

Common Writing Assignment Instructions for Core Discovery Faculty

1. Please let your students know that they'll need to complete the writing by September 7, 2007.
2. Please tell them the purpose of the assignment is to allow the Core faculty to get a better sense of the writing and reasoning abilities of our first-year students. The assignment will not be graded for your course (as noted earlier, you are very welcome to give them points for completing the assignment). The raters will rate the writing anonymously.
3. Please ask them to do their best work.
4. We will let you know as soon after September 7th as possible which students completed the assignment. We will also make sure you have copies of your students' writing (at 300 words per student I hope it's not an overwhelming task to read them if you wish).
5. I am adding all of you to the Blackboard course as students so you can wander through the space we are constructing for this assignment. You will receive an e-mail similar to the one below I just received (yes, David and Steve, the name of your course has been corrected). This is the New Wild West space. All others will be exactly the same except, of course, for the article.
6. I can't thank you enough for helping us assess the correlation between writing and reasoning and enrollment in Core Discovery. All data will be aggregated for any reports generated (which are primarily for our use!) and the identities of the students will be carefully protected as dictated by Human Subjects protocols.

Jean M. Henscheid , You have been added to a UI Blackboard course:
core: Common Core Discovery Assignment - Wild West. Please access this online course material through an Internet Web browser by going to <http://www.blackboard.uidaho.edu/>. When you click the "Log In" button, you will be asked for your username and password as follows:

Log in: <http://www.blackboard.uidaho.edu/>
User name: jeanh
Password: use your UI Novell/Blackboard password

If you do not know your current password for Novell/Blackboard, you may set it by logging into <http://support.uidaho.edu/> and choosing "Change Passwords" from the left menu. You must log in to this system with an active UI username and password. If you are a new UI student, please change your registration PIN and update your password via <http://www.vandalsetup.uidaho.edu/>

Direct all questions regarding your Blackboard course to the course instructor. If you have problems accessing Blackboard after changing your password, you may contact the ITS Help Desk (E-mail helpdesk@uidaho.edu, Phone 208-885-HELP).

For additional help with Blackboard, visit http://www.its2.uidaho.edu/blackboard/student_help.htm

Common Writing Assignment Instructions for Core Discovery Faculty

Round Two: Due December 14, 2007

1. Please let your students know that they'll need to complete the writing by December 14, 2007 by 5 pm.
2. Please tell them the purpose of the assignment is to allow the Core faculty to get a better sense of the writing and reasoning abilities of our first-year students. The assignment will not be graded for your course (as noted earlier, you are very welcome to give them points for completing the assignment). The raters will rate the writing anonymously.
3. Please ask them to do their best work.
4. I can't thank you enough for helping us assess the correlation between writing and reasoning and enrollment in Core Discovery. All data will be aggregated for any reports generated (which are primarily for our use!) and the identities of the students will be carefully protected as dictated by Human Subjects protocols.

Here is the information your students will need to log in:

Log in: <http://www.blackboard.uidaho.edu/>

User name: jeanh [FOR EXAMPLE]

Password: use your UI Novell/Blackboard password

If you do not know your current password for Novell/Blackboard, you may set it by logging into <http://support.uidaho.edu/> and choosing "Change Passwords" from the left menu. You must log in to this system with an active UI username and password. If you are a new UI student, please change your registration PIN and update your password via <http://www.vandalsetup.uidaho.edu/>

Direct all questions regarding your Blackboard course to the course instructor. If you have problems accessing Blackboard after changing your password, you may contact the ITS Help Desk (E-mail helpdesk@uidaho.edu, Phone 208-885-HELP).

For additional help with Blackboard, visit

http://www.its2.uidaho.edu/blackboard/student_help.htm

Guide to Rating Integrative & Critical Thinking

1. Identifies, summarizes (and appropriately reformulates) the problem, question, or issue.

<i>Emerging</i>		<i>Developing</i>		<i>Mastering</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	6
Does not attempt to or fails to identify and summarize accurately.		Summarizes issue, though some aspects are incorrect or confused; nuances and critical details are absent or glossed over.		Clearly identifies the challenge and subsidiary, embedded, or implicit aspects of the core issue, addressing & re-envisioning relationships to each other.	

