2015-2018 Writing Assessment Review

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Summary:
The following document consists of two assessment reports; first, the Writing portion of the 2018 General Education Infused competency assessment, and second, the College Writing Program's own programmatic self-assessment from 2015-2018. Each section will contain a description of the process and methods, a discussion of the findings, and recommendations for the future.

Part 1: 2018 Writing-Infused General Education Course Assessment

Data Collection:

In past assessment cycles, writing, critical thinking and information management were assessed separately. For the first time, in 2018, these competencies were assessed simultaneously, using the same sample texts that were collected from faculty teaching infused courses with W, IM & CT designations. The Writing, Information Management, and Critical Thinking committees met throughout the 2017-2018 academic year to discuss the process of collection and assessment. At the end of fall 2017, faculty to be teaching the infused courses in the spring received an email from Dr. Fuster informing them of the assessment and giving them instructions for the data collection process, as well as resources and suggestions compiled by each of the 3 committees on how to successfully infuse each competency into a disciplinary course. Faculty were asked to score the samples themselves as well. After samples were collected from faculty, the committees met together in May 2 2018 to read and evaluate the samples that were received.

Data Analysis

The writing committee first did a norming session, using several randomly chosen samples. The committee then began the reading and scoring process. When possible, each sample provided was read; however, for those sections that provided more than 15 samples, the committee read a random subsample of at least 5. We received samples from one course that we were unable to assess using the rubric due to the nature of the samples given (for example, a half page script for a public service announcement). Otherwise, two individuals on the committee read and scored each sample. Each set of scores was then compared and any disagreements were identified and resolved through discussion.

Rubric

See Appendix A

Results

Major Findings:

- For SLO #1, 83 % of products scored met or exceeded the standard. For SLO# 2, 45% of products scored met or exceeded standard.

- Products from HIST, PHIL & PSC were among the highest scores overall; those from CRJ 317 and BUS 430 were among the lowest.

SLO #1:

Students will use writing as both a tool for learning and a means for communicating about ideas within a discipline or profession. (As defined in accordance with disciplinary practices.)

Course/Number of Work Products Scored	Exceeds Standard N	Meets Standard N	Approaches Standard N	Below Standard N
COM 450 (1)/9	1	6	2	0
COM 450 (2)/8	1	5	2	0
BIO 314/7	1	5	0	1
CRJ 317/11	0	7	4	0
BUS 430/3	0	3	0	0
BUS 430/8	0	4	4	0
ENG 463/5	1	4	0	0
FAR 363/8	1	6	1	0
DES 421/2	0	2	0	0
HIS 400/10	1	8	1	0
AMT/2	0	1	1	0
PSC 399/7	2	4	1	0
AED 301/8	1	6	1	0
PHI 401W/6	4	2	0	0
COM 308/8	1	7	0	0
THA 234/6	1	5	0	0
BIO 405/10	1	7	2	0
Total N/%	16/14%	82/69%	19/16%	1/<1%

SLO #2:

Students will refine habits conducive to good writing developed at earlier stages in core education and education in the major, per the SUNY Basic Communication Requirements. (As defined in accordance with disciplinary practices.)

Course/Number of Work Products Scored	Exceeds Standard N	Meets Standard N	Approaches Standard N	Below Standard N
COM 450 (1)/9	1	3	5	0
COM 450 (2)/8	0	4	2	2

BIO 314/7	0	5	1	1
CRJ 317/11	0	0	1	10
BUS 430/3	0	0	1	2
BUS 430/8	0	0	0	8
ENG 463/5	1	2	1	1
FAR 363/8	0	3	4	1
DES 421/2	0	0	0	2
HIS 400/10	1	8	1	0
AMT/2	0	1	1	0
PSC 399/7	2	3	2	0
AED 301/8	0	6	2	0
PHI 401W/6	1	4	1	0
COM 308/8	0	0	0	8
THA 234/6	0	0	2	4
BIO 405/10	0	8	2	0
Total N/%	6/5%	47/40%	26/22%	39/33%

Discussion:

While for SLO #1 the majority of samples met or exceeded the standard, the opposite is true for SLO # 2. The committee suggests two factors in particular that affect the breakdown for SLO #2. The first is related to the wording on the rubric. The description of each criterion refers to the students' "ability to revise and improve texts." While this is something that the faculty teaching the courses would be able to assess, it would not be something the writing committee would be able to assess unless they had copies of rough drafts to examine as well. Although the email to faculty asked for them to send drafts, nearly all did not, so the committee was unable to assess this part of SLO # 2; instead we focused only on students' ability to support an argument with appropriate documentation. For some of the samples sent, we were unable to fully assess this aspect, as the assignments seemed not to have required students to fully document their work with sources. Therefore, I suggest that the lower percent of samples meeting SLO #2 is not necessarily due to students' competencies, but may be more related to these issues with the language of the rubric and potentially unclear directions to faculty about what types of writing samples to collect.

