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Composition Curriculum Design

Evaluation Strategy

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In order to determine if students are developing the intended skills in writing outlined in the course, there will be myriad formative and summative evaluations. To begin the course, students will complete a writing sample. Typically, the sample is a five paragraph essay modeled after the SAT essay. This model is a flexible one that does not require outside research, which is important as this is an elective course with students drawn from 10th through 12th grade and, as such, come into the course with a variety of skill levels. To further assist in identifying where each student is starting from, the teacher will reference the students’ writing and reading comprehension scores from the most recent administration of the MAP test.

Within each subunit, there will be a variety of formative assessments, both formal and informal. Each day, students will spend a few minutes writing informally about a topic pertaining to the subunit. These warm ups will be checked periodically by the teacher to ensure that students comprehend the topics. The teacher will also administer periodic quizzes on various concepts. These quizzes may be multiple choice or short answer and will require students to explain concepts and identify examples from reading selections. Students will also be asked to complete close readings of professional samples of each type of writing to demonstrate that they can identify specific examples of the concepts.

As the purpose of this course is to develop writing skills, the bulk of the formative assessments will be in the drafting process. By both formally and informally checking drafts, the teacher can determine whether the student is mastering the objectives and make corrections where needed. Students will also evaluate both themselves and their peers through personal and peer editing.

The summative evolutions of this course will be the final products of each subunit, i.e. the final drafts of advertisements and papers. These products will be evaluated using a standard writing rubric that focuses on the writing process, grammar and punctuation, sentence structure, paragraph and essay structure, and content. This last category looks at how well the student has met the criteria of the assignment and on word choice and sophistication. This rubric, which is used school-wide, provides students with a clear guide as they write, but also affords the teacher the flexibility to assess students who come into the class from a variety of grade, age, and skill levels.

References

Chiarelott, L. (2006). *Curriculum in Context: Designing Curriculum and Instruction for Teaching and Learning in Context* (pp. 42-45). Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.