2. Identifies and considers the influence of **context** * and **assumptions**.

<i>Emerging</i>		<i>Developing</i>		<i>Mastering</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>Approach to the issue is in egocentric or socio-centric terms. Does not include connections to other contexts—cultural, political, and historical. Assessment is grounded in absolutes with little evidence of knowledge of own bias.</p> <p>Does not surface the assumptions and underlying ethical implications, or does so superficially.</p>		<p>Presents and explores relevant contexts and assumptions regarding the issue, though in a limited way.</p> <p>Assessment includes some outside verification, but primarily relies on established authorities</p> <p>Provides some consideration of assumptions and underlying ethical implications</p>		<p>Analyzes the issue with a clear sense of scope and context, including an assessment of the audience of the analysis. Considers other pertinent contexts. Assessment acknowledges complexity and bias of vantage and values, although may elect to hold to bias in context.</p> <p>Identifies and questions the validity of the assumptions and addresses the ethical dimensions that underlie the issue.</p>	

*Contexts to consider

Cultural/social Group, national, ethnic behavior/attitude	Scientific Conceptual, basic science, scientific method
Educational Schooling, formal training	Economic Trade, business concerns costs
Technological Applied science, engineering	Ethical Values
Political Organizational or governmental	Personal Experience Personal observation, informal character

3. Develops, presents, and communicates OWN perspective, hypothesis or position.

<i>Emerging</i>		<i>Developing</i>		<i>Mastering</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>Position or hypothesis is clearly inherited or adopted with little original consideration</p> <p>Addresses a single source or view of the argument, and fails to clarify the established or presented position relative to one's own. Fails to establish other critical distinctions. Fails to present and justify own opinion or forward hypothesis.</p> <p>Position or hypothesis is unclear, or simplistic.</p>		<p>Position includes some original thinking, and/or acknowledging, refuting, synthesizing or extending other assertions, though some aspects may have been adopted with limited thought.</p> <p>Presents own position or hypothesis, though inconsistently.</p> <p>Presents and justifies own position without addressing other views, or does so superficially.</p> <p>In general, position or hypothesis is clear, though gaps may exist.</p>		<p>Position demonstrates ownership for constructing knowledge or framing original hypothesis/questions, integrating objective analysis and intuition.</p> <p>Appropriately identifies own position on the issue, drawing support from experience, and information not available from <i>assigned</i> sources.</p> <p>Clearly presents and justifies own view or hypothesis while qualifying contrary views or interpretations.</p> <p>Position or hypothesis includes sophisticated thought and is developed clearly throughout.</p>	

4. Presents, assesses, and analyzes appropriate **supporting data/evidence**

<i>Emerging</i>		<i>Developing</i>		<i>Mastering</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>Repeats information provided without question or dismisses evidence without adequate justification.</p> <p>Does not distinguish among fact, opinion, and value judgments.</p>		<p>Use of evidence is qualified and selective, though perhaps unintentional.</p> <p>Discerns fact from opinion and may recognize bias in evidence, though attribution is spotty, inappropriate, or exaggerated.</p>		<p>Examines the evidence and source of evidence; questions its accuracy, precision, relevance, completeness.</p> <p>Demonstrates understanding of how facts shape though may not confirm opinion. Recognizes bias, including selection bias and does so with balance.</p>	

Conflates cause and correlation; presents evidence and ideas in confused or confusing sequence.	Distinguishes causality from correlation, though presentation may be flawed.	Correlations are clearly distinct from causal relationships between and among ideas. Sequence of presentation reflects clear relationship or organization of ideas, subordinating appropriately for importance and impact.
Data/evidence or sources are not on topic or are inappropriate.	Appropriate data/evidence or sources provided to meet the information need, though little evidence of more than routine exploration.	Information need is clearly defined and is related to assignment, course or personal interests.
Data/evidence is simplistic.	Data/evidence is adequate.	Data/evidence is complex or applied with sophistication.
No evidence of search, selection or source evaluation skills.	Demonstrates adequate skill in searching, selecting, and evaluating sources to meet the information need.	Evidence of search, selection, and source evaluation skills; notable identification of uniquely salient resources.

