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## CAREER PATHWAYS

Professional development to bridge graduate school and career success

# Developing Effective Writing Assignments: How to Design Assignments for Courses You Teach

Learn how to develop writing assignments that help your students learn, while making your job as a teacher easier

- How do you link the writing assignment to course contents and learning objectives?
- How do you build in low stakes assignments and activities to improve student success?
- How can you provide more useful student feedback?

***\*\*Bring a sample course syllabus (from a class that you're taking or that you would like to teach) to work on\*\****

A hands-on interactive workshop led by Remica Bingham-Risher and Wie Yusuf

**Friday, November 1, 2019**

**Noon-2pm in Monarch 2100** (Graduate School Multipurpose Room)

Also available online: [bit.ly/CP\\_zoom](https://bit.ly/CP_zoom)

Snacks and drinks will be provided. **BRING A FRIEND!**

Questions? Contact Dr. Wie Yusuf  
Chair, Career Pathways Steering Committee  
E-mail: [jjusuf@odu.edu](mailto:jjusuf@odu.edu) Phone: 757-683-4437  
Web: <https://sites.wp.odu.edu/careerpathways/>



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## *Improving Disciplinary Writing*



Old Dominion University's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP): *Improving Disciplinary Writing* is intended to improve upper-division undergraduate students' disciplinary writing – that is, writing that demonstrates a reasoning process supported by research and reflection on a problem, topic or issue.

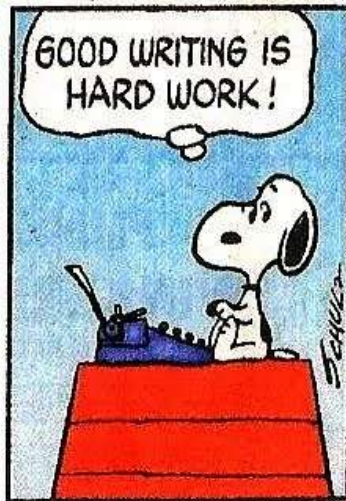


OLD DOMINION  
UNIVERSITY

QEP: *Improving Disciplinary Writing*

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*Develop effective writing assignments by linking:*

**Course learning objectives**

+

**Low-stakes activities  
(scaffolding)**

+

**Useful, timely feedback**

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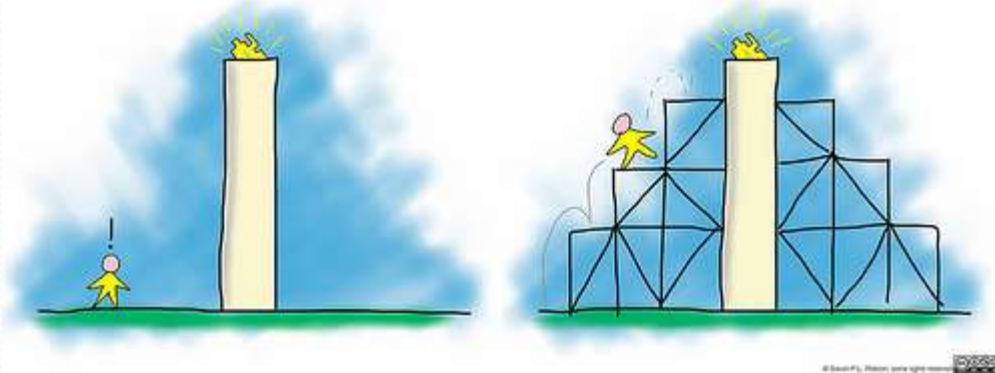
**Course Objectives** describe what learners will be able to do at the end of instruction and provide clear reasons for teaching. When writing objectives, be sure to describe the intended result of instruction rather than the process of instruction itself.

- How do we begin thinking about creative assignments that address the course objectives?
  - Doesn't have to be just one assignment to cover all objectives

**ACTIVITY:** Look at the objectives on your sample syllabus. Think about which ones are appropriate for (or can be linked to) a writing assignment. Give a brief overview of what the writing assignment might be (or what components it might have).

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**Low-stakes Writing** – short (often ungraded) exercises used to gauge learning and give students the opportunity to engage in enhanced learning activities. **Scaffolding** – activities that lead up to or culminate in a major writing assignment or course project.

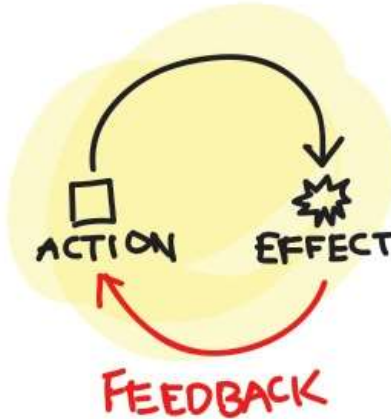
- Why is **breaking a writing assignment into pieces** important?

**ACTIVITY:** Review the **IDW Weekly Writing Tips** ([http://bit.ly/idp\\_tips](http://bit.ly/idp_tips)) for low-stakes writing activities broken down into various learning objectives). Think about how they might be adapted and used in your writing assignment. Outline how one of these activities can help students generate ideas for (or write pieces of) their major writing assignment.

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[1/idw110119/](https://sites.wj1/idw110119/)



**Formative Feedback** that helps promote student learning must be **clear, timely** and should lead to student **use** and/or **reflection**.

- How can you build in assignment feedback that is: (1) useful and (2) timely?
- How can we assure (by means of assignment design) that students use and respond to feedback?
  - Reflections
  - Revisions/Corrections
  - Peer Review

**ACTIVITY:** How do plan to shift your assignment design to build in feedback and have students use it?

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For more information on ODU's  
*Improving Disciplinary Writing*  
initiatives, please visit our  
ePortfolio:

[improvingwriting.wix.com/oduqep](http://improvingwriting.wix.com/oduqep)

or contact the Director of Writing  
and Faculty Development,  
Remica Bingham-Risher, at  
[rbingham@odu.edu](mailto:rbingham@odu.edu).