Teaching Guide for GSIs

Working with Student Writing

Writing, more than simply a mode of communication, is a powerful means of learning. Within each discipline students must learn techniques of observation, critical thinking, conceptualization, and particular terms and modes of discourse. The process of writing affords students with needed practice in all these areas. Often the practitioners of a given discipline are in the best position to teach students how to write for that discipline. Further, people learn to write more fluently by writing often, receiving frequent feedback from instructors and peers, and revising their work.

GSIs encounter many kinds of student writing, from short essay answers on exams to fully executed research papers. Reading, evaluating, and responding to these can be daunting. However, because writing is such an important way for students to process material and show the extent of their understanding, this section of the Teaching Guide for GSIs addresses strategies for creating useful assignments, teaching students through these assignments, and evaluating student writing on a tight time budget.

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Creating Writing Assignments

Many instructors struggle with crafting writing assignments that are accessible yet challenging for students. We suggest you consider the scale of the assignment — in terms of time, length, and scope — and the learning objectives of the assignment — what do you want your students to learn or show that they’ve learned through the assignment, and is it evident to them just what kind of project the assignment asks for?

Getting a Sense of Scale
Articulating Objectives
Taxonomy of Learning Objectives
Exercise in Assignment Design using Bloom’s Taxonomy (doc)

Creating Writing Assignments: Getting a Sense of Scale

Instructors sometimes assign papers that are beyond the range of what most students can realistically complete. But they will try. A vague, poorly conceived, or disproportionately laborious assignment can turn students away from the learning process and lower their motivation quickly. On the other hand, a well crafted and well proportioned assignment with clearly articulated objectives can be highly motivating.

If you want to know how well students understood the explanation of Ohm’s Law in lecture, you can assign a minute-paper at the end of the class in which students briefly jot down and explain the main points. If you want them to explore on their own the importance and applications of Ohm’s law, a five-page research paper might be more appropriate and could take them weeks to prepare. If all the material for such a paper has been presented in course materials already, the same objective could be reached with a two-page brief due at the next section meeting.

Consider a list of prompts for a writing assignment. How would you order them on a scale of least sophisticated to most sophisticated? Least time-consuming to grade to most?

• Distinguish Marx’s main ideas about ideology from Althusser’s.
• Explain the difference between interspecific and intraspecific competition.
• Explain the difference between interspecific and intraspecific competition, and determine which form of competition predominates in the example provided.
• Write a position paper on one major environmental justice issue in the Bay Area.
• Define “simile.”
• Define “simile,” identify one in the poem, and tell what it contributes to the poem.
• Restate Ohm’s law in your own words.
Creating Writing Assignments: Articulating Objectives

Writing assignments are more successful in promoting student learning if you have articulated clear learning objectives. To construct learning objectives (i.e., what students should be able to do or demonstrate), many instructors use a classification system designed in the mid-1950s by Benjamin Bloom et al. commonly referred to as Bloom’s Taxonomy. Simply put, this classification system (presented on the page Taxonomy of Learning Objectives) consists of six different levels of cognitive skills, starting with the simplest, lower order thinking skills of knowing or comprehending something and moving to cognitive skills that demonstrate higher order thinking skills such as an ability to apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate material.

When we create assignments or develop test questions, we can use verbs associated with each of these levels to promote or test how deeply students have learned something. If, for example, a student is able to list the major battles of the Civil War, the student demonstrates knowledge. If a student is able to compare two different theories about the causes of the Civil War and evaluate their merits and limitations, they have demonstrated a more complex set of cognitive skills, the ability to compare and evaluate. Each level in the classification has verbs associated with it that you can use to tailor your writing assignments and exam questions to specific learning objectives. Using appropriate verbs from the italicized lists on the page Taxonomy of Learning Objectives, think about assignments you might create for students to promote learning or to evaluate how well they have learned course material.
Creating Writing Assignments: Taxonomy of Learning Objectives

Bloom et al.’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives for the Cognitive Domain (1956) (with Outcome-Illustrating Verbs)*

Designing Assignments: Exercise in Assignment Design Using Bloom’s Taxonomy (pdf)

Knowledge

Remembering (recalling) appropriate, previously learned information, such as terminology or specific facts.

**Verbs** to use in assignments to have students demonstrate knowledge: define; describe; enumerate; identify; label; list; match; name; read; record; reproduce; select; state; view.

**Example:** Ask your students to do a free-write in class, in which they identify three causes of the Civil War, or define Progressivism. Use their responses as a starting point for discussion, or have the students discuss their responses in small groups.

Comprehension

Understanding the meaning of informational materials.

**Verbs** to use in assignments to have students demonstrate comprehension: classify; cite; convert; describe; discuss; estimate; explain; generalize; give examples; make sense of; paraphrase; restate (in own words); summarize; trace; understand.

**Example:** Ask your students to paraphrase an author’s argument, or a part of their lecture notes, in one paragraph. Then divide the students into pairs and ask the students to discuss any gaps or discrepancies in their comprehension and to construct a new and better paragraph together.

Application

Using previously learned information in new and concrete situations to solve problems that have single or best answers.

**Verbs** to use in assignments so that students can demonstrate their ability to apply: act; administer; articulate; assess; chart; collect; compute; construct; contribute; control; determine; develop; discover; establish; extend; implement; include; inform; instruct; operationalize; participate; predict; prepare; preserve; produce; project; provide; relate; report; show; solve; teach; transfer; use; utilize.

**Example:** Ask students to relate classroom instruction on the immigrant experience in the United States to primary sources which you provide (or which they collect on their own). Ask the students to use the primary sources to teach a course theme to their peers; or have them report their observations on a threaded discussion list.

Analysis

Breaking down informational materials into their component parts, examining (and trying to understand the organizational structure of) such information to develop divergent conclusions by identifying motives or causes, making inferences, and/or finding evidence to support generalizations.
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Verbs to use in assignments so that students can demonstrate their ability to analyze: break down; correlate; diagram; differentiate; discriminate; distinguish; focus; illustrate; infer; limit; outline; point out; prioritize; recognize; separate; subdivide.

Example: In an exam essay question, students may be asked to analyze the reasons for European settlement in the "New World." Beyond simply identifying the reasons, they are asked to prioritize the reasons in order of significance, and to distinguish between the reasons for settlement in New England vs. Virginia.

