Writing “Closing the Loop”

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<th>Outcome 4</th>
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<td>Write effectively for diverse audiences within a specific area or discipline using appropriate standards and conventions.</td>
<td>80% or more students will earn an 80% or better grade on the eight mechanics review quizzes.</td>
<td>Mechanics Review Quizzes</td>
<td>WR 227</td>
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The spring 2017 WR 227 section continued to have repeated common grammar and mechanics errors after students completed their reviews and quizzes. The assessment plan was to evaluate fall 2017 students as they reviewed and applied grammar and mechanics guidelines. The purpose of this assessment is to identify which grammar and mechanics concepts continue to trouble students after they have completed all eight of the reviews.

Results:

Commas—90% average (86% with 80% or better)
Semicolons and Colons—87.14% average (86% with 80% or better)

Capitalization—95.71% average (100% with 80% or better)

Other Punctuation—85.71% average (71% with 80% or better)
Possessive Nouns—82.86% average (78.5% with 80% or better)

Subject Verb Agreement—92.5% average (100% with 80% or better)

Pronoun Antecedent—85.71% average (71% with 80% or better)

Personal Pronouns—83.57% average (71% with 80% or better)
Analysis: Mechanics and punctuation continue to cause frustrations for students. We assume that by the time students reach WR 227 Report Writing at the end of their writing sequence, most students should exhibit control over mechanics. However, a review is helpful in reminding students of what they already know and to clarify misconceptions of the grammar rules. Rather than spending valuable class time in reviewing grammar and mechanics, I put the responsibility on the students for their own reviews. I have created eight general grammar and mechanic review guidelines with rules, examples, and sample quiz worksheets. Students review two guidelines each week for the first four weeks of the course. For each review students demonstrate understanding and proficiency by taking a 10-question quiz. Each quiz has a pool of questions (approximately 40 questions), and the online quiz populates each quiz from those pools. Students are allowed to use guideline sheets and notes as they take the quiz with the intention that as they write, if they question something, they can get their own help. Students are also allowed to repeat the quiz as often as they’d like, and the highest score counts. Each time they take the quiz, different questions populate.

For half of the mechanics review quizzes, 80% of the students received an 80% or better: commas, semicolons and colons, capitalization, and subject verb agreement. The other half of the mechanics review quizzes, 80% of the students received less than 80%; other punctuation, possessive nouns, pronoun antecedents, and personal pronouns.

Plan: Students continue to have more struggles with other punctuation, possessive nouns, pronoun antecedents, and personal pronouns. I plan to have brief in-class reviews of these mechanics to share examples and clarify understanding. The students will then take the quizzes. I will compare to see if the reviews have improved the students’ scores.