

University Writing 20 Assessment – Spring 2004

Table 1. Pretest: Types of writing

	Percent N=297
Book review	
Very often	7%
Often	27%
Sometimes	17%
Occasionally	24%
Not at all	26%
Creative writing (e.g., poem, short story)	
Very often	12%
Often	27%
Sometimes	27%
Occasionally	26%
Not at all	9%
Laboratory report	
Very often	12%
Often	33%
Sometimes	19%
Occasionally	14%
Not at all	23%
Literary analysis	
Very often	44%
Often	38%
Sometimes	12%
Occasionally	5%
Not at all	2%
News report writing	
Very often	6%
Often	10%
Sometimes	11%
Occasionally	28%
Not at all	45%
News feature writing	
Very often	4%
Often	10%
Sometimes	10%
Occasionally	23%
Not at all	53%
Research paper	
Very often	6%
Often	25%
Sometimes	26%
Occasionally	38%
Not at all	5%

	Percent
Historical research essay	
Very often	5%
Often	18%
Sometimes	26%
Occasionally	36%
Not at all	15%
Writing for extracurricular activities	
Very often	14%
Often	13%
Sometimes	13%
Occasionally	15%
Not at all	46%
Others	
Very often	24%
Often	16%
Sometimes	4%
Occasionally	2%
Not at all	53%

Table 2. Pretest: Writing tasks

	Percent N=297
Describe	
Very often	18%
Often	34%
Sometimes	30%
Occasionally	15%
Not at all	4%
Report facts	
Very often	22%
Often	36%
Sometimes	27%
Occasionally	12%
Not at all	4%
Synthesize information from different sources	
Very often	27%
Often	43%
Sometimes	20%
Occasionally	9%
Not at all	2%
Analyze the needs of a writing audience	
Very often	14%
Often	26%
Sometimes	26%
Occasionally	18%
Not at all	16%
Criticize written arguments	
Very often	20%
Often	33%
Sometimes	27%
Occasionally	15%
Not at all	6%
Offer and support your opinion	
Very often	55%
Often	31%
Sometimes	9%
Occasionally	5%
Not at all	< 0.5%

Table 3. Pretest: Writing process

	Percent N=297
Turned in drafts of an assignment prior to the final paper	
Very often	13%
Often	33%
Sometimes	21%
Occasionally	23%
Not at all	11%
Exchanged paper with classmates to give and receive feedback on works in progress	
Very often	14%
Often	32%
Sometimes	23%
Occasionally	22%
Not at all	8%
Received feedback from your teachers prior to final paper	
Very often	14%
Often	33%
Sometimes	26%
Occasionally	21%
Not at all	6%
Received feedback on final paper	
Very often	20%
Often	40%
Sometimes	23%
Occasionally	12%
Not at all	5%

Table 4. Pretest: Research sources

	Percent N=297
Topic-specific books	
Very often	23%
Often	42%
Sometimes	24%
Occasionally	9%
Not at all	2%
Assigned textbooks	
Very often	41%
Often	31%
Sometimes	16%
Occasionally	9%
Not at all	2%
Articles in scholarly journals	
Very often	8%
Often	20%
Sometimes	25%
Occasionally	29%
Not at all	18%
Articles in popular magazines	
Very often	4%
Often	9%
Sometimes	26%
Occasionally	36%
Not at all	25%
Articles in newspapers	
Very often	10%
Often	20%
Sometimes	33%
Occasionally	27%
Not at all	11%
Internet	
Very often	49%
Often	32%
Sometimes	13%
Occasionally	5%
Not at all	1%
Encyclopedias	
Very often	7%
Often	19%
Sometimes	31%
Occasionally	27%
Not at all	16%
Interviews	
Very often	2%
Often	8%
Sometimes	17%
Occasionally	38%
Not at all	35%

	Percent
Other	
Very often	22%
Often	6%
Sometimes	9%
Occasionally	-
Not at all	63%

Table 5. Pretest: Frequency, Length, and Format of Writing Papers

	Percent N=297
Estimate the frequency with which you used the five paragraph format	
Very often	48%
Often	27%
Sometimes	15%
Occasionally	6%
Not at all	4%
Less than 3 pages	
More than 10 assignments	63%
6-10 assignments	21%
2-5 assignments	13%
One assignment	2%
None	1%
3-5 pages	
More than 10 assignments	25%
6-10 assignments	40%
2-5 assignments	31%
One assignment	3%
None	1%
6-10 pages	
More than 10 assignments	3%
6-10 assignments	11%
2-5 assignments	45%
One assignment	28%
None	12%
Over 10 pages	
More than 10 assignments	-
6-10 assignments	2%
2-5 assignments	23%
One assignment	38%
None	36%

Table 6. Pretest: Student self-evaluation

	Percent N=297
Learn how to write papers for college	
Very important	76%
Somewhat important	19%
Neither important nor unimportant	3%
Somewhat unimportant	1%
Very unimportant	1%
Improve writing skills	
Very important	82%
Somewhat important	15%
Neither important nor unimportant	2%
Somewhat unimportant	-
Very unimportant	< 0.5%
Refresh what I already know about writing	
Very important	30%
Somewhat important	52%
Neither important nor unimportant	14%
Somewhat unimportant	2%
Very unimportant	2%
Fine-tune my writing skills	
Very important	75%
Somewhat important	21%
Neither important nor unimportant	3%
Somewhat unimportant	1%
Very unimportant	< 0.5%
Figure out what it takes to do well in UW 20	
Very important	51%
Somewhat important	31%
Neither important nor unimportant	13%
Somewhat unimportant	2%
Very unimportant	3%
Impress the instructor with my writing skills	
Very important	24%
Somewhat important	37%
Neither important nor unimportant	31%
Somewhat unimportant	4%
Very unimportant	4%
Avoid doing poorly in class	
Very important	79%
Somewhat important	17%
Neither important nor unimportant	3%
Somewhat unimportant	1%
Very unimportant	-
Get an A in the course	
Very important	52%
Somewhat important	37%
Neither important nor unimportant	10%
Somewhat unimportant	1%
Very unimportant	1%

