

University of Denver Writing Program WAC Survey

The survey below was administered online in fall 2006 to 321 tenure-track faculty who had taught undergraduate courses in the previous year at the University of Denver; 42% responded. We're currently analyzing responses and conducting follow-up interviews with a random sample of 40 professors, in a study approved by the IRB at DU. A similar survey at The University of Texas at Austin was helpful in developing this one. For more information, contact Doug Hesse at dhesse@du.edu or 303-871-7448. -DH, 2/21/07

Survey: Writing Assignment Practices of University of Denver Faculty

The University of Denver Writing Program, with the support of the Office of the Provost, is conducting a research study of the kinds of writing being assigned across campus. The information gathered will guide Writing Program programming and contribute to basic research. This project has been approved by the DU IRB. We are asking all appointed faculty who have taught an undergraduate course in the past year to respond. Your participation, of course, is voluntary and completely anonymous.

40 respondents, drawn at random, will receive a gift of an item of their choosing from Amazon.com, in an amount up to \$25. After you complete and submit the survey, you will be asked if you'd like to participate in the drawing. Only at that time will we collect your email address; there will be no connection between your survey responses and identifying information.

The survey consists of 15 questions that you'll answer by clicking on the appropriate response, and 2 open-ended questions at the end. We estimate that it will take 7 - 10 minutes to complete the survey.

Part 1, Questions 2-11, asks you to report on writing assignments that you may have made in a recent undergraduate course. Part 2, Questions 12-13, asks you to compare this class to others you have taught. Questions 14-17 ask you to comment on your teaching in general.

1. In which college/school do you teach?

Arts, Humanities
Social Sciences
Natural Sciences
Engineering and Computer Science
Business
International Studies

PART 1

Think of the **most recent undergraduate course** you taught (including the present quarter). Answer questions 2-13 based on that course. Even if you assigned no writing, complete all of the questions; you'll see places to enter "0" or "none."

2. What was the level of this course?

1000
2000
3000

3. Was this course

taken mostly by undergraduate majors?
taken mostly by nonmajors (as a foundations, core, or similar course)?

4. What was the enrollment in the course?

- 15 or fewer
- 16-24
- 25-40
- 41-60
- 61 or more

5. How many times did you assign the following formal writing assignments?

	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9 or more
Short Essay (1-3 pages)						
Longer Essay (4 or more pages)						
Short Research Paper (1-5 pages)						
Mid-Length Research Paper (6-10 pages)						
Longer Research Paper (11 or more pages)						
Creative works (short stories, poems, plays, etc.)						
Other _____						

6. How many times did you assign the following writing tasks to test or report knowledge?

	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9 or more
Essay Exams						
Short-answer quizzes						
Reading or lecture summaries						
Lab reports or Case studies						
Letters, memos, etc.						
Other _____						

7. How many times did you assign the following writing tasks to facilitate student learning, exploration, or discussion?

	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9 or more
Journal or notebook						
Informal in-class writing						
Class forum posts (discussion board, listserv)						
Reading response/reaction						
Other _____						

8. How many times did you assign the following writing tasks to support research or projects?

	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9 or more
Outline						
Proposal or prospectus						
Abstract or précis						
Annotated Bibliography						
Survey or interview questions						
Other _____						

9. How many times did you assign any of the following multi-media projects that involved writing?

	0	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9 or more
Oral presentation/power point						
Web site or page						
Audio or Visual project (e.g. podcast, slideshow, video, photo/image essay)						
Poster						
Other _____						

10. What was the *total number of pages* of writing (formal and informal) assigned in the course?

0
1-10
11-20
21-30
31-40
41 or more

11. Approximately what *percentage of the final course grade* was based on writing assignments?

0
1-20
21-40
41-60
61-80
81-100

12. Was this course typical of the undergraduate courses you teach in terms of the **AMOUNT of writing assigned?**

yes
 no
If "no" please explain.

13. Was this course typical of the undergraduate courses you teach in terms of the **KIND(S) of writing assigned?**

yes
 no
If "no" please explain.

Continue to Part 2

Part 2

Now, please consider ALL of your undergraduate courses and respond to the remaining questions based on your general practices regarding writing.

14. When you assign writing, how often do you ask students to complete the following activities?

Activity:	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
Spend class time generating topics, developing ideas, or talking about writing strategies				
Participate in workshops or discussions with other students about their work in progress				
Meet with you individually outside of class to discuss their writing				
Revise their work based on your feedback before they receive a grade				
Revise based on your feedback after they receive a grade				
Meet with your teaching assistant to discuss their writing				
Meet with a consultant in the Writing Center				
Share final drafts with the class (reading work in class, posting them on Blackboard, distributing copies, etc.)				

15. Many factors contribute to the quality of writing, but please identify the 7 features you think are *most* important in student writing. Check the top seven criteria you apply in your evaluations of student writing.

- Appropriateness to audience and purpose
- Citation and documentation
- Clarity
- Coverage of subject matter/depth of understanding
- Creativity/originality
- Format and presentation
- Grammar, usage, and punctuation
- Integration of source materials
- Language, word choice, and vocabulary
- Logical development/reasoning
- Organization, including opening, closing, and transitions
- Quality of analysis or explanations
- Strength of argument
- Style, tone, and voice
- Supporting details/evidence
- Other

16. How would you characterize the most successful writing that students have produced for your courses?

17. Is there anything else you'd like to share about your teaching or about student writing?