|--------|------|
| Fall 2015 | 256 | .70 \pm .56 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2016 | 339 | .71 \pm .55 | 1 | 1 |
| Fall 2016 | 237 | .52 \pm .54 | .5 | 0 |
| Spring 2017 | 246 | .33 \pm .45 | 0 | 0 |

Method of Assessment: 1C

Portfolio Assessment Rubric: Learning Outcome 1C Under *Rhetorical Composition*—"Discusses his or her attention to audience in the portfolio artifacts."

Benchmark goal of 1 or above, where 1 is "meets expectations."

| Term | N | Mean \pm SD | Median | Mode |
|-------------|-----|---------------|--------|------|
| Fall 2015 | 256 | .62 \pm .57 | .5 | 0 |
| Spring 2016 | 339 | .64 \pm .55 | .5 | 1 |
| Fall 2016 | 237 | .61 \pm .55 | .5 | 0 |
| Spring 2017 | 246 | .47 \pm .49 | .5 | 0 |

Method of Assessment: 1D

Portfolio Assessment Rubric: Learning Outcome 1D Under *Rhetorical Composition*—"Employs appropriate organizational strategies."

Benchmark goal of 1 or above, where 1 is "meets expectations."

| Term | N | Mean \pm SD | Median | Mode |
|-------------|-----|---------------|--------|------|
| Fall 2015 | 256 | .82 \pm .45 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2016 | 339 | .77 \pm .41 | 1 | 1 |
| Fall 2016 | 237 | .77 \pm .41 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2017 | 246 | .75 \pm .37 | 1 | 1 |

Method of Assessment: 1E

Portfolio Assessment Rubric: Learning Outcome 1D Under *Rhetorical Composition*—"Explicitly addresses organizational choices in the artifacts it discusses."

Benchmark goal of 1 or above, where 1 is "meets expectations."

| Term | N | Mean \pm SD | Median | Mode |
|-------------|-----|---------------|--------|------|
| Fall 2015 | 256 | .62 \pm .51 | .5 | .5 |
| Spring 2016 | 339 | .55 \pm .51 | .5 | 0 |
| Fall 2016 | 237 | .42 \pm .44 | .5 | 0 |
| Spring 2017 | 246 | .45 \pm .41 | .5 | .5 |

Outcome 2: Critical Thinking and Reading Resulting in Writing

Direct Measures

Method of Assessment: 2A

Portfolio Assessment Rubric: Learning Outcome 2B Under *Critical Thinking and Reading Resulting in Writing*—“Utilizes an effective controlling idea/argument/thesis.”

Benchmark goal of 1 or above, where 1 is “meets expectations.”

| Term | N | Mean \pm SD | Median | Mode |
|--------------------|----------|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Fall 2015 | 256 | .66 \pm .50 | .5 | 1 |
| Spring 2016 | 339 | .68 \pm .45 | 1 | 1 |
| Fall 2016 | 237 | .71 \pm .44 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2017 | 246 | .74 \pm .36 | 1 | 1 |

Method of Assessment: 2B

Portfolio Assessment Rubric: Learning Outcome 2B Under *Critical Thinking and Reading Resulting in Writing*—“Forwards thoughtful claims and analysis regarding his/her own writing.”

Benchmark goal of 1 or above, where 1 is “meets expectations.”

| Term | N | Mean \pm SD | Median | Mode |
|--------------------|----------|---------------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Fall 2015 | 256 | .85 \pm .51 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2016 | 339 | .94 \pm .43 | 1 | 1 |
| Fall 2016 | 237 | .88 \pm .42 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2017 | 246 | .79 \pm .37 | 1 | 1 |

Method of Assessment: 2C

Portfolio Assessment Rubric: Learning Outcome 2C Under *Critical Thinking and Reading Resulting in Writing*—"Supports claims with sufficient evidence."

Benchmark goal of 1 or above, where 1 is "meets expectations."

| Term | N | Mean \pm SD | Median | Mode |
|-------------|-----|---------------|--------|------|
| Fall 2015 | 256 | .80 \pm .58 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2016 | 339 | .83 \pm .50 | 1 | 1 |
| Fall 2016 | 237 | .72 \pm .47 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2017 | 246 | .60 \pm .43 | .5 | 1 |

Method of Assessment: 2D

Portfolio Assessment Rubric: Learning Outcome 2D Under *Critical Thinking and Reading Resulting in Writing*—"Contextualizes evidence appropriately through the use of "quote sandwiches" or framing and analysis."

Benchmark goal of 1 or above, where 1 is "meets expectations."

| Term | N | Mean \pm SD | Median | Mode |
|-------------|-----|---------------|--------|------|
| Fall 2015 | 256 | .63 \pm .59 | .5 | 0 |
| Spring 2016 | 339 | .62 \pm .55 | .5 | 0 |
| Fall 2016 | 237 | .47 \pm .47 | .5 | 0 |
| Spring 2017 | 246 | .43 \pm .45 | .5 | 0 |

Method of Assessment: 2E

Portfolio Assessment Rubric: Learning Outcome 2E Under *Critical Thinking and Reading Resulting in Writing*—"Illustrates how the course subject/theme influences their writing/thinking."

Benchmark goal of 1 or above, where 1 is "meets expectations."

| Term | N | Mean \pm SD | Median | Mode |
|-------------|-----|---------------|--------|------|
| Fall 2015 | 256 | .84 \pm .51 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2016 | 339 | .77 \pm .52 | 1 | 1 |
| Fall 2016 | 237 | .80 \pm .57 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2017 | 246 | .54 \pm .48 | .5 | 0 |

OUTCOME 2: Critical Thinking and Reading Resulting in Writing
Indirect Measures

Emory Course and Instructor Evaluation Form—Questions 19 and 20

| Method of Assessment: Question 19: “Being able to assess or critique ideas and arguments.” | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Achievement Target: Mean response of 7 or higher. | | | |
| Summary of Assessment Results: Averages of response | | | |
| Semester | Surpassed/ Fell short | Average | Margin |
| Fall 2015 | Surpassed | 8.18 | 1.18 |
| Spring 2016 | Surpassed | 8.01 | 1.01 |
| Fall 2016 | Surpassed | 8.15 | 1.15 |
| Spring 2017 | Surpassed | 8.19 | 1.19 |

| Method of Assessment: Question 20: “Being able to integrate and synthesize information.” | | | |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Achievement Target: Mean response of 7 or higher. | | | |
| Summary of Assessment Results: Averages of response | | | |
| Semester | Surpassed/ Fell short | Average | Margin |
| Fall 2015 | Surpassed | 8.14 | 1.14 |
| Spring 2016 | Surpassed | 7.96 | 0.96 |
| Fall 2016 | Surpassed | 8.09 | 1.09 |
| Spring 2017 | Surpassed | 8.13 | 1.13 |

Outcome 3: Writing as Process

Direct Measures

Method of Assessment: 3A

Portfolio Assessment Rubric: Learning Outcome 3A Under *Writing as Process*—"Articulates his or her own writing process."

