

Notes from Kate McConnell:

There was great variety in the types of writing I assessed. Overall, I noticed competency within language and writing conventions and strength in the areas of readability and communication of central idea/purpose.

For the SC course, there appeared to a standard format within which students were to organize their essays, so I had some difficulty in assessing these pieces in terms of organization. Also in the SC essays, there was not one clear documentation style that seemed to be required. While the authors had clear reasons and evidence to support their points, it was not always clear whether or not they were following a specific, formal documentation style.

Similarly, in the PH course, the essays were lab reports, which followed a mandated structure. While the quality of language/writing conventions and sophistication of ideas were strong within these essays, it was difficult to pinpoint the strengths or weaknesses of organization due to the prescribed lab report format of these pieces. The central idea and purpose of these reports were strongly communicated, and the evidence used was relevant and well explained.

Finally, the PS coursework appeared to be a take home exam, with a series of responses to three prompts. Because each question required a different type of response, it was challenging to gauge the quality of the central idea and use of evidence holistically throughout the entire document. For the most part, these essays displayed proficiency in sophistication of ideas and central idea/purpose, but several of the responses lacked outside evidence to support the assertions made. It was unclear as to whether or not the writers in the PS course were required to use outside evidence to support their claims on this exam. Overall, for this section, the writing reflected an exceptional understanding of the material and a personal investment in the content.

Notes from Maria Soriano:

As usual, completing assessment gave me an intriguing look into and across the disciplines at the types of assignments our students are being asked to complete. In general, I see evidence that students are given assignments that are fairly advanced and dynamic, and that they are incorporating some kind of process into development and review.

Dr. Waner's thermodynamics reports were, overall, well-written. The report itself followed a fairly clear template, which suggests to me that Dr. Waner is teaching his students the conventions and expectations of writing within the discipline. The language and sentence structures were fairly straightforward (as is the convention for scientific writing), but included a lot of jargon for the field. What made assessment of these essays difficult for me, though, was that Dr. Waner had already evaluated and commented on the essays, so there were comments, tracked changes, and highlighting in the text. For the future, my recommendation would be to ensure that essays are uploaded and collected **before** the professor grades and comments on the files.

Dr. Kolesar's History of Math papers were well-researched and were very interesting. The students who went above and beyond were the ones who incorporated a good amount of outside research and included formulas and mathematical language into their essays. Most students scored 2s and 3s in each category on these papers, and

demonstrated interest in and engagement with their topics in order to show the relevance and importance of their research subject.

The papers from the GK 442 courses were similarly outstanding (though there were only three to assess). Two of the students did phenomenal work on their essays, which scored 3s across the board. The third student had a fairly simplistic paper that did not go in-depth and engage with the text like the other two did.

Finally, the papers from the EN 300 course were probably the lowest in terms of what I expect from an upper-level W course. The assignment, honestly, did not seem demanding enough for what I would recommend at that level: the professor asked students to write a paper that examined the similarities and differences between a book and that book's film adaptation. What resulted, for the most part, was a compare-and-contrast paper whose sources were very few. I'd say that the average score for all of the papers in this class and all categories is a 2. Some were well-written, but others could have benefitted from a boost in sophistication and engagement.

Finally, thank you once again for asking us to help with assessment! We appreciate the offer, and hope that our insight and recommendations are useful.