	Percent
How would you characterize yourself as a writer?	
Excellent	4%
Very good	37%
Good	48%
Fair	10%
Poor	1%
How do you think others view your writing ability?	
Excellent	7%
Very good	36%
Good	49%
Fair	8%
Poor	-

Table 7. Post-test: Student self-evaluation

	Percent N=320
I registered for this particular section because the content interested me.	
Strongly agree	30%
Agree	44%
Neutral	11%
Disagree	8%
Strongly disagree	7%
By the end of the course I was more interested in the subject matter than at the start.	
Strongly agree	24%
Agree	33%
Neutral	25%
Disagree	13%
Strongly disagree	5%
The assignments for this course were challenging or thought-provoking.	
Strongly agree	35%
Agree	43%
Neutral	16%
Disagree	5%
Strongly disagree	1%
Comments on my work by the professor were thorough and informative.	
Strongly agree	43%
Agree	41%
Neutral	10%
Disagree	6%
Strongly disagree	< 0.5%

	Percent
The assignments were returned in time to be useful.	
Strongly agree	37%
Agree	35%
Neutral	14%
Disagree	12%
Strongly disagree	3%
If I had questions or concerns, the instructor was accessible.	
Strongly agree	56%
Agree	37%
Neutral	6%
Disagree	1%
Strongly disagree	-
The class size contributed to making this course an effective learning experience.	
Strongly agree	56%
Agree	34%
Neutral	8%
Disagree	1%
Strongly disagree	1%
Comments on my work from other students in the class were generally informative and helpful.	
Strongly agree	19%
Agree	42%
Neutral	24%
Disagree	14%
Strongly disagree	3%
Collaborating with other students in the class helped to improve my writing skills.	
Strongly agree	14%
Agree	36%
Neutral	29%
Disagree	16%
Strongly disagree	4%
I improved my capacity to analyze and evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view in the readings for the course.	
Strongly agree	23%
Agree	44%
Neutral	22%
Disagree	9%
Strongly disagree	1%
I improved my capacities for analytical writing in this course.	
Strongly agree	26%
Agree	41%
Neutral	21%
Disagree	10%
Strongly disagree	2%

	Percent
My ability to synthesize ideas from a number of sources was enhanced by this course.	
Strongly agree	25%
Agree	49%
Neutral	19%
Disagree	6%
Strongly disagree	1%
I improved my ability to construct an informed and persuasive argument.	
Strongly agree	23%
Agree	50%
Neutral	19%
Disagree	7%
Strongly disagree	2%
I am comfortable asking the professor of this course for a letter of recommendation.	
Strongly agree	32%
Agree	34%
Neutral	21%
Disagree	9%
Strongly disagree	3%
UW 20 improved my research skills.	
Strongly agree	28%
Agree	41%
Neutral	19%
Disagree	9%
Strongly disagree	3%
I feel comfortable using GW libraries for research.	
Strongly agree	40%
Agree	48%
Neutral	11%
Disagree	2%
Strongly disagree	-
I know how to find subject-specific scholarly articles.	
Strongly agree	39%
Agree	51%
Neutral	9%
Disagree	1%
Strongly disagree	< 0.5%
Having a librarian involved in UW 20 enhanced the course experience.	
Strongly agree	26%
Agree	33%
Neutral	29%
Disagree	11%
Strongly disagree	2%
The class instruction session on library and research skills led by the class librarian was valuable.	
Strongly agree	23%
Agree	38%
Neutral	23%
Disagree	12%
Strongly disagree	3%

Table 8. Post-test: Research

	Percent N=320
In addition to UW 20, I took one or more classes this semester that required significant research.	
Yes	47%
No	53%
The research skills learned in UW 20 were useful for other classes this semester.	
Strongly agree	25%
Agree	43%
Neutral	25%
Disagree somewhat	5%
Strongly disagree	2%
The individual research appointments led by the class librarian were valuable.	
Strongly agree	20%
Agree	46%
Neutral	20%
Disagree somewhat	8%
Strongly disagree	6%

Table 9. Post-test: Student self-evaluation

	Percent N=320
Compared with my other GW courses this semester the amount of effort I put into UW 20 was	
Higher	81%
About the same	17%
Lower	2%
Overall, my level of engagement in this course was	
Very high	28%
High	48%
Moderate	21%
Low	2%
Very low	2%
Overall, I found this course to be very challenging.	
Strongly agree	40%
Agree	45%
Neutral	10%
Disagree somewhat	5%
Strongly disagree	1%
The average amount of time outside of class I spent on UW20 was	
16-20 or more hours	11%
11-15 hours	17%
6-10 hours	33%
3-5 hours	34%
2 hours or less	4%
No hours	1%
How would you characterize yourself as a writer?	
Excellent	8%
Very good	42%
Good	39%
Fair	9%
Poor	2%
How do you think others view your writing ability?	
Excellent	8%
Very good	42%
Good	38%
Fair	11%
Poor	1%

Table 10. Students' grades in all sections

	Actual grade N=368	Anticipated grade N=314	Thought deserved grade N=293
A	52%	41%	65%
B	37%	45%	27%
C	8%	5%	3%
D-F	1%	1%	-
R	1%	-	-
W	1%	-	-
I	< 0.5%	-	-
Don't know	-	8%	4%