Benchmark goal of 1 or above, where 1 is "meets expectations."

| Term | N | Mean \pm SD | Median | Mode |
|-------------|-----|---------------|--------|------|
| Fall 2015 | 256 | .84 \pm .50 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2016 | 339 | .81 \pm .48 | 1 | 1 |
| Fall 2016 | 237 | .80 \pm .45 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2017 | 246 | .70 \pm .42 | 1 | 1 |

Method of Assessment: 3B

Portfolio Assessment Rubric: Learning Outcome 3B Under *Writing as Process*—"Analyzes how revision improved individual artifacts in the portfolio."

Benchmark goal of 1 or above, where 1 is "meets expectations."

| Term | N | Mean \pm SD | Median | Mode |
|-------------|-----|---------------|--------|------|
| Fall 2015 | 256 | .73 \pm .61 | .5 | 1 |
| Spring 2016 | 339 | .65 \pm .57 | .5 | 0 |
| Fall 2016 | 237 | .59 \pm .50 | .5 | 1 |
| Spring 2017 | 246 | .47 \pm .45 | .5 | 0 |

Method of Assessment: 3C

Portfolio Assessment Rubric: Learning Outcome 3C Under *Writing as Process*—"Is clean, grammatical, and readable."

Benchmark goal of 1 or above, where 1 is "meets expectations."

| Term | N | Mean \pm SD | Median | Mode |
|-------------|-----|----------------|--------|------|
| Fall 2015 | 256 | 1.03 \pm .36 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2016 | 339 | 1.01 \pm .27 | 1 | 1 |
| Fall 2016 | 237 | .93 \pm .28 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2017 | 246 | .94 \pm .21 | 1 | 1 |

Method of Assessment: 3D

Portfolio Assessment Rubric: Learning Outcome 3D Under *Writing as Process*—"Conveys writerly ethos (the reader feels a measure of trust for the writer)."

Benchmark goal of 1 or above, where 1 is "meets expectations."

| Term | N | Mean \pm SD | Median | Mode |
|-------------|-----|---------------|--------|------|
| Fall 2015 | 256 | .95 \pm .50 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2016 | 339 | .96 \pm .46 | 1 | 1 |
| Fall 2016 | 237 | .84 \pm .49 | 1 | 1 |
| Spring 2017 | 246 | .81 \pm .38 | 1 | 1 |

Outcome 3: Writing as Process

Indirect Measures

Course Evaluation Outcomes

Method of Assessment:

English Department Course Evaluation for 101 & 181:

"I feel more confident in my ability to incorporate the ideas of others in my writing than I did at the beginning of the semester."

Summary of Assessment Results:

A total of n=1,178 students responded to this, with 86.6% (n=1,020) of students marking "Mostly" or "Yes". Scale from 1 to 4.

| Semester | Total N | No Change | Some | Mostly | Yes | Avg. |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|-------------|---------------|------------|-------------|
| Fall 2015 | n=244 | 4 (1%) | 24 (10%) | 76 (31%) | 139 (57%) | 3.44 |
| Spring 2016 | n=289 | 12 (4%) | 23 (8%) | 76 (26%) | 177 (61%) | 3.44 |
| Fall 2016 | n=363 | 14 (4%) | 27 (7%) | 90 (25%) | 231 (64%) | 3.53 |
| Spring 2017 | n=282 | 11 (4%) | 40 (14%) | 81 (29%) | 150 (53%) | 3.33 |

Method of Assessment:

English Department Course Evaluation for 101 & 181:

"Because of this class, I understand my own writing process better."

Summary of Assessment Results:

A total of n=1,178 students responded to this, with 87.0% (n=1,025) of students marking "Mostly" or "Yes". Scale from 1 to 4.

| Semester | Total N | No Change | Some | Mostly | Yes | Avg. |
|-----------------|----------------|------------------|-------------|---------------|------------|-------------|
| Fall 2015 | n=244 | 4 (1%) | 17 (7%) | 63 (26%) | 160 (66%) | 3.55 |
| Spring 2016 | n=289 | 13 (4%) | 26 (9%) | 67 (23%) | 183 (63%) | 3.45 |
| Fall 2016 | n=363 | 10 (3%) | 27 (7%) | 81 (22%) | 244 (67%) | 3.53 |
| Spring 2017 | n=282 | 14 (5%) | 41 (15%) | 65 (23%) | 162 (57%) | 3.33 |

Outcome 4: Graduate Pedagogy

Syllabus Checklist

Method of Assessment:

Graduate teaching associates (GTAs) will incorporate learning outcomes derived from the Council of Writing Program Administrators Outcomes Statement (CWPA OS) as well as adhere to guidelines set forth in the Writing Program's "Syllabus Checklist" in their first-year-writing syllabi.

Achievement Target:

During pre-semester reviews, syllabi for each GTA will include learning outcomes derived from CWPA OS as well as textual evidence that the GTA has attended to the following guidelines from the "Syllabus Checklist":

- A course description that seems accessible to first-year students
- A course description that covers both the reading and writing students will be doing in the course while **foregrounding the writing activities** (genres to be produced and modes in which students will work—i.e., written, oral, visual, electronic)
- Three to four major writing assignments
- At least 15 pages of polished prose (i.e., writing that's been reviewed and revised)
- Carefully considered reading load (more than 75-100 pages a week, every week, might be too much)
- Evidence that instructor has thought out how course texts will inform students' development as producers of their own texts

Summary of Assessment Results:

Every GTA incorporated outcomes derived from the CWPA OS for fall 2015, spring 2016, fall 2016, and spring 2017. Writing Program faculty provided formative feedback to students about checklist items, including requests for resubmission when a reviewer could not find textual evidence of one of the points listed above.

