



Appendix 4.H Writing Discipline Assessment Reports  
**Writing**  
**2014-2015**

Outcome 2	Measureable Criteria	Measurement Tool	Courses	Time Frame
Demonstrate consistent use of conventions particular to a specific writing task including organization, content, presentation, and stylistic choices.	<i>A threshold of 80% of students will receive a C or better demonstrated with a minimum Level 3 on the criteria Context and Purpose of Writing and Content Development for the Written Communication VALUE Rubric. Level 3 criteria for Purpose and Writing and Content Development include writing that demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task by using appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within context of the discipline and shape the whole work.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Personal Statements evaluated with the Personal Statement Rubric</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WR 123</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winter 2015</li> </ul>

**Results:** For the Personal Statement assignment 88% of the students received a C or better with a minimum Level 3 on the criteria Context and Purpose of Writing and Content Development: 18% received As (3 students); 29% received Bs (5 students); 41% received Cs (7 students); 6% received Ds (1 student); 6% received Fs (1 student).

**Analysis:** This assignment is a first week diagnostic writing assessment. Since WR 123 is a final course in the AA/OT writing foundational requirements, it is expected that students will write an apparent thesis statement supported by relevant detail; address a specific audience with a specific purpose; and express self through reflection and examples. From the Personal Statement Rubric, 82% of the demonstrated an apparent thesis statement, yet only 58% of the students focused on one or two concrete, relevant examples (many students used general, abstract examples). Although students had probably not written a personal statement prior to this assignment, 76% of the students did purposely write with the intent to share an accomplishment or experience that reveals character.

**Plan:** As a diagnostic assessment, the personal statement works well to allow students to introduce themselves to the instructor, celebrate a few accomplishments or experiences revealing character, determine how effectively students understand and complete an assignment independently of an instructor, and demonstrate college-level writing abilities. This assignment as a measurement tool reveals that students understand and demonstrate a thesis statement. However, their use of relevant and precise examples and support continues to need instruction and practice. Therefore, in all writing classes but specifically in WR 123 additional direct instruction and writing examples are necessary to prepare students to demonstrate skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources and examples to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.



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**Results:** From the Writing 121 student writing assignments randomly gathered for the MSC project, the 50 writing samples reveal 76% of the students received a C or better with a minimum Level 3 on the criteria Context and Purpose of Writing: 34% (17 students) scored Level 4; 42% (21 students) scored Level 3; 18% (9 students) scored Level 2; and 6% (3 students) scored Level 1.

In addition, 70% of the students received a C or better with a minimum Level 3 on Content Development: 30% (15 students) scored Level 4; 40% (20 students) scored Level 3; 20% (10 students) scored Level 2; and 10% (5 students) scored Level 1.



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**Analysis:** The Multi-State Collaborative to Advance Learning Outcomes Assessment (MSC) is an initiative designed to provide meaningful evidence about how well students are achieving important learning outcomes. The initiative foregrounds a distinctly different form of assessment than the traditional standardized test. Instead of producing reports about average scores on tests, the project is piloting the use of common rubrics applied by teams of faculty to student’ authentic college work—including such things as projects, papers, and research. The MSC is designed to produce valid data summarizing faculty judgments of students’ own work, and also seeks to aggregate results in a way that allows for benchmarking across institutions and states. The primary goal of the initiative is to provide assessment data that will allow faculty and institution leaders to assess—and improve—the levels of student achievement on a set of cross-cutting outcomes important for all disciplines.

Southwestern is one of three community colleges in Oregon participating in the MSC project. During fall 2014, Southwestern faculty contributed by identifying two fall term assignments that involved writing, providing brief descriptions of assignments, and providing copies of ungraded student writing assignments. The 50 student writing samples were randomly selected from the WR 121 sections participating in the MSC project.

*Context of and Purpose for Writing.* Although the results of the outcomes assessment for context of and purpose for writing did not reach the 80% threshold, it did come near it with 76% of students scoring a Level 3 or Level 4 on the Written Communication VALUE rubric. It is encouraging that 42% demonstrated an “adequate consideration of context, audience and purpose” while 34% could demonstrate a “thorough understanding of context, audience and purpose.” On the other hand, nearly one-fourth of the students (24%) were able to demonstrate only “an awareness of or minimal attention” to context, audience, and purpose.

*Content Development.* The results of the outcomes assessment in content development did not reach the 80% threshold but did measure that 70% of students were able to score a Level 3 or Level 4 on the Written Communication VALUE rubric. Of that 70%, 30% were able to “use appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate a mastery of the subject, conveying the writer’s understanding, and shaping the whole work” and 40% were able to “use appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to explore ideas within the context of the discipline and shape the whole work.” On the other hand, nearly one-third (30%) of the students were able to use appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas through “most of the work” or “some parts of the work.”

It also appears that the 80% threshold is realistic and measurable of students receiving a C or better demonstrated with a minimum Level 3 on the criteria Context and Purpose of Writing and Content Development for the Written Communication VALUE rubric. Although our students did not reach the threshold, they did come near the threshold suggesting we can provide students with more instruction and practice to reach the 80% threshold.



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**Plan:** As a method of gathering essays for assessment, the MSC project has worked well for us. Even though we focused on writings from WR 121, the samples represented multiple assignments. This process allowed us to examine the criteria through multiple writing genres and activities. These assignments and measurement tool reveal that students understand and demonstrate context, audience, purpose, and content development. However, in all writing classes but specifically in WR 121 additional direct instruction and writing examples are necessary to prepare students to demonstrate skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources and examples to develop ideas that are appropriate for the discipline and genre of the writing.

It is encouraging to note that 88% of WR 123 students did meet the threshold; whereas the WR 121 students did not reach the threshold. Therefore, it suggests that with additional writing instruction and practice achieved through WR 122 and WR 123 does provide students with additional opportunities to succeed in college-level writing.