5. Integrates issue using OTHER (disciplinary) **perspectives and positions.**

<i>Emerging</i>		<i>Developing</i>		<i>Mastering</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	6
Deals only with a single perspective and fails to discuss other possible perspectives, especially those held by others.		Begins to relate alternative views to qualify analysis.		Addresses perspectives noted previously, and additional diverse perspectives drawn from outside information to qualify analysis.	
If more than one idea is advanced, alternatives are disjointed or bolted together.		Rough integration of multiple viewpoints and comparison of ideas or perspectives.		Fully integrated ideas and perspectives from variety of sources. Analogies may be used effectively.	
Adopts a single idea or limited ideas with little question.		Ideas are investigated, if in a limited way, and integrated, if unevenly.		Integrates own and other's ideas through a complex process of judgment and justification	
Engages ideas that are obvious or agreeable.		Engages challenging ideas tentatively or perhaps in ways that overstate conflict.		Can clearly present and justify own view or hypothesis while respecting	
Avoids difficult,					

<p>challenging, and discomfoting ideas. Treats other positions superficially or misrepresents them.</p> <p>Little integration of perspectives and no or limited evidence of reflection.</p>	<p>May dismiss alternative views too hastily. Analysis of other positions is thoughtful and mostly accurate.</p> <p>Acknowledges and integrates different ways of knowing.</p>	<p>other views.</p> <p>Analysis of other positions is accurate and nuanced, empathetic even when countered.</p> <p>Understanding of connections between disciplines and among discipline study, career, and civic responsibilities. New understanding and respect for disciplinary epistemologies</p> <p>Understanding of how one's past standards have evolved.</p> <p>Can self-assess and self-adjust, based on performance standards and criteria used.</p> <p>Can apply criteria to own work with high degree of accuracy.</p>
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6. Identifies and assesses **conclusions, implications, and consequences.**

<i>Emerging</i>		<i>Developing</i>		<i>Mastering</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	6
<p>Fails to identify conclusions, implications, and consequences of the issue or the key relationships between the other elements of the problem, such as context, implications, assumptions, or data and evidence.</p> <p>Conclusions are not connected to the issue(s) or are unsupported.</p> <p>Mistakes correlations with cause.</p>		<p>Conclusions begin to reflect influence of context and consequences that extend beyond the borders of a discipline or single issue.</p> <p>Conclusions are connected to the issue and are supported.</p> <p>Confuses correlations with cause.</p>		<p>Identifies and discusses conclusions, implications, and consequences considering context, assumptions, data, and evidence. Objectively qualifies own assertions.</p> <p>Conclusions derive from the issue and the treatment.</p> <p>Recognizes limitations of correlations or association and qualifies implications of assertions accordingly.</p>	

Considers knowledge as absolute, unassailable confirmed by one or another authority.	Considers knowledge as relative collection of opinions and perspectives, and makes little attempt to compare.	Views knowledge as the best available evidence within the given context, even in the face of uncertainty and ambiguity.
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7. Communicates effectively.

<i>Emerging</i>		<i>Developing</i>		<i>Mastering</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	6
In many places, language obscures meaning.		In general, language does not interfere with communication.		Language clearly and effectively communicates ideas. May at times be eloquent.	
Grammar, syntax, or other errors are distracting or repeated.		Errors are not distracting or frequent.		Errors are minimal.	
Presentation style is consistently inappropriate.		Some problems with more difficult aspects style and voice.		Style is appropriate for occasion and audience.	
Work is unfocused Not organized; lacks logical connection of ideas.		Basic organization is apparent; transitions connect ideas, though may be mechanical.		Organization is clear; transitions between ideas enhance presentation.	
Format is inconsistent, absent, or distracting.		Demonstrates understands appropriate format though execution may be clumsy.		Consistent use of chosen appropriate format. Few problems with other components of presentation.	
Few sources are cited and/or are used correctly		Most sources are cited and used correctly		All sources are cited and used correctly, demonstrating an understanding of economic, legal and social issues involved with use of information.	

For more information, visit the *Critical Thinking Project* homepage at <http://wsuctproject.wsu.edu/ph.htm>.