Use of Assessment Results to Improve Program:

Implementation of the CWPA OS is the first step in professionalizing as composition instructors English and Comparative Literature PhD students. The outcomes are a starting point for designing and teaching writing courses that enable undergraduates to articulate rhetorical vocabulary and practice writing in multiple genres for audiences inside and outside the university. The formative assessment provided to GTAs about their syllabus construction ensures that courses are accessible (i.e., not simply a graduate student teaching her/his dissertation topic) to first-year students and that they are framed as writing, rather than reading or "literature," courses.

Findings from the syllabus review process also help Writing-Program faculty adjust the pedagogical training provided in the Composition Practicum (CPLT 735/ENG 791). For example, during syllabus review, we discovered that a number of GTAs had disconnects between their adapted outcomes and the activities and assignments they had developed for their courses, sometimes assuming that students would know how to find and use sources before any explicit instruction in these areas had been scheduled. We provided feedback indicating as much and made sure to make careful scaffolding of assignments an area of emphasis in the Composition Practicum.

Outcome 4: Graduate Pedagogy, continued

GTA Classroom Observation

| |
|---|
| Method of Assessment: Writing program faculty conduct formative assessment on the classroom teaching of each GTA at least once per academic year. |
| Achievement Target: Writing Program faculty conduct one classroom observation for every GTA teaching in first-year program. |
| Summary of Assessment Results: Writing Program faculty conducted one and sometimes two or three classroom observations for each GTA teaching in the first-year program. Here are the numbers. Fall 2015 11 classroom observations Spring 2016 1 classroom observation Fall 2016 9 classroom observations Spring 2017 6 classroom observations Appendix D contains an example of the written feedback from observations conducted in Fall 2016. |
| Use of Assessment Results to Improve Program: Formative feedback on teaching, such as feedback on syllabus design, is a way of professionalizing GTAs and ensuring undergraduates have consistent and engaging experiences across first-year sections. Findings from the observation sessions also inform the pedagogical training received by GTAs and the creation of in-service workshops for current teachers in the first-year program. For example, after noting uncertainty about how best to structure in-class group work during two or three observations, Writing Program faculty created a workshop about effective ways to conduct group work as well as how to design and assess assignments that include a collaborative component. |

C. Analysis

The data we collected shows that we have made progress toward implementing and assessing our program outcomes, but that we still have much work to do. Switching to a Phase-2 method of assessment in many ways has simplified the process of scoring the portfolios, but it creates more need for students to practice reflective writing throughout the semester, before they craft their reflection letters, and amplifies the need for instructors to agree on precisely what needs to be included in the reflection letters. And because raters only awarded scores of 2 for “exceeds expectations” rarely and only for especially excellent work, as a functional matter scores all fall between 0 and 1. The median score for 9 of the 14 benchmarks is “meets expectations,” with 5 benchmarks receiving a median score of “below expectations.”

Outcome 1 (Rhetorical Composition) was the only outcome with a median score below 1 in multiple benchmarks, showing that this outcome needs the most attention in the year to come. The median score for benchmark 1B (“explicitly addresses course/program learning outcomes”) met expectations in 2015-2016, but then scores dropped noticeably in 2016-2017, coinciding with the implementation of the program’s key terms as part of the Teaching-for-Transfer model (see explanation of this model below). There seemed to have been some confusion for students, instructors, and raters about whether addressing key terms qualified as addressing the learning outcomes or not. Benchmark 1C (“discusses his or her attention to audience in the portfolio artifacts”) scored consistently low across both years. During the norming and debrief sessions, raters reported that students frequently mentioned that they had considered audience, but often didn’t go any further than this simple acknowledgment, which they considered to be insufficient. Based on discussions in the norming periods during each rating session, there was a lot of confusion for the raters between Benchmarks 1D (“employs appropriate organizational strategies”) and 1E (“explicitly addresses organizational choices in the artifacts”). For a complete discussion of inter-rater reliability, see Appendix E.

While the assessment showed that students generally were providing sufficient evidence to support their claims (Benchmark 2C), they did not effectively analyze and contextualize that evidence (Benchmark 2D). Raters reported that often the exhibits were simply dropped into the reflection letters without enough analysis from students.

Similar to Benchmark 1C above, raters reported that the most common reason for scoring a letter as failing to meet expectations in Benchmark 3B (“analyzes how revision improved individual artifacts in the portfolio”) was that students would merely claim that revision had improved their work without explicitly addressing how it had done so. Additional work is needed to provide students with the tools not merely to perform revision, but to name it and describe what they are doing, so that they can transfer those skills to future writing tasks.

The indirect measures of assessment all indicate that from the students’ perspective, FWRT classes are providing them with valuable writing skills that will transfer to classes they take later in their career at Emory. Students report that these classes help them to assess arguments and employ evidence and 87% of students across these courses indicate that they feel more confident working with evidence and understand their own writing process more fully.

As a result of our 2015-2017 portfolio assessment, then, we will

- Continue developing commonalities across the first-year-writing curriculum, including implementation of a modified version of the Teaching-for-Transfer (TFT) model forwarded by Yancey, Robertson, and Taczak (2014). This approach includes an early introduction of students to key terms from writing studies that can inform their practice of and reflection about writing. Our approach also includes a list of activities—directly related to our three learning outcomes—that should be taught/enacted in each first-year course. (See Appendix F for the list of key terms and activities.)
- Revise the reflection letter prompt that students respond to, in order to make it more clear for students what is necessary in their letters and also where they have more freedom to follow their own reflections.
- Revise the assessment rubrics to alleviate confusion among the raters and to reflect changes that have come to the portfolios (for example, with the introduction of key terms, as discussed in the analysis of Benchmark 1B above).
- Develop and conduct faculty-development workshops (or mentoring sessions) for individuals who will teach in the first-year program, but who have not received training in the graduate pedagogy sequence. These workshops will cover program learning outcomes, assignment development and assessment, portfolio teaching, and teaching for transfer.
- Rethink as a program the assessment rating day(s). Scoring portfolios requires concentration. We might be wise to spread the scoring out over more days with norming training occurring each day. White (1998) also suggests that a second norming session during a long day might be advantageous.

III. FACULTY INVOLVEMENT

Many hands and minds have helped us begin assessing the first-year program. All committees and working groups associated with first-year-writing assessment have and will continue to include graduate students, ESL-Program staff, Writing Program faculty, and other faculty who teach in the program. Our first assessment committee was formed during fall 2013, and it worked through spring 2014 to create the current learning outcomes (based upon the Council of [Writing Program Administrators Outcomes Statement](#)).

