



Avoid Grading Papers with Global Problems: Offer Feedback Throughout the Writing Task

Improve the quality of student writing – break up the writing process into steps which can “dramatically improve student performance.” At the very least, to avoid some writing mistakes (which take more of your time to grade), consider sequencing your writing assignment and offering Feedback throughout the Writing Task.

However, you do NOT need to be the person reading all of the drafts!

The following chart provides some possible ways to sequence the writing task.

Method of Feedback	Who Provides the Feedback?	When should Feedback be Provided?	What is the Purpose of this Feedback?
Brainstorm in a small group	Small groups in class; After the first time in class, students use email to continue discussions	The class period after the prompt has been given	Move students beyond just “thinking about” a topic
Present topic to class or to groups for 2 minutes; 1-2 minutes of discussion	All students	Following research periods	Although helpful to do this in class so everyone can refine their topics, it could also be done online
Demonstrate Synthesis then move students to action in using sources	Modeled by instructor; group work; peer-reviews	After substantial research is completed	Require students to synthesize and use sources correctly
Use one class period or record your responses and post on Learning Suite	Instructor shows a paragraph from several student papers	Immediately following a draft	Address representative problems & strengths
Annotated former student paper; Generate an example annotated paper which can be used over several semesters	Students use as example or discuss in groups	Just before the first draft is due	Identify common problems & strengths
Conference with faculty, TA, or FHSS Writing Lab advisors; Consider dismissing a class period to compensate for the conference times	Students meet one-on-one or as small groups	After last draft & before the final paper is due	Define global & local issues for individual students

“Sequencing Writing Assignments.” (Apr 2006). Adapted from WAC Clearinghouse.

Offering Feedback Throughout the Writing Task

Other Methods of Giving Feedback

- Using a former student’s paper (with permission & with a pseudonym), show students the type of feedback you offer. Annotate the paper with your feedback – both positive and negative, as needed. Post on Learning Suite.
- Consider requiring multiple drafts. On the first major draft, give helpful feedback (no more than 3 comments per page). Your feedback can guide students to submit an improved draft. Then make very few comments on the final draft – sometimes using a rubric and a sentence or two about the paper is sufficient if you already commented significantly on a prior draft.
- Consider providing a checklist of the most common problems you have seen in the past.
- Send students to the FHSS Writing Lab (virtually) to get feedback on structure, etc. Remember! You are welcome to come to our training meetings to train the advisors on YOUR paper’s requirements!

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