Recommendations:
1. Revisions to the writing categories on the infusion rubric, as suggested above. I am not sure who created the infusion rubric, but I know that I was not involved (though it may have been the previous CWP director), so any revisions made should involve all committee chairs.
2. Clearer (and earlier) instructions for faculty on the collection and assessment process.
3. I suggest that if we continue to ask faculty to also score these samples, they should be given anchor papers to norm them, ideally the same ones the committee uses.

4. At this point, the three committees have not yet met post-assessment, so I hope that during the upcoming academic year, we will meet to discuss our findings and how we might together better help faculty infuse these competencies into their courses, whether developing workshops, resources, etc. Because these competencies were assessed together, I think we need to be sure that we work together to come up with an action plan. My understanding is that some faculty who taught some of these courses were not fully aware of what these infused courses were supposed to include, so my biggest recommendation to start is to think about how faculty awareness can be increased.

Part II: 2015-18 College Writing Program Assessment

Note: Having stepped into the role as Interim Director of the College Writing Program in 2017, I cannot speak fully to the assessment processes that took place prior to this; however, I worked to obtain as much information and documentation as I could, some of which is included here.

Assessment Cycle:
The practice of the previous CWP director was to rotate assessment of SLOs each year, rather than assess all at once; I continued this practice, referring to the assessment plan created by the previous director which slated which SLOs were to be assessed during Spring of 2018.

Student Learning Outcomes:
In 2011, the College Writing Program and Writing Oversight Committee reviewed the Student Learning Outcomes for CWP 101 and CWP 102 and determined that those learning outcomes were consistent with the SLOs of IF, SUNY-GER, and standards within the field of Composition. As a result, SUNY GER SLOs continue to be used for CWP programmatic assessment because they encompass CWP's course-specific SLOs.
Students will
1. Research a topic, develop an argument, and organize supporting details
2. Demonstrate the ability to revise and improve college level texts.
3. Produce coherent texts within common college-level written forms
4. Develop proficiency in oral discourse; and evaluate an oral presentation according to established criteria.

2018 Assessment (SLOs #1 & 2)

Data Collection
Data collection for these SLOs followed a similar process as had been used by the previous director—an indirect assessment via a survey of instructors on their students' progress and learning (See Appendix B for complete set of survey questions.) Instructors of CWP 099, 101 and 102 were asked to complete a survey for each section they taught. Surveys were anonymous and were returned to the CWP director's mailbox upon completion.

Data Analysis

Surveys were received for a total of 44 sections. This reflects 100% of sections of CWP 099, 53% of sections of CWP 101, and 47% of sections of CWP 102. Data was aggregated overall and by section.

Results

SLO #1: Students will demonstrate the ability to revise and improve college-level written texts

How would you rate your students' current ability to make global revisions?

	CWP 099 (N=3)	CWP 101 (N=15)	CWP 102 (N=26)
Exceeds	0	0	3
Meets	1	8	17
Does Not Meet	2	7	6

	ALL Sections (%/N)
Exceeds	6% (3)
Meets	59% (26)
Does Not Meet	35% (15)

How would you rate your students' current ability to make sentence-level revisions?

	CWP 099 (N=3)	CWP 101 (N=15)	CWP 102 (N=26)
Exceeds	0	0	2
Meets	1	13	20
Does Not Meet	2	2	4

	ALL Sections
Exceeds	4% (2)
Meets	77% (34)
Does Not Meet	18% (8)

SLO #2: Students will research a topic, develop an argument and organize supporting details

How would you rate you students' current ability to integrate research?