Fisher introduced the program learning outcomes to the graduate students taking the Composition Practicum (English 791) course in fall 2014 and provided a syllabus template built around the outcomes. These graduate-student instructors, in fall 2015 working for the first time as teachers of record, incorporated the program outcomes, a portfolio project, and a reflective letter into their courses. As of this writing, then, every first-year writing class is built around the program outcomes and reflective portfolio project.

Scorers for the four rating sessions described in the section “II. Assessment Summary” were current or future teachers in the program or program stakeholders, such as librarian Erin Mooney.

2015-2016 Scorers:

| | |
|---|---|
| Session 1 (April 2016) Jenny Bledsoe Ben Clary Josh Cohen Tina Colvin Alyssa Duck Dave Fisher Bellee Jones-Pierce Heather Julien Judith Levy Jon Loar Erin Mooney David Morgen Shan Mukhtar Katie Rawson Caroline Schwenz Rebekah Spera Sheila Tefft Joonna Trapp Sam VanHorn Brandon Wicks | Session 2 (May 2016) Jenny Bledsoe Daniel Bosch Ben Clary Alyssa Duck Shanna Early Dave Fisher Corey Goergen Heather Julien Jon Loar David Morgen Caroline Schwenz Rebekah Spera Sheila Tefft Brandon Wicks |
|---|---|

2016-2017 Scorers:

| | |
|---|---|
| Session 1 (May 2017) Emily Banks Jenny Bledsoe Tesla Cariani Josh Cohen Rachel Diamond Dave Fisher Wenwen Guo Emily Leithauser Judy Levy Erin Mooney David Morgen Shan Mukhtar Justin Shaw Sheila Tefft Joonna Trapp | Session 2 (May 2017) Levin Arnsperger Emily Banks Jenny Bledsoe Josh Cohen Rachel Diamond Madison Elkins Dave Fisher Wenwen Guo Connor Larsen Sophia Leonard Judy Levy Erin Mooney Shan Mukhtar Sam VanHorn |
|---|---|

IV. What learning outcomes will your program assess next year?

We will assess the same learning outcomes next year, though our assessment process will be modified as detailed in the “Analysis” section above.

One of the central findings of this assessment cycle is that we need to improve our consistency in assigning scores to the benchmarks we identify for each learning outcome. See Appendix E for analysis of inter-rater reliability. As we observe at the end of that appendix,

the data suggest that before we conclude our norming sessions, we would do well to ensure that raters come to a more obvious consensus about levels of performance in these areas. A first step toward stronger reliability scores and norming consensus consists of revising our rubric so that we as a program are clearer about how these constructs are formulated in student texts.

We have initiated this change: a committee of Writing-Program faculty, administrative staff, and graduate fellows met on September 25, 2017 to begin revising the rubric and reflection-letter prompt.

The committee has recommended creating three different documents to replace the current prompt (See Appendix B for current prompt):

1. A new prompt for writing the reflection letter which clearly describes baseline requirements for a successful letter.
2. A teacher-facing document for instructors which will assist them in treating the reflection letter as a traditional and significant writing assignment, scaffolded into the course in stages.
3. A student-facing document which will provide further definitions and instructions for them as they develop their portfolio letters.

The new prompt should

1. Direct students to think of the reflection letter as a roadmap to their portfolio and its content. The overview of the portfolio should describe the writing in broad and general terms so that assessors will understand its scope and purpose.
2. Direct students to address one writing exhibit in particular and how it changed over time with revision. This grounded, particular exercise should include an early and later example as part of the assertion
3. Encourage students to think about transfer of their learning by asking what they are taking from the course to other courses and/or future vocational choices. “How will your learning in this course help you address audiences--both immediate and future?”
4. Should address outcomes explicitly.

The prompt will also describe methods students should employ as they compose:

1. Drawing evidence from their own writing exhibits, using quote “sandwiches” and direct references which are contextualized by explanation and analysis.
2. Writing specifically about the most important “take-away” or achievement they perceive which is directly related to one of the outcomes. The new prompt will suggest that students use reflection on such an achievement as an organizing principle for the reflection letter.

Along with these changes, we will revise the rubric with an eye toward helping scorers to debate less about terminology and to more easily discern connections between the rubric and the portfolio letters they are rating.

2017-2018 Learning Outcomes

| |
|--|
| Outcome 1: Rhetorical Composition. Students compose texts in multiple genres, using multiple modes with attention to rhetorical situations. |
| Direct Measure: Portfolio assessment: Phase 2 rubric <i>New benchmarks being drafted</i> |

| |
|---|
| Outcome 2: Critical Thinking and Reading Resulting in Writing. As they undertake scholarly inquiry and produce their own arguments, students summarize, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the ideas of others. |
| Direct Measure: Portfolio assessment: Phase 2 rubric <i>New benchmarks being drafted</i> |
| Indirect Measure: Emory Course and Instructor Evaluation Form—Question 19: “Being able to assess or critique ideas and arguments.” |
| Indirect Measure: Emory Course and Instructor Evaluation Form—Question 20: “Being able to integrate and synthesize information.” |

Outcome 3: Writing as Process. Students understand and practice writing as a process, recursively implementing strategies of research, drafting, revision, editing, and reflection.

Direct Measure:

Portfolio assessment: Phase 2 rubric

New benchmarks being drafted

Indirect Measure:

English Department Course Evaluation for 101 & 181:

Answer to question,

“I feel more confident in my ability to incorporate the ideas of others in my writing than I did at the beginning of the semester.”

Indirect Measure:

English Department Course Evaluation for 101 & 181:

Answer to question,

“Because of this class, I understand my own writing process better.”

| | |
|--|--|
| Outcome 4: Graduate teaching associates (GTAs) reflectively design and teach courses in first-year writing that are informed by current scholarship in rhetoric and composition and professional standards. | |
| Direct Measure: Writing program faculty conduct formative assessment on the classroom teaching of each GTA at least once per academic year. | Achievement Target: Writing Program faculty conduct one classroom observation for every GTA teaching in first-year program. |
| Direct Measure: Graduate teaching associates (GTAs) will incorporate Emory first-year learning outcomes as well as adhere to guidelines set forth in the Writing Program's "Syllabus Checklist" in their first-year-writing syllabi. | Achievement Target: During pre-semester reviews, syllabi for each GTA will include learning outcomes derived from CWPA OS as well as textual evidence that the GTA has attended to the following guidelines from the "Syllabus Checklist." |
| Direct Measure: GTAs submit portfolios and reflections developed by each student to the Writing Program as part of the assessment process. | Achievement Target: Portfolio and reflection letter submitted for each first-year writing student. Goal is for the average portfolio score to 'meet expectations.' |

V. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices include supporting data and analysis.