Synthesis

Creatively or divergently applying prior knowledge and skills to produce a new or original whole.

Verbs to use in assignments so that students can demonstrate their ability to synthesize: adapt; anticipate; categorize; collaborate; combine; communicate; compare; compile; compose; contrast; create; design; devise; express; facilitate; formulate; generate; incorporate; individualize; initiate; integrate; intervene; model; modify; negotiate; plan; progress; rearrange; reconstruct; reinforce; reorganize; revise; structure; substitute; validate.

Example: In preparation for a research paper, students may be asked to create a prospectus, in which they formulate a hypothesis, compile a bibliography, and plan a research schedule.

Evaluation

Judging the value of material based on personal values or opinions, resulting in an end product, with a given purpose, without real right or wrong answers.

Verbs to use in assignments so that students can demonstrate their ability to evaluate: appraise; compare and contrast; conclude; criticize; critique; decide; defend; interpret; judge; justify; reframe; support.

Example: Have students write a five-page essay in which they compare and contrast two authors’ arguments on a given topic, evaluate their use of evidence, and defend one interpretation over the other.

## An Exercise in Assignment Design Using Bloom’s Taxonomy

On the chart below are listed writing assignments that might be given to a class. With the aid of Bloom’s Taxonomy, try coming up with ways to fill in the fields of the chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Possible format</th>
<th>Cognitive skills exercised</th>
<th>Time investment for students and instructors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distinguish Marx’s main ideas about ideology from Althusser’s.</td>
<td>e.g., two-page essay (lower-division course)</td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fifteen-page research paper (upper-division course)</td>
<td>Analysis, Synthesis</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain the difference between interspecific and intraspecific competition.</td>
<td>In-class short paragraph</td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain the difference between interspecific and intraspecific competition. Determine which form of competition predominates in the example provided.</td>
<td>Forum discussion in bSpace</td>
<td>Application</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define “simile.”</td>
<td>In-class short answer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define “simile,” identify one in the poem, and tell what it contributes to the poem.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restate Ohm’s law in your own words.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a position paper on one major environmental justice issue in the Bay Area.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students could be asked to complete some of the assignments in a number of different formats (ten-page essay, five-minute writing assignment, quiz, position paper, lab journal, etc.) in order to address these prompts. Try to complete this table. Identify the level of cognitive complexity that each assignment requires. Words like “knowledge,” “evaluation,” and “comprehension” may come in handy. Quickly propose an appropriate size and time frame for the assignment. Approximate the amount of time that students would need to complete each assignment and the time the GSI would need to grade a set. Sample scenarios can be viewed on the following page.

[http://gsi.berkeley.edu/gsi-guide-contents/pre-semester-intro/](http://gsi.berkeley.edu/gsi-guide-contents/pre-semester-intro/)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Possible format</th>
<th>Cognitive skills exercised</th>
<th>Time investment for students and instructors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distinguish Marx’s main ideas about ideology from Althusser’s.</td>
<td>two-page essay</td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>Low-Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain the difference between interspecific and intraspecific competition.</td>
<td>In-class short paragraph</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Low-Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain the difference between interspecific and intraspecific competition. Determine which form of competition predominates in the example provided.</td>
<td>Forum discussion in bSpace</td>
<td>Application</td>
<td>Low-Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define “simile.”</td>
<td>In-class quiz</td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define “simile,” identify one in the poem, and tell what it contributes to the poem.</td>
<td>One-page response paper assigned as homework</td>
<td>Knowledge Application Analysis</td>
<td>Student: Moderate GSI: Minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restate Ohm’s law in your own words.</td>
<td>five minute, in-class writing assignment</td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a position paper on one major environmental justice issue in the Bay Area.</td>
<td>ten- to twelve-page paper, divided into segments, across ten weeks</td>
<td>Analysis Synthesis Evaluation</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Guiding Research Papers in the Sciences and Humanities

Although research is conducted in many different ways, and the written reporting of research comes in many different forms, there are some key similarities in the needs of students who are in the process of learning to conduct and report on research. Similarities include the following:

• Breaking a project into manageable steps — helping students concentrate on one significant part at a time as they construct a much larger whole.
• Support for learning the processes involved in the research and reporting
• Accountability to complete the processes, that is, an instructor and a research community
• Refining a question of appropriate scope for a particular assignment
• Scoping relevant literature to find out what research has been done on their question — depending on the course level, this may be their first foray into scholarly databases and literature
• Getting feedback on their work so they can develop it further

In the following pages you will find instructional materials from experienced GSIs in different fields. They reflect important differences among their fields of scholarship, as well as differences in the level of coursework. You may or may not want to segment a research assignment into the particular steps explained here, but the approaches in these assignments are meant to help both GSIs and their students appreciate all the component steps and skills that their research project will entail. Think about ways you could organize students’ work on a research assignment so they come up with the best written product they can.

• Integrative Biology Research Assignment
• English R&C Research Assignment
Example of a Semester-Long Assignment
Designing a Scaffolded Assignment

Your GSIs have prepared a list of potential projects for this course (see below). Some projects are fairly narrowly defined while others allow you the freedom to ask a broad range of questions about plant ecophysiology. They are all designed to give you exposure to asking questions about ecophysiology and to the methods that are commonly used in this field. You will carry out these projects in groups of two to four students.

During our first lab, we will ask you to choose a project topic that is most interesting to you. In the second week of lab, we will set up those experiments together so that you will be ready to make your measurements on established plants later in the semester. By week 6, you will need to turn in refined questions for your project. Two weeks later (week 8), you will turn in a research proposal (100 points) that outlines the research you plan to carry out for your project. The proposal must include five parts:

1. a statement of the research objective(s) and goal(s)
2. a description of the methods to be used, including what you will measure, how you will measure it, what your experimental design is, and the equipment you will need to carry out your project
3. a short discussion of the predicted results for your experiment
4. a list of references (five to fifteen) on the research topic that clearly indicate you are aware of the relevant literature
5. a list of references in which the authors employ the methods you plan to use

After your proposal has been approved, there will be a sign-up sheet for equipment that you must put your name on if you hope to have access to any of it.