	CWP 099 (N=3)	CWP 101 (N=15)	CWP 102 (N=26)
Exceeds	0	0	4
Meets	1	12	17
Does Not Meet	2	3	5

	ALL Sections
Exceeds	9% (4)
Meets	68% (30)
Does Not Meet	23% (10)

Discussion:
Considering instructors' responses regarding their students' ability to revise and integrate sources, it is notable that more report that students meet or exceed this competency in CWP 102 (as opposed to CWP 101 and 099), which speaks to the importance of our multi-course writing requirement, providing students with a greater opportunity to practice and improve their writing skills. Other questions in the instructor survey (see Appendix B) indicated some variance in the degree to which instructors require their students to revise assignments, as well as how much they require their students to write. This factor may also skew these results.

Recommendations:
First I must note that assessment is significantly more difficult in CWP as compared to other departments because of the lack of full-time faculty. At this point in time, apart from the interim director, the CWP only has **one** full time faculty member and approximately 50 adjuncts. Ideally, program or departmental assessments are designed and carried out by faculty, particularly the faculty who teach the courses in question; however, this prospect is difficult when nearly the entire faculty is contingent. In addition to continuing to advocate for full time lecturer lines for CWP, it is also important to think of ways in which even our part time faculty can be included in the assessment process—without requiring them to do work beyond that which they are compensated for. I believe the new CWP director who will take on this role in spring of 2018 plans to work to secure professional developments funds that could be used to compensate part-time instructors who participate in departmental work such as this.

To my knowledge, in past cycles, SLO #1 has only been assessed indirectly, via faculty or student surveys; however, I think it would also be instructive in the future to do a direct assessment, using before-and-after drafts. While this would be a significantly more time consuming process, I think different insights could be gleaned.

As noted in the above discussion, there existed some notable differences among faculty's self-reporting of how much they require students to write and revise. Despite the fact that program guidelines of this nature exist and are given to faculty, the reality of primarily adjunct faculty body that is constantly shifting makes compliance difficult to enforce. I suggest that a more comprehensive orientation for new CWP adjuncts is necessary to better familiarize them with curriculum requirements. Note: this process is underway for Fall 2018.

SLO # 3: Produce coherent texts within common college-level written forms

Assessment-in-progress:
In Spring 2018, research paper samples were collected from all sections of CWP 102 (a random selection of 20% of student' final research paper) so that a trait analysis can be completed in order to assess SLO #3. Upon analysis of the previous assessment cycle for this SLO, particular concerns were identified (by both the current interim director and by other members of the writing assessment committee) with regard to reliability and validity of the process. Therefore, the data analysis for this SLO, which will begin in Fall 2018, will be modified, most significantly by including a norming process for readers and by including the faculty who teach these courses in the assessment and analysis.

2016 Assessment (SLO #4)

Data Collection. Instructors assessed their students' proficiency in both extemporaneous oral and prepared public speaking using standardized rubrics (see appendices). Students evaluated their own proficiency in both extemporaneous and prepared public speaking, and they also assessed the proficiency of one of their peers' prepared oral presentations using the same rubrics. This means that 5 rubrics were collected for each student: 3 that assessed prepared public speaking and 2 that assessed extemporaneous public speaking.

Data Analysis. During the second phase of data analysis, a 20% subsample of rubric sets were selected to create a dataset. In order to compare instructor, student, and peer ratings, it was necessary to collect rubric sets for which all 5 rubrics were available. Due to rubric labeling errors, fewer than 500 sets were usable from 30 sections. The first 3-4 rubric sets for which all 5 rubrics were available were collected from each section until a total of 100 sets was reached.

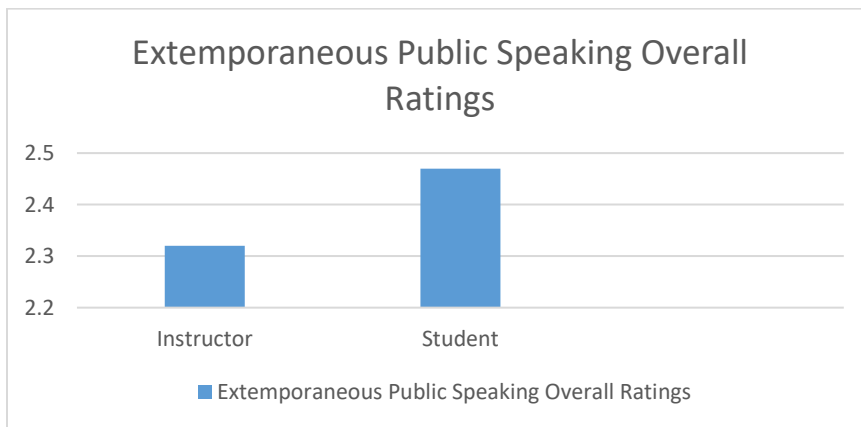**EXTEMPORANEOUS PUBLIC SPEAKING RESULTS**

    Student Learning Outcome Results.