Appendix A: Teaching assignments, enrollments, and data collection

Appendix B: Reflection-letter prompt

Appendix C: Syllabus checklist, assignment-sheet checklist, and syllabus-review rubric

Appendix D: Example of completed feedback form for classroom observation

Appendix E: Inter-rater reliability analysis

Appendix F: Key terms and shared activities

VI. REFERENCES

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Appendix A: Teaching assignments, enrollments, and data collection

Table A shows the number of sections of the three FWRT courses taught by people of different ranks.

Table A: Classes taught by GTAs, Instructors, Lecturers, and Tenure-Track Faculty

| | | Fall 2015 | Spring 2016 | Fall 2016 | Spring 2017 |
|-----------------|------------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
| ENG 101 | Total GTAs | 1 | 6 | 5 | 4 |
| | Total sections | 1 | 6 | 5 | 4 |
| | Total Instructors | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| | Total sections | 5 | 8 | 6 | 6 |
| | Total Lecturers | 2 | 4 | 3 | 0 |
| | Total sections | 3 | 6 | 5 | 0 |
| | Total TT Faculty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total sections | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | <i>Total ESL staff</i> | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| | Total sections | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| | | | | | |
| ENG 181 | Total GTAs | 6 | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| | Total sections | 6 | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| | Total Instructors | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | Total sections | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | Total Lecturers | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| | Total sections | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| | Total TT Faculty | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Total sections | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| CPLT 110 | Total GTAs | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| | Total sections | 3 | 0 | 0 | 4 |

Table B provides an overview of available FWRT sections, section caps, total capacity, total enrollment, and excess enrollment for the 2015-2017 assessment cycle. Enrollment is the number of students remaining in these classes after the deadline to withdraw with a W.

Table B: 2015-2017 First-Year Writing Sections, Caps, and Enrollment

| | Course | Sections | Cap | Capacity | Enrollment | Excess |
|------------------------|--------------|-----------|-----|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Fall 2015 | ENG 101 | 9 | 16 | 144 | 147 | 3 |
| | ENG 101 ESL | 4 | 12 | 48 | 49 | 1 |
| | ENG 181 | 6 | 16 | 96 | 93 | -3 |
| | CPLT 110 | 3 | 16 | 48 | 44 | -4 |
| | Total | 22 | | 336 | 333 | -3 |
| | | | | | | |
| Spring 2016 | ENG 101 | 19 | 16 | 304 | 345 | 41 |
| | ENG 101 ESL | 2 | 12 | 24 | 26 | 2 |
| | ENG 181 | 4 | 16 | 64 | 66 | 2 |
| | CPLT 110 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 25 | | 392 | 437 | 45 |
| Fall 2016 | ENG 101 | 16 | 16 | 256 | 249 | -7 |
| | ENG 101 ESL | 3 | 16 | 48 | 46 | -2 |
| | ENG 181 | 7 | 16 | 112 | 107 | -5 |
| | CPLT 110 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Total | 26 | | 416 | 402 | -14 |
| Spring 2017 | ENG 101 | 10 | 16 | 160 | 161 | 1 |
| | ENG 101 ESL | 2 | 16 | 32 | 32 | 0 |
| | ENG 181 | 6 | 16 | 96 | 89 | -7 |
| | CPLT 110 | 4 | 16 | 64 | 43 | -21 |
| | Total | 22 | | 352 | 325 | -27 |
| Total | | 95 | | 1496 | 1497 | 1 |

Table C details our data collection for both undergraduate-learning and graduate-pedagogy assessment.

Table C: 2015-2017 First-Year Writing Data Collection

| Undergraduate learning | Measure Type | Semester/Sections |
|---|--------------|--|
| Portfolio | Direct | Fall 2015 16 sections of FWRT Spring 2016 24 sections of FWRT Fall 2016 24 sections of FWRT Spring 2017 22 sections of FWRT |
| Course Evaluations (FWRT custom questions) | Indirect | Fall 2015 16 sections of FWRT Spring 2016 19 sections of FWRT Fall 2016 19 sections of FWRT Spring 2017 14 sections of FWRT |
| Course Evaluations (General questions 19 and 20) | Indirect | Fall 2015 All sections Spring 2016 All sections Fall 2016 All sections Spring 2017 All sections |
| Graduate pedagogy | Measure Type | Semester/Sections |
| Syllabus review | Direct | Fall 2015 10 graduate-student syllabi Spring 2016 7 graduate-student syllabi Fall 2016 8 graduate-student syllabi Spring 2017 12 graduate-student syllabi |
| Classroom observation | Direct | Fall 2015 11 classroom observations Spring 2016 1 classroom observations Fall 2016 9 classroom observations Spring 2017 6 classroom observations |

Appendix B: Reflection-letter prompt

Reflective Portfolio Letter

Develop a letter addressed to the Portfolio Assessment Committee that shows how you've achieved the learning outcomes for your first-year composition course. This letter should exhibit and discuss in detail concrete examples from your portfolio. You should write between 750 and 1250 words, not including the exhibits from your portfolio that you reference in the letter.

The Assessment Committee is composed of a number of first-year writing instructors as well as graduate students from across the university who serve as fellows in the Writing Program. Several of these individuals helped create the program learning outcomes and they are excited to see how students have achieved the outcomes.

Possible Approaches

Feel free to use first person and write a narrative of your experience, rather than writing an argumentative essay. You can document your learning for the committee by

- Telling a story in which exhibits from your portfolio play major roles.
- Exploring each piece of your writing process and the part it plays in producing a final product.
- Discussing your failures and how they turned into successes.
- Describing your successes and then discussing how you intend to improve in other areas needing further developing.

Artifacts as exhibits within the letter

Back up assertions you make about your learning by including exhibits from your portfolio. Depending on how your instructor has asked you to develop your portfolio, an exhibit might be

- A link to the part of a document that you discuss in your reflection letter.
- A screen capture with callouts.
- A screencast in which you show and talk about one or more artifacts.
- Quoted or block quoted material from an artifact.
- Reported or quoted feedback from others.
- A series of illustrations (or quotations) that show how a particular artifact or part of an artifact evolved.

In every case, you should embed your exhibit in a discussion about its significance for your learning.