You will begin your research during the ninth or tenth week of the semester and will be able to collect data for approximately four weeks. This should allow sufficient time to collect enough data so that you can draw some firm conclusions. We will be available for consultation throughout the semester.

After you complete your project, you will have two things to accomplish: A written report to be handed in on May 6 and a fifteen-minute oral presentation of your study, its results, and implications. You should be prepared to give it at the bi-annual UCB Plant Physiological Ecology Symposium on May 12.

If you are not thoroughly aware of how to use the library for tracking down references, following up specific reference citations, and on how to use the various abstracts, please see one of the instructors — we have handouts to help you.

If you are not thoroughly familiar with how to write a scientific paper, or what is expected for the research project, please see one of the instructors — we have handouts to help you.

Designing a Scaffolded Assignment
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Writing a substantial paper is a daunting task for many students. You can help relieve some of their uncertainty or anxiety in the way you structure and support it. Effective design of writing assignments involves three basic stages:

Scaffolding the Assignment
Helping Students Organize Essays
Developing a Strategy for Evaluation

Scaffolding the Assignment

“Scaffolding” as it’s used here is a metaphor for an instructional strategy that gives students some external support for a specific element of a challenging task, then moves on to another challenging task, and so on until the entire project is completed. For example, segmenting a complex technical or scientific paper into smaller, manageable phases is one scaffolding technique that is often very helpful for students.

• Acknowledge that writing is a difficult process, even for the most seasoned academics.
• Give students clear, concrete instructions.
• Help students understand that good writing takes hard work, and that they shouldn’t expect to write things perfectly on their first try.
• Build in-class time to do peer reviews so that students learn to edit their own work and the work of others.

If your course allows you the freedom, plan for students to carry a research project throughout the semester. You can help break down the process by asking them to turn in a series of smaller assignments:

• At the beginning of the semester, ask students to propose a research question or topic.
• Have students clarify this question and provide an annotated bibliography to demonstrate that they are familiar with the literature on the topic. This would be a good time to ask students to have well developed, testable hypotheses.
• Ask students to write a research proposal with a developed introduction and a description of the methods they plan to employ. In the proposal, they should focus on providing a context and rationale for their research.
• If time permits, allow students to carry out their research and analyze their data. You may ask them to turn in tables, figures, and graphs with legends. This will allow you to converse with students about effective ways to communicate quantitative information. It will also provide the framework for the results and discussion sections.
• As a grand finale, have students write up their results in a formal report using the format that is most common in your discipline. They should have most of the paper already written by this point since they have already developed majority of the information for the introduction and methods in their proposals.

Helping Students Organize Essays

Teach students how to organize science papers by providing them with examples and analysis.

For example, provide students with a published example of science writing.

http://gsi.berkeley.edu/gsi-guide-contents/pre-semester-intro/
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• Ask students to comment on the paper’s organization. Emphasize the divisions and subdivisions in the paper (e.g., in the Methods section, there are sections that address the study site, the statistical analyses used, the sample methods, etc).

• Ask students to comment on the clarity of the writing. Provide (or generate as a class) a list of attributes to evaluate:
  – precision of the language
  – thoroughness and detail
  – formatting and appropriate use of references and citations
  – effectiveness of tables, graphs, and figures

• Provide students with a written analysis of the organization of the paper, paying special attention to the Results and Discussion sections. You may want to discuss how information was effectively (or ineffectively) communicated in the figures, tables, or graphs. Emphasize that the discussion section should place the study in the larger context of what we know and evaluate the data. It should answer questions the author proposed in the beginning.

• Have small groups of students choose a short journal article to evaluate. Ask them to critique the paper for organization and clarity. These assignments could be turned in for a grade.

Use this same model for peer editing when the students write their first lab reports.

Provide students with a guideline for writing and grammar.

Always review the effectiveness of your assignment design as the students are doing it and afterwards. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of the assignment you’ve designed? What will make it clearer and more beneficial for students next time around?

Developing a Strategy for Evaluation

When developing a method for evaluating student writing, you may want to incorporate the following components in your grading rubric:

The content of the writing:

• Was the student thorough with her explanations?
• Did the student complete the appropriate background reading/research?
• Did the student argue his or her points logically?
• Was the content effectively organized?

The clarity of the writing:

• Does the paper communicate the student’s ideas effectively?
• Is the writing concise and direct?
• Are all sources cited properly?
• Did the student adequately proofread the paper?

Again, your students are most likely to succeed in each of these aspects of their writing if you have explained your expectations with them clearly, and if they have received substantive feedback at each major step in the project.
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English R&C Research Assignment

by Diane Matlock, English

[This is a very general assignment that challenges first- and second-year students to apply their developing critical skills to a question of interest to them. R1B is a course that satisfies the campus’s Reading and Composition requirement. The materials below are instructions for the students.]

What is a Research Paper?
Preparing for a Research Project
Beginning the Research Project
Evaluating Sources
Assessing an Argument
Managing Information
Working Sources into the Paper
Your Working Title and Introduction

What is a Research Paper?

A research paper should provide its writer and its reader with new knowledge and a new understanding of a specific topic. The success of your research paper depends primarily on your critical judgment in selecting sources and on the originality and thoughtfulness of your treatment of the topic.

To write an effective research paper, one that makes an argument about your topic, you must review relevant resources and, using powers of analysis and integration, develop a paper that reveals understanding and original thinking. You want to think of your research topic as a question or problem — not a topic area — that your essay is going to address and/or resolve.

If you take seriously the importance of using sources judiciously and of learning something new through the research process, the paper should embody all of the following characteristics:

• Originality
• Expression of an evaluation or attitude
• A reasoned approach to an argument
• A synthesis of information from several sources
• Systematic documentation of sources
• The result of a time-consuming research process

Preparing for a Research Project

If you have been assigned a research project, be sure you understand the requirements and the limits of the assignment before you begin your research. If you have been assigned a specific research project, keep in mind the cue words in the assignment. Are you to describe, survey, analyze, explain, classify, compare, or contrast? What do such words mean in this field? You also need to know the audience, rhetorical stance, scope, length, and deadline for your project.
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Research Log

You should keep a research log — either on paper or digitized — to jot down thoughts about your topic, lists of things to do, and ideas about possible sources; also use it to keep track of library materials. You can also use the log as a means of analyzing and developing your research process. What things worked? What didn’t work? How will you do things differently next time?