Table 1: Extemporaneous Public Speaking SLO Results

	Total *N*	Exceeds % (*N*)	Meets % (*N*)	Approaches % (*N*)	Does Not Meet

					% (*N*)
Instructor Ratings	100	37	57 (57)	6 (6)	0 (0)
Student Ratings (Self)	100	49 (49)	47 (47)	4 (4)	0 (0)

Overall Mean Rating Comparison. A paired-samples t test was calculated to compare the mean instructor overall rating (*m* = 2.32, *sd* .58) to the mean student overall rating (*m* = 2.47, *sd* .56). Student ratings were significantly higher than instructor ratings ($t(99)$ = -2.34, p < .05).

Figure 1. Extemporaneous Public Speaking Overall Ratings

Trait Rating Comparison. Students rated themselves higher than did instructors on all traits, as illustrated in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Extemporaneous Public Speaking Trait Rating Comparison

	Instructor Mean	Instructor SD	Student Mean	Student SD
Ideas were sufficiently focused to be addressed in the time available	2.22	0.60	2.43	0.61
Ideas were supported with adequate examples/evidence as appropriate	2.10	0.75	2.37	0.69
Ideas were presented coherently	2.18	0.69	2.40	0.64
Language was appropriate for context	2.26	0.60	2.56	0.59
Speaking pace was appropriate	2.41	0.60	2.42	0.70
Speaking volume was appropriate	2.31	0.68	2.55	0.61
Presentation of ideas was appropriate for the context	2.36	0.58	2.53	0.59

|				
Overall Rating	2.32	0.58	2.47	0.56

PREPARED PUBLIC SPEAKING RESULTS

Student Learning Outcome Results.

Table 3: Prepared Public Speaking SLO Results

	Total *N*	Exceeds % (*N*)	Meets % (*N*)	Approaches % (*N*)	Does Not Meet % (*N*)
Instructor Ratings	100	31 (31)	68 (68)	1 (1)	0 (0)
Student Ratings (Self)	100	47 (47)	51 (51)	1 (1)	1 (1)
Student Ratings (Peer)	100	63 (63)	37 (37)	0 (0)	0 (0)

Overall Rating Comparison. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the overall prepared public speaking ratings of instructors, students, and peers. A significant difference was found among the rater types (F (2, 297) = 11.91, p < .01). Tukey's HSD was used to determine the nature of the differences between the raters. This analysis revealed that students rated themselves (m = 2.46, sd = .57) significantly higher than their instructors rated them (m = 2.30, sd = .48). Peer ratings (m = 2.65, sd = .47) were significantly higher than both student ratings and instructor ratings.

Figure 2. Prepared Public Speaking Overall Ratings
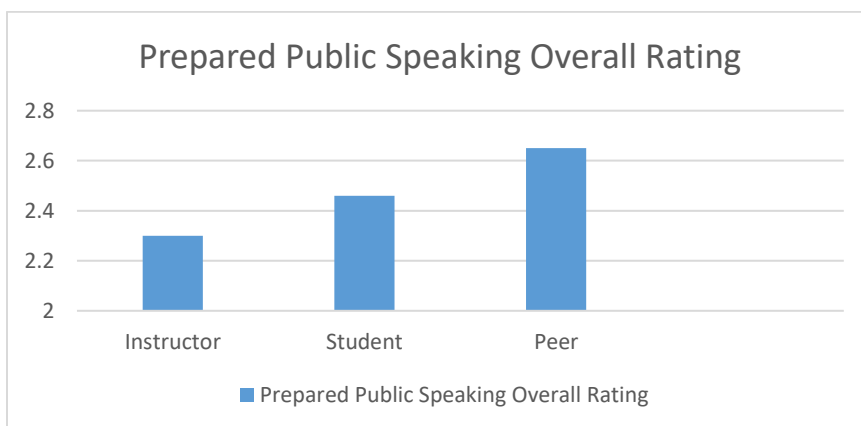
Trait Rating Comparison. As illustrated in Table 4 below, students rated themselves higher than did their instructors on all but two traits: 1) Speaker poise and confidence, and 2) Speaking pace. Students rated themselves lower than did their peer on all but two traits: 1) Speaker enthusiasm, and 2) Effective technology use.