Use the Learning Outcomes as Guides for Reflective Writing

The committee will be especially interested to see whether and how you've achieved the outcomes listed below. Keep that in mind as you write and try to apply the rhetorical vocabulary that makes up the outcomes in your reflection.

Outcome 1: Rhetorical Composition. Students compose texts in multiple genres, using multiple modes with attention to rhetorical situations.

Description: Through composing a variety of texts and using a number of composing technologies, students demonstrate understanding of audience, purpose, and constraints. They use and adapt generic conventions, including organization, development, and style.

Getting started: Describe your portfolio. Walk the reader/viewer through the works it contains. Describe how these projects allowed you to practice writing for an audience in various ways, emphasizing in your description organization and word choice. Discuss the genres in your portfolio and how those genres speak to the audiences and situations your assignment asked you to address. How many different genres are you including in your portfolio and why? What did you exclude and why?

Outcome 2: Critical Thinking and Reading Resulting in Writing. As they undertake scholarly inquiry and produce their own arguments, students summarize, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the ideas of others.

Description: Students may encounter the ideas of others in a variety of texts generated both inside and outside the classroom: print, visual, aural, oral, spatial. Students learn accepted and ethical ways to integrate other texts into their work, rightly handling citation and adaptation. Students use writing as a critical thinking tool.

Getting started: Think about what you have learned this semester in your development as a critical thinker and reader. What new realizations do you have about yourself as a person engaged in inquiry and scholarship? What projects in particular in your portfolio show your growing abilities to craft an argument, read other's arguments well, and incorporate and challenge ideas from other's writings. Explain one or two important choices you made in this project and how that work developed you as a critical thinker and reader.

Outcome 3: Writing as Process. Students understand and practice writing as a process, recursively implementing strategies of research, drafting, revision, editing, and reflection.

Description: In learning about their own writing process and doing guided reflective writing about that process, students learn to critique their own and others' works. They also become aware that it usually takes multiple drafts to create and complete a successful text.

Getting started: Consider describing the changes in one of the projects included in the portfolio from beginning to end. Did you use techniques that your instructor may have mentioned: outlining, word webs, response paragraphs, and blogging? Did informal kinds of writing find their way into the process such as emailing a professor about an idea, sketching out notes on a napkin at a coffee shop, or talking to a friend about your ideas? Ultimately, your writing process includes each step you take from the coffee shop napkin to an outline to a first draft and eventually, a final product.

Appendix C: Syllabus checklist, assignment-sheet checklist, and syllabus-review rubric



SYLLABUS CHECKLIST

Teacher's name _____ Date _____
 Course name & number _____

| | | Notes |
|--------------------------|--|-------|
| Course Description | <input type="checkbox"/> Seems accessible to first-year students <input type="checkbox"/> Covers both the reading and writing students will be doing in the course while foregrounding the writing activities (genres to be produced and modes in which students will work—i.e., written, oral, visual, electronic) | |
| Course Policies | Include: <input type="checkbox"/> Paraphrases or adaptations of the five major WPA outcomes <input type="checkbox"/> Course texts <input type="checkbox"/> Academic honesty <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance <input type="checkbox"/> Late work <input type="checkbox"/> Revision <input type="checkbox"/> Email/Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Personal electronics <input type="checkbox"/> Writing Center <input type="checkbox"/> Multilingual/ESL Tutoring <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Advising <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling Services <input type="checkbox"/> Domain of One's Own statement (if yours is a Domain course) | |
| Assignments and Schedule | Include: <input type="checkbox"/> Three to four major writing assignments <input type="checkbox"/> At least 15 pages of polished prose (i.e., writing that's been reviewed and revised) <input type="checkbox"/> Carefully considered reading load (more than 75-100 pages a week, every week, might be too much) <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence that instructor has thought out how course texts will inform students' development as producers of their own texts <input type="checkbox"/> Breakdown of assignments and weights (relative contributions to the final grade) <input type="checkbox"/> Grading description/general rubric (elaboration of characteristics instructor will consider when assigning grades). Grading description doesn't necessarily need to be a part of the syllabus if you're planning on creating some sort of scoring guide as a part of your assignment sequences. | |

ASSIGNMENT SHEET CHECKLIST

Teacher's name _____ Date _____
 Course name & number _____

| | | Notes |
|--------------------------------|--|-------|
| Purpose & Goals | <p>____ Description of genre or type of text to be produced, including mode(s) in which it is to be composed</p> <p>____ Goals for the assignment (Explain what students will learn from completing the assignment and how this learning articulates with course outcomes.)</p> <p>____ Assignment steps and products to be created as part of these steps Two examples: 1. proposal→annotated bibliography→rough draft→revised draft→oral presentation→reflection 2. story treatment→script→shot list→edited video→reflection</p> <p>____ Due date for the assignment (if not specified on syllabus)</p> | |
| Audience | <p>____ Description of the kinds of audiences appropriate for the assignment</p> <p>You might avoid having students create their own audience with no guidance. You might also refrain from positing the instructor as the audience for every paper.</p> | |
| Format, Style, & Documentation | <p>____ Number and kinds of sources required</p> <p>____ Suggested databases or research strategies for students</p> <p>____ Recommended length of the final draft (number of words, pages, slides, minutes of audio/video/oral presentation time)</p> <p>____ Required documentation style (MLA, APA, Creative-Commons Attribution, other)</p> <p>Especially for alphabetic texts, the following elements are often specified as part of the documentation style. If you have expectations other than those dictated by the published style guide, you might include them in the assignment sheet.</p> <p>____ Whether such things as title page, references page, appendices are expected</p> <p>____ Format for title pages, headers, references pages</p> <p>____ Directions for spacing, type and font, margins, headings, indentation, title pages</p> | |
| Evaluation Criteria | <p>The following elements may appear on your syllabus. If one or more of them does, you don't need to include on your assignment sheet.</p> <p>____ Point value for the assignment and how that fits as part of the total grade for the semester</p> <p>____ Specific explanations of how students can successfully meet your criteria</p> <p>____ Stages at which feedback will occur (e.g., feedback on proposal, peer review)</p> | |