Project Calendar

Before beginning a research project, you should also map out a rough but realistic schedule for your research. It can include the following action items and the dates they need to be completed:

• Analyze project; decide on primary purpose and audience; choose topic
• Set aside library time; develop search strategy (see below)
• Send for materials needed from Interlibrary Loan
• Do background research, narrow topic if necessary
• Decide on research questions and a tentative hypothesis
• Start working on bibliography; begin tracking down sources
• Gather or develop graphics or visuals needed
• Develop working thesis and rough outline
• If necessary, conduct interviews, make observations, or distribute and collect questionnaires
• Read and evaluate sources; take notes
• Draft explicit thesis and outline
• Prepare first draft, including visuals
• Obtain and evaluate critical responses to your draft
• Do more research if necessary
• Revise draft
• Prepare list of works cited
• Edit and revise draft; use spell checker
• Prepare final draft
• Do final proofreading

Beginning the Research Project

You should see your research project as an essay that responds to an interesting question. For an academic, one of the fundamental roles is asking questions. To initiate your project, you should begin by formulating a research question. Pose possible questions that are worth exploring and challenging. You should also choose a narrow question that can be answered fully within the page limits set for the assignment. You want to create a discipline-appropriate question that is interesting, significant, and pursuable. Before beginning, consider:
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• What is the research problem or question you intend to address?
• Why is it an interesting question? Why is it problematic?
• Why is it significant?

Your instructor can help you think through these questions if you get stuck.

Evaluating Sources

Once you have selected your research topic and begun exploring the primary and secondary sources available, you will work to evaluate the sources you find: determine which ones are most relevant to your research question; identify which sources will provide the best context for answering your question; and collect the sources that you will be able to use as evidence for the argument you will eventually make. To do this, you will need to eliminate inappropriate sources — such as those that are outdated, are unreliable, use uncited sources, or make unsubstantiated claims.

Don’t try to read everything — be selective

You want to select sources that are worth your time and attention. Begin by looking at the title, abstract or introductory paragraphs, date, name of publisher or periodical, and length of text. Consider carefully each source’s relevance, currency, scholarship, and scope.

Next, you need to determine the rhetorical situation of the sources you will work with.

What is the rhetorical situation of the source?

Every text originates in a particular situation; you need to learn about the situation or conversation a text belongs to. What question is being posed, and how does the writer shape it? You need to consider a real author, writing for some important reasons, within a real historical context, from a certain perspective. Whether argumentative or informative, sources present particular perspectives. This is true of primary sources as well as secondary sources. For example, the editorial staffs of different magazines and newspapers can have distinct political orientations, and emphasize issues in particular ways to appeal to their assumed audience. For this reason, before reading closely through a whole article or book, you need to try to determine the rhetorical situation of the source and the argument. Ask yourself:

• What kind of text is it? What are its qualities and features?
• Who is the author? What is the reputation of the author? What is her or his perspective or bias?
• When was the source written?
• Where did the source appear? (There are different degrees of scholarly prestige for different journals and presses.)
• Why was the book or article written?
• What is the author’s aim?
• How is the source organized?
• What sources are included in the bibliography and footnotes?

Answering these questions will help you understand the rhetorical situation of a source.
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Evaluating websites

The same criteria that apply to printed sources apply to websites. When using websites to conduct research, consider the following:

• Is an author named? (Check the home page or “About This Site” link). Who, if anyone, sponsors the site? (If the authorship and the sponsorship of a site are both unclear, be extremely suspicious of the site.)

• The domain often specifies the type of group hosting the site: commercial (.com), educational (.edu), nonprofit (.org), governmental (.gov), military (.mil), network (.net), etc. What does the domain of this site tell you about the source?

• Why was the site created? To argue a position? To sell a product? To inform readers?

• Can you tell whether the author is knowledgeable and credible?

• Who is the site’s intended audience?

• How current is the site?

• How current are the site’s links?

The UC Berkeley Library has an extensive guide you may find helpful on Evaluating Resources.

Assessing an Argument

After learning about the rhetorical situation of a source, read its argument critically. If it is book-length, look at the introduction, conclusion, and one essential chapter. You should choose the chapter that most specifically relates to your research project. Just as you close-read a literary passage by breaking it down into smaller parts, you analyze an argument by examining elements of its form and manner of presentation. Consider what the author states and how she or he states it.

Be alert to biases

• Is the purpose of the argument to inform, or to advocate?

• Does the author or publisher have political leanings or religious views that affect the argument they make? For example, is the author or publisher associated with a special-interest group, such as Greenpeace or the National Rifle Association, that might see only one side of an issue?

• How fairly does the source treat opposing views? Does it over-generalize and attack them, or does it engage them respectfully?

• In what ways does the bias of the source limit its usefulness for your research question?

Analyze the argument

• What is the author’s central thesis?

• What is the basic structure of the argument for the thesis? Are there any logical fallacies in the structure?

• What assumptions does the argument make? Are any of the author’s assumptions questionable?

• What counts as evidence for the argument? Is the evidence current? Is it accurately presented and interpreted? Is it relevant? Does the source have the expertise to handle the evidence fairly?
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• Does the author consider opposing arguments fairly and refute them persuasively?

Finally, you want to ask yourself how you might use the source. Is the evidence useful, relevant, and accurately reported? Or does the article provide an example of a point of view you want to discuss? How might the source be used to provide evidence for and/or to contextualize your argument?

[For more tips on helping students read critically, see Teaching Critical Reading. For a consideration of ways writers construe their sources, see the Teaching Excellence Award essay Sources into Evidence by Leonard von Morzé.]

Managing Information

An effective researcher is a good record keeper. You need to find a systematic way of managing information. You will need methods for maintaining a working bibliography, keeping track of materials, and taking notes without plagiarizing your sources.

Record complete bibliographic information for each of your sources, and do not forget to include the page numbers of any passages you might cite as evidence in your essay. The following entries are examples of the MLA format for a bibliography:


Maintain a working bibliography

Keep a record of any sources you decide to consult. You will need this record, called a working bibliography, when you compile the list of works cited that will appear at the end of your paper.

