

Written Communication Assessment

Fall 2017

Method:

Written Communication was assessed through the collection of samples of student work. Eleven courses were selected for assessment (see Table 1), which comprised 233 individual classes. Two students from each of the classes were randomly selected for assessment, with the exception of the largest course; ENGL 102. Only one student was selected from each section of this course. This selection method resulted in a sample of 390 students.

Instructors for the selected courses were sent an initial email announcement within the first month of classes, which notified instructors of their class's inclusion in the assessment. Approximately a week later, a second email was sent which included instructions for submitting pieces of student work and the names of their selected students. Instructors were asked to send samples of work from the selected students that demonstrated the ability to write appropriately for audience, purpose, and genre; and demonstrate appropriate content, organization, syntax, and style. Attached to the second email notification was a copy of the rubric that would be used in the assessment in order to assist instructors in selecting appropriate pieces of student work. Instructors were also asked to submit a copy or brief description of the assignment to enable the assessors to better evaluate the student work. Work could be submitted electronically or in paper form. If work could not be submitted, instructors were asked to indicate the reason for the lack of submission, such as the student dropped the course or did not complete the selected assignment. A reminder email was sent to all instructors of selected courses approximately two weeks before the due date for submissions.

Table 1. Courses selected for assessment of Information Literacy

Course	Number of Classes
BIOL 103	26
ENGL 102	76
ENGL 106	17
GP 201	10
HIST 101	18
HLTH 101	22
HUM 101	19
MGMT 203	9
MKTG 201	22
MUS 104	6
PSYC 213	8

All collected artifacts were anonymized and uploaded into the Tk20 assessment software’s juried assessment function. A group of ten volunteers were assigned to assess the artifacts using the rubric. The analytic rubric consisted of four dimensions: Ideas/Engagement with topic, thesis/focus, organization, and mechanics. The dimensions were rated on a 5-point Lykert-type scale, ranging from 4, expert proficiency, to 0, no proficiency. Each artifact was assigned to two different volunteers for assessment. Therefore, the mean of the scores from the two assessments would be the final score for each artifact. Assessors attended a norming session in which five artifacts were communally assessed prior to assessing all artifacts in the Tk20 system.

Results

Artifacts were submitted for 213 students (54.6%). Artifacts could not be collected from 41 (10.5%) of the selected students because the students either dropped the course or did not turn in the assignment chosen for assessment. The remaining artifacts were not submitted for various reasons, including the class having no required assignments suitable for assessment, or artifacts being submitted after the assessment deadline.

Artifacts were assigned to assessors in the juried assessment function in Tk20 in the early Spring semester of 2018. The juried assessment contained 208 artifacts (5 of the original 213 were used for the norming session) which were each assigned to two assessors, resulting in 416 artifact reviews assigned. Rubric scores for the assessed students are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Frequency table of rubric scores for all assessed students

Criteria	4-Expert Proficiency	3-Proficiency	2- Some Proficiency	1-Limited Proficiency	0-No Proficiency	NA/ Missing	Mean (SD)
Ideas/Engagement	47(11.52%)	140(34.31%)	177(43.38%)	39(9.56%)	5(1.23%)	8(1.92%)	2.45(.86)
Thesis/Focus	50(13.09%)	167(43.72%)	96(25.13%)	58(15.18%)	11(2.88%)	34(8.17%)	2.49(.99)
Organization	68(17.0%)	179(44.75%)	112(28.0%)	41(10.25%)	0	16(3.85%)	2.69(.87)
Mechanics	47(11.49%)	188(45.97%)	128(31.3%)	42(10.27%)	4(0.98%)	7(1.68%)	2.57(.86)

Note: NA and missing responses are not included in criteria mean calculations

Mean scores for all criteria fell between the “some proficiency” and “proficiency” score categories. The Organization and Mechanics criteria could be categorized as having means falling under proficiency with rounding, while the Ideas/Engagement and Thesis/Focus means would be rounded down to fall under the some proficiency category. However, means for all criteria were clustered closely together, with a spread of less than 0.25 points.