Formative Syllabus Review Rubric

Syllabus Feedback Teacher

| Criteria | Feedback |
|---|----------|
| Syllabus includes required sections from syllabus template, adapted for teacher's plan for running the course. | |
| Syllabus includes Emory FYW learning outcomes along with at least one writing-oriented outcome related to the course theme. | |
| Key terms effectively integrated into course through initial readings and one assignment (besides final portfolio reflection; can be low-stakes) in which students define terms and write about relationships among them, use them to analyze a piece of writing, or use them to discuss their prior experiences with writing. | |
| Students practice framing and/or reflection in conjunction with each high-stakes assignment. Reflection activities necessitate use of key terms and concrete evidence from student's work. | |
| Students asked to produce writing that evidences participation in a conversation, scholarly or otherwise. Evidence of conversation might include using the lexicon of a particular discourse community, writing a "wild" genre that characterizes work in a particular field, developing a claim related to a line of inquiry prompted by close reading (analysis), or adeptly placing multiple sources in dialog with one another (synthesis). | |
| Students asked to communicate via voice, visual, and gesture in ways that inform and are informed by their writing. | |
| Students produce a portfolio and a reflection letter in which they argue—using concrete evidence from their work—that they have achieved course learning outcomes. | |
| As students engage in the activities listed above they are presented with explicit instruction and opportunities to practice | |
| Summary, paraphrase, and quotation | |
| Synthesis, analysis, and evaluation | |
| Developing, finding, and vetting evidence/sources. | |
| Substantive revision. | |

Appendix D: Example of completed feedback from classroom observation

Formative Observation Form

Rev. 10/15/2015

Teacher Name

Course Number ENG 101
 ENG 181
 CPLT 110

Date of Observation

Course Name

Pre-Lesson

Objectives for the lesson (What will the students know or be able to do by the end of the lesson?)

Teaching strategies (What methods will you use to help the learners reach these objectives?)

Lesson

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Preparation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides evidence of planning |
| | |
| Framing | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Articulates the connections between the lesson and the course or assignment learning outcomes• Introduces the material, idea, technique, or strategy students should learn during the class session• Forecasts the major “movements” or activities that comprise the day’s lesson• Summarizes or debriefs at the conclusion of the lesson, explicitly relating lesson to current assignment and/or course learning outcomes |
| | |

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Teaching Strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides application and concrete exercises involving writing, reading, speaking, and listening • Activates prior knowledge • Paces learning appropriately • Transitions smoothly from one part of lesson to next by explaining how parts are related • Encourages students to work collaboratively • Monitors learner understanding and comments on student progress • Offers feedback and response that is both helpful and supportive |
| | |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates awareness of different learning styles • Communicates subject with competence and confidence • Uses written/aural/visual/electronic/non-verbal communication effectively • Ensures legibility, audibility, and appropriate (universal) design of all materials and media in the classroom |
| | |

Formative Summary

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

Appendix E: Inter-rater reliability analysis

Stemler (2004) notes that establishing the degree of reliability among raters (inter-rater reliability) via one or more consensus estimates, consistency estimates, or measurement estimates has important implications for the validity of study results. If judges cannot be shown to consistently score observed behavior, subsequent analyses of the ratings given by those judges yield spurious results (para. 2). White, Elliot, and Peckham (2015) provide guidance about how to interpret consistency measures for writing program assessment. Table 1 contains their suggestions for modeling inter-rater agreement for portfolios using a common measure of consistency: weighted Cohen's kappa. In this table and in the context of portfolio scoring, "adjudication" relates to rater consensus: A common practice during portfolio scoring is for an artifact to be given a third score when scores assigned by two independent raters differ by a predetermined number of points. The scores reported in the body of this report were adjudicated. However, the scores analyzed below were unadjudicated (pre-adjudication) scores given by two raters randomly assigned to each project.

Table 1: Hypothetical strength of inter-rater reliability agreement for ePortfolios

| Range of scores | Nonadjudicated Weighted Kappa |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| ePortfolio Scoring | |
| High | .46 to .69 |
| Medium | .23 to .45 |
| Low | .1 to .22 |

Source: White, E. M., Elliot, N., & Peckham, I. (2015). *Very Like a Whale: The Assessment of Writing Programs* (1 edition). Logan: Utah State University Press.

Table 2 includes measures of inter-rater agreement among Emory portfolio raters for the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 academic years. The **consensus estimates** reflect one of three categories: “exact” when raters agreed on the same score; “adjacent” when raters differed by one point (either more or less than the other rater’s score); and then scores that differ by two points. The table also provides **consistency estimates** represented by the weighted Cohen’s kappa for each benchmark.

Table 2: Consensus and consistency estimates, 2015-2016 and 2016-2017

| | | Consensus Estimates | | | Consistency Estimate |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| | | Exact (%) | Adjacent (%) | Differ by 2 (%) | Nonadjudicated Weighted Kappa |
| 1A effectively addresses multiple genres/types of writing | 2015-2016 (n=521) | 60 | 37 | 3 | .218** |
| | 2016-2017 (n=407) | 54 | 44 | 2 | .136** |
| 1B explicitly addresses course/program learning outcomes | | 64 | 35 | 1 | .425** |
| | | 71 | 28 | 1 | .44** |
| 1C discusses his or her attention to audience in the portfolio artifacts | | 57 | 40 | 3 | .33** |
| | | 57 | 41 | 2 | .263** |
| 1D employs appropriate organizational strategies | | 63 | 36 | 1 | .218** |
| | | 66 | 34 | 0 | .163** |
| 1E explicitly addresses organizational choices in the artifacts it discusses | | 55 | 41 | 4 | .228** |
| | | 55 | 43 | 2 | .076ns |

| | Consensus Estimates | | | Consistency Estimate |
|--|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| | Exact (%) | Adjacent (%) | Differ by 2 (%) | Nonadjudicated Weighted Kappa |
| 2A utilizes an effective controlling idea/argument/thesis | 62 | 36 | 2 | .263** |
| | 59 | 41 | 0 | .093* |
| 2B forwards thoughtful claims and analysis regarding his/her own writing | 60 | 38 | 2 | .227** |
| | 58 | 41 | 1 | .073ns |
| 2C supports claims with sufficient evidence | 61 | 38 | 1 | .334** |
| | 62 | 38 | 0 | .253** |
| 2D contextualizes evidence appropriately through the use of "quote sandwiches" or framing and analysis | 62 | 36 | 2 | .385** |
| | 63 | 35 | 2 | .271** |
| 2E illustrates how the course subject/theme influences their writing/thinking | 55 | 42 | 3 | .223** |
| | 55 | 42 | 3 | .268** |
| 3A articulates his or her own writing process | 58 | 40 | 2 | .221** |
| | 62 | 37 | 1 | .223** |

| | Consensus Estimates | | | Consistency Estimate |
|--|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| | Exact (%) | Adjacent (%) | Differ by 2 (%) | Nonadjudicated Weighted Kappa |
| 3B analyzes how revision improved individual artifacts in the portfolio | 57 | 40 | 3 | .331** |
| | 58 | 40 | 2 | .232** |
| 3C is clean, grammatical, and readable | 81 | 19 | 0 | .264** |
| | 82 | 18 | 0 | .107* |
| 3D conveys writerly ethos (the reader feels a measure of trust for the writer) | 63 | 35 | 1 | .271** |
| | 57 | 41 | 2 | .118** |

ns: not significant

*p<0.05

**p<0.01

Finally, Table 3 assigns the inter-rater data from the scoring sessions hypothetical strength values forwarded by White, Elliot, and Peckham (2015).

