***Designing Writing Assignments***

This session explores the different ways each faculty member can help contribute to the development of student writing skills in a course-relevant manner.  At the end of this session, faculty will be able to:

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| **Objectives** | 1. Articulate the role all faculty play, even non-writing instructors, in building student writing skills. 2. Differentiate between learning to write and writing to learn opportunities. 3. Design a course and course-level appropriate writing assignment for students. |
| **Assessments** | Proficient level- course relevant application |

**Resources**

***What role do I play as a non-writing instructor?***

In our professional careers, we as faculty members use writing every day for a variety of purposes, such as to communicate information via memos; to clarify a new policy, or to learn new concepts. Students need practice writing in order to effectively work to these same goals.

One of Wilmington University’s graduation competencies is for students to develop written communication skills, meaning all faculty, regardless of course content, are expected to play their part in the development of student writing skills.

* Further reading on [the role every faculty member](https://wac.colostate.edu/intro/pop2b.cfm) can play in developing writing skills in student

***What is the difference between learning to write and writing to learn?***

Faculty members can conceive of the use of writing assignments to achieve one of two end goals. Students can use a writing assignment as an avenue for learning course content, and students can use writing assignments as an avenue for displaying written communication skills.

Many times assignments will aim to assess student efforts on both ends-learning to write and to hone this skill for future professional use, as well as to write to learn about specific course concepts. As faculty we will want to be sure to articulate which of these goals we have for a particular writing assignment as well as how student work will be assessed.

Please review the resources provided for more information.

***Any suggestions for further reading and guidance?***

Ultimately we will have to supply the content area expertise for our course’s writing assignments, but that doesn’t mean we are alone in developing sound writing assessments. Please review the resources provided for more information on the various writing resources available for Wilmington University faculty and how we can contribute to our writing across the curriculum initiative.

***How should I approach designing an appropriate writing assignment for my classes?***

For this module we encourage faculty to take a look at a specific learning outcome you feel would be best evidenced by a student writing submission and to craft a writing assignment using the resources provided.

If you would like to discuss this topic, or to forward your planned activity to the CTE for feedback on your designed assignment please feel free to send us an email at [facultydevelopment@wilmu.edu](mailto:facultydevelopment@wilmu.edu).

***How do I earn credit for this learning unit on my Pathway to Instructional Excellence?***

Our designing writing assignments module is designated as a CTE (Center for Teaching Excellence) Proficient Level Elective. At this level, the CTE is looking to see faculty application of this module in the design of a writing assignment for your course.  Please upload a document into your WilmU Learning Center profile that outlines your planned assignment and predicts how these efforts will impact student writing skills.  Please include the following in your submission:

* The intended class learning outcomes or objectives you plan to address with your assignment
* The writing assignment you have created
* The predicted impact this assignment will have on student writing skill development

Faculty submissions will be scored using the *Proficient Level Rubric.*  To earn completion of this exercise, faculty must score 4/5 or higher.  Faculty scoring 3 or lower will receive feedback from the CTE and will have the opportunity to resubmit their active learning techniques application.

**CTE-Pathways to Instructional Excellence-Proficient Level Rubric**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Scoring= 1**  **Unrelated** | **2**  **Beginner** | **3**  **Essential** | **4**  **Proficient** | **5**  **Mastery** |
| Submission appears unrelated to learning unit. Evidence of teaching skill not present in faculty submission. | Submission shows ability to recall correct terms but lacks ability to apply learning content to described teaching situation. | Submission shows understanding of how to apply learning content to teaching situation but lacks ability to anticipate the impact this decision will have on student learning. | Submission demonstrates correct application of teaching skill and correctly identifies potential impact this will have on student learning. | Submission demonstrates correct application of teaching skill, identifies potential impact on student learning and ability to tailor teaching to individual student needs. |