Table 4: Prepared Public Speaking Trait Rating Comparison

	Instructor Mean	Instructor SD	Student Mean	Student SD	Peer Mean	Peer SD
Topic was made interesting and relevant for the audience	2.30	0.61	2.60	0.53	2.64	0.54
Topic was appropriate for the audience	2.39	0.49	2.65	0.50	2.66	0.53
Topic was sufficiently focused to be addressed in the time available	2.14	0.68	2.46	0.66	2.60	0.53
Ideas were supported with adequate examples and evidence	2.19	0.68	2.44	0.60	2.55	0.61
Content was presented in a logical order	2.30	0.54	2.56	0.57	2.66	0.53
Transitions between ideas were effective	2.10	0.66	2.29	0.71	2.50	0.62
Language was appropriate for purpose and audience	2.35	0.50	2.53	0.59	2.59	0.53
Language was clear and vivid	2.25	0.58	2.38	0.60	2.51	0.61
Speaker conveyed enthusiasm	2.15	0.69	2.32	0.76	2.28	0.70
Speaker was dressed appropriately	2.22	0.68	2.41	0.70	2.58	0.70
Speaker appeared poised and confident	2.30	0.56	2.24	0.70	2.49	0.63
Speaker made appropriate eye contact	2.10	0.71	2.25	0.73	2.28	0.73
Speaker used notes effectively	2.14	0.62	2.34	0.71	2.54	0.58
Visual and vocal distractions (e.g. saying "um," tapping foot) were kept to a minimum	2.10	0.64	2.24	0.67	2.37	0.67
Speaking pace was appropriate	2.31	0.53	2.28	0.66	2.55	0.58
Speaking volume was appropriate	2.23	0.65	2.43	0.67	2.53	0.58
Presentation was appropriate for the assignment	2.36	0.52	2.65	0.56	2.75	0.44
Presentation was original	2.34	0.63	2.68	0.51	2.60	0.60
Length of presentation was within the guidelines given	2.19	0.76	2.45	0.67	2.57	0.54
Presentation reflected significant preparation	2.38	0.69	2.42	0.66	2.56	0.58

Technology and/or other audio/visual supports were used effectively	2.29	0.73	2.47	0.67	2.47	0.71
Overall Rating	2.30	0.48	2.46	0.57	2.65	0.47

DISCUSSION

Overall, on students rated themselves significantly higher than did their instructors, and they rated their peers even higher. This suggests that students may be having difficulty evaluating themselves and their peers effectively. It is unclear whether this is due to lack of understanding of the criteria, difficulty in applying the rubric, and/or some kind of bias.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Conducting rubric norming sessions with faculty may improve understanding of criteria and consistency in applying the rubric. Faculty should also consider conducting norming sessions with students to help them improve their understanding and application.

Appendix A

Infusion Assessment Rubric: Information Management, Critical Thinking, and Writing

Category	Student Learning Outcome	Exceeds Standards (4)	Meets Standard (3)	Approaching Standard (2)	Below Standard (1)
Information Management	Students will use applications to read, write and execute files (as evinced by the file's level of complexity).	Composed file demonstrates *expert usage* of the application's functionality.	Composed file demonstrates *sufficient usage* of the application's functionality.	Composed file demonstrates *limited usage* of application's functionality.	Composed file demonstrates *insufficient usage* of the application's functionality.
Information Management	Students will conduct research using appropriate investigative techniques (as evinced by the quality of the resources the student was able to find and cite).	*All* references are peer-reviewed professional journals or other discipline appropriate sources.	References are *primarily* peer-reviewed professional journals or other discipline appropriate sources.	*Some* references are peer-reviewed professional journals or other discipline appropriate sources.	References are *questionable* or from sources outside the discipline and have uncertain legitimacy.
Information Management	Students will evaluate, locate and synthesize information (as evinced by source summaries, arrangement, and integration).	The student provides *exemplary* information source summary (evaluate), establishes relevancy (locate), and integrates resources meaningfu	The student provides *sufficient* information source summary (evaluate), establishes some relevancy (locate), and integrates most resources meaningfully (synthesize).	The student provides *limited* source summary (evaluate), establishes limited source relevancy (locate), and only limited integration of resources (synthesize).	The student provides *minimal* information source summary (evaluate) and does not establish relevancy (locate) or sufficiently integrate resources (synthesize).

		lly (synthesize).			