Keep track of source materials

The best way to keep track of source materials is to photocopy them or print them out.

As you take notes, avoid unintentional plagiarism

You will discover that it is amazingly easy to borrow too much language from a source as you take notes. Do not allow this to happen. To prevent unintentional borrowing, resist the temptation to look at the source as you take notes — except when you are quoting. Keep the source close by so you can check for accuracy, but do not try to put ideas in your own words while you have the source’s sentences in front of you.

As you take notes, be sure to include exact page references, since you will need the page numbers later if you use the information in your paper.

There are three kinds of note-taking: summarizing, paraphrasing, and quoting.

A summary condenses information, perhaps reducing a chapter to a short paragraph or a paragraph into a single sentence. A summary should be written in your own words; if you use phrases from the source, put them in quotation marks.

A paraphrase is written in your own words; but whereas a summary reports significant information in fewer words than the source, a paraphrase retells the information in roughly the same number of words.
Teaching Guide for GSIs

If you retain occasional choice phrases from the source, use quotation marks so you will know later which phrases are your own.

A quotation consists of the exact words from a source. In your notes, put all quoted material in quotation marks. When you quote, be sure to copy the words of your sources exactly, including punctuation and capitalization.

Working Sources into the Paper

You want to work quotations and paraphrases into the texture of your own prose, carrying an argument in your own voice. Remember that you are using your sources as evidence for your own argument. In other words, you need to construct a thesis and argument that present your ideas, not those of the primary and secondary sources you read.

Choose a documentation style

The format of citations depends upon the documentation style you are using — for example, MLA, APA, or CMS. Select a style appropriate for your discipline. Consult a style guide (your instructor may recommend one, or there may be a standard one for your discipline).

Your Working Title and Introduction

A good title is an important part of your project as it is your reader’s first introduction to your essay. Your working title can be a question, a summary of thesis or purpose, or a two-part title with a colon. For example:

• Is Patriarchal Management Extinct?
• The Relationship between Client and Therapist Expectation of Improvement and Psychotherapy Outcome
• Money and Growth: An Alternative Approach
• Fine Cloth, Cut Carefully: Cooperative Learning in British Columbia (this one begins with an interesting mystery phrase that will become clear after reading the essay)

An introduction has three main parts:

• The first part introduces the reader to the problem the paper addresses. This section usually contains needed background on the problem and often reviews previous scholarship that has addressed it. Frequently, the writer explains why the problem is a problem (for example, why earlier attempts to solve the problem have been unsatisfactory) and why the problem is significant and worth pursuing.
• The second part explains the focus and purpose of the essay, and includes the thesis.
• The third part gives the reader an overview of the research project.
Drafts, Edits, Revisions

Writing is a difficult and complex craft. Writing to learn new material or exercise higher-order intellectual work is all the more complex. Many students believe that “real” writers can whip out a paper from scratch the day before it’s due in a single inspired (or desperate) effort, so that is what they as student writers aim for. When GSIs start grading a pile of these last-minute “inspired” papers with all their careless errors and underdeveloped ideas, they may well despair of deciphering them, let alone evaluating them for a grade. Many of the papers just don’t seem finished.

GSIs can make the students’ job, and their own, much more productive by making students responsible to produce finished work. Drafts, revisions, and proofreading should be the norm for students’ writing process. The result of this is that GSIs will grade papers focusing more on the students’ intellectual accomplishment than on defective or incomplete writing.

Drafts

Require students to bring a draft of a major assignment to class, and give some kind of homework credit for drafts that really show substantial effort toward completion. By definition these drafts will not be polished, and there’s no point in polishing at this stage when the content is subject to review and revision. (Ease student fears of showing work in progress by letting them know what you do and do not expect at this stage.)

GSIs may or may not have time to read through all the drafts and give feedback (though it’s most effective if they do), but they can give students the set of standards they would use to give feedback and give some class time to peer editing. Provide students with a worksheet (you can view an example of a peer review worksheet) showing the kinds of questions you would be asking about a paper, questions that reflect both the learning objectives of the assignment and the grading rubric. It is also helpful to provide the student writer with a separate worksheet for deciding how to use the peer reviewer’s comments. This isn’t about making students do the GSIs’ work. Rather, it’s about developing students’ sense of what constitutes excellence, and practicing the kind of review that happens in many professional settings.

Revisions

Many students completely misunderstand the notion of revision. They tend to make whatever superficial improvements are suggested, but when faced with a paragraph or a section of a paper that needs to be strengthened or rethought, they will often leave it substantially as it is with minor corrections or word changes. GSIs can help students understand what to do with the feedback they receive, whether it comes from the GSIs or from fellow students.

One strategy for teaching revision is to demonstrate revision of a spotty or disorganized paragraph in class, then follow it up with some group work revising a different paragraph. Another strategy is to have students reflect on the comments their paper received, write down the issues that are most important to rework, and come up with a revision plan. They must do this directly after peer review so the issues are fresh and the students can remember what to work on when they later sit down to revise.

Another strategy is work on a a student’s document using collaborative editing in bDrive (Google Docs). The student shares a paper draft with you, which you work and comment on together simultaneously.
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Proofreading

Finally, emphasize proofreading by making it a discrete step, the last step, in the writing process. Distinguish proofreading from revision. While revision addresses large-scale and substantive issues such as coherence of argument or appropriate degree of detail or changing a summary into an analysis, proofreading identifies and eliminates surface errors such as improper word usage, misspelling, or mistakes in sentence structure. Consider providing students with a checklist of common errors to correct and usages particular to your field. For an example, see Checklist for All Assignments (Biology).

Some GSIs are reluctant to give class time or their prep time to drafts and peer editing, but that time invested saves a great deal of time in the grading process later on. The papers read better, problems are reduced, and the GSIs can evaluate the quality of learning and content — the objectives the instructor had in mind in assigning the paper.

Each of these steps is the students’ responsibility to master, but the GSI can help students take on these responsibilities and at the same time help themselves when it comes time to grade.
Peer Review Worksheet

Instructions: Read your partner’s essay through, making notes about content. You can also make marks on the draft itself. Begin by noticing the larger features of the essay and work toward smaller-scale issues. Be ready to explain your concerns about the paper directly to its author. You don’t need to do any proofreading since the draft you are reading is subject to change.

