English 110 Faculty Development Workshop

Facilitating Peer Response and Supporting Student Revision
October 10, 2007

Goals
- To share techniques for teaching students strategies for soliciting peer response.
- To examine ways to model successful peer response for students.
- To discuss a variety of in-class and out-of-class peer response activities.
- To identify strategies we can teach students for responding to peer response feedback.
- To highlight how recommended textbooks support peer response and revision.

Supporting an Instructional Goal
Although our program assessment reflected an increase in peer response activities in Fall 2006, these activities declined substantially in Spring 2007 – corresponding with faculty requests for more strategies for facilitating peer response. As a result, one of our 2007-2008 instructional goals is to teach a variety of revising and editing strategies, with attention to peer response.

Peer Response as Part of the Dynamic Writing Process

1. Invention Strategies for Peer Response

   How can I help students prepare for peer response by situating it within the context of the assignment and writing process?

   ▪ Students could work collaboratively to draft peer response questions based on the assignment guidelines and evaluation criteria.

   ▪ Students could freewrite about the challenges they are facing and the types of feedback that would be helpful to them at this stage in their composing process.

   ▪ In *Works in Progress*, Lisa Ede encourages students to elicit descriptive responses (see p. 273 in the 5th ed.). She urges students to ask readers to: say what the writers’ main points seem to be, point to memorable words or passages, summarize the passage, suggest what’s implied, or identify the central idea.

   ▪ In *A Meeting of Minds*, Callaghan and Dobyns suggest students follow a focused agenda for peer review (see p. 332 in 2nd ed.). They note that peer evaluation is a complicated task, but that it helps students obtain readers’ feedback and learn to read their own work with a new lens.

   ▪ In *The Brief Thomson Handbook*, Blakesley and Hoogeveen offer sample peer review questions and suggest strategies for reading peers’ texts from an informed perspective (see 3d). They also offer tips to both the writer and the reviewer to prep them for an engaging and helpful peer review process.
2. **Drafting Strategies for Peer Response**

What strategies can I employ to model effective response?

- Classes can role-play successful and unsuccessful peer response sessions and compare the characteristics of each.

- Students can participate in whole-class workshops.

- Professors can conduct group conferences with students to facilitate the peer review process, model helpful responses, and elicit additional feedback.

- In *A Meeting of Minds*, Callaghan and Dobyns offer characteristics of ineffective and effective writing (see p. 331 in 2nd ed.). These lists give students language they can use as readers of peers’ drafts to identify strengths and challenges in what they are reading.

- In *The Brief Thomson Handbook*, Blakesley and Hoogeveen include instructions for using the comment function in MS Word (see 3d).

3. **Revising Strategies for Peer Response**

How can I support student revision in response to peer feedback?

- Students could write revision plans, detailing which feedback they will respond to and how.

- Classes could discuss how to respond to feedback collected during a whole-class workshop.

- In *A Meeting of Minds*, Callaghan and Dobyns suggest focuses for revision, helping students identify discreet tasks to complete one step at a time (see pp. 334-336 in 2nd ed.). For instance students might first cut unnecessary material and then focus on extending their support for their argument as needed.

- In *The Brief Thomson Handbook*, Blakesley and Hoogeveen include a self-evaluation checklist for revision (see 3a). They also focus on revising for audience, purpose, and kairos.
Resources

Blackboard Resources (Select “Workshop Materials”):
- Supporting Peer-Response (October 2006)
- Teaching Revising and Editing (April 2007)

Additional Local Resource:
Michelle Trim’s *What Every Student Should Know About... Practicing Peer Review.* (Pearson).

Upcoming Faculty Development Opportunities – Mark Your Calendars

- **Oct 17th, 12:10 – 1:10 PM, College Writing Reading Group (Alamance 101)**

- **Nov 14th, 12:10 – 1:10 PM, Workshop on Sequenced Assignments (Ward Octagon)**
  Our last fall workshop will showcase assignments, with attention to sequenced assignments. If you have a successful series of sequenced assignments that you would like to share with colleagues, please email them to Jessie by November 9th. Lunch provided.