

WID Teaching Portfolio – Davina Mill, Psychology – Fall 2010

D. Peer Review

Advice-centered peer reviews: Students helping each other improve their drafts

This “sharing” can be enlightening. Students have the opportunity to try to follow the logic of someone else’s paper and to help identify language errors. It also allows them to see their own work in the context of others. Finally, each student can benefit from others’ comments and improve their paper. If you forget your typed drafts, still come to class, critique others’ papers, see how other students are writing their papers, and get marks for your participation grade.

Arrive with two typed drafts of you’re the first half of you paper. Include your cover page/ working title. Divide class into pairs, and have each pair exchange drafts with *another* pair.

The two students in each pair collaborate to compose a jointly written review of the two drafts they have received using this checklist: (note on your feedback sheet a-j so writer can follow your advice)

Introduction section

- a. Write out the question, problem, or issue that this draft addresses. Do you think this problem passes the “So what?” test?
- b. Is there a place in the introduction where the author directs the reader to the purpose of his or her paper? Write out the writer’s complete thesis statement (Note: if you are having trouble with a and b, concentrate on helping the writer clarify the problem and thesis)
- c. At the end of the Introduction section, does the reader have a good idea of what to expect in the upcoming body of the paper? (e.g., “The first part of the paper will show...; the second part of the paper explores....; finally....”).
- d. Was the working title clear and informative? Can you suggest a better title?

Continue reading and making helpful comments:

- e. Note with a wavy line in the margins all places where you got confused as a reader.
- f. Read the topic sentences of each paragraph: Is there a good logical flow? Are headings needed to help guide the reader?
- g. On a separate page, write out your assessments of the strengths and weaknesses of the writer’s **ideas**. Try to back up your comments with specific examples from the draft. (e.g., are the arguments logical? clear or confusing? are opposing viewpoints addressed?)
- h. Reread the draft: Are the writer’s claims being backed up by references from the literature? Does the writer need to do more research to back up claims being made? Remember that an opinion piece is not a research paper. If not, indicate on the student’s draft a code such as REF? (meaning: where is a reference to back up this claim?).
- i. Write out at least two things that you think are particularly strong about this draft.
- j. Make three or four directive statements recommending specific changes that the writer should make in the next draft. (e.g., problems with: APA or MLA style? Grammar or spelling?)

The pairs then return the drafts to the original writers along with the collaboratively written reviews. If time permits, the two pairs can meet jointly to discuss their reviews. The writer is responsible for deciding which changes to make.