Your thesis is:

Your major supporting points are:

Strengths I saw in your essay:

Things I didn’t understand, logic I didn’t follow, parts you should think about revising for clarity or reader comprehension:

Something new I learned from your essay:
Writer’s Response to Reviewer’s Comments

Which of your reader’s comments are most important? Consider the large-scale issues of your essay: argument, logic, coherence, organization, persuasiveness, interest.

Which comments may have some value, but you’re not sure about them?

Which comments do you disagree with? Why?

What did you learn about your writing or about this particular paper? Strengths? Tendencies to watch out for?

What discrete steps will you take next to revise your paper? When will you work on each step? Make a concrete plan to follow for your revision process.

Issue 1
Issue 2
Issue 3
Issue 4
Proofreading
Checklist for All Assignments (Biology)

Please complete this checklist and hand it in stapled to your assignment.

- The first page includes your name, date and the scientific paper’s citation in this format: Author(s). Year published. Title of article. Journal. Journal Volume (number): pages in journal volume.
- Text is in 11- or 12-point font and is double-spaced.
- Each paragraph begins with a topic sentence.
- Spelling has been checked.
- All paraphrased, summarized, and quoted ideas and statements of an author other than you are cited (author, year) in text.
- Data, findings, and/or discoveries are discussed as evidence, not proof. The word proof is used appropriately in courtrooms and in math, but not in scientific writing.
- Slang, jargon, and wordiness are avoided. For example, try not to use as to, due to, in order to, it is suggested that, first of all, the fact that, with regard to, etc. If you use to, that, in or of in a phrase, try choosing a more precise word. For example, in order to could be better said because or so. First of all is better said first. Previous to is better said before. In some cases is better said sometimes.
- Genus and species names (e.g. Gorilla gorilla, Drosophila melanogaster) are italicized with the first word (the genus) capitalized and the second word (the species) in lowercase.
- If used, i.e. is followed by an explanation and e.g. is followed by one or more examples.
- The Latin i.e. (id est) translates to “in other words” in English, and e.g. (exempli gratia) means “for example.”
- Correct plurals are used. Note the examples below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wrong</th>
<th>Correct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>this data</td>
<td>these data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>data is</td>
<td>data are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phenomenons</td>
<td>one phenomenon, two phenomena</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>genuses</td>
<td>one genus, two genera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taxons</td>
<td>one taxon, two taxa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>phylums</td>
<td>one phylum, two phyla</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- The tone of your writing is professional.
- No conjunctions (don’t, won’t, etc.) are used. They make writing too casual for essays. Also note: “its” is a possessive pronoun (e.g. its fauna). By contrast, “it’s” means “it is.”
- “Which” and “that” are used correctly. “Which” usually refers to a whole group and is used in a general case (and with a comma) while “that” is used in a specific case.
- Examples:
  (1) The neighborhood dogs, which bark, wake me up at night.
  (2) The neighborhood dogs that bark wake me up at night.
  In (1) all neighborhood dogs bark and wake me up at night. In (2) the dogs that bark are a subset of all neighborhood dogs, and only the barking dogs wake me up at night.
Grading Essays

Grade for Learning Objectives  
Response to Writing Errors  
Commenting on Student Papers  
Plagiarism and Grading

Information about grading student writing also appears in the Grading section of the Teaching Guide. Here are some general guidelines to keep in mind when grading student writing.

Grade for Learning Objectives

Know what the objective of the assignment is, and grade according to a standard (a rubric) that assesses precisely that. If the purpose of the assignment is to analyze a process, focus on the analysis in the essay. If the paper is unreadable, however, consult with the professor and other GSIs about how to proceed. It may be wise to have a shared policy about the level of readiness or comprehensibility expected and what is unacceptable.

Response to Writing Errors

The research is clear: do not even attempt to mark every error in students’ papers. There are several reasons for this. Teachers do not agree about what constitutes an error (so there is an unavoidable element of subjectivity); students do not learn when confronted by too many markings; and exhaustive marking takes way too much of the instructor’s time. An excellent essay on this topic is “On Not Being a Composition Slave” by Maxine Hairston (available at the GSI Teaching & Resource Center). Resist the urge to edit or proofread your students’ papers for superficial errors. At most, mark errors on one page or errors of only two or three types.

Commenting on Student Papers

The scholarly literature in this area distinguishes formative from summative comments. Summative comments are the more traditional approach. They render judgment about an essay after it has been completed. They explain the instructor’s judgment of a student’s performance. If the instructor’s comments contain several critical statements, the student often becomes protective of his or her ego by filtering them out; learning from mistakes becomes more difficult. If the assignment is over with, the student may see no reason to revisit it to learn from the comments.

Formative comments, on the other hand, give the student feedback in an ongoing process of learning and skill building. Through formative comments, particularly in the draft stage of a writing assignment, instructors guide students on a strategic selection of the most important aspects of the essay. These include both what to keep because it is (at least relatively) well done and what requires revision. Formative comments let the student know clearly how to revise and why.

For the purposes of this guide, we have distinguished commenting on student writing (which is treated here) from grading student writing (which is treated in the Teaching Guide section on grading). While it is true that instructors’ comments on student writing should give reasons for the grade assigned to it, we want to emphasize here that the comments on a student’s paper can function as instruction, not simply as justification. Here are ten tips.
Teaching Guide for GSIs

1. Use your comments on a student’s paper to highlight things the paper accomplishes well and a few major things that would most improve the paper.

2. Always observe at least one or two strengths in the student’s paper, even if they seem to you to be low-level accomplishments — but avoid condescension. Writing is a complex activity, and students really do need to know they’re doing something right.

3. Don’t make exhaustive comments. They take up too much of your time and leave the student with no sense of priority among them.

4. Don’t proofread. If the paper is painfully replete with errors and you want to emphasize writing mechanics, count the first ten errors on the page, draw a line at that point, and ask the student to identify them and to show their corrections to you in office hours. Students do not learn much from instructors’ proofreading marks. Direct students to a writing reference guide such as the Random House Handbook.