Table 3: Hypothetical strength of inter-rater consistency

| | | Consistency Estimate | |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | | Nonadjudicated Weighted Kappa | Hypothetical Strength of Consistency |
| 1A effectively addresses multiple genres/types of writing | 2015-2016 (n=521) | .218** | Low |
| | 2016-2017 (n=407) | .136** | Low |
| 1B explicitly addresses course/program learning outcomes | | .425** | Medium |
| | | .44** | Medium |
| 1C discusses his or her attention to audience in the portfolio artifacts | | .33** | Medium |
| | | .263** | Medium |
| 1D employs appropriate organizational strategies | | .218** | Low |
| | | .163** | Low |
| 1E explicitly addresses organizational choices in the artifacts it discusses | | .228** | Medium |
| | | .076ns | NS |
| 2A utilizes an effective controlling idea/argument/thesis | | .263** | Medium |
| | | .093* | Low |
| 2B forwards thoughtful claims and analysis regarding his/her own writing | | .227** | Medium |
| | | .073ns | NS |

| | Consistency Estimate | |
|--|----------------------|---|
| | Nonadjudicated Kappa | Weighted Hypothetical Strength of Consistency |
| 2C supports claims with sufficient evidence | .334** | Medium |
| | .253** | Medium |
| 2D contextualizes evidence appropriately through the use of “quote sandwiches” or framing and analysis | .385** | Medium |
| | .271** | Medium |
| 2E illustrates how the course subject/theme influences their writing/thinking | .223** | Low |
| | .268** | Medium |
| 3A articulates his or her own writing process | .221** | Low |
| | .223** | Low |
| 3B analyzes how revision improved individual artifacts in the portfolio | .331** | Medium |
| | .232** | Medium |
| 3C is clean, grammatical, and readable | .264** | Medium |
| | .107* | Low |
| 3D conveys writerly ethos (the reader feels a measure of trust for the writer) | .271** | Medium |
| | .118** | Low |

ns or NS: not significant

* p<0.05

**p<0.01

Variables for which consistency measures are not significant (ns or NS) or have low hypothetical strength are of critical concern. Consistency measures for the following variables were low or not significant for at least one of the two academic years we scored.

- 1A effectively addresses multiple genres/types of writing
- 1D employs appropriate organizational strategies
- 1E explicitly addresses organizational choices in the artifacts it discusses
- 2A utilizes an effective controlling idea/argument/thesis
- 2B forwards thoughtful claims and analysis regarding his/her own writing
- 2E illustrates how the course subject/theme influences their writing/thinking
- 3A articulates his or her own writing process
- 3C is clean, grammatical, and readable
- 3D conveys writerly ethos (the reader feels a measure of trust for the writer)

White, Elliot, and Peckham (2015) note that weighted kappa scores of 0.7 are common for readings of timed, impromptu essays (p. 122). They do note, however, that “more complex writing performances, such as portfolios, do not often achieve these levels” (p. 122) and they suggest that “for those involved in writing program assessment, low reliabilities with nonadjudicated scores are occasions for further study to determine the sources discrepancy between readers” (pp. 122-123).

The data suggest that before we conclude our norming sessions, we would do well to ensure that raters come to a more obvious consensus about levels of performance in these areas. A first step toward stronger reliability scores and norming consensus consists of revising our rubric so that we as a program are clearer about how these constructs are formulated in student texts. We have initiated this change: a committee of Writing-Program faculty met on September 25, 2017 to begin revising the rubric and reflection-letter prompt.

Appendix F: Key terms and shared activities

Table 1: Elaboration of key terms

| Concept | Handles |
|--|---|
| Locating my writing | |
| Rhetorical context/situation | “purpose”; “exigence”; “kairos”; “what’s it for?” |
| Audience | “reader”; “listener”; “interlocutor”; “who reads it?” |
| Conversation | “discourse community”; “intertextuality”; “writer-based/reader-based”; “invention”; “motive”; “collaboration” |
| Genre | “signaling characteristics”; “social action”; “tone”; “style”; “speech genre”; “register”; “what is it?” |
| Designing and developing my writing | |
| Controlling idea | “thesis”; “claim”; “argument”; “warrant” |
| (Critical) analysis | “pattern recognition”; “close reading” |
| Arrangement | “organization”; “structure”; “(multi)mode(al)”; |
| Evidence | “data”; “sources”; “backing” |
| Re-(en)visioning my writing | |
| Reflection | “metacognition”; “complication”; “nuance” |
| Revision | “rewriting”; “editing”; “remixing”; “repurposing”, “proofreading” |

Common Activities: What we do in first-year writing

- Work with students to identify prior knowledge and practices and set expectations for college writing, including beyond FYW
- Read pieces (either excerpts from writing-studies articles or sections from rhetorics/handbooks) that address key terms explicitly
- Develop reading and writing activities in which students complicate their understanding of key terms through rhetorical analysis and reflection about their own writing
- Extend these activities so that students engage in practices implied by first-year writing outcomes, including
Inventing topics (which proceeds from attending to and then and moving to enter a conversation)
 1. Writing in multiple drafts
 2. Developing, finding, and vetting evidence/sources
 3. Writing with evidence/sources
 - a. Summarizing
 - b. Paraphrasing
 - c. Quoting
 - d. Analyzing
 - e. Synthesizing
 4. Revising, remixing, and remediating material in genres appropriate for a variety of contexts and conversations
 5. Communicating via voice, visual, and gesture in ways that inform and are informed by their writing
 6. Developing a portfolio and reflective letter within which students use key terms to argue that they've achieved course outcomes as well as to explain their theory of writing