English 110 Faculty Development Workshop

Facilitating Students’ Self-Assessment of Writing
September 10, 2008

Goals
- To examine how facilitating students’ self-assessment of their writing supports ENG 110 instructional goals and course objectives.
- To identify self-assessment activities that faculty already integrate into their teaching.
- To discuss how we might build opportunities for self-assessment into our assignments.
- To highlight resources that support students’ self-assessment.

Supporting an Instructional Goal
This workshop facilitates the instructional goal to support students’ development of strategies to self-assess their work. Based on the 2007-2008 assessment results, our greatest instructional challenge is helping students reflect on their own writing and use various forms of feedback to guide their revisions. Focusing on self-assessment addresses a portion of this challenge.

In addition, supporting students’ self-assessment helps students develop:

- A more sophisticated writing process—including invention, peer responding, revising and editing—that results in a clear, effective, well edited public piece. (ENG 110 Objective)

By learning strategies to examine their own writing, students are better prepared to evaluate their writing process and to determine when they need additional feedback, revisions, and edits to produce effective public pieces.

College Writing/English 110 Faculty Practices

- Holistic Self-Assessment of Attitudinal Stage in Writing

“I like using an article by Rebecca L. Lipstein and K. Ann Renniger called ‘Interest for Writing: How Teachers Can Make a Difference’ (published in English Journal, 96:4, March 2007: pp. 79-85). The article is by and for middle school teachers, but I have my 110 students read it anyway – it’s a quick and easy read. In the article the authors categorize 4 attitudinal stages in writing and then discuss what kinds of feedback are most welcome by each attitudinal stage. I have my students assess themselves according to the paradigm laid out in the piece – or discuss why it is not a good model for capturing their stage of writing. I use the piece as a tool to help students think critically about their own writing, what kinds of revision advice they take and ignore, and how to become more effective writers.” (Megan Isaac)
Self-Assessment with Evaluation Rubric

“Before students participate in peer review, I have them self-assess their draft using the same rubric I will use to evaluate their final text (and that I frequently also use to guide peer review). This activity prompts them to consider how their draft matches the expectations for the assignment, and it gives them an opportunity to revise at least once before they solicit peer feedback. After peer review, I ask students to write a revision plan that considers how they will use their own assessment and their peer feedback to inform revisions; if their own assessment differs significantly from their peers’, I encourage them to reflect on the differences and to critically evaluate all the feedback they’ve received.” (Jessie Moore)

Reflective Self-Assessment Informing Next Writing Project

Several faculty ask students to reflect on each writing project when they submit it and to consider how their work on the assignment connects to the course objectives. This reflection could be extended to ask students to set goals for their next project, based on their pre-grade self-assessment of their writing.

Self-Identified Goals for Future Writing, Reflecting on Graded Work

Some faculty ask students to respond to the feedback they receive on graded assignments. This type of formal response encourages students to read faculty comments thoroughly and to establish self-identified goals for future writing based on that feedback.

Other Ideas?

Resources for Facilitating Students’ Self-Assessment

- The brief Thomson Handbook by David Blakesley & Jeffrey L. Hoogeveen
  - Approximately 40 project checklists prompt students to try a variety of writing process activities, to examine the rhetorical situation to which they are responding, and to select appropriate rhetorical strategies.
  - Project checklists include: “Using Self-Evaluation to Guide Revision” (p. 31), “Reviewing for Biased Language” (p. 406), and “Do You Have an Effective Working Thesis Statement?” (p. 74).

- The Academic Writer: A Brief Guide by Lisa Ede
  - The “Strategies for Revision” chapter includes tips for “Examining Your Own Writing” (p. 282) and “Questions for Evaluating Focus, Content, and Organization” (pp. 282-283), as well as other sub-sections on self-assessment during revising.
The “Understanding the Writing Process” chapter includes “Questions for Analyzing Your Composing Process” (p. 35).

- **Meeting of Minds, 2nd Ed.** by Patsy Callaghan & Ann Dobyns
  - The chapter on revising discusses self-evaluation. Students are encouraged to read their work with their audience in mind. Although only one paragraph long (see p. 332), the discussion is packed with tips that students can try.
  - The chapter also offers strategies for reading your own work with different lenses and includes a sample revision plan in which a student negotiates responding to both her self-assessment and her peers’ feedback.

- **The Harbrace Guide to Writing** by Cheryl Glenn
  - Each suggested assignment includes a checklist students can use to self-evaluate their draft for key characteristics described in the chapter.

Upcoming Faculty Development Opportunities – Mark Your Calendars

- **Sept 17th, 12:15 – 1:15 PM, College Writing Technology Help Session (Alamance 318)**
  Bring your lunch and come with questions about integrating technology into your teaching or assignments.

- **Oct 8th, 12:15 – 1:15 PM, Teaching & Writing with Technology Workshop (McEwen 213)**
  In response to recent revisions to the Council of Writing Program Administrators’ *Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition*, as well as faculty requests, the October workshop will focus on integrating technology into teaching first-year composition. Lunch provided.

- **Oct 13th, 12:00 – 1:00 PM, Joint Lunch with GST 110 Faculty (Moseley 215)**
  Join GST 110 and ENG 110 faculty for a collaborative discussion on supporting students throughout their first year. Lunch provided.