5. Notice patterns or repeated errors (in content or form). Choose the three or four most disabling ones, and direct your comments toward helping the students understand what they need to learn to do differently to correct this kind of error.

6. Use marginal notes to locate and comment on specific passages in the paper (for example “Interesting idea — develop it more” or “I lost the thread of the argument in this section” or “Very useful summary here before you transition to the next point”). Use final or end comments to discuss more global issues (e.g., “Work on paragraph structure” or “The argument from analogy is ineffective. A better way to make the point would be…”)

7. Maintain a catalogue of positive end comments: “Good beginning for a 1B course.” “Very perceptive reading.” “Good engagement with the material.” “Gets at the most relevant material/issues/passages.” Anything that connects specific aspects of the student’s product with the grading rubric is useful. (For more on grading rubrics, see the Grading section of the Teaching Guide.)

8. Diplomatic but firm suggestions for improvement: Here you must be specific and concrete. Global negative statements tend to enter students’ self-image (“I’m a bad writer”). This creates an attitudinal barrier to learning and makes your job harder and less satisfying. Instead, try “The most strategic improvement you could make is…” Again, don’t try to comment on everything. Select only the most essential areas for improvement, and watch the student’s progress on the next draft or paper.

9. Typical in-text marks: Provide your students with a legend of your reading marks. Does a straight underline indicate “good stuff”? Does a wavy underline mean something different? Do you use abbreviations in the margins? You can find examples of standard editing marks in many writing guides, such as the Random House Handbook.

10. The tone of your comments on student writing is important to students. Avoid sarcasm and jokes — students who take offense are less disposed to learn. Address the student by name before your end-comments, and sign your name after your remarks. Be professional, and bear in mind the sorts of comments that help you with your work.

Plagiarism and Grading

Students can be genuinely uninformed or misinformed about what constitutes plagiarism. In some instances some students will knowingly resort to cutting and pasting from unacknowledged sources; a few may even pay for a paper written by someone else. Your section syllabus should include a clear policy...
Teaching Guide for GSIs

notice about plagiarism so that students can not miss it, and instructors should work with students to be sure they understand how to incorporate outside sources appropriately.

Plagiarism can be largely prevented by stipulating that larger writing assignments be completed in steps that the students must turn in for instructor review, or that students visit the instructor periodically for a brief but substantive chat about how their projects are developing, or that students turn in their research log and notes at intermediate points in the research process.

For further guidance on preventing academic misconduct, please see Academic Misconduct — Preventing Plagiarism.

UC Berkeley has a campus license to use Turnitin to check the originality of students’ papers, and for generating feedback to students about their integration of written sources into their papers. The tool is available in bCourses as an add-on to the Grading tool, and in the Assignments tool SpeedGrader. Even with the results of the originality check, instructors are obligated to exercise judgment in determining the degree to which a given use of source material was fair or unfair.

If a GSI does find a very likely instance of plagiarism, the faculty member in charge of the course must be notified and provided with the evidence. The faculty member is responsible for any sanctions against the student. Some faculty members give an automatic failing grade for the assignment or for the course, according to their own course policy. Instances of plagiarism should be reported to the Center for Student Conduct; please see If You Encounter Academic Misconduct.
GSIs often want to know more about working with multilingual writers — students whose first language is not English. Although people often use the term “ESL” (English as a Second Language) to refer to students whose first language is not English, professionals in the field now usually prefer “non-native [English] speakers” (NNS) or “multilingual students.” The term “multilingual” respects both students’ ability to function in more than one language and the challenge they face when writing in English. “NNS” and “multilingual” are often more accurate expressions than “English as a Second Language” because English may be a person’s third or fourth language or beyond.

This page addresses questions that often come from GSIs who work with multilingual students in courses that require a substantial amount of writing, but in which developing writing skill is not necessarily a primary learning objective. GSIs who work in courses that are designed to improve student writing should read, in addition to this page, Working with NNS Writers in the Reading and Composition section of the Teaching Guide for GSIs.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is there such a wide range in student writing at Cal?
How can I deal with a multilingual student’s writing when I’m not an ESL specialist?
Do I need to correct all the errors and let the student learn from my corrections?
Should I make special accommodations for multilingual students?
Should I grade the work of people with language difficulties differently?
What about plagiarism? I’ve heard that copying is considered a good practice in some cultures.
What if I’m finding a student essay really, really hard to read?
How can I learn more?

Why is there such a wide range in student writing at Cal?

Linguistic variety in a world language such as English is inevitable and normal, and UC Berkeley students come from a vast array of linguistic backgrounds.

International students bring the varieties of English they learn in other English-speaking countries (for example Australia, Canada, or India) or in their previous schooling in non-English-speaking countries. International students who come from non-English-speaking countries show evidence of English proficiency through standardized testing before being admitted to Cal. For many of these students, the volume and sophistication of the writing expected in their classes here may present a new order of challenge.

Students who have difficulty composing in Standard Written English may be international students from non-English-speaking countries. Or they may be students from English-speaking countries for whom the language of the home was not English, or they may be students whose first language is English. People in the latter two groups often share in common that they have learned the language well by ear but are still working to become fluent on paper.

Of course there are many accomplished English-language writers among multilingual students. It’s best not to generalize or prejudge students’ abilities or needs based on linguistic background.
Teaching Guide for GSIs

How can I respond to a multilingual student’s writing when I’m not an ESL specialist?

GSIs are not asked to perform like ESL professionals. What GSIs are generally tasked to do is to evaluate students’ mastery of specific course materials or awareness about a topic based on their writing assignments, using an appropriate grading rubric (a specific set of standards).

More helpful than singling out multilingual student writers for special attention is to consider all student writing as falling somewhere along a continuum from very correct, elegant, and effective to ungrammatical, awkward, or incoherent. Almost all of our students’ writings will fall somewhere along this spectrum, and within a single paper there are often passages that differ in quality.

Should I correct all the errors and let the student learn from my corrections?

No. A GSI’s markings and comments on student papers should primarily help students understand the degree of their achievement and how they can improve their knowledge and performance in the future. Usually when an instructor sets out to correct errors, he or she is merely copyediting surface mistakes without attending to patterns of error or even the quality of the students’ thought. This can distract students from the main learning objectives that the piece of writing is meant to assess. Correcting errors can also take up an inordinate amount of a GSI’s time.