Writing	Students will use writing as both a tool for learning and a means for communicating about ideas within a discipline or profession. (As defined in accordance with disciplinary practices.)	The student produces *exemplary* texts demonstrating mastery of common college-level written forms within a disciplinary context.	The student produces *coherent* texts using common college-level written forms within a disciplinary context.	The student produces texts that may *lack cohesive* features and/or fail to adequately or completely adhere to disciplinary forms or conventions.	The student is *unable to produce coherent texts* using common college-level written forms within a disciplinary context.
Writing	Students will refine habits conducive to good writing developed at earlier stages in core education and education in the major, per the SUNY Basic Communication Requirements. (As defined in accordance with disciplinary practices.)	The student demonstrates the ability to *independently* revise and improve texts, and is able to use references to critically develop a sound position, thesis, or argument.	The student demonstrates the ability to revise and improve texts, and is able to use references in support of a position, thesis, or argument.	The student demonstrates limited ability to revise and improve texts and/or use references to develop a position, thesis, or argument.	The student does not demonstrate the ability to revise and improve texts, and is unable to satisfactorily utilize references to develop a position, thesis or argument.

Critical Thinking	Students will identify, analyze, and develop well-reasoned arguments. (As defined in accordance with disciplinary practices).	The student demonstrates the ability to *independently* analyze and develop well-reasoned arguments.	The student demonstrates the ability to identify, analyze, and develop arguments.	The student demonstrates some ability to identify, analyze or develop arguments, but only in a *limited* way.	The student does not demonstrate the ability to independently analyze and develop well-reasoned arguments.

Appendix B

CWP Instructor Assessment of Student Revision
Please respond to each of the following questions as part of our program assessment. Complete a survey for each section that you teach this semester. Surveys are anonymous. Return completed surveys to Maggie's mailbox in Ketchum 213.

1. **Which CWP course is this section?**
___CWP 099
___CWP 101
___CWP 102

2. **Where does this class meet?**
___Traditional Classroom
___Computer Lab

3. **If you stapled together ALL of the final drafts of ALL of the essays your students wrote for this class this semester, about how many double-spaced pages would there be?**
___Fewer than 10
___10-20
___21-30
___31-40
___More than 40

4. **How many assignments were your students required to revise?**
___None
___Some
___Most
___All

5. **On how many assignments did you give your students written or verbal feedback BEFORE they/you turned in a final version?**
___None
___Some
___Most
___All

6. **How often did your students write during class?**
___Never
___Rarely
___Sometimes
___Often
___Very Often

7. **Overall, how would you rate your students' ability to revise when they started this class?**
___Below College-level
___At College-level

8. Overall, how would you rate your students' ability to revise now?

___Below College-level

___At College-level

9. How would you rate your students' current ability to make global revisions?

___Does Not Meet: Students demonstrate a lack of ability or inconsistent ability to revise in any substantial way. Students do not engage in revision process or revision attempts were either infrequent or insufficient to improve the content, focus, structure, clarity, and coherence of earlier drafts.

___Meets: Students demonstrate the ability to revise by refining the content, sharpening the focus, and improving structure, clarity, and coherence of all drafts.

___Exceeds: Students consistently demonstrate a sophisticated ability to revise by altering content and approach, by reorganizing material, or by clarifying and strengthening the coherence of ideas of all drafts.

10. How would you rate your students' current ability to make sentence-level revisions?

___Does Not Meet: Mechanics either do not improve or appear to be the only focus of revision.

___Meets: The mechanics of final drafts are mostly accurate and rarely impede meaning.

___Exceeds: The mechanics of final drafts are nearly flawless.

11. How would you rate your students' current ability to integrate research?

___Does Not Meet: Students fail to integrate outside sources or paper consists largely of quotations and paraphrases from sources with few connections between or among them. Conclusions demonstrate no evidence of the students' own thinking and may merely restate some of the ideas presented.

___Meets: Students integrate evidence drawn from appropriately selected sources. Conclusions demonstrate students' conscious attempts to integrate their own thinking with an analysis of outside sources.

___Exceeds: Students integrate evidence drawn from carefully selected sources. Conclusions are based on thoughtful integration of the students' own thinking and careful analysis of the outside sources. Students integrate evidence drawn from carefully selected sources. Conclusions are based on thoughtful integration of the students' own thinking and careful analysis of the outside sources.