Students can’t really process comprehensive error marking, but they can understand a pattern to correct if the GSI can help them learn to identify and work on it themselves. If improvement of student writing is a major course objective, please see the page Working with NNS Writers for further elaboration and productive strategies.

Should I make special accommodations for multilingual students such as allowing them more time than other students on writing assignments?

No. “Accommodation” is a technical term for specific measures stipulated for individual students with specific mental, physical, or other disabilities, and these measures are formally determined case-by-case by specialists at the Disabled Students Program. Multilingualism is not a disability.

Should I grade the work of people with language difficulties differently?

No. The grading standards for all students’ work should remain the same. Grading, however, is not the only thing GSIs do with student papers; they also respond with comments. The response and commenting strategy can vary: you can for example comment on the paper’s features based on the grading criteria, and also comment on one or two prominent kinds of writing error for a student to work on.

What about plagiarism? I’ve heard that copying is considered a good practice in some cultures.

There are several reasons a multilingual student or someone raised outside the US might try to fill a written assignment with other people’s material. Many of the reasons are the same ones native English speakers might have for plagiarizing: the stress of thinking their own written English is not good enough; getting desperate at the last minute before an assignment is due; not understanding that merely cutting and pasting from the Internet is an unacceptable practice; not sufficiently understanding the norms for acknowledging sources in U.S. academic culture. Cultural difference could be relevant in some cases: for example, in some cultures certain texts may be regarded as so authoritative or so well known as to render citation, and student analysis, trivial. However, even if cultural difference does enter in, all college students in the US need to understand and follow the norms of the academic community here. Any paper
a student turns in as his or her own work must in fact be the product of the student’s own intellectual labor; if students use other sources, they are required to give proper citations. GSIs are in a great position to help all students learn about this issue. For more information on plagiarism, please see the Teaching Guide section Academic Misconduct: Plagiarism.

What if I’m finding a student essay really, really hard to read?

When a GSI feels that a student writer’s work is so problematic that the GSI really can’t tell how much the student has learned or what he or she means to say, there are several options.

• The GSI can put it back into the stack of ungraded papers and look at it again later; often when a GSI first reads a paper it seems incomprehensible, but with some patience and a second read the GSI may understand it more fully.

• The GSI can consult with other GSIs in the course and the Instructor of Record for perspective, tips, or instructor policies on how to proceed.

• The GSI can invite the student to office hours and discuss some of the difficulties the GSI had as a reader. It is best to choose just one or two major difficulties, preferably as patterns. An office-hour conversation is also helpful because sometimes just getting used to a student’s manner of speech helps a GSI understand the writing.

• The GSI can suggest that the student take advantage of tutoring to work specifically on writing skills. Note that students cannot be required to use the tutoring programs. The following campus units provide tutoring:
  
  o Student Learning Center Writing Program. Tutoring and workshops available for all UC Berkeley undergraduates.
  
  o Academic Services in the Residence Halls: Tutoring. Writing tutors available for students in the residence halls on a drop-in basis; drop-in hours are posted at their website.
  
  o Athletic Study Center. Individual and group tutoring for student athletes.

GSIs needn’t feel like they are putting a student off or singling a student out by suggesting outside tutoring; it’s actually a great resource. Research shows that one-on-one instruction with a tutor is an extremely effective strategy for students to improve their writing.

How can I learn more?

If you would like to learn more about working with multilingual students on their writing, please see Working with NNS Writers in the Reading and Composition section of the Teaching Guide.

If you would like to see a list of resources for student writers and their GSIs, please see Additional Resources at the end of this Teaching Guide section, or the Additional Resources page in the Reading and Composition section of the Teaching Guide.
Teaching Guide for GSIs

Time Management Suggestions for Grading Student Writing

• Articulate your learning objectives for the assignment. Do you want students to simply demonstrate an understanding of the material, or would you rather they extend that knowledge by synthesizing or applying what they’ve learned? This saves grading time by helping students write the right kind of essay and by helping you keep firmly in mind the traits that are most important to evaluate and provide feedback on.

• Provide your students with a handout or rubric that gives specific guidelines, or a checklist to clarify your expectations. Use it when grading the written assignment.

• Create and use a grading rubric. This can save you time by reducing grade challenges, because students will more likely understand the rationale for their grade.

• Good papers are easier and less time-consuming to grade than poor ones. Extra time spent giving students guidance through stepped assignments and multiple drafts reduces the amount of time spent on grading, and the students learn more through the process.

• If you are parsing an assignment someone else has created, zero in on the steps and the learning objectives of each step in completing the assignment.

• If you are designing your own assignment, how packed is students’ time in your course already? What do they have time for? How packed is your time? How long can you afford to spend teaching the assignment (if necessary) and reading through the students’ papers?

• Define your policies about receiving, proofreading, and editing drafts.

• Teach and require students to review each other’s work effectively in peer review teams.

• When you evaluate student work, keep your focus on the learning objectives of the assignment, or the particular knowledge and skills it was designed to assess. Don’t be distracted by extraneous matters, such as marking superficial mistakes.
Teaching Guide for GSIs

Working with Student Writing: Additional Resources

The American Heritage Guide to Contemporary Usage and Style (2005). Boston and New York: Houghton-Mifflin. Discreet or discrete? Myriad reasons, or a myriad of reasons? If you do take time to correct usage in a student’s writing, it’s a good idea to back up your judgment with a reliable source. Many standard writing handbooks also include brief usage guides.


Center for Teaching and Learning, UC Berkeley. Resources for Non-Native English Speakers.


George Mason University Writing Across the Curriculum. Teaching with Writing. Gateway to several useful and concise pages on learning through writing.


Tollefson, Steve (1988). Encouraging Student Writing. Berkeley: Office of Educational Development, University of California. Excellent resource for non-writing specialists; in addition to essential pointers for instructors, it includes several pages of handouts giving tips for student writers.

Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL). General and specific resources for instructors and students.


The Writing Center at University of North Carolina. Materials for students and instructors. Scores of handouts about many, many writing issues.

Further resources on writing are listed on the Resources page of the Reading and Composition chapter.